



Thai Undergraduate Students' Motivation Towards Learning English in the EMI Context

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Abstract: This study investigates the motivation of Thai undergraduate students to learn English within the English Medium Instruction (EMI) context. The participants were 493 Thai students from eight full EMI programs at a Thai university. Employing a survey research design, a motivation questionnaire comprising 29 items was used to measure seven motivational constructs. The results highlighted a strong motivation driven by the instrumental value of learning English in shaping future career prospects and academic pursuits. In contrast, the study highlighted that expectations from other people were rated the lowest among the motivational factors. The findings offered valuable insights and implications for English educators within the EMI context in enhancing their students' motivation towards English learning.

Keywords: EMI, English medium instruction, learning English, motivation, Thai undergraduate students

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Introduction

English Medium Instruction, or EMI, has become increasingly prevalent in tertiary education worldwide, particularly in non-Anglophone countries where English is used as a foreign language (EFL) (Dearden, 2014; Galloway & McKinley, 2022; Kamaşak, Sahan, & Rose, 2021; Macaro, Curle, Pun, An, & Dearden, 2018; Sahan, Galloway, & McKinley, 2022). Despite its increasing prevalence, recent studies have revealed that a growing number of EFL undergraduate students in EMI programs across the globe are facing challenges related to their insufficient English proficiency. These challenges often range from struggling to understand English-instructed content to difficulties in classroom engagement and task completion (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018; Galloway &

Sahan, 2021; Macaro et al., 2018). To alleviate these challenges, the students must consistently develop their English proficiency throughout their academic pursuits in the EMI environment. However, learning English could become tedious and arduous for numerous EFL students. For them to prosper in their English learning, one of the crucial factors is their motivation to learn English. This assertion is grounded in the recognition that learning a foreign language demands dedicated effort and steadfast commitment, qualities that are often driven by one's motivation (Dörnyei, 2018).

In EFL contexts, it is well recognized that motivations can drive students to exhibit positive learning behaviors, such as setting study goals, maintaining consistent practices, and actively seeking learning opportunities (Dörnyei, 2009). Within the EMI environment, numerous studies have found that students' English learning motivation could influence their decision to study in EMI programs (Galloway & Sahan, 2021) or enroll in English courses offered by their institutions (Jiang, Zhang, & May, 2019). Their motivation could also influence their learning outside of the classroom, leading them to participate in various activities to improve their English (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018). These actions, driven by their motivation, could potentially contribute to developing their English language skills, which would translate into better academic performance.

Given its importance not just for English language learning but also for academic success within EMI programs, it is not surprising that considerable scholarly attention has been directed towards investigating the motivation of EFL undergraduate students to learn English in such contexts (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018; Hengsadekul, Koul, & Kaewkuekool, 2014; Jiang, Zhang, & May, 2019; Lasagabaster, 2016; Sahan, Kamaşak, & Rose, 2023). However, despite the extensive research conducted on this subject, a notable research gap exists in Thailand, the context of this study. While numerous studies have explored English learning motivation among Thai EFL students in various tertiary-level contexts (Assavanadda & Tangkiengsirisin, 2018; Kanoksilapatham, Khamkhen, Kitkha, & Na Nongkhai, 2021; Laiphrakpam & Aroonsrimorakot, 2021; Nattheeraphong, 2020; Pojchanaphong & Inkhamchuea, 2021), research specifically addressing motivation in the EMI context is scarce. Consequently, a need arises for further investigation.

Thus, by employing a survey research design, this study seeks to investigate the motivation towards learning English among Thai undergraduate students within the EMI context. By addressing the existing gap, this study aims to make a two-fold contribution. Firstly, it can expand the existing body of knowledge on English learning motivation within EMI contexts. This research can be particularly relevant for researchers studying EMI programs in other non-English-speaking countries. Secondly, by understanding what drives students to learn English in the EMI setting, the study can provide educators with valuable insights to design their teachings that directly target student motivations. This alignment between teaching and student motivations can potentially foster a more engaging and relevant learning environment. This, in turn, can motivate students to invest more effort in their studies, leading to the development of stronger English language skills.

Research Objective

This study investigates the motivation towards learning English among Thai undergraduate students within the EMI context.

Review of Literature

EMI in Thailand

Over the past decade, Thailand, like many other non-Anglophone countries, has experienced a significant increase in EMI programs at the tertiary level (Sameephet, 2020; Tang, 2021). Several factors have contributed to this growth, including the Thai government's efforts to align higher

education institutions with international standards, the need to attract international students, and the desire to enhance Thai students' English proficiency to compete in the competitive Asian job markets (Galloway & Sahan, 2021; Sameephet, 2020; Tang, 2021).

In general, EMI programs in Thailand are widely understood as the utilization of English as a primary language of instruction for content subjects, encompassing lectures, assignments, course materials, and examinations (Sameephet, 2020; Tang, 2021). The primary focus of the courses in EMI programs is on the subject content rather than the language itself. However, due to the absence of explicit EMI policies at the national and institutional levels, the implementation of EMI programs in Thai universities varies and is context-dependent (Galloway & Sahan, 2021; Sameephet, 2020). Some universities offer full EMI programs where all courses are conducted entirely in English, while others adopt bilingual or partial EMI programs where classes are taught in both Thai and English. Variations can also be observed in the student recruitment process and support provided to students in EMI programs, such as different language requirements and approaches to language support, including self-access study options and ongoing English language classes (Galloway & Sahan, 2021).

Despite the different approaches to implementing EMI, previous studies have highlighted several challenges Thai EFL students and lecturers have faced. Among these challenges, one of the most significant concerns is the students' inadequate English language proficiency (Coffin, 2014; Galloway & Sahan, 2021; Sameephet, 2020; Tang, 2021). For example, foreign instructors within the International College at a Thai university observed that students' academic writing skills, specifically in assignments and project reports, posed the most significant challenge within the EMI setting, underscoring the need to improve English proficiency among them (Tang, 2021). In addition, Thai students with limited English abilities may often struggle to comprehend course content, leading to reduced engagement in class discussions, group projects, and presentations (Sameephet, 2020).

To effectively assist Thai students in EMI programs to overcome challenges in improving their English proficiency, it is crucial to develop a comprehensive understanding of their motivation to study English. The reason is that this understanding allows English educators to design teaching approaches and learning environments that meet the interests of students and lead to improvements in both English language learning and overall academic studying in EMI contexts (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018; Lasagabaster, 2016).

Motivational Theoretical Frameworks in This Study

This study utilized various influential motivational constructs to enhance the understanding of motivation in English language learning, acknowledging the multifaceted nature of motivation. The constructs included Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS), two aspects of instrumental motivation (promotion and prevention), attitude towards the L2 community, and cultural interest.

By incorporating L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2009), the study focused on the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self, and the L2 learning experience. The Ideal L2 Self represents the learners' ideal version of themselves as proficient L2 speakers (Dörnyei, 2009). Numerous studies grounded in the L2MSS have highlighted the significance of the Ideal L2 Self as it creates a positive future self-image that students strive to achieve through English language learning (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018; Kanoksilapatham et al., 2021; Lasagabaster, 2016; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009). The Ought-to L2 Self, particularly in this study, encompasses the attributes and characteristics learners believe they should possess to meet other people's expectations. Previous research has demonstrated that the desire to meet the standards set by peers, teachers, and parents could motivate students to study English (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018). Apart from the two self-related concepts, the L2 learning

experience component refers to the immediate L2 learning environment (e.g., the quality of teaching) that could influence students' motivation (Dörnyei, 2019; Taguchi et al., 2009). Positive learning experiences, such as engaging activities and positive teacher-student interactions, can stimulate students' motivation; on the other hand, negative experiences, for example, irrelevant materials and excessive workload, can diminish them.

In addition to the L2MSS, this study also incorporated instrumental motivation, referring to the desire to learn a foreign language for practical purposes (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991). Drawing upon the findings from a comparative study of L2MSS among Japanese, Chinese, and Iranian learners of English (Taguchi et al., 2009), this current study classified instrumental motivation into instrumentality-promotion and instrumentality-prevention. The promotion aspect involves motivation driven by the belief that learning a foreign language is a means to personal success, such as career advancement and academic achievements. Conversely, the prevention perspective sees language learning as a tool to avoid negative outcomes, such as missing career opportunities and encountering challenges in academic studies (Taguchi et al., 2009). Past research has demonstrated a significant relationship between both aspects of instrumental motivation and L2 learning behavior (Lasagabaster, 2016; Taguchi et al., 2009). Hence, both types of instrumental motivation were incorporated in the context of this study.

Two additional motivational factors relevant in the research context were the attitude towards the L2 community and cultural interest. The former reflected students' perceptions of and feelings towards individuals belonging to the L2 community; the latter pertained to students' fascination with various cultural products like movies, TV series, and books of the L2-speaking community (Taguchi et al., 2009). Both attitudes towards the L2 community and cultural interests have been widely recognized as significant L2 motivations across various learning contexts (Kanoksilapatham et al., 2021; Lasagabaster, 2016; Taguchi et al., 2009). Consequently, considering their proven significance, the current study also incorporated them as essential components of English learning motivation.

English Learning Motivation in the EMI Setting and in Thailand

During the past decade, several studies have explored motivational factors in learning English among students in the EMI environment. In Spain, Lasagabaster (2016) investigated the relationship between motivation, gender, native language, and possible selves among university students in the EMI setting and found that when considering the sample as a whole, without dividing it by gender, students' motivated language learning behavior was primarily influenced by their ideal version of themselves as proficient in English and their attitudes towards the EMI experience. Interestingly, the study found that the instrumentality-prevention and the Ought-to L2 Self did not significantly correlate with students' effort in learning English, suggesting that external factors played a less important role in this particular group (Lasagabaster, 2016).

Contrary to the results of the aforementioned study, Doiz and Lasagabaster (2018) conducted a qualitative study of L2MSS among university students and teachers within the EMI settings at a Spanish university and found that in the case of students, both components of the Ideal Self and the Ought-to Self were more balanced. Concerning the Ideal L2 Self, the students demonstrated their vision to become successful and fluent English speakers, driven by diverse reasons such as enhancing career prospects and facilitating communication with other people. The students' aspiration for their Ideal L2 Self could drive their motivation to continually improve their English language skills through various activities. Regarding the Ought-to L2 Self, the study revealed that some students were heavily influenced by their parents' insistence on the importance of English. In addition, the study also reported that the social situation (referring to the role of English in their

society) and the consequences of not knowing English could be external pressure that pushes students to enroll in EMI programs to improve their English.

Apart from the studies in Spain, in China, Jiang et al. (2019) conducted a study on learning motivation and needs among students in an EMI medical degree program who took English for Specific Purpose courses (ESP). The study underscored the students' diverse motivations, encompassing a range of objectives. Notably, reading relevant material and seeking knowledge emerged as prominent motivations. Moreover, significant emphasis was placed on motivations such as publishing research articles and reports, succeeding in examinations, and engaging in academic activities both domestically and internationally. These motivations are driven by the practical benefits of studying English, which align with the instrumental motivation framework.

In Thailand, Hengsadeeikul et al. (2014) conducted a study of motivational orientation and preference for EMI programs in Thailand, and the findings revealed that students in EMI programs were primarily motivated by instrumental motivation. They placed importance on learning English for its practical advantages, such as enhancing their socio-economic status and professional opportunities. Moreover, the study showed a positive correlation between instrumental motivation and socio-cultural aspects as well as xenophilic orientations, indicating that students also recognize the value of English proficiency for cultural exchange and fostering connections with individuals from different backgrounds.

In line with Hengsadeeikul et al. (2014), numerous studies exploring the motivation behind Thai undergraduate English learning highlight the prevalence of instrumental motivation. For example, three studies conducted in different Thai university contexts found that Thai undergraduates exhibited high levels of motivation towards studying English as they viewed English as an essential tool for their future lives and careers (Assavanadda & Tangkiengsirisin, 2018; Laiphrakpam & Aroonsrimorakot, 2021; Pojchanaphong & Inkhamchuea, 2021). This trend is supported by a large-scale study conducted with both science and humanities students from eight Thai universities, which found that both groups of students share the goal of using English for employment and professional advancement, suggesting a potential uniformity in instrumental motivation across disciplines (Kanoksilapatham et al., 2021).

Beyond instrumental motivation, a smaller body of research explores L2MSS and English learning motivation among Thai undergraduates. Kanoksilapatham et al. (2021) found a slightly high level of motivation driven by both the Ideal L2 self and the Ought-to L2 self among science and humanities students. This is further supported by Nattheeraphong's (2020) study on highly motivated underprivileged students. Regarding the Ideal L2 self, Nattheeraphong (2020) found that the students expressed their Ideal L2 Self by envisioning themselves working with foreigners and even working abroad. When considering Ought-to Self, the students were aware of their families' desires for good behavior and academic focus; however, none of them reported family pressure regarding specific careers or expectations and they did not feel obliged to meet the expectations of others.

Based on previous studies, it is evident that motivation for studying English among students, either in EMI contexts or in Thailand, is a multifaceted construct comprising various dimensions, and the findings can vary depending on the context. While numerous studies have explored Thai undergraduate students' English learning motivation, research specifically focused on EMI contexts remains limited. This study aims to address this gap in the existing literature by investigating this issue through the lens of the seven motivational constructs previously discussed.

Research Methodology

Context of the Current Study

The study was conducted at a Thai university that offers 12 full EMI programs and two partial EMI programs. The full EMI programs use English extensively for lectures, course materials, class activities, assignments, and exams, while the partial EMI programs deliver core courses in Thai with elective courses in English. Notably, the majority of lecturers in both program types are Thai. The focus of this study lies on the full EMI programs. Many first-year Thai students in these programs often face significant challenges due to a lack of strong English proficiency. This limited proficiency can lead to difficulties in comprehending lectures, course materials, and participating effectively in class activities, ultimately impacting their academic performance. To help them develop their English skills for effective study in the EMI environment, all first-year students not majoring in English were required to enroll in an Intensive English course (IE), a preparatory course offered three weeks before the start of the first semester. Following the IE course, students enrolled in the English for Communication 1 (EC1) course in the first semester, which was mandatory for all students except English majors. Both the IE and EC1 courses emphasized developing essential language skills, including paragraph writing, presentations, and discussions, to enhance students' ability to engage effectively in English-medium studies. Upon successful completion of EC1, students had to enroll in another English course aimed at achieving a higher level of English proficiency.

Participants

Convenience sampling was utilized to recruit participants for this study. The target population consisted of 2,471 first-year Thai students from eight full EMI programs in 2021. These students were enrolled in EC1. To determine the appropriate sample size, Yamane's formula was applied, considering a 95% confidence level. The calculated representative sample size for the target population was 362 students. Thus, the sample size was deemed adequate since this study included 493 Thai students (N=493), comprising males and females.

Research Instrument

Motivation Questionnaire: An online questionnaire was employed as the research instrument. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts: (1) demographic information of the participants, including gender, sections, and majors; and (2) items measuring students' motivation in learning English. The motivation items were adapted from a well-established questionnaire previously employed in studies on L2 motivation across diverse contexts, including China, Iran, Japan, and Hungary (Taguchi et al., 2009). The adaptation was justified because the original questionnaire underwent rigorous development and validation processes, ensuring its validity in measuring the motivational constructs in this study.

Following the selection of relevant items from the established questionnaire, the developed questionnaire comprised 29 five-point Likert scale items ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The items were carefully translated into Thai by the researchers. To maintain the accuracy and consistency of the translation, the translated questionnaires underwent a thorough review and revision process until a consensus was reached on the final version. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, three experts from the fields of education, English, and psychology evaluated the questionnaire using the item-objective congruence (IOC) index. The results revealed that all items achieved an IOC value higher than 0.60, indicating good validity. However, the researchers revised certain items to enhance their clarity according to the suggestions from the experts.

Subsequently, the revised questionnaire underwent a pilot study with 89 first-year students from three full EMI programs to assess its reliability using Cronbach's alpha (Taber, 2018). The results demonstrated acceptable levels of reliability, which were higher than 0.7 for each sub-category: Ideal L2 Self (0.887), Ought-to L2 Self (0.847), instrumentality-promotion (0.751), instrumentality-prevention (0.890), cultural interest (0.834), attitude towards learning English (0.798), and attitude towards L2 community (0.719). The overall reliability of the questionnaire was 0.912, indicating a high level of reliability. A brief description of each motivational factor in this study is given below.

1. **Ideal L2 Self:** The individual's desired future identity as a successful English user
2. **Ought-to L2 Self:** A sense of obligation or responsibility to learn English, influenced by the expectations of other people
3. **Attitude towards the English learning experience:** The overall emotional and cognitive evaluation of the English learning process, encompassing feelings of interest and enjoyment
4. **Instrumentality-promotion:** The expectation of gaining positive outcomes from learning English, such as career advancement or personal growth
5. **Instrumentality-prevention:** The desire to avoid negative consequences associated with inadequate English language proficiency
6. **Cultural interest:** Curiosity and enthusiasm for exploring the cultural aspects associated with native English speakers
7. **Attitude towards the L2 community:** The student's perception of the English-speaking community

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data for this study was collected during the first semester of the academic year 2021 after receiving approval from the university's Ethical Review Committees. The online questionnaires, distributed by EC1 lecturers for one week, garnered 493 responses. To address the research objective, the quantitative data underwent analysis using means and standard deviations to present a comprehensive overview of participants' average motivational levels. The degree of motivation was interpreted based on class interval calculation (Alkharusi, 2022), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

The Criteria for the Degree of Motivation

Scale	Mean Range	Range	Interpretation
5	Strongly Agree	4.21–5.00	Very high degree of motivation
4	Agree	3.41–4.20	High degree of motivation
3	Moderate	2.61–3.40	Moderate degree of motivation
2	Disagree	1.81–2.60	Low degree of motivation
1	Strongly Disagree	1.00–1.80	Very low degree of motivation

Results of the Study

The collected data was categorized into seven motivational constructs. These encompass the following order: the three components of L2MSS, followed by two types of instrumental motivation, and concluding with the last two motivational constructs (cultural interest and attitude towards the L2 community). Table 2 presents the questionnaire statements used to assess each construct, their mean scores, and standard deviations (SD).

Table 2*Descriptive Statistics Regarding Students' Motivation for Studying English*

No.	Statement	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
1. Ideal L2 self				
	I study English because....			
1	I see myself in the future living abroad and being able to engage in conversations using the English language.	4.15	0.91	High degree of motivation
10	When I think about my future job, I envision myself using English in my work.	4.24	0.87	Very high degree of motivation
15	I can see myself as someone who can communicate with friends or colleagues from different countries using English.	4.30	0.82	Very high degree of motivation
27	I can see myself speaking English fluently as if it were my native language.	3.92	1.05	High degree of motivation
	Mean	4.15	0.75	High degree of motivation
2. Ought-to L2 self				
2	For me, learning English is important and has an impact on gaining acceptance from people around me.	4.05	0.97	High degree of motivation
8	Learning English is necessary because people surrounding me expect me to do so.	3.01	1.31	Moderate degree of motivation
16	I consider learning English important because the people I respect think that I should do it.	3.29	1.34	Moderate degree of motivation
26	I study English because close friends of mine think it is important.	2.89	1.35	Moderate degree of motivation
29	Studying English is important to me because other people will respect me more if I have knowledge of English.	3.41	1.29	High degree of motivation
	Mean	3.33	0.96	Moderate degree of motivation
3. Attitude towards the English learning experience				
5	I really enjoy learning English.	3.82	0.97	High degree of motivation
12	I like the atmosphere of my English classes.	3.79	0.98	High degree of motivation
19	I always look forward to learning English.	3.48	1.01	High degree of motivation
	Mean	3.70	0.71	High degree of motivation
4. Instrumentality–promotion				
3	Studying English can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a good job.	4.71	0.56	Very high degree of motivation.
9	Studying English can be important to me because I think I'll need it for further studies.	4.49	0.70	Very high degree of motivation.
17	Studying English is important to me in order to achieve a special goal (e.g., to get a degree or scholarship).	4.52	0.72	Very high degree of motivation.
24	Studying English is important to me because English proficiency is necessary for promotion in the future.	4.56	0.70	Very high degree of motivation.

No.	Statement	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
	Mean	4.57	0.55	Very high degree of motivation.
5. Instrumentality–prevention				
4	I have to study English; otherwise, I think I cannot be successful in my future career.	3.95	0.97	High degree of motivation
11	Studying English is important to me because I would feel ashamed if I got bad grades in English.	3.23	1.27	Moderate degree of motivation
18	I have to study English because I don't want to get bad marks in it.	3.48	1.30	High degree of motivation
25	I have to learn English because I don't want to fail the English course.	3.71	1.21	High degree of motivation
23	Studying English is necessary for me because I don't want to get a poor score or a failing mark on English proficiency tests.	4.00	1.04	High degree of motivation
28	Studying English is important to me because, if I don't know English, I'll be considered a weak student.	3.04	1.37	Moderate degree of motivation
	Mean	3.57	0.90	High degree of motivation
6. Cultural interest				
6	I am interested in movies from countries where English is the native language.	4.13	0.97	High degree of motivation
13	I am interested in songs and music from countries where English is the native language.	4.34	0.89	Very high degree of motivation.
20	I am interested in print media such as books, magazines, and newspapers from countries where English is the native language.	3.52	1.13	High degree of motivation
22	I am interested in television programs from countries where English is the native language.	3.66	1.11	High degree of motivation
	Mean	3.91	0.84	High degree of motivation
7. Attitude towards the L2 community				
7	I would like to be friends with foreigners living in countries where English is widely spoken.	4.45	0.82	Very high degree of motivation.
14	I enjoy meeting people from countries where English is widely spoken.	3.59	1.08	High degree of motivation
21	I would like to travel to countries where English is widely spoken.	4.41	0.84	Very high degree of motivation.
	Mean	4.15	0.72	High degree of motivation

The results, as shown in Table 2, indicate that the instrumentality-promotion dimension emerged as the highest motivator ($M = 4.57$). This suggests that the students studied English because they believed it was essential for career advancement and their future studies. This motivation peaked when considering English as crucial for future job opportunities, as shown in Statement 3 ($M = 4.71$), while the motivation for further studies (Statement 9) was slightly lower but still very high ($M = 4.49$). In contrast, the lowest motivation was seen in the Ought-to L2 Self category ($M = 3.33$), specifically for Statement 26 ($M = 2.89$), which reflected the motivation to learn English because it was important to close friends. This contrast demonstrated that motivations driven by personal goals and career

aspirations significantly outweighed extrinsic pressures from others in driving students to learn English in this EMI context.

The results also revealed variations in other motivational dimensions. For instance, a majority of students displayed a high degree of motivation driven by their Ideal L2 Self ($M = 4.15$). They strongly envisioned using English in future scenarios, such as living abroad and in their future careers, as evidenced by Statement 1 ($M = 4.15$) and Statement 10 ($M = 4.24$). The highest motivation within this category was also linked to the students' Ideal L2 self as a competent English user who can communicate with friends or colleagues using English, as shown in Statement 15 ($M = 4.30$). Overall, these results underscore the significance of students' visions of their future selves as one of the major motivating factors.

Furthermore, the learning environment itself can contribute to students' motivation. A considerable portion of students demonstrated strong motivation driven by positive experiences in learning English ($M = 3.70$). The enjoyment of learning English, as reflected in Statement 5 ($M = 3.82$), and the positive classroom atmosphere, as indicated by Statement 12 ($M = 3.79$), underscore the presence of a positive learning environment that likely contributes to their motivation.

In the instrumentality-prevention category, students also displayed a high degree of motivation ($M = 3.57$). Significant concern over failing English proficiency tests, as indicated by Statement 23 ($M = 4.00$), and failing the English course itself, as reflected in Statement 25 ($M = 3.71$), indicates that the desire to avoid failure can be a significant driver in students' efforts to learn English. The result underscores the students' high motivation to avoid negative outcomes driven by concerns about grades, course failure, future career success, and social perceptions.

Moving on to cultural interest, students demonstrated a significant interest in cultural products from English-speaking countries, with an overall mean of 3.91. Specifically, interest in English-language songs and music (Statement 13) was very high, with a mean of 4.34, while interest in movies (Statement 6) also reflected high motivation ($M = 4.13$). Interest in print media, such as books, magazines, and newspapers (Statement 20), was somewhat lower but still indicated a high level of motivation ($M = 3.52$). Similarly, interest in television programs from English-speaking countries (Statement 22) was also high ($M = 3.66$).

Finally, in terms of social aspects, attitudes towards the English-speaking community exhibited strong motivation, with an overall mean of 4.15. The strongest motivation was the desire to befriend people from English-speaking countries (Statement 7), with a mean of 4.45, followed closely by a strong motivation to travel to these countries (Statement 21), with a mean of 4.41. Enjoyment in meeting people from English-speaking countries (Statement 14), though slightly lower, still indicated a high degree of motivation ($M = 3.59$). Overall, the data indicates that students were particularly motivated by cultural products and social connections related to English-speaking countries.

Discussion

The study sheds light on the motivation of Thai EFL students to learn English within an EMI context. Notably, the highest motivational factor observed was instrumentality-promotion, indicating that EMI students acknowledged the importance of English for their future professional and academic success ($M = 4.57$). Additionally, the results revealed a relatively high degree of motivation towards two primary components of L2MSS, namely Ideal L2 Self ($M = 4.15$), learning experience ($M = 3.70$), and other motivational factors, including attitude towards the L2 community ($M = 4.15$), cultural interest ($M = 3.91$), and the instrumental value of English for prevention ($M = 3.57$). However, the "Ought-to L2 Self" was found to be the least motivating factor among the participants ($M = 3.33$).

The following sections delved into discussions of the results through the lens of the key motivational constructs in this study.

L2MSS: Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to Self, and L2 Learning Experience

Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to L2 Self, and L2 learning experience—the three components of L2MSS—have been recognized as significantly impacting students' L2 learning behaviors (Dörnyei, 2019). This study strengthens this notion by demonstrating that all three L2MSS components can act as motivational factors. Particularly, this study highlights the crucial role of the Ideal L2 Self in motivating students. The majority of the students had a shared vision of their future as professionals in an international setting where English serves as the language for communication. Also, they aspired to achieve fluent English proficiency to engage in conversations and interactions with friends or colleagues from different countries. These envisioned future selves likely act as an incentive, driving students to actively learn English, as high proficiency in English is essential for working in such international settings. The result of this study aligns with previous studies on EMI students (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018; Lasagabaster, 2016), which suggests that the Ideal L2 Self as a competent English user significantly motivated students to invest in developing their English language skills. Furthermore, it resonates with studies conducted in Thailand that identified the Ideal L2 Self as a key factor influencing Thai undergraduate students to learn English (Kanoksilapatham et al., 2021; Nattheeraphong, 2020). For the students in this study, participation in the EMI program likely plays a significant role in shaping their Ideal L2 Self. Students may observe non-native English speaker lecturers delivering classes confidently, witness peers from diverse backgrounds conversing fluently in English during group work or social interactions, or encounter alumni who have successfully navigated professional careers in English-speaking environments. These diverse experiences could contribute to the students developing a more concrete vision of themselves as competent English users. This vision, in turn, may serve as a powerful motivator, driving them to invest greater effort in developing their English.

In contrast to the strong influence of the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self played a less prominent role in this study. This aligns with Lasagabaster's (2016) study, which found a lesser influence of the Ought-to L2 Self on EMI students' English learning. However, it contrasts with the findings of Doiz and Lasagabaster (2018), whose study found that parental pressure played a significant role in motivating undergraduate EMI students. Their study suggests a more active parental role in English learning, with students reporting pressure and guidance from their parents. This lessened motivation driven by the Ought-to L2 Self in the current study could be explained by the characteristics of the participants, who were undergraduate students. According to Lasagabaster (2016), undergraduates may place less emphasis on external pressures and develop a stronger sense of self-direction and autonomy in their learning. Additionally, the influence of others, such as parents or teachers, on students' English learning could be another factor. Perhaps the people surrounding the students in this current study exerted less pressure regarding English learning. This notion is supported by Nattheeraphong's (2020) study on underprivileged Thai students, which found that participants acknowledged their families' desires for good behavior and academic focus but reported no specific pressure regarding careers or expectations. This current study suggests that the students may have experienced less pressure from other people, like parents, making their learning behaviors less influenced by the need to meet external expectations.

As for students' English learning experiences, this study found that students had a positive attitude towards their English learning, consistent with previous studies in the EMI context (Hengsadeeikul et al., 2014; Lasagabaster, 2016). Overall, the positive attitude reflects the effectiveness of the teaching and learning practices within the context of this study. This may be attributed to students' consistent engagement in English language learning throughout their first year at the university. Notably, these students had already participated in the IE course before the start of the first

semester and subsequently enrolled in EC1 during the first semester. Both courses were designed in sequence to equip students with skills for studying in the EMI context (e.g., delivering presentations in English and writing academic essays in English). The progressive nature of these courses likely contributes to a positive impact on students' English learning experiences.

Instrumental Motivation: Promotion and Prevention

This study also examines instrumental motivation in English language learning, focusing on its two aspects: promotion and prevention. Analysis of the data reveals that instrumentality-promotion emerged as the highest form of motivation, indicating the students in this study were primarily driven by the practical advantages of English, particularly for their future careers and academic pursuits. These results echo existing studies highlighting the dominance of instrumental motivation among Thai undergraduate English learners, regardless of the context—EMI programs (Hengsadeeikul et al., 2014) or others (Assavanadda & Tangkiengsirisin, 2018; Laiphrakpam & Aroonsrimorakot, 2021; Pojchanaphong & Inkhamchuea, 2021).

Concerning career advancement, this result aligns with prior research by Hengsadeeikul et al. (2014). Their study found Thai undergraduate students in EMI programs were motivated to learn English due to its recognized role in enhancing employability and securing better job opportunities. This alignment likely stems from the fact that English proficiency is often a prerequisite for high-paying jobs in Thailand, particularly within multinational companies, the tourism, and hospitality sectors. Consequently, students view English as a tool for career progression, motivating them to invest in their English learning. Regarding academic advancement, this study concurs with Jiang et al.'s study (2019), which found that the English requirements imposed by EMI studies (e.g., the need to read materials in English) significantly influence students' motivation to attend ESP courses. Within the EMI context, students directly experience how English facilitates their current studies and equips them to tackle academic challenges. These tangible connections between English proficiency and academic success can elevate students' perception of English as a valuable tool for their studies and motivate them to further develop their English.

Concerning instrumental prevention, this study's results, in line with Doiz and Lasagabaster's (2018) findings, indicate that a subset of students is motivated to study English due to the fear of negative consequences if they neglect English learning. The fear may stem from the likelihood that students in EMI who do not achieve a certain level of English proficiency are more likely to encounter academic challenges and obstacles, potentially leading to failure in their studies. These students might fear failing courses, delaying graduation, or missing out on internship opportunities if their English skills are insufficient. This fear becomes a potent motivator, driving students to actively participate in English learning to avoid such unfavorable outcomes in the future.

Attitude towards L2 Community and Cultural Interest

The study sheds light on Thai students' positive attitude towards English-speaking communities, reflected in their enthusiasm to form friendships, engage with people, and explore English-speaking countries through travel. Although the study does not explicitly provide the reasons behind this positive attitude, one influential factor seems to be the students' visions of their ideal selves. Their vision, expressed in statements related to the Ideal L2 Self such as 'I see myself in the future living abroad and being able to engage in conversations using the English language,' may motivate their active involvement with the L2 community. This ideal self-concept can drive their belief that interacting with English speakers will facilitate language proficiency, compelling them to actively seek opportunities to engage with and learn from the L2 community.

For the cultural interest, it was observed that students in this study demonstrated their enthusiasm for English-language media from English-speaking countries, such as films, music, and literature. However, it appeared that students exhibited a relatively lower level of interest in printed media. One conceivable reason could be that in the digital era, students may favor digital and online media over conventional print media. Furthermore, students, especially those with insufficient English proficiency, may perceive printed media as more challenging to comprehend and engage with than other media forms.

Implications

Based on the results, several pedagogical implementations can be suggested, especially for the English educators involved in English education in the EMI settings at the tertiary level. First, recognizing the importance of instrumentality-promotion as the primary motivating factor in this study, it is important to ensure that the practical benefits of English for students' academic and professional achievement are highlighted whether in the EMI program or the English courses offered to students. To achieve that, real-life examples such as stories of individuals or alumni who have achieved professional growth, or career advancement through English language skills should be used to help students witness concrete evidence of the instrumental value of English firsthand.

Second, recognizing the importance of other motivational factors in this study, creating an environment that fosters the right conditions and opportunities to meet these motivations is essential. To help students create their Ideal L2 Self, it is essential to provide activities (e.g., collaborative discussions about L2 Ideal Self) that can encourage students to envision their ideal L2 Self in alignment with their academic and professional aspirations. A clear vision of their Ideal Self helps students become more proactive in their language learning to become their desired L2 Self. Moreover, to ensure a positive and engaging learning experience, incorporating films and music from English-speaking cultures can captivate students' interest. In addition, considering that students in EMI contexts might be motivated by the need to avoid failure or negative outcomes arising from insufficient English proficiency, additional language support services, such as tutoring, workshops, or language clinics, should be provided to meet the students' diverse needs.

Finally, it is important to provide lecturers with insights into students' motivations. Instructing lecturers about students' motivation is crucial in enhancing the teaching and learning process. When teachers deeply understand their students' motivations, they can create a more effective and engaging learning environment to meet students' needs and make the learning experience more meaningful and relevant.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Study

Although this study measures various motivational constructs, the study might not fully capture the entirety of motivation and potentially overlook other relevant dimensions. For future research, exploring additional dimensions of L2 motivation would be valuable. Also, incorporating qualitative methods alongside quantitative measures would be beneficial through triangulation. This would allow researchers to gain deeper insights into the factors shaping students' motivation to learn English and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Moreover, to provide more explicit direction on how specific motivational constructs are related to students' learning behavior, future studies should investigate the relationships between each motivational factor and students' actual learning outcomes. Educators and researchers can develop targeted strategies and interventions to enhance students' motivation and academic achievement by understanding how these motivations impact learning behaviors.

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