Toward the Promotion of Lifelong Learning: A Study of Thai Older Adults' Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language

Natthanicha Pundit

University of Essex

Abstract

This study explored L2 motivation of Thai older adults under the L2 Motivational Self System framework. It contributed to the severe lack of L2 motivation research pertaining to this age group, with the aim to better promote lifelong education, improve pedagogical strategies and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning in later adulthood, and ultimately enhance the quality of life of older adults in Thailand. The participants in this study were 77 Thai older adults aged 40 and above who responded to an online motivational factors questionnaire. The results suggested that Thai older adults' general attitudes toward EFL learning were positive and appeared to be the strongest L2 motivational drive and predictor of L2 learning efforts. On the contrary, increasing age seemed to link with a decline in the learning effort level. Additionally, Thai older adults who were either males or identified as low-proficiency in English would be more inclined to experience higher levels of English anxiety. The findings highlighted the importance of maintaining positive attitudes to EFL learning and awareness of its benefits among older adults, and incorporating appropriate anxiety reduction approaches for older adult learners of specific genders and proficiency levels.

Introduction

Like many countries across the globe, Thailand is facing a prominent trend of aging society. Due to the decline in mortality and improvements in healthcare, the Department of Older Persons (2024) reported that Thailand is near the stage of a complete-aged society, with 19.97% of its population made up of older persons aged 60 and above. It is, therefore, important that appropriate public programs and multidimensional social supports are being initiated and provided promptly to meet a specific range of needs for this particular age group (United Nations,

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Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2020). This includes sustainable education, which can contribute to physical, mental, and social health maintenance in older adults (Purdie and Boulton-Lewis, 2003).

There are multiple approaches to educational promotion, with second/foreign language (L2) learning being one way to engage older adults in later-life learning activities. It has been demonstrated in literature that L2 language learning in older adulthood plays a role in the preservation and/or enhancement of elderly people's cognitive skills and abilities (Bialystok and Craik, 2010; Bak *et al.*, 2014; Antoniou and Wright, 2017; Ware *et al.*, 2017; Pfenninger and Polz, 2018). In addition, it is also shown to contribute to the improvement of social skills and mental health in older ages (Pfenninger and Polz, 2018; Klimova and Pikhart, 2020).

To handle this phenomenon of aging society, Thailand's government and policy makers have turned their attention to the concept of lifelong learning in the hope of cultivating a suitable environment for the healthy aging of Thai senior citizens. Srinuch and Chindapol (2020) reported that several public programs have been carried out to address this issue as part of the National Elderly Plans, Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 (2017), the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan, and Elderly Person Act B.E. 2546 (2003). Additionally, English courses are now open to the general public at various educational institutes across Thailand, offering alternative continuing education programs for Thai people of all ages, including the older adult population. However, Pechapan-Hammond (2020) pointed out that these courses had been designed with inadequate understandings of individual differences in L2 learners and lacked appropriate pedagogical approaches that are needed for the development of quality English programs.

Research has found that affective factors—including motivation—should be taken into consideration when creating L2 programs for older adults, as they can have a significant impact on the promotion and provision of quality L2 learning contexts in later adulthood (Arxer, Ciriza and Shappeck, 2017). Although research on motivation has been conducted across different sociocultural contexts, such as South Korea (Kim and Kim, 2015), the Czech Republic (Pikhart and Klimova, 2020), Brazil (Garcia, 2017), and Pakistan (Islam, Lamb and Chambers, 2013), the scarcity of research on L2 learning and L2 motivation of older people in the Thai context remains a prominent obstacle that needs to be overcome. Therefore, this present study was conducted with the aim to look at how motivational and attitudinal factors shape the learning of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Thai older adults.

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Literature Review

1. The Thai context

1.1 The overview of Thailand

Thailand, also known as the Kingdom of Thailand or Siam, is located in Southeast Asia, with a population of 71.9 million as of 2024 (United Nations Population Fund [UNPF], 2024). Thailand is approximately the size of France and is connected to Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and Malaysia. The capital and most populated city of Thailand is Bangkok, which is situated in the central area of the country (Arttachariya, 1997). Thailand has never been colonized by other nations; thus, the only official language of Thailand is Thai, which is used widely throughout the country and is the medium of instruction in most national and local educational institutes (Na Nongkhai, 2017). The official religion in Thailand is Buddhism.

1.2 Thailand's sociocultural setting

With over 90 percent of the population being Thai-speaking Buddhists (U.S. Department of State, 2023), Thai culture is heavily influenced by Buddhist-based values and beliefs, which emphasize the importance of respect, politeness, and avoidance of direct confrontation. According to Rappa (2022), much like many countries in East and Southeast Asia, Thai people have a tendency to value the importance of group conformity and relationships forged through interdependency. The concept of saving "face"—a social representation of one's self in a society—is, therefore, deeply embedded in Thai communication and interactions (Ukosakul, 2005). Maintaining face requires a person to meet the expectations of others in order to fulfill the responsibilities of their different social positions; thus, "face" is also concerned with social status and gender norms (Rappa, 2022). Thais—mostly male older adults—at the apex of career success, wealth, and recognition will often have a lot of "face" to maintain.

Thai culture is also quite male-dominated. Although at a less intense degree compared to other neighboring religions (e.g., Hinduism and Islam), Buddhist practices and traditions have played a prominent role in preserving male supremacy and dominance in Thai society (Arttachariya, 1997), and drawn a line of gender discrimination where women are expected to work the supportive roles on one side, while males dominate political and religious powers on the other (Rappa, 2022).

1.3 Education system in Thailand

In Thailand, according to Princess of Naradhiwas University (n.d.), formal education, as specified in the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999), consists of two levels: fundamental and higher education. Fundamental education comprises pre-primary school education for children aged 3-6, six years of primary school, three years of middle school, and three years of high school. High school can be compartmentalized into general education, which is a pathway to higher education,

and vocational education, which focuses on developing specific skills, provides job qualifications for a particular field of employment and is a requirement for the acquisition of advanced vocational certificates. Higher education is divided into post-secondary education and undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

1.4 English in Thailand

Thai people recognize English as a very important language due to its role in globalization, and place it above other foreign languages (Bennui and Hashim, 2014). English is also associated with high social status and the elite, with its practical values in specific industries such as education, tourism, international trading, and diplomacy (Hayes, 2008; Pechapan-Hammond, 2020); it is also seen as a ticket to better education and respected professions (Na Nongkhai, 2017). This also means that for the majority of Thai people English usage is very limited to certain areas of Thailand and irrelevant to their daily lives (Hayes, 2016). Therefore, it is expected that Thais appear to have high levels of English anxiety—a variable that has been researched to have adverse effects on L2 motivation (Hashimoto, 2002; Salayo and Amarles, 2020; Alrabai, 2022)—due to unfamiliarity with the language and its speakers.

In education, English is generally taught as a foreign language and mandatory subject starting in the first year of primary school and throughout fundamental education (Hayes, 2016). In higher education, English classes remain a graduation requirement in some university undergraduate majors (e.g., Accounting, Tourism Industry, and Human Resource Management) (Hayes, 2016). However, in general, upon completion of fundamental education, studying English is no longer an obligation in Thai colleges and universities, with Thai used as the sole medium of instruction. Several Thai people never re-engage with formal English nor other L2 learning again.

2. L2 motivation

In recent years, motivation has been increasingly regarded as an important predictor of L2 learning outcomes, L2 learning behavior, and L2 learning success (Ushioda, 2020). However, the genesis of motivation studies in second language acquisition (SLA) can be dated back to Gardner and Lambert's (1959) seminal work, which explained the role of motivation and attitudes in language learning with the socio-educational model and highlighted their impact on language learning success to be comparable with aptitude and intelligence. The model suggests that L2 performance is influenced by two independent variables, language aptitude and motivation, the latter being impacted by three components, namely integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, and language anxiety (Gardner, 1985). In SLA motivation, Gardner (1985) proposed that it is crucial to look into one's goal—also referred to as orientation—for learning an L2 and distinguish it from motivational intensity, to understand why they are motivated to learn the language. According to him, the terms "orientation" and "motivation" differ in the sense that orientation represents reasons for learning an L2, while motivation describes the desire, attitudes, intensity of effort, and persistence toward attaining that orientation. Subsequently, Gardner's

(1985) integrative motive—"a motivation to learn a second language because of positive feelings towards the community that speaks the language"—was proposed and remains perhaps the most influential theoretical concept in the L2 motivation field to date (pp. 82-83). Since then, a multitude of studies have been conducted on L2 motivation over the decades (e.g., McCroskey and Baer, 1985; MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; Noels, 2001).

More recently, Dörnyei (2005) raised a number of criticisms regarding Gardner's "integrativeness" and presented the need for reinterpretation of the concept. In his work, Dörnyei (2009) firstly argued that there is no direct link between the integrative concept and other theories developed in other fields of study. Secondly, the concept fails to adapt to the rapidly changing roles of different languages. With the rising concept of Global English, which perceives English as an International Language that has no ties to one specific culture, L2 learners have experienced difficulty identifying their target of the integration (Dörnyei, 2009). This conflicts with the premise of "integrativeness" which implies that an L2 learner engages in L2 learning because of their desire to integrate into a target language community (Dörnyei, 2005; 2009). Similarly, it can be said that the term lacks external validity. Gardner's model was developed in the specific context of Canada, where bilingualism (English and French) and multicultural integration were prominent. However, it becomes less applicable in other learning contexts, in which L2 learners have limited access to the target language and little direct contact with its speakers because it is taught in school (Dörnyei, 2005; 2009). This phenomenon is also present in the Thai context, as English is learned as a compulsory subject in schools and used by certain groups of economic and social elites in tourism areas for negotiating international businesses and commercial purposes (Hayes, 2016). To appease this growing dissatisfaction with Gardner's integrative motive, Dörnyei built upon the integrative concept and proposed the L2 Motivational Self System (L2 MSS), which looks at the dynamic and complex nature of motivation from the perspective of the individual's self (Dörnyei, 2009).

3. The L2 Motivational Self System

Dörnyei (2005), inspired by two psychological theoretical frameworks, including the self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) and the possible selves theory (Markus and Nurius, 1986), proposed the L2 MSS, which is a language motivation model. It consists of three components that make up a broad construct:

     1) the ideal L2 self, which refers to the desirable self-image of the L2 speaker a person wishes to become in the future. The ideal L2 self can serve as a powerful motivational force that drives the person to learn the L2 in order to close the linguistic ability discrepancy between their current and ideal selves;

     2) the ought-to L2 self, which relates to the attributes a person believes he or she should possess in order to meet expectations of the people around them and to avoid negative consequences; and

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3) L2 learning experience, which deals with the immediate learning environment and experience that are situation-specific motives of an L2 learner, such as teacher impact, the program curriculum, the classmates, and success experiences (Dörnyei, 2005).

According to the hypothesis of the L2 MSS, "if proficiency in the target language is part and parcel of one's ideal or ought-to self, this will serve as a powerful motivator to learn the language because of our psychological desire to reduce the discrepancy between our current and possible future selves" (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009, p. 4). Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh (2006) further validated the L2 MSS in their large-scale investigation in Hungary. The study explored different dimensions of language learning motivation with the use of a motivation questionnaire, and generated empirical evidence that supported the L2 MSS's explanatory power. In the aspect of the ideal L2 self, the findings of the research demonstrated that L2 learners who visualized their future selves in a vivid and optimistic fashion with regard to language proficiency showed higher levels of motivation to learn the target language. Additionally, it was found that L2 motivation can be predicted by the concept of the ideal L2 self, while instrumental orientation—which refers to the desire to achieve practical goals through language learning—could serve as a motivator for L2 learning. Moreover, the research found a correlation between levels of motivation and attitudes toward the experience associated with the L2. In other words, should L2 learners hold positive perceptions of their teachers and view them as supportive, engaging, and proficient in the target language, the L2 learners will be more motivated to learn the L2. However, the study also showed that detrimental effects on L2 motivation could be caused by language learning anxiety (Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh, 2006).

Since then, existing literature shows that the L2 MSS and Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh's (2006) motivation questionnaire have been widely adopted in a plethora of L2 motivation studies across varying participant groups and language learning contexts (e.g., Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009; Csizér and Kormos, 2009; Ryan, 2009). Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009) investigated and compared L2 motivation profiles of English learners from Japan, China, and Iran. The participants in the research were of diverse employment status (i.e., middle school and university students and working professionals), self-assessed English proficiency levels, degrees of exposure to native English instructors, and overseas experiences. The results of the study showed a resemblance between the patterns emerging in the 2006 Hungarian motivation project and the three Asian countries (Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009). This added empirical evidence that the L2 MSS can be used in various learning contexts regardless of their ecological and cultural differences. Furthermore, their findings showed that the ideal L2 self had a higher correlation with intended learning effort in L2 learning, thus reinforcing the call for reinterpretation of Gardner's "integrativeness" with the concept of the ideal L2 self.

4. Older adults and L2 motivation

Among the few studies done with older learners, Kim and Kim (2015) looked at five motivational constructs—including Dörnyei's ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self—to explore motivational and demotivational factors that influenced the learning of 420 EFL elderly learners aged 43 to 78 in South Korea. The data collected from a questionnaire demonstrated that the participants perceived self-actualization as the most influential motivational factor in their L2 learning (Kim and Kim, 2015). These findings correspond with the work of Geng and Jin (2023) who studied Chinese older adults' motivation to learn EFL, combining the use of questionnaires and an innovative qualitative approach of elicited metaphor analysis to shed more light on L2 motivation in older adult learners. In their project conducted with 262 participants aged 50 to 80, it was reported that the quality of the learning experiences and positive classroom interactions held higher value than the learning outcomes, suggesting that they chose to engage in EFL learning in later life because of the perceived personal enjoyment and fulfillment that taking an EFL course would bring (Geng and Jin, 2023). Similar findings also emerged in Mora and Abad's (2016) work carried out in Ecuador in which personal development was one of the most perceived benefits for EFL learning among elderly EFL learners aged 65 to 85. This supports Deci and Ryan's (1985) theory of intrinsic motivation in the sense that learners of advanced ages tend to partake in foreign language learning due to their personal interests, enrichment, and self-satisfaction rather than external forces (e.g., rewards or pressures from others) which may be more influential in younger learners (Papi and Teimouri, 2012).

Kim and Kim (2015) also found that the ideal L2 self was shown to have the highest correlation level with the demotivational factor, as elderly learners who set unattainable proficiency goals for their future selves experienced learning stress and their L2 motivation was negatively impacted. In a similar way, it may be more effective and productive to match coursework and activities with the proficiency level of older adult learners, as research found that their willingness to learn EFL seemed to increase when they were challenged with moderately difficult tasks that they needed to overcome (Geng and Jin, 2023).

Another study was conducted in Brazil by Garcia (2017). His work investigated a combination of the language learning strategies employed by 25 Brazilian elder learners of EFL aged 60 to 81 and motivational factors that affected their learning process. Garcia used a questionnaire to gather information on the participants' likes and dislikes and reasons for learning English. The results showed that socialization was one of the main motivational forces in EFL learning (Garcia, 2017). This aligns with other studies' findings which suggest that taking an EFL course can provide opportunities to be socially included and expand one's social network through interactions with teachers and classmates, reminisce with same-aged peers who have experienced similar life situations (Geng and Jin, 2023), and communicate with and assist foreigners in need (Mora and Abad, 2016).

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In addition, older adult L2 learners have reported to recognize the benefits of foreign language learning in the maintenance of mental well-being and prevention of memory-related issues (e.g., dementia) (Mora and Abad, 2016; Garcia, 2017; Geng and Jin, 2023). This is also reflected in Smith and Freund's (2002) study of the dynamics of possible selves in old age, which indicated that concerns regarding declining health seem to be the focal domain of motivational orientations of possible selves of most people in later life.

Older adult learners also perceive instrumentality—the practical use of learning an L2 (Dörnyei, 2009)—differently from younger learners whose EFL learning is motivated by certain obligations and expectations of their family (e.g., the need to pass exams, for further academic achievement, for career advancement in the future) (Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009). Older adult learners are more driven by the prospects of being able to travel overseas (Garcia, 2017) and to visit their families who work and live abroad (Geng and Jin, 2023), as well as the pleasure and entertainment acquired from understanding various forms of media (e.g., films, TV shows, books, newspapers, and magazines) (Mora and Abad, 2016).

Lastly, research has shown that effects of L2 motivational factors may vary based on past learning experiences (Knowles *et al.*, 2020) and across different demographic variables. Ghenghesh (2010) suggested that L2 motivation decreases with age; therefore, participants of older ages will likely be less motivated than younger ones. Similarly, Mora and Abad (2016) found that older adult L2 learners' motivation levels may be affected by the variables of age and education level. L2 learners of older ages and with higher school levels tend to be more aware that engaging in L2 learning can keep their lives active and dynamic; thus, they may exhibit stronger motivational force for L2 learning than their younger and less educated counterparts. Gender may be another contributing factor affecting the level of L2 motivation, as some studies found that females tend to show higher L2 motivation than males (Ryan, 2009; You, Dörnyei and Csizér, 2016). Others presented evidence of men being more motivated than women (Kitano, 2001; Rafek, Ramli and Hassan, 2018). Regarding the relationship between L2 proficiency and L2 motivation level, empirical data among older adult participants are very limited. However, past findings appear to point toward a similar trend: L2 proficiency seems to have positive correlations with L2 motivation across age groups (e.g., undergraduates (Islam, Lamb and Chambers, 2013); middle schoolers to working professionals (Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009)).

Despite these diverse studies, research on L2 motivation in older adults is still in its infancy (Kim and Kim, 2015). To the best of my knowledge, there have been no studies on this topic in the Thai context, despite the recognized influential power of affective and social variables on L2 learning (Imsa-ard, 2020). Very little is understood about their underlying importance for pedagogical improvement of lifelong education and how they may influence older adults' decision to partake in an L2 learning journey in later life. Therefore, this study adopted the L2 MSS to answer the following research questions:

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     1) What is the L2 MSS profile of Thai older adults?

     2) What is the relationship between older Thai adults' L2 MSS profile and demographic variables (age, gender, and self-reported L2 proficiency)?

Methodology

1. Participants

Considering the sample sizes appearing in previous similar studies and the practical limitations, the sample size of this project was set to be at least 60 to achieve sufficient statistical power. Ultimately, the total number of participants in this study was 77. One questionnaire response was removed due to the ineligibility of the participant (i.e., age < 40). The minimum age of 40 was established to represent and distinguish "older adult participants" from the more common adult learner populations in literature (e.g., secondary school and university students). The participants were all Thai older adults whose ages ranged between 40 and 81 years old, with an average age of 55.25 ($SD = 9.55$) which corresponded with the admission age for Thai Elderly Schools (e.g., Sadao Municipality, 2025). The participants had different upbringings, diverse occupational and educational backgrounds, and were from different regions across Thailand. Table 1 demonstrates the breakdown of the participants' demographic information in relation to their age, gender, education level, and self-reported English proficiency. The participants were not learners of EFL at the time of data collection. However, the majority had studied English as part of the compulsory school subjects when they were students in fundamental education.

2. Data collection

An online motivational factors questionnaire (see Appendix A) was created via Qualtrics and distributed through the snowball sampling approach in order to reach participants from all over Thailand on a variety of social media platforms, including Facebook, Line, and Instagram. The questionnaire took approximately 20-30 minutes to complete.

Table 1. Demographic information of participants

Demographic variable		
Gender	Male	43 (55.84%)
	Female	34 (44.16%)
Age (years)	Highest	81
	Lowest	40
	Means	55.25
Education level	Middle school	1 (1.30%)
	High school	4 (5.20%)
	Advanced vocational certificate/post-secondary education	1 (1.30%)

	Undergraduate degree	26 (33.77%)
	Postgraduate degree	45 (58.44%)
Self-reported English proficiency level	A1	28 (36.36%)
	A2	15 (19.48%)
	B1	14 (18.18%)
	B2	5 (6.49%)
	C1	7 (9.09%)
	C2	8 (10.39%)

(Source: Author)

3. Instrument

The motivational factors questionnaire that was employed in the present study was adapted from Ryan (2009) and Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009). The questionnaire items were developed based on validated items from Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh's (2006) original motivation questionnaire conducted for a series of large-scale research on L2 motivation in the Hungarian context. Upon selection of appropriate motivational factors for the Thai context based on the definitions provided in the aforementioned studies, the questionnaire items were adjusted and translated into Thai as most of the participants were not fluent in English. The total number of items in the final motivational questionnaire was 49, consisting of two parts:

1) Forty-five statement-type items which were used to measure the participants' attitudes and motivation about learning EFL. The items were developed on the six-point Likert scale, as research has shown that using an even number of response options (e.g., four- or six-point scale) can prevent participants from selecting the neutral option; thus, it can generate more meaningful data from the participants (Dörnyei and Taguchi, 2010).

2) Three multiple-choice items which asked the participants' demographic backgrounds, including their gender, education level, and self-rated English proficiency level.

3) One short answer item which required the participants to input their age in years.

The instrument was designed to investigate nine motivational variables, namely: 1) Intended learning effort, 2) Ideal L2 self, 3) Ought-to L2 self, 4) Family influence, 5) Instrumentality, 6) Attitudes to learning English, 7) Attitudes to L2 community, 8) Cultural interest, and 9) English anxiety (see Appendix B for more details). The variables were selected and slightly modified to be compatible with the Thai sociocultural context and the sociodemographic profile of the participants. For example, the definition of the motivational variable "family influence" adopted from Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009) has been adjusted to encompass not only the influence of parents (e.g., "my parents encourage me to study English") but also the roles of family and significant others of the participants (e.g., "my family encourages me to study English"); this has been done due to assuming that some participants may perceive their "immediate family" differently from Taguchi's younger participants—e.g.., the Thai older adult participants may no

longer be as involved with their parents but could interact more with their spouse and children. Many of the items representing the instrumentality-prevention variable in Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009) were not included in the questionnaire as they mainly reflected EFL study as part of school duties and examination obligations, which did not align with the occupational characteristics of the participants. The English anxiety factor adopted from Ryan (2009) was added to the questionnaire, as studies found that Asian people in particular tend to experience great difficulty when asked to speak English in front of an audience due to English not being commonly used in their countries (Kim, 1998). Boonkit (2010) reported that Thai learners lacked confidence in their English-speaking skills and felt anxious about making errors when communicating in English; thus, English-speaking skills have been deemed an important topic needed to be addressed in EFL learning and teaching in the Thai context (Khamkhien, 2010). Therefore, English anxiety may manifest as a predominant predictor of L2 motivation in Thai older adults.

The questionnaire was first piloted with a sample of 11 Thai older adults—their responses were excluded from the final analysis—whose demographic profile was similar to the intended participant sample of the research. The pilot study showed that the questionnaire could be understood and completed by all the participants. A reliability test was run in SPSS, and a Cronbach's alpha coefficient was measured at .947, which suggested that the questionnaire was highly reliable.

4. Data analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaire responses were checked for completeness and random-response bias before being exported to SPSS for descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

The mean score for each motivational subscale was first computed from the respective items to be used as the outcome variables for the inferential analyses. The scores were then tested for assumptions of normality, equal variance, and independence to determine appropriate statistical tests. The results of the Shapiro-Wilk test (see Appendix B for more details), coupled with the visual inspections, led to the assumption that the data distributions were approximately a mixture of both normal ($p < .05$) and non-normal ($p \geq .05$). Thus, parametric tests were used for the normally distributed dependent variables, while non-parametric tests were performed with the non-normal variables.

To explore the participants' demographic information and their L2 MSS profile, the Descriptive procedure was performed. The mean value of each motivational variable was inspected and used to explain the L2 MSS profile of the Thai older adult participants. Subsequently, Pearson and Spearman's rank correlations were run with the aim of identifying any possible correlations between the Intended learning effort and the different motivational factors. The results obtained from these statistical analyses were interpreted to answer the first research question. To shed light on the second research question, firstly, Pearson and Spearman's rank correlations were

performed to investigate the links between the participants' age and the mean for each motivational subscale. Secondly, to compare the effect of gender on L2 motivation, an Independent Samples t-Test and Mann-Whitney U Test were performed with gender (male and female set as the categorical independent variable) and the motivational factor means (set as the continuous dependent variables). Lastly, a One-way ANOVA test and Kruskal-Wallis H Test were run with the participants' self-assessed English proficiency level assigned as the continuous independent variable, while the mean for each motivational factor was set as the continuous dependent variable. The significance level was set at .05.

Results

Table 2 shows two statistical outcomes. The first is the mean *(M)* and standard deviation *(SD)* values of each of the motivational subscales. All the mean values ranged from 1 to 6, with 6 indicating the most positive attitudes. The second is the correlation indices between Intended learning effort and the rest of the motivational factors. The numbers demonstrate that all motivational variables were strongly correlated with Intended learning effort (p < .001), except for English anxiety, $r(75) = -.19$, $p = .101$.

Table 2. Mean values of the motivational factors and their correlations with Intended learning effort

Motivational factor	*M*	*SD*	Correlation with Intended learning effort		Sig.
			r	*rₛ*	
Intended learning effort	4.70	.71			
Attitudes to learning English	4.83	.63		.70**	<.001
Instrumentality	4.39	.76	.44**		<.001
Ideal L2 self	4.35	.89		.50**	<.001
Cultural interest	4.25	.94	.58**		<.001
Family influence	4.25	.65	.49**		<.001
Ought-to L2 self	4.17	.90		.48**	<.001
Attitudes to L2 community	4.16	.83		.53**	<.001
English anxiety	3.56	1.17	–.19		.101

*Correlation is significant at *p < .05, **p < .01
(Source: Author)

Table 3 shows that there was a weak negative correlation between the age variable and the motivational factor Intended learning effort, $r(75) = -.23$, $p = .041$. A similar trend could be observed with Cultural interest, $r(75) = -.21$, $p = .072$, although the value did reach significance. There were no significant correlations between age and other motivational factors.

Table 3. The relationship between the participants' age and their L2 MSS profile

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Motivational factor	Correlation with age		
	r	r_s	Sig.
Intended learning effort	-.23*		.041
Ideal L2 self		-.13	.263
Ought-to L2 self		-.18	.113
Family influence	-.15		.191
Instrumentality	-.19		.097
Attitudes to learning English		-.07	.544
Attitudes to L2 community		-.18	.120
Cultural interest	-.21		.072
English anxiety	.01		.916

*Correlation is significant at *p < .05, **p < .01

(Source: Author)

In light of the differences in the L2 MSS profile of the male and female participants, Table 4 indicates that there was no statistically significant difference in gender across the motivational factors (p ≥ .05), except for the English anxiety subscale, t(75) = 2.47, p = .016, with the means for the male group reported at 3.84 (*SD* = 1.12) and the female group at 3.20 (*SD* = 1.15).

Table 4. The relationship between the participants' gender and their L2 MSS profile

Motivational factor	*M (SD)*		Gender difference		
	Male	Female	t	U	Sig.
Intended learning effort	4.76 (.75)	4.61 (.66)	.92		.358
Ideal L2 self	4.30 (.90)	4.42 (.89)		684.50	.631
Ought-to L2 self	4.32 (.97)	3.98 (.79)		564.00	.086
Family influence	4.30 (.69)	4.18 (.60)	.77		.443
Instrumentality	4.45 (.78)	4.32 (.75)	.74		.465
Attitudes to learning English	4.78 (.63)	4.90 (.63)		641.00	.352
Attitudes to L2 community	4.21 (.85)	4.11 (.82)		665.00	.497
Cultural interest	4.29 (.89)	4.21 (1.01)	.38		.705
English anxiety	3.84 (1.12)	3.20 (1.15)	2.47*		.016

*Group difference is significant at *p < .05, **p < .01

(Source: Author)

Regarding the differences in the L2 MSS profile in relation to the participants' self-reported English proficiency level, Table 5 demonstrates that there was no statistically significant difference in L2 motivation across all proficiency levels, except for English anxiety, F(5, N = 77) = 7.43, p <.001. Post hoc comparisons with the Tukey's HSD test were subsequently carried out to further investigate the nature of relationships pairwise. The results indicate that the mean value of the A1 participants was significantly higher than that of the B1, p < .001, the B2, p = .003, and the C1, p = .001, as concluded in Table 6.

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Table 5. The relationships between the participants' self-reported English proficiency level and motivational factors

| Motivational factor | $M (SD)$ by self-reported English proficiency level | | | | | | F | χ^2 | Sig. |
	A1 (N = 28)	A2 (N = 15)	B1 (N = 14)	B2 (N = 5)	C1 (N = 7)	C2 (N = 8)			
Intended learning effort	4.48 (.77)	4.63 (.82)	4.89 (.45)	4.32 (.46)	5.06 (.59)	5.18 (.52)	2.30		.054
Ideal L2 self	3.98 (1.06)	4.35 (.61)	4.73 (.49)	4.60 (.37)	4.80 (.57)	4.48 (1.28)		9.31	.097
Ought-to L2 self	4.24 (.97)	4.04 (.96)	4.10 (1.10)	3.92 (.58)	3.94 (.36)	4.65 (.64)		6.56	.256
Family influence	4.26 (.71)	4.11 (.59)	4.31 (.70)	4.04 (.67)	4.09 (.66)	4.60 (.40)	.82		.538
Instrumentality	4.52 (.66)	4.27 (1.03)	4.34 (.80)	3.92 (.44)	4.29 (.80)	4.63 (.56)	.81		.550
Attitudes to learning English	4.65 (.66)	4.93 (.60)	4.99 (.47)	4.52 (.70)	4.97 (.69)	5.08 (.69)		5.22	.390
Attitudes to L2 community	4.11 (.94)	4.25 (.78)	4.24 (.72)	3.40 (.91)	4.40 (.87)	4.30 (.59)		4.11	.534
Cultural interest	3.91 (.91)	4.27 (1.07)	4.54 (.67)	4.40 (.86)	4.74 (.89)	4.40 (1.10)	1.52		.195
English anxiety	4.31 (.82)	3.76 (.99)	2.90 (.98)	2.44 (.62)	2.60 (1.17)	3.25 (1.42)	7.43**		<.001

*Group difference is significant at *p < .05, **p < .01

(Source: Author)

Table 6. The group comparisons of the English anxiety factor

Pair	Mean Difference	Sig.
A1–A2	.55	.510
A1–B1	1.41**	<.001
A1–B2	1.87**	.003
A1–C1	1.71**	.001
A1–C2	1.06	.091
A2–B1	.86	.186
A2–B2	1.32	.110
A2–C1	1.16	.115
A2–C2	.51	.842
B1–B2	.46	.945
B1–C1	.30	.986
B1–C2	-.35	.966
B2–C1	-.16	1.000

B2-C2	-.81	.698
C1-C2	-.65	.795

*Group difference is significant at *p < .05, **p < .01

(Source: Author)

Discussion

1. What is the L2 MSS profile of Thai older adults?

It can be seen that the mean score for Attitudes to learning English—which concerns situation-specific motives related to past learning experiences and environments—was the highest ($M = 4.83$, $SD = .63$). This suggests that Thai older adults generally had very positive attitudes toward learning English when reflecting about their previous and prospective learning of EFL. This is consistent with Pechapan-Hammond's (2020) report that Thais tend to view the English language as "an important means of communication within its tourist industry" and associate it with people from privileged groups (pp. 634-635); it is also consistent with Hayes' (2016) study conducted with Thai undergraduate students, which revealed their desire to learn English and their positive recognition of its importance and impact at the individual level and in the globalized world. It is also beneficial to note that adults' motivation levels may vary depending on past learning experiences. Knowles *et al.* (2020) found that individual differences, such as perceived negative student self-concept and exposure to incompatible programs in the past, may influence adults' learning motivation. Therefore, the results may indicate that it is important to establish EFL curricula that both foster positive self-esteem and resilience—to help older adult students cope with their previous pessimistic selves—and promote and meet positive expectations by delivering enjoyable learning experiences to uplift their attitudes toward learning.

With the mean values for Intended learning effort and Instrumentality (understood as the practical usefulness perceived by an individual of being proficient in an L2) being viewed slightly less, albeit still rather, positively at $M = 4.70$ ($SD = .71$) and $M = 4.39$ ($SD = .76$) respectively, it could be inferred that the participants were likely to both study EFL in the future if given the chance and put high levels of efforts into learning the language because they were aware of the pragmatic benefits that being fluent in English would bring in various ways. In addition to this, although the differences were slight, the mean for the item "Studying English is important to me because it offers a new challenge in my life" ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 1.06$) was higher than those of items "Studying English is important because with a high level of English proficiency I will be able to make a lot of money" ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 1.21$) and "Studying English is important to me because English proficiency is necessary for promotion" ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 1.18$). This indicates that the participants showed stronger intrinsic motivation to learn EFL for fulfillment of their personal development and satisfaction than due to extrinsic motivation; this aligns with previous studies (e.g., Deci and Ryan, 1985; Kim and Kim, 2015; Mora and Abad, 2016; Knowles *et al.*, 2020; Geng and Jin, 2023) reporting that the main motivational force for L2 learning in older adult learners

came from the prospects of internal rewards. This point is further supported by the fact that Family influence (M = 4.25, SD = .65) and Ought-to L2 self (M = 4.17, SD = .90) were perceived as less important, as external pressures or encouragement from outside forces (e.g., parents, family, or peers) would no longer be as influential among older adults as with younger populations (Papi and Teimouri, 2012).

According to the correlation analysis results between Intended learning effort and other motivational subscales, significant correlations were found with all the factors (p < .001) except English anxiety (p = .101). This reinforced the explanatory power of Dörnyei's (2005) L2 MSS framework for assessing L2 motivation across different sociological contexts and age groups. Most notably, Attitudes to learning English showed the highest correlation coefficient with Intended learning effort (r_s = .70, p < .001), suggesting that the more positive the participants' attitudes toward learning English were, the more effort they would be willing to put into learning English and vice versa. These findings were consistent with previous research, which found that attitudes toward learning English have a significant positive relationship with the desire to study English (Dastgheib, 1996, as cited in Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009), and an influence on level of learning efforts (Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009). Therefore, promoting positive perceptions toward English learning in later life is important in motivating and maintaining interest in L2 lifelong education for Thai older adults. On the other hand, English anxiety appeared to have a negative correlation, albeit nonsignificant, with Intended learning effort (r = -.19, p = .101). Some previous studies did find negative associations between L2 anxiety and L2 motivation (e.g., Hashimoto, 2002; Salayo and Amarles, 2020; Alrabai, 2022). It may be generalized to an extent from these corresponding findings that the more anxious a Thai older adult was in using English, the less motivated they would be in learning English and the more hesitant they would feel in putting effort toward learning the language.

It is, however, also important to note that these results and interpretations should be regarded with caution, as the reliability scores for the Family influence, Attitudes to learning English, and Instrumentality subscales were relatively low at .57, .60, and .57 respectively (see Appendix B). Therefore, it was possible that other factors such as the participants' family situations or geographic location—which may impact the level of exposure to English and cultures of people from English-speaking countries—or their learning readiness (affected by aspects such as financial status and availability) may have influenced the outcomes of the L2 motivation profile of the participants.

2. What is the relationship between older Thai adults' L2 MSS profile and demographic variables (age, gender, and self-reported L2 proficiency)?

2.1 The relationship between older Thai adults' L2 MSS profile and age

Regarding the age aspect, the statistical results indicated that age correlated negatively and significantly with Intended learning effort, r(75) = -.23, p = .041. This could be interpreted that

the older the participants were, the less effort they would likely put into learning English. In addition, it appeared that age had marginal correlations with Instrumentality, $r(75) = -.19$, $p = .097$, and Cultural interest, $r(75) = -.21$, $p = .072$. From these results, it may be drawn that the participants may have perceived learning EFL as slightly less beneficial as they aged. In light of this, the findings seemed to contradict Mora and Abad's (2016) report, which proposed that older L2 learners tend to realize the multidimensional benefits—including promotion of health—of L2 learning to a greater degree than their younger counterparts. However, this could be due to their participants' higher average age, whose physical health may be more prioritized. Moreover, the limitations of the present study's questionnaire items may have contributed to the inconsistency in the findings, as they were mostly related to occupational dimensions (e.g., "Studying English is important to me because English proficiency is necessary for promotion"). Therefore, the older participants who were already satisfied with their current advanced career position and income may no longer perceive high proficiency in English as an important requirement in life. The contradictory findings could also be explained by the fact that the participants may have been less interested in the cultural aspects represented in the questionnaire items, including TV programs, films, and music. This may be explained by the assumption that older people tend to pay less interest to forms of entertainment in general due to the incompatible content that tends to aim at younger generations (Mares and Woodard, 2006), and may show preferences for other leisure activities such as community events or face-to-face gatherings with friends and family (Cornwell, Laumann and Schumm, 2008). The responses could have been different should the questionnaire have included items related to health benefits of L2 learning—reported to be one of the most influential factors for L2 learning in later life in previous studies (e.g., Smith and Freund, 2002; Mora and Abad, 2016; Garcia, 2017; Geng and Jin, 2023)—and other aspects of English-speaking cultures that would allow older participants to better identify with (e.g., food and arts). While the relationships that emerged were not significant with regard to the rest of the motivational factors and the age variable, most of the correlation coefficients showed negative values. Overall, this supported Ghenghesh's findings (2010) that L2 motivation may generally decline with age.

2.2 The relationship between older Thai adults' L2 MSS profile and gender

For the gender variable, contrary to some previous studies that found that females tended to be more motivated in L2 learning than males (e.g., Ryan, 2009; You, Dörnyei and Csizér, 2016), there were no statistically significant differences between the L2 motivation of the male and female participants for the majority of the motivational factors in this present study. The only exception was that the male participants reported to have a significantly higher level of English anxiety than their female counterparts, $t(75) = 2.47$, $p = .016$. This corresponded with some previous research (e.g., Kitano, 2001; Rafek, Ramli and Hassan, 2018). Kitano (2001) reasoned that men tended to perceive themselves as inferior to women when it came to language learning as it was often regarded as a feminine domain, and female learners tended to perform generally better at linguistic tasks, especially at speaking. Rafek, Ramli and Hassan (2018), who studied L2 motivation in Malaysia—a country that shares several sociocultural similarities and male

dominance trends with Thailand—proposed that males were more anxious in English classes because they were more likely to experience higher levels of fear of embarrassment or loss of pride elicited when, or at the prospect of, making mistakes in front of public audiences. In addition, the concept of face, which is held rather seriously in Thailand, may have also been at play, as losing one's face may cause significant negative consequences emotionally and socially, not only to the individual but also to their affiliated parties (e.g., family, educational institutes, and workplace) (Ukosakul, 2005). Therefore, it may be possible that the male participants felt more anxious imagining themselves using English because they were more sensitive to the idea of losing credibility or hurting reputations of the communities to which they belonged as a result of committing linguistic mistakes. In light of these findings, English anxiety reduction techniques and activities should, therefore, be emphasized and incorporated in EFL lifelong learning curricula, to enhance L2 motivation, learning efforts, and, ultimately, outcomes of Thai older adult learners, as well as to promote equal learning success for all genders.

2.3 The relationship between older Thai adults' L2 MSS profile and self-reported L2 proficiency

The last variable investigated was self-reported English proficiency. It was found that proficiency did not significantly affect the L2 motivation of the participants except for the dimension of English anxiety, $F(5, N = 77) = 7.43$, $p < .001$. The overall findings seemed to contradict earlier studies conducted with younger L2 learners (e.g., Islam, Lamb and Chambers, 2013; Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009), which found that L2 proficiency and L2 motivation were positively linked. Nevertheless, the lower-proficiency participants (A1 and A2 levels) were shown to have higher levels of English anxiety than higher-proficiency participants, which corresponded with findings in Liu's (2006) project. This may have been due to the likelihood that the participants who perceived themselves as poorly proficient in English had had limited access and fewer experiences being exposed to English and native English speakers; thus, they were more anxious when imagining themselves having to engage in English usage (Liu, 2006). Yung (2019) also mentioned that self-perceived English proficiency had a positive correlation with Ideal L2 self, as the more positively learners pictured and recognized themselves as competent L2 users, the more likely they would rate themselves higher on the proficiency scale. As shown in Table 5, although the correlations were non-significant ($\chi^2(5, N = 77) = 9.31$, $p = .097$), the A1 ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.06$) and A2 ($M = 4.35$, $SD = .61$) participants indeed reported lower degrees of Ideal L2 self, thus supporting Yung's (2019) findings.

However, it is interesting to note that the participants who reported to have C2 proficiency demonstrated a relatively high level of English anxiety ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 1.42$), higher than the B1 ($M = 2.90$, $SD = .98$), B2 ($M = 2.44$, $SD = .62$), and C1 ($M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.17$) participants. These findings are similar to those of Marcos-Llinás and Garau (2009), who proposed that the underlying reasons may be related to psychosocial factors that influenced L2 learners with higher self-evaluated English proficiency to be more susceptible to pressures from external forces and

expectations to perform well. For this present study, it was supported by the C2 participants' mean scores (see Table 5) for Ought-to L2 self, $M = 4.65$ ($SD = .64$), and Family influence, $M = 4.60$ ($SD = .40$)—which may not be significantly different from the other groups (p = .256 and .538 respectively)—but were of the highest scores among the proficiency levels. Therefore, they may have felt more obligated to perform their English language skills effectively in order not to disappoint the people around them, and thus displayed higher anxiety levels in the process.

Nevertheless, Kim (2019) highlighted a significant issue with the use of self-reported proficiency in research, more specifically, the extent to which self-perceived proficiency matches actual performance. There could be chances of outcome bias due to the inaccuracy of participants' perceptions of their linguistic abilities as non-learners at the time of data collection, as well as how they interpreted the provided definitions for each proficiency level in the questionnaire.

Conclusion

The present study has yielded supplementary evidence to support the strength of the L2 MSS framework in L2 motivation research across diverse sociocultural contexts and participant demographic profiles, and answered the two proposed research questions. Firstly, it seems that Thai people tend to hold generally positive perceptions toward both English-speaking countries, including the people and their cultures, and EFL learning regardless of age, and these favorable attitudes appear to underpin the main motivational force for learning EFL in Thai older adults. Therefore, strengthening the focus on provision of effective and enjoyable learning environments and experiences to maintain those perceptions could be particularly crucial in the promotion of EFL lifelong learning in Thailand. Secondly, an increase in age may affect the level of learning efforts of Thai older adults and influence their decisions to re-engage with EFL in later life. Possible ways to combat this issue may include raising awareness of the practical benefits of EFL learning, especially in the dimensions of health and social connection. EFL programs may also consider including culture-related content that could be more relevant to this age group in order to boost their English learning motivation. With gender having emerged as a non-predominant predictor of L2 motivation for Thai older adults in this study, the results of the gender comparison contributed to the conflicting findings among L2 motivation literature. Evidence regarding the influential power of gender remains ambiguous and needs for further research are highlighted. More importantly, English anxiety should be taken into consideration as it was found to be more significantly impacted by demographic factors (i.e., gender and self-reported English proficiency) compared to other motivational variables. These findings provided some pedagogical implications. For example, when dealing with prospective Thai older adult learners who are male, appropriate support and guidance in L2 learning to cope with potential anxiety issues should be given importance, as these adults may experience more psychological difficulty. In a similar vein, different teaching approaches should be tailored and carried out for learners with different proficiency levels. Providing suitable challenges and matching levels of difficulty of learning activities and materials may help transform older adult learners' learning anxiety into enjoyment

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(Geng and Jin, 2023); this could lead to improved classroom experience and heightened motivation and performance. Thai older adults who perceive themselves as either low or high-proficient in English may feel more anxious and reluctant to engage in EFL learning. Therefore, positive self-talk campaigns and confidence-boosting strategies may be worth incorporated into and maintained throughout a program.

Future Research/Limitations

This present study suffered from several limitations. Firstly, the generalizability of the findings was relatively low due to the small sample size. For future research, more in-depth quantitative investigation with greater numbers of participants or a qualitative method (e.g., open-ended questionnaire items, individual interviews, and focus groups) may give more insights into L2 motivation of Thai older adults. The use of snowball sampling may have led to bias toward more educated and globalized participants and impacted the reliability of the findings. More diverse and appropriate questionnaire items and a broader selection of different motivational subscales (lists of potential motivational variables in Csizér and Kormos, 2009; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009; Islam, Lamb and Chambers, 2013) could better lead to more comprehensive investigations and richer data of the participants' L2 MSS profile. Due to the multifaceted nature of L2 motivation, effects of other independent variables (e.g., education level, length of previous EFL learning, or overseas experience) on L2 motivation should be studied to pinpoint dominant motivation predictors. In addition, actual learning efforts measured by observable behavior or standardized proficiency test scores rather than self-reported proficiency may yield more reliable and valid results and interpretations.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Motivation questionnaire for Thai older adults

I would like to ask you to help me complete my dissertation project aiming at investigating motivation for learning English as a foreign language of Thai older adults. In this section, I would

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like you to rate how much you agree with each of the following statements. This is not a test and therefore there are no right or wrong answers. Please kindly read the statements carefully and give your responses sincerely. Please select only one choice for each statement and don't leave out any of them. Thank you very much for your help.

Scale: Strongly disagree, disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, agree, strongly agree

Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I am worried that native speakers of English would find my English strange.						
2. I think learning English will be really interesting.						
3. My family encourages me to take every opportunity to use English.						
4. I will be willing to work hard at learning English.						
5. My family encourages me to study English.						
6. Learning English is necessary because people around me expect me to do so.						
7. I would get tense if a foreigner asked me for directions in English.						
8. I study English in order to keep updated and informed of recent news of the world.						
9. I am afraid other people will laugh at me when I speak English.						
10. I think that English-speaking countries play an important role in the world.						
11. I like English magazines, newspaper, or books.						
12. I like listening to the music of English-speaking countries.						
13. If an English course was offered at university or somewhere else in the future, I would like to take it.						
14. I would like to study English even if I were not required.						
15. I would like to know more about people from English-speaking countries.						
16. I imagine myself as someone who is able to speak English.						
17. I think that English-speaking countries are advanced and developed nations.						
18. I loved learning English when I was a student.						

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Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
19. I can imagine myself speaking English with international friends or colleagues.						
20. I like English TV programs.						
21. Studying English is important to me because other people will respect me more if I have a knowledge of English.						
22. Studying English is important to me in order to get closer with my family.						
23. Studying English is important to me in order to attain a higher social respect.						
24. Learning English is necessary because it is an international language.						
25. Whenever I think of my (future) career/position, I imagine myself using English.						
26. I like the people who live in English-speaking countries.						
27. I like meeting people from English-speaking countries.						
28. I think I will enjoy learning English.						
29. I think I will do my best to learn English.						
30. I like English-speaking films.						
31. I can imagine myself living abroad and having a discussion in English.						
32. My family encourages me to study English in my free time.						
33. I would like to attend English classes in the future.						
34. Studying English is important to me because English proficiency is necessary for promotion.						
35. My family believes that I must study English to be an educated person.						
36. I think I am the type who would feel anxious and ill at ease if I have to speak to someone in English.						
37. I can imagine a situation where I am speaking English with foreigners.						
38. I get nervous when I have to speak English in front of other people.						
39. Studying English is important to me because it will offer a new challenge in my life.						

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Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
40. I would like to spend lots of time studying English.						
41. I will study English because close friends of mine think it is important.						
42. I like English series.						
43. Studying English will help me connect with the younger generations of my family.						
44. Studying English is important because with a high level of English proficiency I will be able to make a lot of money.						
45. Studying English is important to me in order to gain the approval of my colleagues/family/boss.						

Finally, please answer some personal questions below:

1. What is your gender?   □ male   □ female   □ prefer not to say

2. How old are you?

3. What is the highest educational degree you have completed?

□ middle school   □ high school   □ advanced vocational certificate/post-secondary education   □ undergraduate degree   □ postgraduate degree

4. Please rate your English proficiency

□ C2: Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.

□ C1: Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

□ B2: Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible

without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

□ B1: Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

□ A2: Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

□ A1: Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

(Definition of the CEFR Global Scale from the Council of Europe, 2025)

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Appendix B: List of motivational variables with reliability coefficients and normality test results

Motivational variable	Definition	Items	α	Shapiro-Wilk		
				Statistic	df	Sig.
Intended learning effort	Intended learning effort one is willing to put toward learning English	13. If an English course was offered at university or somewhere else in the future, I would like to take it. 4. I am willing to work hard at learning English	.75	.970	77	.063

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Motivational variable	Definition	Items	α	Shapiro-Wilk		
				Statistic	df	Sig.
		29. I think I will do my best to learn English				
		40. I would like to spend lots of time studying English				
		14. I would like to study English even if I were not required				
Ideal L2 self	L2 specific facet of one's ideal self	31. I can imagine myself living abroad and having a discussion in English	.81	.925	77	<.001
		37. I can imagine a situation where I am speaking English with foreigners				
		16. I imagine myself as someone who is able to speak English				
		19. I can imagine myself speaking English with international friends or colleagues				
		25. Whenever I think of my (future) career/position, I imagine myself using English				
Ought-to L2 self	Attributes that one believes they ought to possess (i.e. various duties, obligations, or responsibilities) in order to meet expectations of others or avoid possible negative outcomes	41. I study English because close friends of mine think it is important	.76	.954	77	.007
		6. Learning English is necessary because people around me expect me to do so				
		35. My family believe that I must study English to be an educated person				
		45. Studying English is important to me in order to gain the				

Motivational variable	Definition	Items	α	Shapiro-Wilk		
				Statistic	df	Sig.
		approval of my colleagues/family/boss				
		21. Studying English is important to me because other people will respect me more if I have a knowledge of English				
Family influence	Active and passive roles of family and significant others in one's L2 motivation	5. My family encourages me to study English	.57	.971	77	.075
		3. My family encourages me to take every opportunity to use English				
		32. My family encourage me to study English in my free time				
		22. Studying English is important to me in order to get closer with my family				
		43. Studying English is a way to connect with the younger generations of my family				
Instrumentality	Perceived pragmatic benefits and usefulness of L2 proficiency for personal goals, duties, and obligations	44. Studying English is important because with a high level of English proficiency I will be able to make a lot of money	.66	.974	77	.112
		34. Studying English is important to me because English				

Motivational variable	Definition	Items	α	Shapiro-Wilk		
				Statistic	df	Sig.
		proficiency is necessary for promotion				
		39. Studying English is important to me because it offers a new challenge in my life				
		23. Studying English is important to me in order to attain a higher social respect				
		8. I study English in order to keep updated and informed of recent news of the world				
Attitudes to learning English	Situation-specific motives related to past learning environment and experience	2. I find learning English really interesting	.60	.962	77	.021
		28. I think I will enjoy learning English				
		33. I would like to attend English classes in the future				
		18. I loved learning English when I was a student				
		24. Learning English is necessary because it is an international language				
Attitudes to L2 community	Feelings or opinions toward the community of the L2	17. I think that English-speaking countries are advanced and developed nations	.70	.956	77	.010
		27. I like meeting people from English-speaking countries				

Motivational variable	Definition	Items	α	Shapiro-Wilk		
				Statistic	df	Sig.
		26. I like the people who live in English-speaking countries				
		15. I would like to know more about people from English-speaking countries				
		10. I think that English-speaking countries play an important role in the world				
Cultural interest	Interest in the cultural products of the L2 culture, such as TV, magazines, music and movies	12. I like listening to the music of English-speaking countries	.84	.974	77	.115
		30. I like English-speaking films				
		11. I like English magazines, newspaper, or books				
		20. I like English TV programs				
		42. I like English series				
English anxiety	Worries and usually negative emotional reactions aroused when learning or using the L2	36. I think I am the type who would feel anxious and ill at ease if I have to speak to someone in English	.85	.974	77	.117
		7. I would get tense if a foreigner asked me for directions in English				
		9. I am afraid other people will laugh at me when I speak English				

Motivational variable	Definition	Items	α	Shapiro-Wilk		
				Statistic	df	Sig.
		1. I am worried that native speakers of English would find my English strange				
		38. I get nervous when I have to speak English in front of other people				

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