

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The relationships among motivation and motivational variables on English language learning and English proficiency have been investigated in this study. This chapter provides a review of literature and related studies in three areas: English language proficiency of Thai learners, Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), and motivation and motivational variables on English language learning. The details are presented as follows.

2.1 English Language Proficiency of Thai Learners

The importance of English language proficiency has been growing as a result of globalization, which influences educational institutions and workplaces to adapt themselves to international integration (Warschauer, 2000). The significance of English proficiency was stated in a chapter of the Educational Reform Act – Thai learners should have global literacy which means that they must know and understand English to be qualified as world citizens. Moreover, one of the standards for English proficiency in the Basic Education Curriculum 2001 is the ability to use English as a tool for learning, for further study, and for career (Ministry of Education, 2002).

English language proficiency is defined as the degree of a learner's skill with which a learner can use a language, such as how well a learner can read, write, speak, or understand the language. In addition, it also refers to a learner's skill in using the English language for a specific purpose (e.g. academic or occupational purposes). English proficiency may be measured through the use of a proficiency test such as TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication (Richards et al., 1992; Davies et al., 1999).

There have been many studies by researchers using standardized tests of English proficiency such as TOEFL (Prapphal, 2001; cited in Chantarasorn et al., 2003; Prapphal, 2003) and TOEIC (Wilson and Chavanich, 1989; Wilson and Stupak, 2001; Wilson et al., 2004; Educational Testing Service, 2005) in their studies of Thai learners' English proficiency, and its relationship with learner variables. Most of these studies reveal the inadequacy of Thai learners' English language proficiency as their average scores in TOEFL and TOEIC were lower than those of other nationalities such as Burmese, Cambodian, Filipino, Indonesian, Laotian, Singaporean, and Vietnamese (Educational Testing Service, 2005).

The problems of inadequate proficiency in English among Thai learners have so far been presented in many studies. Most of Thai school students who study English at every level neither reach the school criteria of their particular levels nor have their satisfactory abilities in using English in all four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Ruksasut, 1985 and Sukamonson, 1990; cited in Thongpinit, 1996; Ministry of Education, 2002). Moreover, the average English proficiency of Thai university students was lower than the international standard (TOEFL score of at least 500) required in international graduate programs in Thailand or for graduate studies abroad (Prapphal, 2001; cited in Chantarasorn et al., 2003; Prapphal, 2003).

In all of those studies previously stated, the English proficiency of Thai learners is relatively low and does not meet the requirements of most educational institutions at school or university levels. Noticeably, the range of levels of proficiency required at university levels of Thai graduates for academic purposes which require a standardized score of TOEFL (mostly at least 500 or 550) are not so varied as those in the Thai workforce which require a wide range of a standardized score of TOEIC offered in domestic and multinational companies in Thailand (See Table 1.2, page 3).

2.1 Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC)

Students' successful performance in language learning can be measured and assessed by tests and examinations (Brown, 1994). The English proficiency

of the subjects in the present study is measured by the standardized Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) examination.

TOEIC, a test of proficiency in English as a foreign language (EFL) of non-native English speakers, was originally designed by Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, New Jersey. Today, ETS still produces TOEIC, but a subsidiary of ETS, namely Chauncey Group International Ltd., now administers and distributes the test. TOEIC was first administered in Japan in 1979, in Korea in 1982, and in Thailand in 1988. It is now given in more than 50 countries all over the world such as France, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, and Thailand. In 2001, more than 1,500,000 worldwide candidates took the test (Moritoshi, 2001; TOEIC Examinee Handbook, 2002; Rogers, 2003; and <http://www.toeic.co.th>). The significance of TOEIC has been emphasized and increased in Thailand. There were an estimated 20,000 Thai TOEIC test-takers in 2003 (Griggers, 2004) and an estimated 46,000 Thai TOEIC test-takers in 2004 (ETS, 2005).

A standardized TOEIC score is used to evaluate non-native English speakers' communicative English proficiency (Woodford, 1982; Wilson and Chavanich, 1989; Wilson and Stupak, 2001; and Wilson et al., 2004). Woodford (1982) and Wilson et al. (2004) found that there is a very strong correlation between TOEIC scores and students' Language Proficiency Interview (LPI) performance. LPI is considered a generally applicable 'speaking proficiency' criterion. In Wilson et al.'s study (2004), the groups of the participants were classified by gender, educational level, and organizational context. The findings indicate that the relationships between the participants' levels of speaking proficiency and TOEIC score ranges were relatively strong and positive. Similarly, it was found that there was a relatively strong correlation between TOEIC scores and LPI test scores in both Thai (Wilson and Chavanich, 1989) and Korean (Wilson and Stupak, 2001) TOEIC test takers.

The TOEIC score is widely accepted as a key indicator of English proficiency in EFL countries such as Thailand for academic and specifically occupational purposes (Wilson et al., 2004; and <http://www.toeic.co.th>). For academic purposes, some universities in Thailand such as the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and Kasem Bundit University (KBU) state a requirement for a

TOEIC score in their admission policies to their undergraduate and graduate students (See http://www.ait.ac.th/interimpage/ait_visitor/Admissions/FAQ.asp and http://www.efc.kbu.ac.th/bulletin_eng_com.pdf). TOEIC scores used for academic purposes can be classified into ranges with the interpretation for different levels of English language proficiency for examinees as shown in Table 2.1 (Rogers, 2003: 5).

Table 2.1 Guideline for TOEIC Score Interpretation (for Examinees)

TOEIC Score Range	Proficiency Level
10-200	Beginner 1
205-300	Beginner 2
305-400	High beginner
405-550	Intermediate
555-650	High intermediate
655-800	Advanced
805-990	High advanced

Furthermore, a TOEIC score is also used for occupational purposes. It represents how well a job applicant can communicate in English, particularly in real-life situations and in business or working environments. Almost all positions in international organizations such as managers, sales representatives, customer service agents, flight attendants, hotel employees, customs officials, and others require TOEIC score for career promotions. Many domestic companies also require TOEIC scores for many positions where English is required. Many job seekers include their TOEIC test scores as a part of their résumés for job applications (Rogers, 2003). Throughout Thailand, English language proficiency has also become a requirement for recruitment in many positions. Many international and domestic corporations require their Thai employees to be able to achieve a standard TOEIC score to ensure their proficiency in English (Griggers, 2004).

Employers' requirements in Thailand for the level of TOEIC score, to be achieved by their employees, is generally in accordance with the demands of the various working positions which require the use of English, such as the positions of customer service representative with a minimum TOEIC score of 550, flight attendant with a minimum score of 600, and accountant with a score of 650 (See Table 1.2, page 3). The interpretations of TOEIC score for job candidates' English language proficiency can be broadly divided into four levels: elementary, intermediate, working, and advanced working proficiency levels (See Table 1.1, page 2).

In the present study, in order to facilitate the analysis of data concerning the subjects' English language proficiency, the guidelines of examinees' English proficiency interpreted according to TOEIC scores (Table 2.1, page 12) and that of job candidates' required English proficiency (Table 1.1, page 2) have been summarized in Table 2.2 (adapted from Rogers, 2003: 5, Rymniak, 1997: 11, and TOEIC Examinee Handbook (page 39), The Nation ('Jobs', page 4-10), Bangkok Post ('Classified', page 1-5), and the Internet) as criteria for the interpretation of TOEIC scores as English proficiency.

Table 2.2 Criteria for the Interpretation of TOEIC Scores as English Proficiency

TOEIC Score Range	Proficiency Level	Proficiency Description	Position
200-395	Elementary Proficiency	Able to satisfy basic survival requirements.	hotel room-service order taker, hotel waiter/waitress/bartender
400-595	Intermediate Proficiency	Can initiate and maintain face-to-face conversations; satisfy limited social demands.	airport information clerk, aircraft maintenance engineer, bookkeeper, business service center agent, customs agent, hotel head waiter, customer service representative, operations officer, shipping and receiving clerk
600-795	Working Proficiency	Able to satisfy limited work requirements and routine social demands.	accountant, assistant hotel manager, cooperate secretary officer, coordinator, engineer, flight attendant, logistics engineer, sales manager, system analyst
800-990	Advanced Working Proficiency	Able to satisfy most work requirements with acceptable and effective language usage.	executive manager, executive secretary, general manager, logistics coordinator, marketing manager, senior accountant

To better understand the variety of levels of English proficiency among non-native English learners, factors in English language learning relating to English proficiency, such as motivation and motivational variables, relevant to such proficiency levels are then studied.

2.3 Motivation and Motivational Variables in English Language Learning

Several studies on learner variables (motivation, attitudes, and anxiety) and their relationships with learners' foreign-language proficiency have been carried out over the course of more than three decades. All of those studies have proved that learner variables have influences on learners' language proficiency (Lukmani, 1972;

Kachru, 1992; Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Brown, 1994 and 2000; Warden and Lin,

2000; Dörnyei, 1994 and 2002; Masgoret and Gardner, 2003; Lamb, 2004; Gardner et al., 2004; and Rahman, 2005).

Learner *motivation*, as defined by Brown (1994) as an internal state or condition of need, impulse, or desire that initiates, directs, and maintains a learner's behavior to move to a particular performance, has become more recognized as an affective factor for successful language learning (Noels et al., 2000). As Horwitz (1986, cited in Oxford and Shearin, 1994) stated, providing learners with the motivation to learn was one of the best steps to facilitate learning success. Importantly, besides motivation, other affective factors such as learner attitudes and anxiety could also predict language achievement (Gardner, 1985; cited in Noels et al., 2000). Attitudes and anxiety were categorized as motivational variables that affected learners' language learning (Oxford and Shearin, 1994). Thus, *motivational variables* are defined as factors affecting language learning motivation (ibid.).

The issues of motivation and motivational variables are reviewed as follows.

2.3.1 Language Learning Motivation

It has been suggested that the most likely fundamental and salient factor affecting foreign-language proficiency is motivation (Rahman, 2005). According to Bailey et al. (2000), as motivation has a direct effect on the target-language proficiency, it is a strong predictor of substantial foreign language proficiency. Based on Brown's study (2000), motivation can be viewed from both learner and language learning perspectives.

2.3.1.1 Learner Perspectives

In terms of learner aspects, motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic. *Intrinsic motivation* refers to the learner's desire to learn a foreign language due to certain internally rewarding consequences, namely feelings of competence and self-determination. For example, learners fully appreciate their own competence to

use the language. *Extrinsic motivation* refers to the learner's desire to learn a foreign language in anticipation of an apparent reward from outside and beyond the self (e.g. parents, peers, teachers). Typical extrinsic rewards are money, prizes, grades, and certain types of positive feedback. In other words, intrinsic motivation involves a desire to learn a foreign language for personal reasons, while extrinsic motivation is a desire to learn a foreign language for an external reward such as prizes, grades, and even positive feedback (Brown, 2000). Several scholars have also explored the nature of learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as described hereafter.

Students would have intrinsic motivation towards English language learning when they experience a feeling of achievement on their English language learning or feel English language learning to be more meaningful to them (Ellis, 1989). Intrinsic motivation generally refers to motivation to engage in a learning activity because that activity is enjoyable and satisfying to do (Noels et al., 2000). Intrinsic motivation can also be an innate need for competence when learners are free to choose to perform a learning task (Deci and Ryan, 1985; cited in Noels et al., 2000). Moreover, according to Oxford and Shearin (1994), for the existence of intrinsic motivation, "Past success encourages greater effort in the future by heightening the need for achievement, as long as the value of success is perceived as strong" (p. 18). Vallerand et al. (1992, 1993, 1997, cited in Noels, 2000: 61) propose three subtypes of intrinsic motivation: (1) knowledge (the motivation for doing an activity for the feelings associated with exploring new ideas and developing knowledge), (2) accomplishment (the sensations related to attempting to master a task or achieving a goal), and (3) stimulation (motivation based on the sensation stimulated by performing an interesting or a challenging task).

Olgren (2000, cited in Oz, 2005) differentiates intrinsic and extrinsic motivation by virtue of intrinsic motivation being relevant to the reasons for English skill (listening, speaking, reading and writing) development, intellectual achievement, and self-satisfaction. On the contrary, extrinsic motivation is related to the reasons for grades, academic requirements, and educational advancement. Noels et al. (2000) also support the notion that extrinsic motivation is the motivation to achieve some instrumental goal such as earning a reward or avoiding a punishment.

2.3.1.2 Language Learning Perspectives

In terms of language learning aspect, motivation can be integrative or instrumental. *Integrative motivation* refers to the learner's desire to learn a foreign language to integrate into the target language community whereas *instrumental motivation* refers to the learner's desire to learn a language for such instrumental goals or functional purposes as getting a job or passing an examination (Ellis, 1989; Brown, 2000). In EFL settings, integrative motivation was previously overlooked in most Asian countries where the English language is necessary only for career and business purposes; therefore, instrumental motivation appears more dominant (Lukmani, 1972; Kachru, 1992; Warden and Lin, 2000; Runmei, 2002; Rahman, 2005; Krieger, 2005). However, with the advent of the era of globalization, there has been more focus upon the role of integrative motivation.

From the findings of Cox and Assis-Peterson's (1999) and Lamb's (2004) research, they believe that as a result of globalization, non-native speakers of English will learn the language less for academic grades (less instrumental motivation) and more as a symbol of their self-identity (more integrative motivation) since learners will want to express their identity as an English-skilled person in their society. As also stated in Lamb (2004), in relation to Indonesia, the English language was previously acquired for instrumental reasons. But with the advent of globalization and its influence on people's lives, the learners' integrative and instrumental motivation became more inter-related since learners are unavoidably influenced by printed media and technology (e.g. the Internet, English newspapers and magazines) to become able to communicate in English. Similarly, Benson (1991) also discovered that integrative and personal reasons (intrinsic motivation) for learning English in the globalizing world were equally important with instrumental reasons. In his study, the majority of Japanese learners needed to use English not only to interact with English speakers, but also to communicate with other non-native English speakers who used English for international communication.

In fact, it seems that the interaction of all four aspects of motivation is more complex since the advent of the era of globalization in the middle

of the 20th century. The roles of intrinsic, extrinsic, integrative, and instrumental motivation have become more inter-related. According to Brown's (1994 and 2000) motivational dichotomies, intrinsic and integrative motivation are related when for example, language learners wish to integrate themselves with the target-language culture in order to have native English-speaking friends, or to migrate to native English-speaking countries. Extrinsic and instrumental motivation are associated when the learners learn the language for language training (occupational reasons) or tutoring (educational reasons). Additionally, Irie (2003, cited in Krieger, 2005) found that the existence of intrinsic and integrative motivation were correlated with a group of high language achievers, while extrinsic and instrumental motivation were more highly correlated in a group of low language achievers.

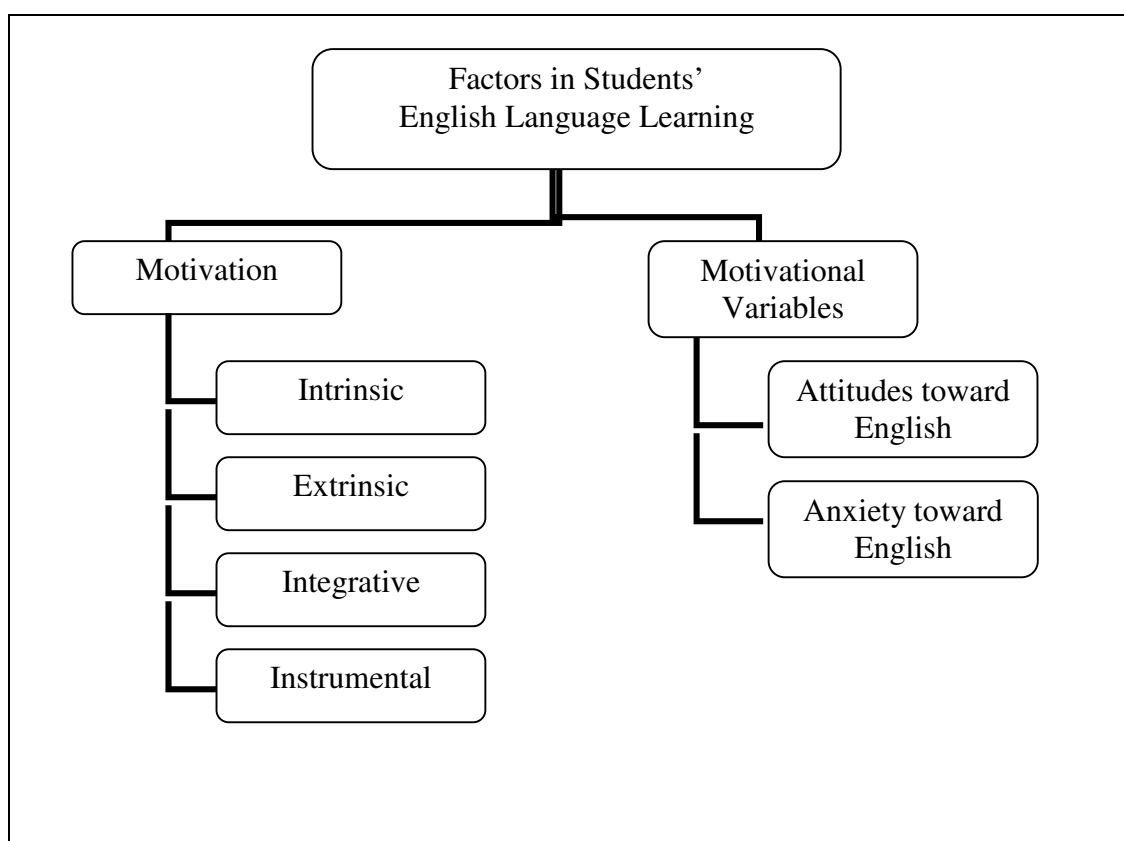
2.3.2 Motivational Variables

Although language learners may be equally motivated to learn the target language, the sources of their motivation may differ and thereby result in different language proficiency. Several studies (Dörnyei, 2002; Masgoret and Gardner, 2003; and Gardner et al., 2004) on motivational variables (attitudes and anxiety) have been carried out. For instance, Bailey et al. (2000) propose that motivation in language learning is influenced by socio-psychological factors.

Studies on motivational variables – factors impacting language learning motivation – have been conducted by many researchers and scholars. Oxford and Shearin (1994) classified motivational variables into five factors: (1) attitudes, (2) anxiety, (3) learning goals, (4) learning involvement, and (5) previous language learning. Furthermore, based on Williams and Burden's framework (1997, cited in Dörnyei, 2002), motivational variables can be classified into internal and external variables. Internal variables come from learners' own wants or desire to study the language. These can be categorized as psychological variables which are attitudes and anxiety towards the English language. In contrast, external variables evolve from other factors (parents, teachers, peers, and societal expectations) outside of the learner's own desire to study the language.

In this present study, the learner variables are based on three main affective factors (motivation, attitudes, and anxiety) on English language learning from the application on the studies of Oxford and Shearin (1994), Brown (2000), and Williams and Burden (1997, cited in Dörnyei, 2002). Specifically, four types of motivation (intrinsic, extrinsic, integrative, and instrumental motivation) are based on the study of Brown (2000). Additionally, the dominant motivational variables (attitudes and anxiety) are adjusted from the studies of Oxford and Shearin, 1994, and Williams and Burden (1997, cited in Dörnyei, 2002). A summary of the three main affective factors on English language learning investigated in the present study is outlined in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Affective Factors on English Language Learning



As all aspects of motivation from Figure 2.1 have been previously discussed, motivational variables will be considered next. Table 2.3 illustrates motivational variables based on scholars' studies.

Table 2.3 Motivational variables

Oxford and Shearin's (1994) five factors impacting language learning motivation	Williams and Burden's framework of L2 motivation (1997:20, cited in Dörnyei, 2002)	
	Internal Factors	External Factors
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Attitudes</i> 2. <i>Anxiety</i> 3. Learning goals 4. Learning involvement 5. Previous language learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Attitudes</i> - <i>Anxiety</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents - Teachers - Peers - Societal expectations

From Table 2.3, the dominant motivational variables chosen in the present study refer to attitudes and anxiety which are mentioned in both the studies of Oxford and Shearin (1994) and Williams and Burden (1997, cited in Dörnyei, 2002). It should be noted that the chosen motivational variables, attitudes and anxiety towards English (in Williams and Burden's (1997, cited in Dörnyei, 2002) framework) are the only learner-internal factors included in the present study due to its scope and limitations. However, the three related supplementary factors (learning goals, learning involvement, and previous language learning) are discussed prior to the discussion of the issues of learner attitudes and anxiety since they are related to the data analyses of the first part of the questionnaire in the present study.

According to Oxford and Shearin (1994), a student's learning goal is one of the motivational variables in English language learning. In their study, *learning goals* refer to reasons for learning. As Ramage (1990, cited in Noels et al., 2000) stated, students who had language learning goals were more intrinsically motivated to learn a language than those who did not. Secondly, referring to a student's *learning involvement*, this represents the extent to which a student actively and consciously participates in the language learning process and the integration of in- and out-of-class support into the learning experience. Lastly, a student's *previous*

language learning applies to the time spent on formal (in-class) and informal (out-of-class) English language learning.

2.3.2.1 Learner Attitudes

Attitudes can be defined as the sets of beliefs about such factors, such as the target language culture, learners' own culture, their classroom learning community, and the learning tasks learners are given (Ellis, 1989; and Brown, 1994; cited in Rahman, 2005). Oxford and Shearin (1994) also define attitudes as sentiments towards the learning community and the target language. Rahman (2005) concludes that a learner's attitude relates to the language-learning situation and the environment as a whole. He also stated that in general, positive attitudes facilitate the language learning process. Gardner and Lambert (1972, cited in Rahman, 2005) postulated that learners' motivation to learn is determined by their attitudes towards the target language community in particular and towards the learning task itself.

Gardner (1985, cited in Ellis, 1989; and in Lightbown and Spada, 1999) explains that positive attitudes and motivation are related to success in foreign language learning. They also indicate that the higher level of motivation and more positive attitudes a language learner has, and correspondingly the higher the proficiency s/he will have in his/her language skills, and vice versa. Masgoret and Gardner (2003) also propose that successful students are those who are motivated to learn the target language and have favorable attitudes towards the language learning.

2.3.2.2 Learner Anxiety

Anxiety refers to a state of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension or worry (Scovel, 1978; cited in Brown, 2000). Gardner et al. (2004) explain that learners' negative attitudes in the motivational framework could be conceptually defined as anxiety. As Krashen (2002, cited in Rahman, 2005) states, learners with high motivation and a low level of anxiety are well-equipped for success in second language acquisition. Horwitz et al. (1986) also found that students with lower levels of foreign language anxiety received higher language scores than their more anxious classmates.

Levels of anxiety are found to differently affect learning outcomes. Scovel (1978, cited in Bailey, 1983) explains the differences between the two broad categories of anxiety: facilitative and debilitating anxiety, and that the former could be helpful to learners' task performance whereas the latter could be harmful to it. Bailey (1983) states that facilitative or mild anxiety is one of the keys to learning success, and this type of anxiety is closely related to the positive effects of competitiveness which motivate learners to study harder and get their job done. In contrast, debilitating anxiety stimulates language learners to adopt avoidance behavior which generates negative effects on language learning (Bailey, 1983; Aida, 1994; Brown, 2000; Gardner et al., 2004).

From the studies of many scholars previously stated, it is expected that the inter-relationship between motivation and motivational variables in English language learning will give some predictable guidelines on EFL students' English proficiency. If motivation and motivational variables are facilitative to the students' language learning, students will likely acquire the English language more easily and possibly be higher English-language proficiency achievers. But if motivation and motivational variables are obstructive to the students' language learning, the students will likely acquire the English language with more difficulty and possibly be lower English-language proficiency achievers.