L2 Motivational Self System: A Case of Thai EFL Senior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience of the L2 motivational self system (L2MSS) among Thai EFL senior high school students. It took the form of an explanatory mixed-methods research design using the L2MSS questionnaire adopted from Taguchi et al. (2009) and Subekti (2018) to collect quantitative data from 183 students and a semi-structured interview with 6 students for qualitative data. Results from the questionnaire revealed that the ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience were high, while the ought-to L2 self was moderate. The thematic content analysis generated five themes: 1) use of English in the envisioning future career, 2) entertainment as a motivator for self-study, 3) influence of external motivational factors on internal motivation, 4) the impact of learning context, and 5) threat of examination on learning for communication. The paper concludes by recommending further research on a relationship of L2MSS constructs and English learning achievement and how the three motivation constructs predict English learning achievement. Researching the roles of parents in creating English learning motivation, and peers influence on self-efficacy development as a means to generate self-images is also suggested.

Keywords: L2 motivational self system (L2MSS); Ideal L2 self; Ought-to L2 self; L2 learning experience; Senior high school students

INTRODUCTION

Motivation is defined as "the learner's attitude, desire, interest and willingness to invest effort in learning a second language" (Richards, 2015, p. 149). Motivation plays an important role in foreign or second language (L2) learning as it acts as an incentive drive for a long-term and tiresome learning process (Dörnyei, 2005). Also, motivation can explain why people think and act accordingly, so it has the potential to determine success or failure in any learning situation. To be successful, L2 learners need to be enthusiastic, committed and persistent. Strongly argued, the smartest learners may not be able to master the L2 if they lack adequate motivation to sustain the effort in a lengthy L2 learning process. In other words, learners lacking motivation to learn are more likely to fail than the motivated ones (Dörnyei, 2002; 2005). Supported by Richards (2015), motivation increases the amount of invested time and effort of the learners who need to be committed to the L2 learning, which only some learners can do so due to their robust interest in learning the L2.

Based on early works on learning motivation pioneered by Gardner and Lambert (1959), motivation is divided into two main types, that is, integrative and instrumental motivation (Richards, 2015). Integrative motivation concerns "a positive attitude toward the target language and culture, and a desire to interact with it and assume some of its values" (Richards, 2015, p. 150). It represents the wish to become a target language community member, which is an internal motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). In the L2, learners who wish to integrate themselves into the target language culture community (Harmer, 2015) or learn L2 for their own self-perceived needs and goals (Brown, 2014) possess integrative motivation. In contrast, instrumental motivation reflects a primarily practical reason for

learning a language (Richards, 2015). Instrumental learners may perform a task for rewards such as money, prizes and grades, or positive feedback (Brown, 2014). To be successful in learning, integrative motivation is encouraged.

Subsequently, due to globalisation and the role of English as a world lingua franca, the traditional concept of motivation has been reconceptualised to focus on self and identity rather than integration into the target language community (Dörnyei, 2009; Ushioda, 2011). Ushioda (2011) points out three reasons. First, it is because more curricula treat English as an essential basic educational skill. Second, there is no clear definition of the target language community for English learners to integrate into. Third, the Internet and online communication networks connect language users around the world and flatten geographical boundaries separating the language users' community.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Owing to increasing discontent with integrativeness and integrative motivation, Dörnyei (2009) reconceptualised the motivation concept and developed the L2 motivational self-system (L2MSS) which consists of the *ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self*, and *L2 learning experience*. This new internal emphasis framework is different from that of Gardner and Lambert, which focuses on the external domain. The highlights are other community's language and L1 culture, which can promote or obstruct communication (Dörnyei, 2002). The role of integrativeness in the L1 community and culture is crucial but it does not have a potential for language learning in a foreign context which has no English speaking community (Taguchi et al., 2009).

In terms of research, most L2MSS studies were carried out with university students, and the findings on the component with the strongest impact on student's learning cannot be concluded. Particularly in the Thai context, there seems to be a need for more research in this field taking into consideration the three components of the L2MSS. Even the most recent large-scale research with Thai high school students (Imsa-ard, 2020) adopted the concept of motivation before reconceptualisation. Moreover, as seen from the several existing research studies, the L2 learning experience was not included (Malirum, 2018; Nguyen, 2019).

There is still a need for researching the L2MSS and Thai students at a basic educational level as it is still scarce. The first reason is that the research findings derived from the undergraduate context cannot be generalised to the high school context (Imsa-ard, 2020). The second reason, as shown by research, is that high school students with a high level of ideal L2 self tend to employ deep learning strategies (Irgatoğlu, 2021), which positively affect learning achievement (Chotitham et al., 2014). Therefore, it is essential to understand the motivational construct that impacts high school students' language learning, how the students construct their L2MSS as well as how the L2MSS influences their English learning. Teachers can then plan for learning motivation development and sustainability and language learning achievement. However, in Thailand, little attention is paid to the research that explores the motivational impacts on high school students. All of these are worthwhile teaching and researching as "the secondary school age is one that is most suitable for language learning within instructional context" (Boo, Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p. 156). Dornyei (2005) argued that without adequate motivation, even good learners cannot achieve long-term goals without adequate motivation. Therefore, the objective of this study is:

To explore the ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self and L2 learning experience of the L2MSS of Thai EFL senior high school students.

It is expected that the findings will offer insightful information about the motivational self system of young learners and its roles in their language learning. The results are also aimed to pave the way for further research in this field in the Thai context. Pedagogical benefits can then be gained to help enhance their motivation more effectively and appropriately. As

Richards (2015) points out, learning motivation can be maintained by effective classroom learning conditions. Dörnyei (2002) strongly argues that it is the responsibility of every teacher to motivate learners for their long-term development. In particular, the findings on the L2 learning experience are hoped to provide more evidence of the self aspects in the L2MSS framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW

L2 MOTIVATIONAL SELF SYSTEM

The L2MSS was drawn on two important psychological theories (Dörnyei, 2009). The first is the theory of *possible selves* by Markus and Nurius (1986, cited in Ushioda, 2011). For Dörnyei (2005, 2009), the possible selves are believed to be the most powerful. The possible future selves concern what individual people would like to become and are afraid of becoming. The possible selves function as future self-guides, giving a direction for current motivational behaviours and linking self-concept and motivation. The theory entails the ways people see and view themselves currently or in the future although they are not certain whether it is going to happen. The attempt is to reduce the discrepancy between the current and ideal selves, which leads to another theory underpinning the L2MSS, Higgins' *self-discrepancy theory* (Dorneyi, 2009; Ushioda, 2011). Motivation to diminish such discrepancy by learning a new language, or improve the target language proficiency being learned, can occur if learners see differences between their current, actual state as language learners and their desired ideal selves (Subekti, 2018).

The L2MSS comprises three components: ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience (Dörnyei, 2009). The first two constructs crucial to the self system were derived from the self-discrepancy theory and self-regulation. *The ideal L2* or *hoped-for self* indicates the attributes an individual wishes to possess, such as personal hopes, aspirations or wishes to be a proficient L2 user. The ideal L2 self is also related to the promotional type of instrumentality motivation as it regulates positive outcomes, that is, goals and hopes of becoming successful in L2 use, professionally and personally. For Taguchi et al. (2009), if learners hold a strong ideal L2 self, their positive attitudes towards L2 learning will be reflected, and they will demonstrate greater effort to achieve the goal of L2 learning.

The ought-to L2 self features the attributes an individual believes ought to possess as per social expectations and pressures or to avoid unfavourable effects (Dörnyei, 2009; Ushioda, 2011). The ought-to L2 self corresponds to the preventional type of instrumentality as it controls negative effects which are associated with the perceived duties and responsibilities individuals have towards other people (Taguchi et al., 2009). Examples of the preventional focus are studying the L2 hard to pass an examination or not to disappoint parents (Ushioda, 2011).

Some language learners' motivation to learn a foreign language is not always generated from their internal or external self-images. Rather, it develops from successful engagement in the language learning process. The last construct of the L2MSS: *L2 learning experience* was thus proposed. It refers to situation-specific motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience shaping everyday motivation, such as the influence of teachers, the curriculum, peer groups, or experience of success (Dörnyei, 2009). Unlike the first two components, the L2 learning experience is not related to generated self-images. The interaction between these ongoing situated processes with the possible future selves development is thus still less clearly theorised (Ushioda, 2011) and needs future research to elaborate on the self aspects of this bottom-up process (Dörnyei, 2009). Pedagogically, Ushioda (2011) points out

that the conceptual shift to the emphasis of self and identity as an internal domain of motivation calls for teachers of English to engage the students' motivation, interests, and identities.

The three constructs of L2MSS will serve as the study's conceptual framework as depicted in Figure 1.
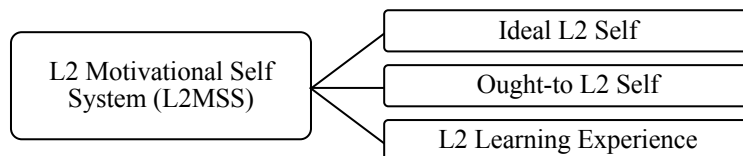

FIGURE 1. *Conceptual Framework of L2 Motivational Self System*

RELATED STUDIES ON L2MSS

There has been much research in the Asian context exploring the relationship between the L2MSS and other variables. In the Indonesian tertiary educational context, it was found that there was no significant relationship between ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience with learning achievement, and ought-to L2 self correlated negatively with learning achievement. Also, the L2MSS could not predict the learning achievement of Indonesian undergraduate students (Subekti, 2018). In Cambodia, research suggested that the ideal L2 self of school students was the highest motivation level, but it illustrated a weak correlation with the school students' English proficiency. Additionally, there was a negative correlation between the ought-to L2 self and L2 learning experience and English proficiency (By, 2018). Many correlations were found among Taiwanese university English majors regarding the relationship between the L2MSS and language learning strategies (Berg & Lu, 2019).

Other research studies compared levels of the L2MSS with relevant variables. In Taiwan, qualitative research revealed that the ought-to L2 self was more influential than the ideal L2 self for adolescent English learners due to parents' expectations and efforts invested in improving the English ability of their children (Huang, 2017). It was also found that the L2MSS of high school students in Turkey is moderate and the most frequently reported sub-category of the L2MSS is L2 learning experience. Researching gender, female participants were greater than those of the males in terms of the levels of each L2MSS category. Regarding proficiency, students with higher grades were likely to have an ideal L2 self motivation than unsuccessful students. Besides, the students who had high level of ideal l2 self were prone to apply deep learning strategies (Irgatoğlu, 2021). In the Korean context, high school students with stronger ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self had a higher level of L2 willingness to communicate inside and outside the classroom (Lee & Lee, 2020).

For the Thai context, it was found that the ideal L2 self was the strongest motivational component of undergraduate students, followed by the L2 learning experience and the ought-to L2 self (Darling & Chanyoo, 2018). Specific to high school students' motivational research, it was revealed that there was a significant difference in the degree of ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self of grades 10-12 students in Science-Mathematics and Arts-Language programmes (Malirum, 2018). Note that the L2 learning experience was not taken into account.

METHOD

RESEARCH DESIGN

To remedy the drawback of using only a self-reported instrument which may not reflect actual behaviours (Subekti, 2018), this study utilised an explanatory mixed-methods research design (Cresswell & Clark, 2011). A quantitative method was first used to collect questionnaire data. Quantitative data analysis was performed for the quantitative results. Then, a qualitative method employing a semi-structured interview was conducted to mix the qualitative with quantitative data. Finally, the results were interpreted with a general emphasis on the quantitative data while the qualitative findings explained and elaborated the quantitative results.

SCHOOL CONTEXT AND PARTICIPANTS

Thai formal education can be categorised into two levels which are basic and higher education (Ministry of Education Thailand, 2017). Altogether 12 years in duration, basic education in Thailand comprises six years of primary education (Pratom or Grade 1-6), three years of lower secondary (Mattayom 1-3 or Grade 7-9) and three years of upper secondary education (Mattayom 4-5 or Grade 10-12). All school-aged children are to have access to primary education.

Participants in this study were studying in a regular programme using Thai as a medium of instruction in a medium-size public school located in Bangkok. These students are in three different programmes: Mathematics-Science, Mathematics-English, and Chinese-Japanese. For English subjects, they were taught by native and non-native English teachers from the Philippines and Thailand. Native English teachers taught communication skills while reading and writing skills were taught by non-native English teachers who were from the Philippines.

Among 414 students from grades 10-12 (147, 132, and 135 students respectively), and based on a convenient sampling technique, 183 students agreed to participate in this research project (53, 84 and 46 participants respectively). The gender of participants classified by grade is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. *Gender of Participants Classified by Grade*

Grade	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
10	10 (5.46%)	43 (23.50%)	53 (28.96%)
11	25 (13.66%)	59 (32.24%)	84 (45.90%)
12	9 (4.92%)	37 (20.22%)	46 (25.14%)
Total	44 (24.04%)	139 (75.96%)	183 (100.00%)

Six participants were purposively selected by the Department Head (two males from grade 10, Mathematics-Science programme, two females from grade 11, Chinese-Japanese programme, and two females from grade 12, Mathematics-Science) as interview participants. Although limited in number, all of them were key informants in providing insightful information. They were also willing to take part in the research.

INSTRUMENTS

The L2MSS questionnaire consisting of the *ideal L2 self*, *ought-to L2 self*, and *L2 learning experience* was adopted from Taguchi et al. (2009), where the participants were asked to rate their level of agreement for each statement. The analysis of structural equation modeling

confirmed their validity. The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients of the three components based on the Japan context were reported at 0.89, 0.76 and 0.90, respectively. Only items 26-30, a 5-point scale of the L2 learning experience, were taken from Subekti (2018). Each motivational construct consisted of 10 items, and this made up of 30 items in total. The L2MSS questionnaire in this study applied the five-point scale instead of the original 6-point as used in Taguchi et al.'s work. The rationale is that a 5-point scale is more common for Thai students and will not overwhelm young participants. Also, for the online questionnaire, the 5-point scale fits the mobile device screen better than the higher point scale.

The interpretation of the rating scores is 4.21-5.00 means very high, 3.41-4.20 means high, 2.61-3.40 means moderate, 1.81-2.60 means low, and 1.00-1.80 means very low. The formula to calculate the range of 0.80 for each level is: the maximum value of the Likert scale (5) minuses the minimum value (1) and then is divided by the maximum value (5). It is noted that the questionnaire included both English and Thai language for low English proficient students. Back translation was conducted to ensure the accuracy of the translation.

The semi-structured interview was conducted in Thai with each participant. Then, the interview information was translated from Thai to English, and another colleague verified the translation accuracy. These interview guide questions were designed to elicit answers in relation to each L2MSS construct. Based on the objective of each question, its content validity was determined by 3 experts and the Index of Objective Congruence (IOC) was 0.91.

1) What would you like to be in the future? Why? (Ideal L2 self, to explore what they would like to become)
2) Will you be using English in your future? Why or Why not? (Ideal L2 self, to explore whether they would use English in their future)
3) What have you done or how have you learned English to achieve your future career goal? (Ideal L2 self, to explore actual behaviours of learning English)
4) What or who motivates you to learn English? How? (Ideal and ought-to L2 self, to explore internal and external motivational factors of English learning)
5) How do you feel about learning English at this school? You may think about your teachers, classmates and materials. (L2 learning experience, to explore how teachers and social environments provide L2 learning experience of success or failure)
6) How do they (teachers, classmates and materials) impact your learning of English? (L2 learning experience, to explore how social environments in a learning process influence L2 learning experience and self-aspects)

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Upon the school's approval, students participated in the study by signing the consent form. The participants completed the online questionnaire in class in early October 2020. One month later after the analysis of the questionnaire findings, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with each selected participant outside class time at their school. For the purpose of ethical consideration, the participants were informed that there would be no effect on their score, and their names would be kept confidential so that they would honestly provide the answers in the questionnaire and interview. The reliability of the data collected was thus ensured.

DATA ANALYSIS

To analyse the L2MSS of the participants, the score of each component of the L2MSS questionnaire was calculated by SPSS 22 for mean and standard deviation (SD). Qualitative data analysis involved repeated reading of the responses (Benson, 2010) to generate themes as per each construct of the L2MSS. Thus, themes were in fact pre-determined in support of the

quantitative data findings. A discussion was performed and agreement between the two coders was reached regarding the emerging themes. Excerpts related to each generating theme were presented. It was noted that the qualitative data findings were reported separately and after the presentation of the quantitative results as per the nature of the mixed-methods research design. Subsequently, a mixing of the qualitative and quantitative findings will be displayed.

FINDINGS

Results of the L2MSS questionnaire are shown in Table 2. It was found that the ideal L2 self was rated the highest with the mean of 3.50, which means that the EFL students had a high ideal L2 self. The L2 learning experience was the second with a mean of 3.45, which also means a high motivation for the L2 learning experience. The ought-to L2 self was reported the third or the lowest with the mean of 3.38, which means the students' ought-to L2 self was moderate.

TABLE 2. *Means and Standard Deviations of the L2MSS*

Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Ideal L2 Self	3.50	.88	High
Ought-to L2 Self	3.38	.91	Moderate
L2 Learning-Experience	3.45	.83	High

Furthermore, the findings of the mean score of each item of the L2MSS were displayed in Table 3.

TABLE 3. *Means of Each Item of the L2MSS*

Ideal L2 Self		Ought-to L2 Self		L2 Learning Experience	
Item	Mean	Item	Mean	Item	Mean
1	3.49	11	2.82	21	3.62
2	3.25	12	2.74	22	3.88
3	3.65	13	3.06	23	3.14
4	3.57	14	3.57	24	3.50
5	3.76	15	3.52	25	3.87
6	2.94	16	3.84	26	3.43
7	3.64	17	3.86	27	3.39
8	4.26	18	3.86	28	3.30
9	3.41	19	3.60	29	2.95
10	3.02	20	2.90	30	3.49

From Table 3, for the first construct of the L2MSS, most items were rated high except item 8, which showed a very high motivation on the Ideal L2 self (*The things I want to do in the future require me to use English)* and items 2, 6, and 10 which were reported moderately. In particular, item 6 (*I can imagine myself speaking English as if I were a native speaker of English*) was the lowest.

Regarding the ought-to L2 self, items 14-19 were reported very high while the rest were moderate. Among them, item 17 (*It will have a negative impact on my life if I don't learn English*.) and item 18 (*Studying English is important to me because an educated person is supposed to be able to speak English*.) were the highest. In contrast, item 12 was the lowest (*I have to study English because if I do not study it, I think my parents will be disappointed with me*).

In regard to the L2 learning experience, item 22 (*I find learning English really interesting.*) was the highest, closely followed by item 25 (*I would like to have more English classes at school*). Item 29 was the lowest (*The materials in my English classes suit my needs.*), which showed a moderate motivation level.

The content analysis of the qualitative data generated five themes as follows.

THEME 1 USE OF ENGLISH IN THE ENVISIONING FUTURE CAREER

From questions 1 and 2, the participants could talk about their future careers without hesitation. Certainly, these careers required the use of English, which well reflected the importance of English.

> *Lawyer because I like laws. It's interesting. Society and surrounding factors inspire me to have an idea to become a lawyer. Yes, I will be using English for international laws. Learning English is important because I will have to use it when I study international laws. (Male #2, Grade 10).*

> *I would like to be an engineer... I will be using English definitely. I would like to work overseas. I travel quite frequently so I would love to go abroad. That's why I was an exchange student. ... I think about my future. I want to plan for my future. (Female #1, Grade 12)*

THEME 2 ENTERTAINMENT AS A MOTIVATOR FOR SELF-STUDY

Question 3 exhibited the actual behaviours of English learning of all participants. They learned and practised English outside class by themselves with social media such as YouTube to watch movies and listen to songs.

> *I have absorbed English through films and songs. I know how expressions are used. I have been listening to songs and watching English films since I was young until now. But I don't know much about vocabulary. Social media is in English which impacts us on catching up with news and information. I have to follow some artists to know about their song release and comments of their fans. (Female #1, Grade 11)*

> *When I have free time, I put myself in an environment like when I was an exchange student in America. I listen to music, watch movies and news on YouTube. I try to have English as much as I can. This works and helps improve my English. I choose the series or movies that I'm interested in such as something about physicians. I know a lot of vocabulary in medical science from a place that gives you knowledge for free. (Female #2, Grade 12)*

THEME 3 INFLUENCE OF EXTERNAL MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS ON INTERNAL MOTIVATION

Question 4 revealed that external factors such as parents whose support and expectation motivated them to have a desire to learn English.

> *My parents bought me films and songs on DVDs to watch and listen to. Also, in our daily conversations in Thai, we use transliterated English words. Oh, games can be motivation too. (Female #1, Grade 11)*

> *Since kindergarten, I was surrounded by English. My mother is a teacher so when I was with her at a school I had a chance to talk with teachers from the Philippines. It's like I had a community to speak English to every day. At home, my grandma always encourages me to learn English. (Female #2, Grade 12)*

THEME 4 THE IMPACT OF LEARNING CONTEXT

Questions 5 and 6 displayed that the students perceived that their learning context, including teachers, class materials, and peers, significantly impacted their language learning.

> *I'm very satisfied because there are many English subjects with many skills being taught. I have practised every English skill. Learning environment is good. Teachers teach well with teaching techniques that stimulate students' attention. Teachers also pay attention to students. Teachers really play an important role*

in building learning motivation. But for me, I study just to get a job in a future, only that. (Male #1, Grade 10)

They (teachers, materials and classmates) all have a great impact. ... Classmates? One classmate has just been to America to study. I think one day if I could go, it would be good. I like communication. I don't like learning in a classroom only. I want to really use English. Here, we don't use English. Outside of class, we talk with our teachers in Thai. (Female #2, Grade 11)

THEME 5 THREAT OF EXAMINATION ON LEARNING FOR COMMUNICATION

From questions 5 and 6, the participants clearly mentioned their want to learn English for communication and their disfavour of examination, which were the augmented data from the questionnaire findings. The results are also in line with theme 1.

I feel I don't use English that much. It's unlike what I learned in America. We should learn what we will use. Here, we learn grammar by memorising verb forms and tenses. Still, I can't write a beautiful sentence. In America, I learned grammar from listening. And this helps improve my writing and grammar knowledge. (Female #2, Grade 12)

Not enough (learning English). Students should have a chance to study English with native speakers of English. Currently, we learn how to write and pass exams. It's alright to learn English with Thai teachers but it will be better to learn it with native speakers too because we will use English in our daily life. ... (Male #2, Grade 10)

The qualitative findings were mixed with the quantitative results as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4. *Mixing of Data*

Quantitative Results	Mixed with Qualitative Results
High ideal L2 self	Theme 1 Use of English in the envisioning future career
	Theme 2 Entertainment as a motivator for self-study
	Theme 3 Influence of external motivational factors on internal motivation
High L2 learning experience	Theme 4 The impact of learning context
Moderate ought-to L2 self	Theme 5 Threat of examination on learning for communication

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

The findings of the high ideal L2 self were supported by the research of By (2018), and the high ideal L2 self, followed by the L2 learning experience and ought-to L2 self were in line with Darling and Chanyoo's (2018) research carried out with Thai tertiary students. However, the results differed from Irgatoğlu's (2021) work revealing the moderate L2MSS of high school students in Turkey and the L2 learning experience construct was reported the most frequently. The discussion was based on each theme that emerged to provide pedagogical and theoretical implications in the field of L2MSS.

BEING A LANGUAGE USER AS A "MUST" CONDITION TO DEVELOP IDEAL L2 SELF MOTIVATION

Concerning theme 1, students could talk about their future careers that require English use, which supports a high level of ideal L2 self motivation. Noticeably, item 8 (*The things I want to do in the future require me to use English*) was rated the highest with a *very high* mean score of 4.26. The results corroborated the work of Csizer and Kormos (2014), hypothesising that visions of students as competent L2 users might be the essential energy source for effective self-regulated learning and autonomous learning behaviours.

The findings confirm the importance of having a clear future vision of oneself, but this may not be adequate to develop the ideal L2 self motivation. The essential condition for the

ideal L2 self motivation enhancement is the use of the English language in the future. In other words, a future vision with no use of the language may not be effective in igniting the ideal L2 self motivation. The main aim is the hope of becoming successful in L2 use, professionally and personally (Dörnyei, 2009).

Future career vision with the ultimate goal of becoming a user of the language is powerful to maintain or invest learning effort. The results agree with Taguchi et al. (2009) and Dörnyei (2014), who argues that "… the vision of who they would like to become as second language users seems to be one of the most reliable predictors of their long-term intended effort" (p. 12). The findings on the impact of strong ideal L2 self on invested effort for learning goal attainment expand on the results of Yetkin and Ekin (2018), which signified that language learning experiences could predict the intended effort of the secondary school students.

As the participants of this study mentioned, English is important and necessary for their future education and professions. With this positive attitude towards the language being learned, learning to improve their language abilities and achieve their future career goals can be invested and maintained. Therefore, knowing that they will need to use the language for what they would like to become creates goal-directed attitudes and behaviours. The implication lies in using the future career vision with a need to use the language as a source of energy and foundation of real goal-directed learning behaviours (Lyons, 2014).

THE ROLES OF ENTERTAINMENT IN MOTIVATIONAL L2 BEHAVIOURS AND PROACTIVE AUTONOMY DEVELOPMENT

The findings from the semi-structured interviews exhibited that students enjoyed their self-study outside of class using entertainment as learning tools such as films, songs, games and media on YouTube. This is in line with Haghverdi's (2015) research results, showing school students improved their English skills through English films and songs. Television shows also greatly influenced undergraduate students' language acquisition (Vijayakumar et al., 2020).

The results illustrate the crucial roles of learning entertainment. First, learning enjoyment supports motivational L2 behaviours. Research also revealed an association between motivation and language proficiency mediated by foreign language enjoyment (Zhang et al., 2020). Students in this study mentioned that they have been learning English through films and songs since they were young. This implies that their self-motivation to learn the language, such as vocabulary, has been firmly ensured by entertainment. This learning paradigm asserts that entertainment promotes pleasant and enjoyable conditions conducive to language learning which in turn energises motivational intensity and motivated L2 behaviours. Learning entertainment is a metacognitive learning strategy in seeking opportunities to learn and practise the language (Oxford, 1990), and this positively associates with the ideal L2 self (Berg & Lu, 2019). Second, learning entertainment seems to develop proactive learner autonomy in language learning. Proactive autonomy (Littlewood, 1999) refers to full autonomy which allows students to set their own learning direction, determine learning objectives, select methods of learning, and evaluate their own learning. In other words, they have complete freedom to learn what they want to learn, and learning is an individual matter without a teacher's presence. Unlike the normal learning process, reactive autonomy is preferable, as Asian students need the help and support of their teachers to create a direction for their study (Swatevacharkul & Boonma, 2020).

A close relationship between learner autonomy and ideal L2 self motivation to learn confirms the recent findings. Autonomy is the motivation for independent learning (Swatevacharkul & Boonma, 2020). The L2MSS strongly correlated with learner autonomy in terms of motivation, learning strategies, and metacognition of Taiwanese university students (Lu & Berg, 2019). Long supported by Ushioda (1996), autonomous learners are motivated learners. However, the results of this present study suggested that proactive learner autonomy

seems to enhance the ideal L2 self with the benefits provided by edutainment as out-of-class independent learning.

Considering that full autonomy is the ultimate goal for education since it can develop life-long learners who are self-dependent, edutainment, a blend of traditional entertainment sources such as movies and educational tools (Bird, 2005), is a strong tool to achieve such education objective. The pedagogical implications are that language education can be performed in an entertaining and exciting learning context. Thus, an edutainment learning system should be implemented as part of any language courses to ignite the ideal L2 self and proactive autonomy.

MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS

The high ideal L2 self can also be explained by the mutual relationship between external and internal motivational factors. The qualitative evidence of this study indicated that their mothers, as mentioned by most students, motivated them to learn English. This shows that their ideal L2 self was triggered by family members, particularly parents, at a very young age. This reflects that parents as an external factor are an immense influence creating ideal L2 self or internal motivation. As research discloses, parents impact their children's motivation positively or negatively (Iwaniec, 2014; Kong & Wang, 2021; Pavalache-Iliea & Tîrdia, 2015). The findings of this present study revealed the positive influence of parents on children's learning motivation, that is, parents' support and expectations of English learning of their children. Huang's (2017) research explains that parental expectations display the hope of their children to become successful global citizens and the belief that it is the parents' obligation for English learning of their children. In the field of L2MSS, some studies exhibit that there is an association between parental expectations and academic performance, career prospects, and social position (Huang, 2017).

The implication is that parents are the first and potential agents to contribute to their children's intrinsic motivation of English learning. Schools should encourage parents to engage more in and support their child's language learning. They can provide English exposure through entertainment, which reinforces the significance of edutainment in creating and sustaining the ideal L2 self discussed previously. In this case, internal motivation factors are created by significant others through the perceived value of entertaining activities, which develops the intrinsic interest of those activities, and of course, positive attitudes are the result. Having a pleasant experience of English and English learning through films, songs and games also prevent language learning anxiety which, according to Papi (2010), has a negative relationship with the ideal L2 self.

THE CRUCIAL ROLES OF TEACHERS AND PEERS IN FAVOURABLE L2 LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The results revealed the high level of L2 learning experience which was supported by the qualitative findings showing that students viewed their teachers, peers and learning materials all had a significant impact on their L2 learning as per theme 4: the impact of learning context. The findings were similar to what Csizer and Kormos (2009) and Yetkin and Ekin (2018) found, that is, besides the ideal L2 self, L2 learning experience can motivate learning behaviour and intended effort of secondary and university students. It confirms that including the L2 learning experience as the third dimension of the L2MSS model is valid.

The first reason that explains the high level of L2 learning experience motivation is teachers. The interview findings displayed that the L2 learning experience is satisfactory if teachers teach well with a variety of teaching techniques that will stimulate students' attention. Learning materials seem not to have a direct impact. Rather it is teachers who cause a positive or negative impact on the materials. As users of the materials, teachers assume responsibility

for the best use of the materials to achieve the most significant learning outcomes. Thus, it depends on how the teachers will use materials for the best learning outcomes. Essentially, the practice of language skills is needed by all the students, and it enhances a positive L2 learning experience. This reflects the central role of teachers in creating a favourable L2 learning experience for the students by providing chances to practise the English skills, which develops learning motivation.

Peers also play a significant role in creating a pleasant L2 learning experience. Collaborative learning is one way to promote learning motivation. Students can learn from their peers, and this definitely helps increase learner autonomy. As one male student said, *classmates can help increase pleasant learning environment if they all are attentive in class. Also, friends can teach friends, and there is no need to ask the teachers questions. In contrast, if classmates are not that good, like, they talk during teaching, this destroys my concentration easily.* This requires effective class management that is conducive to learning on the part of teachers.

In addition, consistent with the work of Zhao and Qin (2021), peers help create self-efficacy, which possibly generates self-image. "Perceived self-efficacy is defined as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave" (Bandura, 1994, p. 1). As the interview results reviewed, one student said she would like to be an exchange student in the USA like one of her friends. If one day she could do this, it would be good for her. This student saw her friend as a successful learner of English or probably her role model, and this raised her perceived self-efficacy. Envisioning herself, she would be successful, like her friend, in the future. In this case, her self-beliefs of efficacy are through the vicarious experiences, one of the sources of self-efficacy, provided by social models (Bandura, 1994). Thus, the evidence seems to suggest that self-efficacy created by peers may generate self-image and create a future vision for L2 students. This calls for teachers to involve peers more in a language learning process as peers can help ignite motivation to learn and confidence to reach a goal.

LEARNING FOR COMMUNICATION AS A MAJOR GOAL AND L2MSS ENHANCEMENT

It was found that the ought-to L2 self was moderate. Noticeably, the questionnaire items 11 *(I study English because close friends of mine think it is important)* and 12 *(I have to study English, because, if I do not study it, I think my parents will be disappointed with me)* were rated the lowest. This clearly suggested the participants' own view and awareness of the importance of learning English. Also, the qualitative findings revealed their disfavour of examination-oriented teaching, which hinders their ability of English communication. As the students pointed out, they wanted to become a user of English. Thus, the students were not satisfied with a heavy emphasis on teaching to pass examinations. This may reflect a mismatch between the students' and teachers' expectations of the learning outcome. For students, examinations appear to negatively impact self-concept motivation development and a better L2 learning experience. Besides, learning is more important than testing and evaluation. As the evidence showed, students did not concern much about getting good scores or passing the exam. Their primary concern is to learn the language and use it. Learning for communication is thus the central goal of foreign language learning, which counts for foreign language teaching and learning. Indeed, learning and being a competent user of English is vital to energise L2MSS, and this needs to be acknowledged and aware of by teachers. Supported by Lee and Lee (2020), both ideal and ought-to L2 self can enhance L2 willingness to communicate in an exam-oriented context.

According to Benson (2010), students perceive teachers as the most immediate representatives of educational authority. Thus, instructional problems in the classroom need to

be solved by teachers. In this case, students felt they lacked opportunities to practise and use the English language. This calls for teachers' attention to students' needs and the ways to accommodate those needs. This responsiveness will help increase their learning motivation particularly their ideal L2 self which in turn results in greater learning achievement.

CONCLUSION

The results from the questionnaire showed that the ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience were high, while the ought-to L2 self was moderate. The three themes: *Use of English in the envisioning future career, Entertainment as a motivator for self-study*, and *Influence of external motivational factors on internal motivation* converged with the high ideal L2 self. The theme on *The impact of learning context* was well mixed with the high L2 learning experience, while the theme on the *Threat of examination on learning for communication* triangulated with the moderate ought-to L2 self. The findings suggested that the L2MSS can motivate senior high school students in a Thai learning context, particularly ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience.

For English language pedagogy, the exam-oriented approach should be minimised as this can demotivate students to learn. In the students' views, perhaps in contrast to those of the teachers, English learning is meaningful when there are opportunities to use it in and out of the classroom. This leads to increased ideal L2 self motivation and a more positive L2 learning experience, which in turn fosters deep learning. When students are deep learners, they are likely to become autonomous and consequently become life-long learners, which is the ultimate goal of every educational system.

A similar study with a larger sample size of high school students should be replicated for future research to confirm the findings. Studies on a relationship of L2MSS constructs and English learning achievement and how the three motivation constructs predict English learning achievement is strongly recommended, including exploration of the L2MSS of university students, the roles of parents in creating English learning motivation, and peers influence on self-efficacy development as means to generate self-images.

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