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## **Factors that Motivate Chinese Tour Guides and Thai Tour Guides When Learning the English Language**

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### **Abstract**

Motivation has long been recognized as one of the determinant and exuberant factors in FL (foreign language) learning process and achievement. English, for its wide use across various walks, has long been inexorably viewed as the global language and becomes a basic educational skill required alongside “literacy and numeracy” all over the world. As a result, the major line of research in the field of FL learning and teaching has been prominently focusing on English. To keep in line with the trend that EFL (English as a foreign language) learner is often the focus of FL motivation research, this study aims to provide insights to FL motivation research by offering both quantitative and qualitative observation of a specific occupational group in a cross-cultural context. A mixed-method approach was employed, administering and collecting 68 self-report questionnaires and conducting 10 semi-structured interviews. The findings showed that all the four motivational factors’ levels studied were rated by “high” both groups, ranking from the highest “instrumental”, to “the need for achievement”, “self-confidence” and “integrative” respectively. Despite that the instrumentality of both groups’ motivation at the beginning is approximately the same, the component “self-efficacy” - such as persistence and the confidence in self to master a foreign language - plays a bigger role in Thai tour guides’ learning outcomes while Chinese tour guides is more driven and sustained by their enjoyment and the sense of achievement in their enjoyment. Pedagogical recommendations for motivational teaching of the English language can also be drawn from the findings, in relation to EFL learning environment with reflective learning experiences guided by corresponding monitoring and instruction along the process.

**Keywords:** EFL, motivation, cross-cultural context, Thai tour guides, Chinese tour guides

### **Introduction**

#### **Background and Rationale of the Study**

Globalization, the historical process of increasing interconnectivity worldwide, has constantly been shaping and redefining every aspect of human society. International or cross-border communication encounters are prevalent in the global community of economy and culture. As Kramsch (2014, p. 296) notes, language learning conditions are inevitably subject to globalization’s influence due to “the mobility of people, capital and global technologies, and its global information networks.” This has been the case for China and Thailand. As a robust Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contributor, tourism has always been a lucrative industry in Thailand, of

which the biggest source is visitors from China. This has required more tour guides for better services and leave the two countries grappling with a shortage of capable tour guides amid a lucrative industry.

To gain proper cross-cultural communicative competence, language skills lie at the heart of a three-dimension role that a tour guide needs to perform while guiding: “a mediation of access, understanding, and encounters/interactions”, according to Weiler and Yu’s definition (2007, p. 14). In terms of language learning, motivation has been considered one of the key components for success in proficiency of the language, as it helps to sustain learners’ interest during long learning process. Dörnyei (1994, p. 22) also highlights motivation as the fundamental issue in FL learning that “underpins the operation of every other factor” in language acquisition, including the learner’s age, meta-linguistic sophistication, prior educational experience, cognitive style, language aptitude, and working memory capacity in particular.

Based on the above context, despite the boom in FL motivation studies in which English is often the target language for school students, there is a relatively small and fragmented body of research on occupation-specific EFL learners. Consequently, many EFL motivation theories might not apply to a particular group of language learners, such as tour guides in this study’s case.

Additionally, investigating language learners’ motivation not only enables dissecting the factors that have driven learners’ efforts toward EFL learning achievement, but also yields rich insights into how the learners relate to their social environment (Ryan, 2009). Thus, this study aims to explore the factors that motivate tour guides from the two countries in their EFL learning in a cross-cultural context.

In sum, this current study is an attempt to provide insights into a specific occupation in a rather understudied area of EFL motivation literature, in the hope that it can also contribute some instructional or pedagogical implications for teaching practices to enhance EFL students’ motivation in classroom or vocational training programs.

### **Research Questions**

As noted above, this study primarily focuses on the topic from the perspective of the social psychology tradition that has yielded far-reaching influence over the decades: the *Socio-Educational (SE) Model* (Gardner, 1985).

On that score, the questions this study sets out to address are threefold:

- 1) What factor(s) motivates/motivate Chinese tour guides when learning EFL?
- 2) What factor(s) motivates/motivate Thai tour guides when learning EFL?
- 3) What are the similarities and differences in the factors that motivate Chinese tour guides and Thai tour guides when learning EFL?

### **Theoretical Framework**

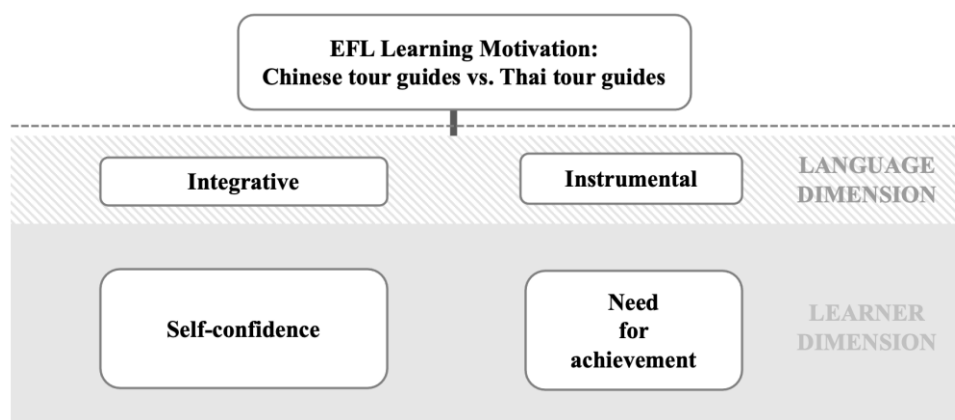
In this study, the distinction and interplay of two components - *integrative* vs. *instrumental* - is used as a fundamental structure to organize the research. It also employs part of Dörnyei’s integrated and extended tripartite construct to add a personal dimension to supplement the

Gardnerian social dimension, which helps substantiate the learner's context-specific language learning experience. It touches on fairly stable individual characteristics such as “*the need for achievement*” and “*self-confidence*”. More specifically, self-confidence incorporates “language anxiety, perceived FL competence, attributions about past experiences and self-efficacy” (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 24).

Through drawing on the established approaches of examining motivation, this framework (Fig. 1) aims to provide an overarching structure for the exploration and comparison of the specified aspects of tour guides' EFL learning motivations from the two countries.

**Figure 1**

*Theoretical Framework*



### Significance

To the best of the author's knowledge, in spite of the great variety of theories on the overarching concept of motivation, by and large, there has been far-from-enough empirical examinations to present the EFL motivation in contexts of cross-cultural settings among learners of a particular occupational group. Apart from that, studying occupation-specific language learning can provide practical implications for EFL teaching. Both of them, by and large, provide the impetus for this research.

### Review of Related Literature

To substantiate the theoretical framework aforementioned, the major research periods of “motivation” research history, research on EFL learning and teaching, studies on tour guides' EFL learning in both countries were reviewed to identify the research gap in the existing body of literature.

#### The Socio-Psychological Period (1959-1990)

This period approaches learners' performance from a socio-psychological point of view, formulating a dichotomy between integrative and instrumental motivation and arguing that good foreign language learners can “identify with members of another ethnolinguistic group and take

on very subtle aspects of their behavior, including their distinctive style of speech and their language” (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

### **The Cognitive-Situated Period (1990s)**

This period is characterized by two frameworks proposed by Dörnyei (1994) and Williams and Burden (1997): the former is an educational tri-partite model entitled “Components of Foreign Language Learning Motivation” that divides the motivation process into three levels: the language level, the learner level, and the learning situation level; and the latter employs a grouping category based on the principle whether the motivational influence is internal or external, which is framed as the social-constructivist model (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

### **The Process-Oriented Period: the *L2MSS* and *DST* (2000s-present)**

Building on the SE and Cognitive-Situated theories, Dörnyei and Ottó (1998, cited in Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011) take time into account in their “Process Model of L2 Motivation” to better explore motivation changes from a temporal dimension, which further bridges the theoretical framework with classroom teaching practices. More recently, the FL academia is moving into a new phase with an emphasis on the complex interrelationship and interconnectedness of “internal, social and contextual factors” with the proposition of Dynamic Systems Theory (Ellis, 2008, p. 23, cited in Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011) that “conceptualizes language learning development as change within a changing and reflective language system” (de Bot, et al., 2007, p. 8)

### **Research on EFL Learning and Teaching in Both Countries**

In the context of China, FL motivation research has been primarily focused on EFL (English as Foreign Language Learning) among young students aged under 25 for pedagogical strategies, given that English has been selected as a compulsory school subject in China since 2001. A proliferation of Chinese scholarly research has followed the above SE and Cognitive-Situated theories as framework (Zhou, 2018; Liu, 2020; Ye, 2020). In the more recent years, in a holistic review, most studies in China are built on the self-based L2MSS motivation theory to enrich it, to corroborate it or to test it within a niche group. A considerable amount of research has confirmed the motivational effects of the *FL-self* and the learning experience (Du & Jackson, 2018; Zheng et al., 2019; King et al., 2019; Hu & McGeown, 2020).

As for the research in Thailand, scholars also approach FL motivation from the L2MSS domain. Among the foreign languages, teaching and learning English is a significant part of Thai language education which result in the flow of many proposals and suggestions in EFL learning and teaching practices in the academics. EFL research in Thailand that follows the recent L2MSS trend includes Rattanaphumma (2016), Nongkhai (2017) and Darling and Chanyoo (2018). They explore how different “L2 selves” are influenced and how they affect FL learning with teaching implications.

### **Related Research on Tour Guides’ EFL Learning**

In light of the focus of this research, there are relevantly a small body of research related to tour guides' EFL learning in both countries. The extant literature in both countries focus primarily on EFL teaching practices and strategies, instead of the tour guides' motivations - in themselves - or the factors behind them.

The specific facets in EFL learning motivations remain quite under-researched in terms of tour guides. In China, Wen, Huang and Ying (2019) have identified seven major motivations for Chinese tour guides, including "knowledge enhancement/learning, business development, sightseeing, self-fulfillment, escape/relaxation, destination uniqueness, and adventure" (p. 9). In Thailand, Gyamfi and Lai (2020, p.38) observe that "future careers, societal needs, life purpose and the reputation" are essential factors to influence tour guides' interest in EFL.

The trend for the majority of other Chinese scholars' studies pay attention to the teaching practices on certain EFL skills or to the vocational groups in the tourism industry. For example, He (2018), Tan (2019), Wang(et al.(2018) have all suggested the importance of situational classroom training - such as Flipped Classroom, SPOC-mixed teaching, and the perspective to integrate the tour guides' classroom with language skills, guiding skills to enhance interest and engage learners.

Similarly, studies in Thailand stress proper training and mentoring sessions that is situation-based to enhance learners' interest and efforts in attaining their FL goals. One study in Thailand looks at tour guides' ESP (English for specific purposes) and the use of contextual-based learning for their improvement. The results show that contextual teaching and learning had a significant effect on learners' reading skill. Moreover, it can serve as a motivation to drive them in learning and help them to understand the learning materials (Ratminingsih, Suardana and Martin, 2018). Findings of another study in this vein which approaches tour guiding as a language learning strategy implemented as a task indicate that it's beneficiary for the learners to acquire language skills and shape their attitudes towards the instruction (Kanoksilapatham and Suranakkharin, 2019).

## **Research Gap**

Despite the fast development and wide application of theoretical models in English research on FL motivation to learners' contexts, the role of EFL motivation remains under-researched in cross-cultural settings or occupation-specific learners, especially in the case of this study.

Thus, with reference to the abovementioned studies, which argue that motivation is essential for EFL proficiency and that it incorporates various aspects related to the components outlined in the previous framework of FL motivation laid out in the introduction, it is argued by the author that more is needed to further examine the EFL learning motivation among occupation-specific learners from a comprehensive perspective, which becomes the focus of this study.

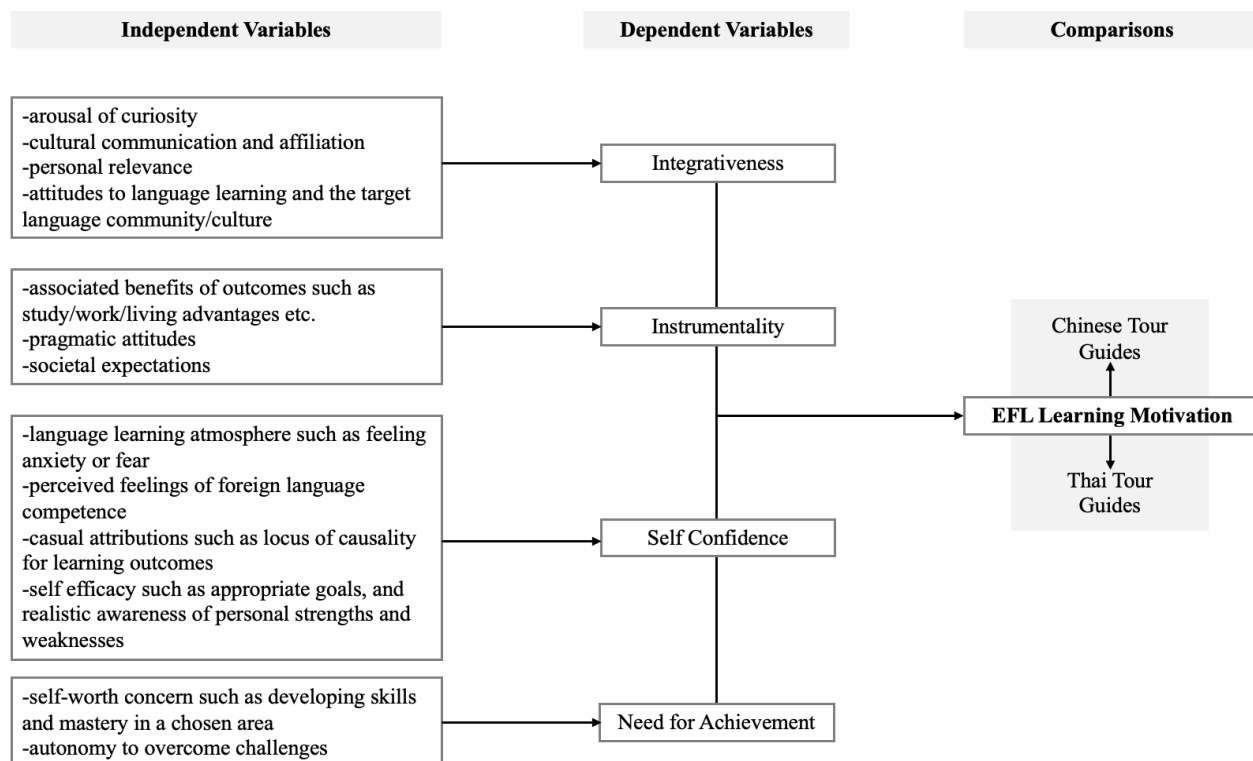
## **Conceptual Framework**

Based on the above literature, **Figure 2** illustrates the concepts applied in this study in relation to the objectives of this research. Based on the above literature, four main motivational

factors were conceptualized.

**Figure 2**

*Conceptual Framework (Dörnyei, Z. & Ushioda, E., 2011)*



## Methodology

### Sampling

A total of 70 participants makes up the sample of the study, which includes 35 Chinese tour guides and 35 Thai tour guides. The criteria for selection include participants with at least 2-year experience in tour guiding and have fluent English proficiency. An equal number of Thai tour guides and Chinese tour guides were selected to participate in the study. Since the sample is rather small, 10 participants (5 Thai and 5 Chinese) were selected for the interview. However, in the end, a total of 68 tour guides who had answered the questionnaire were investigated.

### Instruments and Methods

#### *Questionnaire and Descriptive Data Processing*

The questionnaire is an adapted version of Gardner’s (2010) **AMTB (Attitude/Motivation Test Battery)**, one used by Schmidt and his associates in their 1996 research and one of Dörnyei’s large- scale motivational study from 1993 to 2004, in which 4 main motivational factors were

conceptualized (Dörnyei, 2018). It consists of 30 items, with 5 items measuring integrative factors and 5 for instrumental factors respectively. Then, each of the 4 factors are measured by 3 items in the “self-confidence” category. The last 4 items measure the “need for achievement” factor.

For this study, the author has noted in the beginning that the foreign language in the items refers to only English. The first section of the questionnaire collects the respondents’ basic information. In total, 26 items measure EFL motivation on a *6-point Likert* scale. The choice of an even number for the scale is for eliminating neutral responses. The number 1 to 6 correspond to the varying degrees from “**strongly disagree, moderately disagree, slightly disagree to slightly agree, moderately agree and strongly agree**”.

**Reliability Test.** The questionnaire was administered to 30 non-participants for a pilot since the set of questions has been adapted from the AMBT and the established ones with academic authority. The *Cronbach’s alpha* ( $\alpha$ ) was computed for each cluster, to make sure they are not below the acceptable level of 0.6 as suggested by Hulin (et al., 2001). If  $\alpha$  is bigger than 0.8, the items of the same dimension/aspect possess high reliability. According to the test results returned in quasi-SPSS statistical service (Table 1), it is shown that the reliability of questions for each motivational component are within the optimal range of  $>0.6$ .

**Table 1**

*Reliability of the Questionnaire measured by Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient ( $\alpha$ )*

Components	Cronbach’s Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Number of Items
Integrative Motivation	0.853	5
Instrumental Motivation	0.715	5
Self-Confidence	0.830	12
Need for Achievement	0.974	4

The data collected from valid questionnaires were later processed using open-source Microsoft excel to yield descriptive statistics. To measure the items in quantitative scales, *Mean* and *SD* (*standard deviation*) were calculated to determine the characteristics of motivation the respondents had, in particular the level of each motivational factor. The evaluation criteria of the *6-point Likert* scale based on an even interval are as follows:

- 1.00~2.00 means the level of the motivational component is “**very low**”.
- 2.01~3.00 means the level of the motivational component is “**low**”.
- 3.01~4.00 means the level of the motivational component is “**moderate**”.
- 4.01~5.00 means the level of the motivational component is “**high**”.
- 5.01~6.00 means the level of the motivational component is “**very high**”.

### ***Semi-structured Interview and Thematic Analysis***

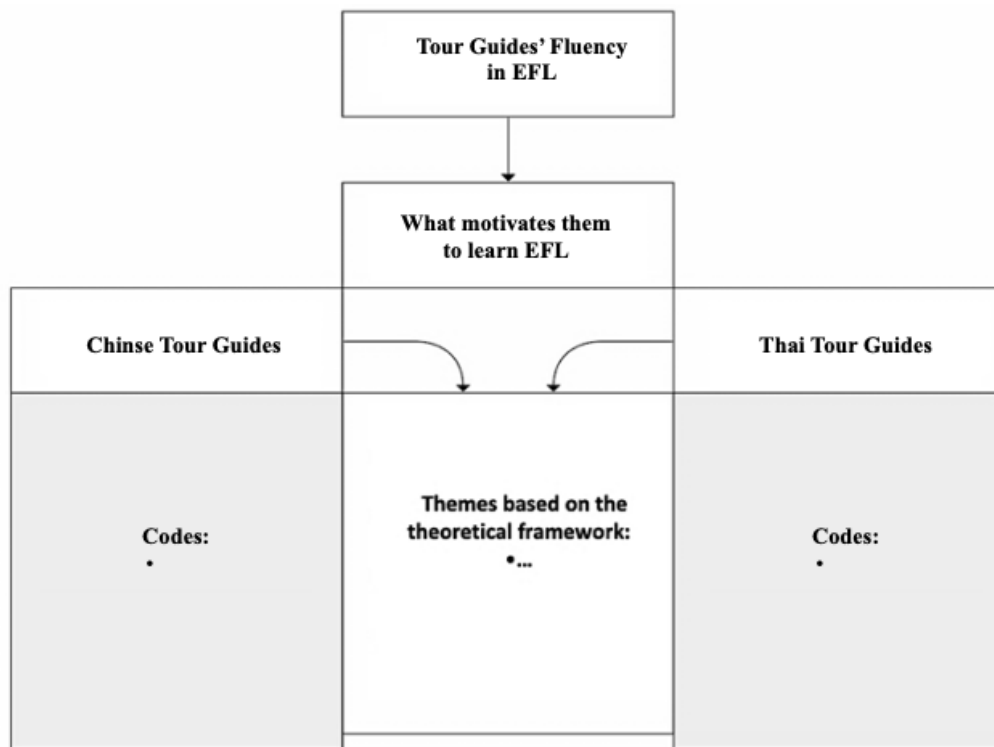
An interview of 10 participants was conducted via Zoom/Skype video-chatting in both Chinese and English. Transcripts of the ten participants’ interview responses were collected, coded



and categorized into **four main variables shown in Figure 2**. Results of the interview were analyzed and linked to the data collected from the questionnaire.

**Figure 3**

*Thematic Framework for Interview Responses*



### Findings and Discussions

The results come from the data collected from 68 valid questionnaires and interviews regarding four dimensions: *integrative, instrumental, self-confidence, and need for achievement*.

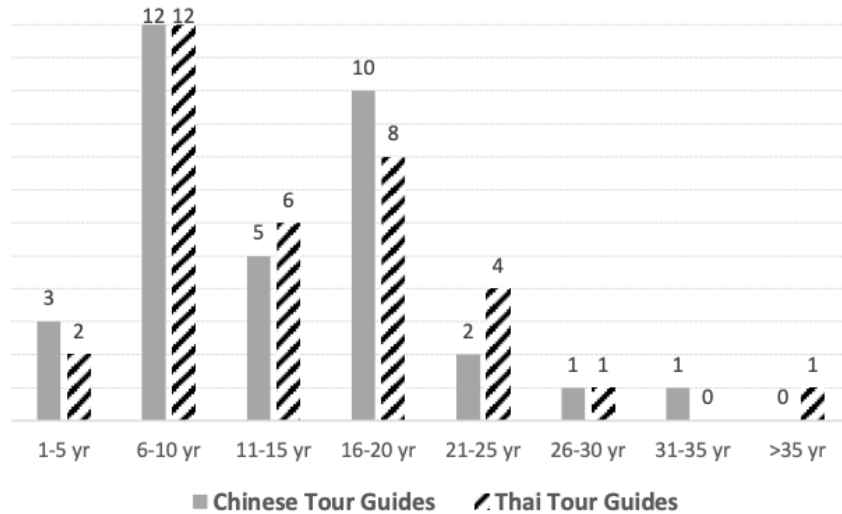
#### Basic Information of the Respondents

The basic information and characteristics of the participants are summarized and compared in Figures 4-7.

From Figure 4 below, the majority of both groups started their EFL learning at the age of 6-20 yr.: 79.4% of the Chinese tour guides group and 76.5% of the Thai tour guide group respectively.

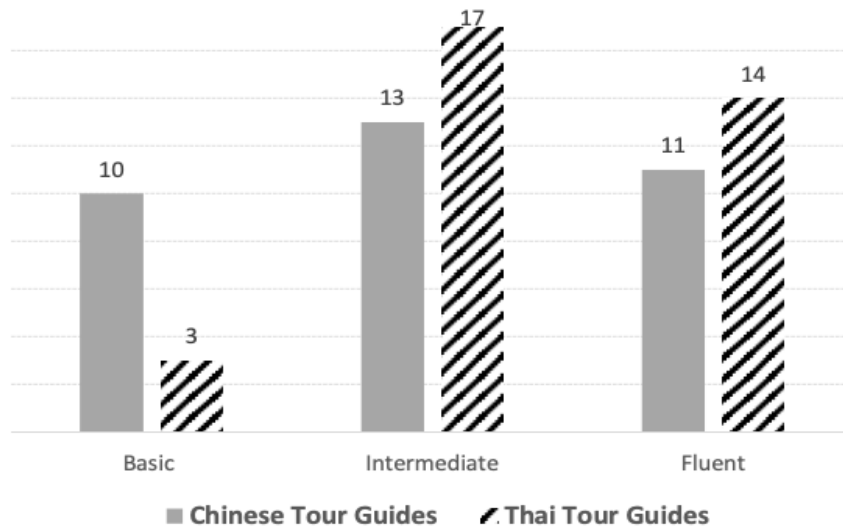
**Figure 4**

*Starting age for EFL learning between the groups (N of valid responses of each group = 34)*



**Figure 5**

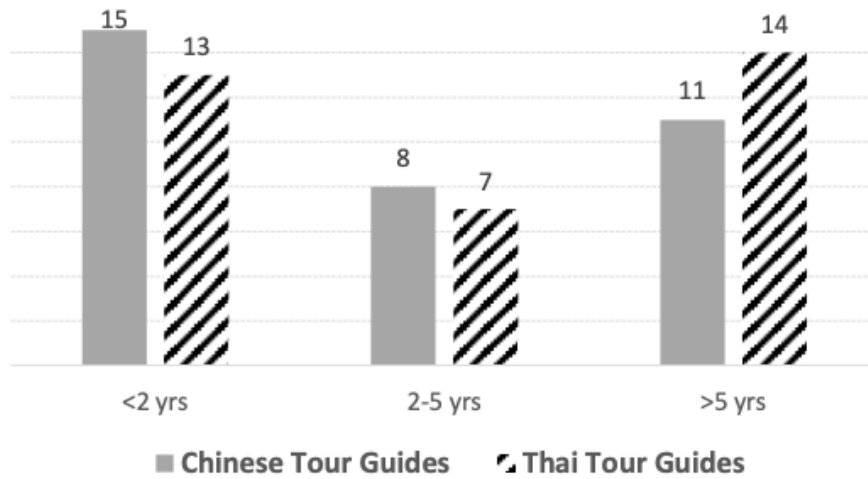
*Self-identified language level achieved so far (N of valid responses of each group = 34)*



In Fig. 5, around 33.3% of Chinese tours guide think that their EFL level is basic, while less than 10% of Thai tour guides view their English language achievements that way. Within the sub-groups of “Intermediate” and “Fluent”, fewer Chinese tour guides have self-identified their EFL proficiency than their Thai counterparts: 91.2% of Thai tour guides self-evaluated themselves to be “intermediate and above level” EFL speakers, compared to the rate of 70.6% in Chinese tour guides.

**Figure 6**

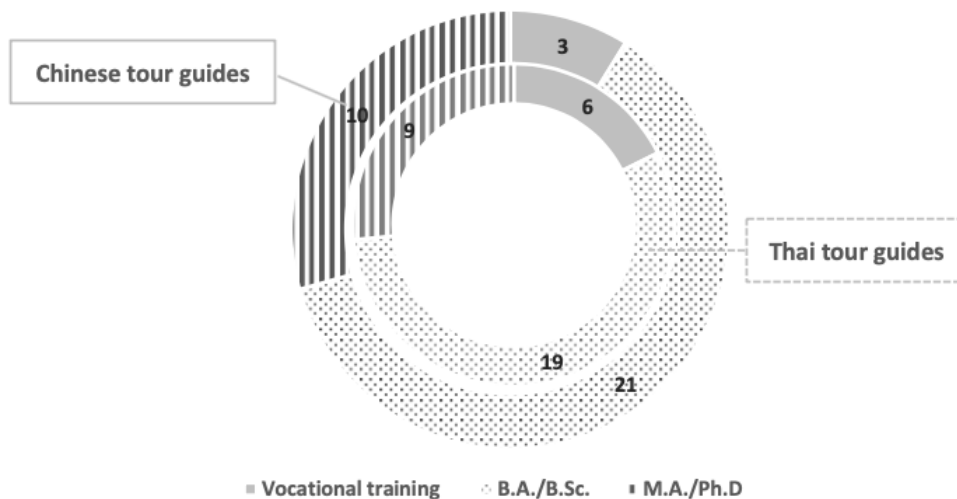
*Experience in tour-guiding business (N of valid responses of each group = 34)*



In terms of their tour-guiding experience (Fig. 6), 55.9% of Chinese tour guides have been in the business for over 2 years and that portion for Thai tour guides reaches 61.8%, with small differences between the sub-groups as categorized as <2 years, 2-5 years and >5 years.

**Figure 7**

*Highest level of education completed (N of valid responses of each group = 34)*



As for the highest education degree completed among them, Fig 7 shows that 91.2% of Chinese tour guides have achieved B.A./B.Sc. and above degrees, while 82.3% of Thai tours guides have finished the same education programs accordingly.

Overall, it is indicated through the above graphics that there is no disparity between the two groups regarding each of the categorization in relation to the sample size for interviews. Underlying the data collected, both groups are almost evenly distributed within some of the major sub-categories. One noticeable gap in the demographics lies in the language proficiency levels which the participants consider themselves at. As can be seen, there remains no huge discrepancy between the sample pools in the respondents for further semi-structured interviews by the standard of “Fluent” in both groups, 11 Chinese tour guides and 14 Thai tour guides, which, coupled with the general tendency that the basic results arrived at, is believed to make the findings in the next round of research fairly robust and grounded.

### Comparison of the Motivational Factors of Chinese and Thai Tour guides on EFL Learning

**Table 2**

*Overall Motivations' Levels*

Motivational Factors	Chinese Tour Guides		Thai Tour Guides		
	Mean		Mean		
Integrative	*4.259	High	>	*4.159	High
Instrumental	***5.018	V. high	>	***5.006	High
Self-confidence	**4.309	High	<	**4.652	High
Need for Achievement	***4.360	High	<	***4.853	High

As can be seen in Table 2, the mean score for motivational factor “instrumental” for both group is the highest followed by “need for achievement”, “self-confidence” and “integrative”. There is similarity between the two groups of tour guides in their *integrative* motivation and *instrumental* motivational factors, with Chinese tour guides’ *average mean* score modestly higher than that of Thai tour guides. Meanwhile, the difference in *average mean* scores lies in the last two factors that are largely internal: *self-confidence* and *the need for achievement*, with an average mean of 4.309 in *self-confidence* and 4.360 in *need for achievement* for the Chinese tour guides which are much lower than the Thai tour guides’ average mean score of 4.652 and 4.853 respectively.

As previously noted in the literature, integrative motivation incorporates affective dispositions including social, cultural, ethnolinguistic components, as well as a general interest in foreignness and foreign languages (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). It characterizes the learners who learn a FL out of their interest in the values and cultures of the target community/country and drive them to preferably understand and get to know the people who speak the FL and the culture.

The theme distribution in Table 3 shows that both groups have positive feelings towards EFL. 3 Thai tour guides focus more on the love of the language itself and are influenced by their multi-lingual environment; while all 5 Chinese tour guides attach greater importance to their desire for abroad/overseas experiences and the culture, also being influenced by their multi-lingual environment.

**Table 3**

*Distribution Related to Integrative Factors*

	Participants	Multilingual environment	Desire abroad experience	Think FL as fun	Like the FL's culture/country	Other positive feelings
<i>Thai tour guides</i>	1	✓		✓		
	2	✓			✓	
	3	✓		✓		
	4	✓				✓
	5			✓		
<i>Chinese tour guides</i>	6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	7	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	8	✓	✓		✓	
	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	

This corresponds to the finding in the previous integrative data (Table 2), that both Thai and Chinese tour guides show high level in their integrativeness in EFL learning, in spite of different emphases on the affective aspects.

**Table 4**

*Distribution Related to Instrumental Factors*

	Participants	Financial gains	Global vision	Useful when required/needed	Job opportunities/choices
<i>Thai tour guides</i>	1	✓			✓
	2		✓		✓
	3	✓	✓	✓	
	4	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5		✓		✓
<i>Chinese tour guides</i>	6	✓		✓	✓
	7	✓		✓	✓
	8	✓		✓	✓
	9			✓	
	10	✓	✓	✓	✓

The instrumental category refers to potential utilitarian gains of EFL proficiency as a means to an end, such as competence certification, financial improvements and better career prospects (Gardner, 1985). As shown in Table 4, the majority of the interviewees, nonetheless, highlighted the advantageous importance of learning EFL to them in general, regarding their career development that often leads to more job opportunities and financial gains. All the interviewees considered that English was of practical use if they wanted to live, work or study overseas, which

fits into what Yashima has described as the “interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and ... openness toward different cultures” (2002, p. 57).

One difference to be noted is that four Thai tour guides (P2, P3, P4, P5) would pay attention to the influence of the country itself and its status on the global stage; while in contrast, only one (P10) Chinese tour guide mentioned the importance of learning EFL from an international outlook. This also corresponds to the finding in the previous integrative data (Table 2), that both Thai and Chinese tour guides show high level in their instrumentality in EFL learning.

**Table 5**

*Distribution Related to Self-confidence Factors*

	Participa nts	Enjoyment in EFL learning environme nt	Comforta ble using English in a FL environme nt	Establishi ng the goal of mastering EFL	Addressi ng past influence s	Aware of own EFL strengths or weakness es	Locating the causes when being challeng ed	Autonom y in overcomi ng difficultie s
<i>Thai tour guides</i>	1	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	2		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	3	✓	✓	✓	✓			
	4			✓	✓	✓	✓	
	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Chine se tour guides</i>	6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	7		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	8		✓		✓			✓
	9	✓	✓	✓		✓		
	10		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The descriptive statistics in the questionnaires show that both groups are “high” on their FL learning motivation, specifically on all four motivational factors in this study. In addition, there is a similarity between the two groups of tour guides in their integrative and instrumental motivation, with Chinese tour guides’ average mean modestly scoring a bit bigger than that of Thai tour guides. The distributions of themes in Table 7 and Table 10 are in line with the descriptive pattern.

According to the previous literature, holding positive views about the past and the current experience in relation to achievement in FL learning is believed to play a significant role in motivating language learners to extend more efforts in their present and future learning (Bandura, 1993). Within this category that mediates between learners’ beliefs, past achievements and corresponding subsequent performances, 4 kinds of nodes have emerged, including “direct/indirect contact with the FL environment”, “perceived competence”, “past experiences” and “self-efficacy”. The last one comprises self- reflection and self-regulation and plays a vital role in determining FL learners’ efforts and engagement they exert for the task (Bandura, 1993).

Based on that, the themes coded in this factor are:

- 1) enjoyment in the FL learning environment, and comfortable using FL in a FL environment;
- 2) establishing the goal of mastering FL;
- 3) addressing past influences;
- 4) awareness of own FL strengths and weaknesses, locating the causes when challenged, and autonomy to overcome difficulties for improvements.

As presented in **Table 5**, it is shown that Thai tour guides tend to attribute more to their past experiences and EFL abilities, meaning that they’re more reflective and self-regulative, while Chinese tour guides validate the driving forces to learn EFL on the sense of a favorable EFL-native learning environment when learning and using the language.

In Thai tour guides’ responses, all of them show a slightly more positive awareness of their ability in learning EFL, such as what their strengths and weaknesses are, and how to deal with them. In contrast, Chinese tour guides are happier that they can learn EFL in an overseas environment that they desire, whether out of interest in the country or a multi-lingual environment’s influence.

**Table 6**

*Distribution Related to Need for Achievement Factors*

	Participants	Sense of fulfillment/progress	Willing to put in great efforts	Like/ready to be challenged	Determination to stick to what’s started
<i>Thai guides</i>	1				
	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3		✓		✓
	4	✓	✓		
	5		✓	✓	✓
<i>Chinese guides</i>	6	✓		✓	
	7	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8	✓			
	9	✓			
	10		✓	✓	

“The need for achievement”, with the other three factors mentioned above, is related to the constant personalities of the learner in himself/herself, which needs to be included the possibility of a wide range of motivational factors which influence the language experience. It refers to the sense of longing for success and self-worth that exert great influence on the determination associated with new knowledge exploration, the mastering of learning goals, and actual task performances. (Dörnyei, 1994).

As displayed in Table 2, both groups of tour guides reported “High” on the average *mean* score, while Chinese tour guides reported lower *mean* scores than Thai tour guides within this category, which is in accordance with the finding in the “self- confidence” ones. A stark difference lies in that Thai tour guides are endeavor-oriented, i.e., the determination to put in great efforts

and sustain through the learning process; while Chinese tour guides focus more on their personal sense of fulfillment, a kind of self-worth as achieved through their passion or interest in the language or their experiences in the language's culture.

In sum, despite that the *integrativeness* and *instrumentality* of both groups' motivation is approximately the same, *self-efficacy* and *need for achievement* - such as persistence, the perceived confidence and the determination to master EFL - play a bigger role in Thai tour guides' learning. (Table 2).

Due to the interacting nature of motivational components as noted by prominent scholars in the literature, a correlation examination is discussed in the following part to provide important insights into the possible sources of some of the beliefs and attitudes expressed in the questionnaires by the respondents and offer more solid interpretation of the subject under investigation: EFL learning motivation in tour guides. Hence, a general look at the 10 interviewees' EFL learning journey in their interviews is needed.

The majority (80%) of the participants (P1, P2, P4, P5; P6, P8, P9, P10) believed that EFL learning environment played a vital role during their learning process, although the influence of environment was exerted through/on different kinds of motivation studied in this research. For example, for Thai tour guides, the environment's effect was seen more in their family's influence and their work's needs or requirements, which can be categorized into integrative and instrumental respectively.

Chinese tour guides on the other hand were influenced by the environment in terms of their love/interest for the different cultures and overseas experiences. In order to stay at the country that they like, the language has become a necessity for them, which - in its essence - is a kind of instrumental motivation that further drives their need for achievement, as they desire the experiences abroad (integrative) and want to make best of the language they are learning.

Similarly, both groups of participants keep the distinguished aspects of motivation in the two categories that have looked more into the learners' individual traits. The codes in the "self-confidence" theme highlight Thai tour guides' self-reflection and self-regulation traits in judging their abilities in learning English and readily adjusting efforts accordingly, which corresponds to the finding that Thai tour guides report greater willingness to put in great efforts and perseverance in the "need for achievement" theme.

In comparison, Chinese tour guides link their confidence in EFL learning more to their enjoyment or favorable experiences in using the language in a cross-cultural environment, which can be explained in their motivation to learn EFL for a sense of fulfillment/success ("need for achievement" theme) because it is something - as expressed in their comments - that they are passionate/curious about and drives their desire to go abroad for cross-cultural experiences or even a global vision.

## Conclusion

### Conclusion



The main focus of this study was to investigate EFL learning motivation of Chinese and Thai tour guides since language is very important for their career success.

Overall, results show that Chinese tour guides' motivation in learning English depends more on the learning environment, while Thai tour guides value their internal agency more in EFL learning. The main finding for the current study is that for all tour guides from both countries who have achieved EFL proficiency in the present study, all the four motivational factors are at the level "high", ranking from the highest "instrumental", to "the need for achievement", "self-confidence" and "integrative" respectively, which validate Dörnyei's claim that "instrumental motives are particularly efficient in energizing FL learning ... especially the internalized instrumental motive" (1990, p. 56).

Another point to note is that an exposure to a multi-lingual learning environment plays a vital role during the EFL learning process. However, in the case of tour guides in this study, the scope of "multilingual environment" is - to a large extent - a social one (i.e., in family or at work), which calls for caution about analyzing the general statements that the interviewees commented when describing the EFL learning environment as a whole, for the reason that their accounts do not necessarily reflect their genuine and most fundamental purposes for learning English.

In comparison of the themes, the results show that the motivation of EFL learners is diverse and complex, and that their learning motivation changes and fluctuates over time. The motivational factors need to be viewed, in this sense, as **the starting ones** and **the sustaining ones**, as suggested by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) who claimed that the understanding of foreign language learning is more adaptive and in-the-context, especially when it comes to the varying motivational trajectories and experiences being shaped by multiple motives/orientations.

With regard to each category, **in the starting side**, both groups' instrumentality in motivation is highly related to the practical use in daily life and work ("*Helpful for work/ Better job offers and payment/ Growing trade/ Good for work and everything/ Job's requirement*"), while Chinese tour guides' have a bit more to do with their love/interest - an affective disposition - for the foreign culture/country, which can account for their slight difference in the integrative category. Yet, that desire is tinged with instrumentality ("*English is a must-have if I want to stay abroad*" expressed by P6; and "*It has to have practical uses to support my interest and passion*" a comment by P10).

**As for the sustaining ones**, the codes extracted for *Questions 1* and *2* lead up to reveal that Thai tour guides are more driven to sustain their learning through their self- efficacy and past experiences ("*Keep at it, and the difficulty will be overcome. As long as you love it, you'll always find a way.* - P3"; "*you should think about scientific methods and keep practicing it. That contributes to steady progress all the time.*" - P5), which are essential constructs in the "self-confidence" theme, while Chinese tour guides are more driven by their enjoyment in using English in a native environment. That can also explain Chinese tour guides' inclination to sense of achievement in their enjoyment ("*there's peer pressure / a need to prove myself that I can do it/ hate to be left behind*" - P7; "*It's a kind of success for me*" - P6; "*... being self-demanding, I seek*

to fulfill tasks or achieve goals in EFL learning” - P7), while Thai tour guides are more willing to put in great efforts (“Once started, it has to be sustained.” - P5).

## **Pedagogical Implications and Limitations**

### ***Pedagogical Implications***

With all the above findings combined, it should be recognized that the motivation of EFL learners in relation to their learning environment with reflective learning experiences/instructions is crucial to keep them motivated for a longer time for better outcomes.

From the EFL teachers’ perspective, the role played by EFL instructors should highlight the task of addressing the benefits for learners early in their learning, facilitating and directing the learners with enhanced self-efficacy, self-reflection and self-regulation strategies to improve their learning experiences along the way.

More specifically, one of the practical ways to apply to teaching English is to suggest learners talk with native English speakers on the Internet or in person, through which they can fully immerse themselves into all aspects of the cross-cultural language setting for skills improvement. For instance, students may engage in programs online/offline with native English speakers for communicative purposes and cultural exchanges as well.

Meanwhile, in-time feedbacks or advice to booster sense of achievement and proper reflection are also needed. There are a number of ways to enhance students’ motivation in EFL learning including integration of fun activities and technology, and encouraging language practices in authentic or simulated cross-cultural situations, and offering timely periodic advice via instant messaging tools.

### ***Limitations***

There may be confounding variables unmeasured in the questionnaires or unaccounted for in the analyses, because there is an unlimited number of reasons one might study a FL and factors that might influence motivation and there is no way to ensure the honesty of the participants, some reductionism is inevitable for limited time and scope. Nevertheless, it is believed that the advantages of the widely-utilized methodology can outweigh these imperfections. Hopefully, this study can provide insights into how EFL motivation is approached, conceptualized and analyzed in a cross-cultural context, regrading a specific occupation.

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