Students' Preference for Teachers' Motivational Strategies and their Perception of their Own Motivation toward Learning English: A Case of Private Vocational Colleges

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate students' preference for teachers' motivational strategies, their perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies, and the correlation between these two variables. The participants consisted of 320 first year vocational certificate students in the 7 private vocational colleges. A questionnaire and semi-structured interview were employed in data collection. The 24 motivational strategy items were categorized into four main categories based on Dörnyei's (2001b) framework. Descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient were used to analyze the data. The findings indicated that 22 teachers' motivational strategies were preferred at the "greatly preferred" level, whereas only two strategies were preferred at the "preferred" level. It was found that all 24 motivational strategies could motivate students to learn English. The students most preferred motivational strategies under the third category, maintaining and protecting students' motivation. They also agreed that the motivational strategies under the third category could motivate them to learn the most. On the other hand, the strategies under the fourth category, encouraging positiveself-evaluation, were least preferred

and they least motivated the students to learn English. Interestingly, it was found that all preferred strategies could motivate the students to learn English.

Introduction

Motivation has been accepted as one of the main factors influencing students' success in acquiring a second language (Dörnyei, 1998, 2001a; Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Scarcella and Oxford, 1992). Dörnyei (2000) conceptualized the term of motivation in the psychological study as three steps of human behavior. The first step is the choice that people choose to be their goals. Then, how long they attempt to do the particular actions, and the last step is their attempt to complete their goals. In relation to education, motivation is the combination of four components: a learning objective, a need to complete the objective, personal opinion towards learning the new language, and effort to achieve the particular goal (Gardner, 1985). Motivation is usually used to explain the success or failure of language students. It can be assumed that students with proper motivation can be easily successful (Brown, 2000). This is because motivation provides driving force to learn language in the initial stage that will stimulate students to keep learning until they can achieve their learning goals (Dörnyei, 1998).

As motivation plays an important role in second language acquisition, researchers have tried to find the effective teaching strategies that can promote students' motivation toward learning the second language. In a recent review, Alrabia (2014) conducted a research to examine teachers' motivational practices in English classes and students' perceptions of their motivation toward language learning. The result indicated that motivational practices of the teachers matched the students' perception of motivation in English classes suggesting that students' motivation was relevant to the teachers' practices in motivating the students to learn English, and those strategies had positive effects on the students' motivation. This finding was consistent with the result of previous studies (Bernaus, et al., 2009; Dörnyei, 2001; Guilloteaux and Dörnyei, 2008; Papi and Abdollahzadeh, 2011; Trang and Baldauf, 2007) indicating that teachers' practices had some relationship with students' motivation.

For this reason, the research on teachers' motivational strategies and students' motivation is needed. In Thai context, Cho and Teo (2013) conducted a study to investigate the use of motivational strategies of the teachers, the students' preference for the teachers' strategies, and whether there was a difference between these two variables. The finding of this study revealed a significant difference between the teachers' motivational strategies and the students' preference. The researchers suggested that teachers should employ motivational strategies which lined up with the preference of the students. However, a significant limitation of Cho and Teo' s study was that it was more concerned with the difference between these two variables, but the result was inconclusive whether the matching use of teachers' motivational strategies and the students' preference could actually promote students' motivation toward learning English. Additional research is needed to determine the correlation between students' preference for motivational strategies and students' motivation in order to find the dynamic of these two variables which can provide the teachers with the guideline for enhancing students' motivation.

Accordingly, the present study aimed to investigate students' preferences for teachers' motivational strategies, their perceptions of their own motivation in relation to teachers' motivational strategies, and the correlation between these two variables. The majority of research on second language learning motivation in Thai context has focused on students in the regular program, school or university context (Cho and Teo, 2013; Kitjaroonchai, 2012; Abidin et al., 2012). In the AEC, strong demands for vocational expertise have risen dramatically. However, it was found that English proficiency of vocational certificate students is very low (The Office of Vocational Education Commission, 2008). Boonrangsri (2004) found that vocational students had low English proficiency in all four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, because they did not realize the importance of English and they also lacked motivation toward learning English.

Mr. Chaiprug Sereerak, the Secretary-General of the Office of the Vocational Education Commission, said that apart from vocational knowledge, language proficiency is required. Vocational students' English proficiency must be improved in order to increase their job opportunities in the AEC labor market (Buranasomphop, 2015). Therefore, to cope with the strong demands for vocational expertise in the AEC labor market, the present study was conducted with vocational certificate students who need a rapid solution to their lack of motivation.

Mastan and Teo (in press) investigated the use of motivational strategies of the English teachers in vocational colleges and found that the teachers frequently used 24 motivational strategies in their classroom. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the first year vocational certificate students' preference for those 24 motivational strategies which were used by their teachers, their perception of their own motivation in relation to teachers' motivational strategies, and the correlation between these two variables. The 24 motivational strategies were categorized into four main categories, namely creating motivational conditions, promoting learners' motivation, maintaining and protecting learners' motivation, and encouraging positive self-evaluation (Dörnyei, 2001b). Results of the present study can provide teachers with knowledge and guidance for enhancing the first year vocational certificate students' language learning motivation and preparing them for the strong demands of the labor market in the AECfrom the start of their vocational study. This study also filled the gap in the context of vocational level in which little study has been done.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. What teachers' motivational strategies are preferred by students in vocational colleges?

2. What is vocational students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English?

3. Is there correlation between students' preference for teachers' motivational strategies and their perception of their own motivation toward learning English in vocational colleges?

Research Methodology
Participants

The participants of this study consisted of the first year students in the 7 private vocational colleges in Songkhla Primary Education Service Area Office 2. The total number of the first year students in these 7 vocational colleges was 1,893. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling technique, the participants of this study were 320 first year vocational certificate students (104 males and 216 females) who were randomly selected with a balanced proportion of the number of first year students in each college. The number of student participants in each college is illustrated below.

Table 1: Participants of the Study

College	Total number of first year students	Number of student participants
1.	104	18
2.	347	59
3.	65	11
4.	122	21
5.	445	75
6.	567	95
7.	243	41
Total	**1,893**	**320**

Student participants' age ranged from 15 to 22. All of them enrolled in 2000-1201 Real Life English 1, a required course for the first year vocational certificate students.

Regarding the semi-structured interview, 18 student participants (5%) were selected based on convenience and accessibility. On the day of gathering data by the questionnaire, all of the

student participants were asked for their voluntary participation in the interview.

Instruments

To obtain the data, a five–point Likert scale questionnaire and semi–structured interview questions were used as the instruments of this study.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was employed to measure students' preference for the motivational strategies used by their English teacher and their perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies. 19 of 24 questionnaire items were constructed by the researcher, while the rest five items were selected and adapted from Dörnyei's (2001b) sample questionnaire items.

The first section of the questionnaire included four questions eliciting the participants' general information. The second contained 24 five–point Likert scale items to examine the students' preferences for their teachers' motivational strategies (5=Most prefered, 4=Greatlyprefered, 3=Preferred, 2=Slightly prefered, 1=Least prefered). The third comprised 24 five–point Likert scale items concerning the students' perceptions of their own motivation in relation to teachers' motivational strategies (5=Strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3=Uncertain, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly disagree).

The 24 questionnaire items in the second and third section were categorized into four categories based on Dörnyei's (2001b) framework. Items 1-6 belong to the first category, creating the basic motivational conditions; items 7-12 belong to the second, generating students' motivation; items 13-18 belong to the third, maintaining and protecting the students' motivation; and items 19-24 belong to the fourth, encouraging positive self-evaluation.

The questionnaire was checked for content validity by three experts in this field, and piloted for reliability with40first year vocational

certificate studentsin a private vocational college in Songkhla. The total Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were 0.95 and 0.92 for students' preference and students' perception respectively. This indicated that the items in the questionnaire were highly reliable.

Interview

Semi-structured interviews were carried out to elicit more useful informationabout the students' preference for the teachers' motivational strategies and their perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies. Seven questions concerning the discovered findings from the questionnaire were asked in Thai in order to make the participants feel free and comfortable to express themselves.This information could be used to discuss and support the findings from the questionnaire. This helped the researcher to better understand the students' preference for the teachers' motivational strategies and their perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies.

Data Collection

Data were collected in November and December, the second semester of Thailand's academic year 2015. The researcher visited 7 private vocational colleges in Songkhla Primary Education Service Area Office 2, briefly informed the students of the objective of the study, and assured that the information and responses were anonymous.

18 participating students (5%) volunteered to participate in the interviews. The students were asked seven questions. Each interview took about 15 minutes. Note taking and tape recording were conducted during the interviews.

Data Analysis

For data from the questionnaire, descriptive statistics, namely mean scores and standard deviation, were used to analyze the students' degree of preference for the teachers' motivational strategies and the level of the students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English in

relation to the teachers' motivational strategies. The criteria for the interpretation of the mean values are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Criteria for the Interpretation of the Mean Value of the Students'
Preference for Teachers' Motivational Strategies and the Students'
Perception of Their Own Motivation toward Learning English

Mean value	Level of preference	Level of perception
4.21-5.00	Most preferred	Strongly agree
3.41-4.20	Greatly preferred	Agree
2.61-3.40	Preferred	Uncertain
1.81-2.60	Slightly preferred	Disagree
1.00-1.80	Least preferred	Strongly disagree

Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to analyze the relationship between students' preference for teachers' motivational strategies and their perception of their own motivation toward learning English. To interpret the correlation coefficient, this study adopted Hinkel et al.'s "Rule of Thumb for Interpreting the Size of a Correlation Coefficient" (2003).

Table 3: Rule of Thumb for Interpreting the Size of a Correlation Coefficient
(Hinkel et al., 2003)

Size of correlation	Interpretation
.90 to 1.00 or -.90 to -1.00	Very strong positive/negative relationship
.70 to .90 or -.70 to -.90	Strong positive/negative relationship
.50 to .70 or -.50 to -.70	Moderate positive/negative relationship
.30 to .50 or -.30 to -.50	Weak positive/negative relationship
.00 to .30 or .00 to -.30	Little if any relationship

For qualitative data, the tape-recorded interviews were transcribed for contents, analyzed, and summarized.

Findings

This section reports findings on the students' preference for the teachers' motivational strategies, their perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to the teachers' motivational strategies and whether there was correlation between these two variables.

The Students' Preference for Teachers' Motivational Strategies

It was found that the average preference level for 24 teachers' motivational strategies was in the range of "greatly preferred" ($\bar{x}$ = 3.63) meaning that the students in general greatly preferred these 24 teachers' motivational strategies. Table 4 summarizes the mean values of the students' preference for the 24 teachers' motivational strategies.

Table 4: Students' Preference for Teachers' Motivational Strategies

No.	Teachers' Motivational Strategy	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of Preference
My English Teachers Create the Motivational Conditions by…				
1	Creating a pleasant and relaxed classroom atmosphere.	3.73	1.00	
2	Accepting my mistakes as a part of learning process.	3.61	0.86	Greatly preferred
3	Being friendly with me.	3.93	1.03	
4	Paying attention to me.	3.69	0.97	
5	Understanding my learning problems.	3.53	0.99	
6	Providing ice-breaking activities at the beginning of the course.	3.45	1.13	
My English teachers generate my motivation by …				
7	Sharing their own experiences of learning the English language to students.	3.62	1.12	
8	Reminding me about the importance of English.	3.55	1.03	
9	Encouraging me to set the goals of learning English.	3.62	1.06	Greatly preferred
10	Encouraging me to learn English in my free time via the Internet, music, and movies.	3.73	1.16	
11	Using interesting teaching materials such as videos and games.	3.76	1.13	
12	Assigning the tasks that are not too easy or difficult for me.	3.58	1.12	

Table 4: Students' Preference for Teachers' Motivational Strategies(Cont.)

No.	Teachers' Motivational Strategy	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of Preference
My English Teachers Maintain and Protect My Motivation by…				
13	Starting an English class with interesting activities.	3.68	1.08	
14	Providing new activities for me.	3.65	1.07	
15	Promoting my self- confidence in learning English.	3.61	1.12	
16	Avoiding making comparison between me and my friends.	3.76	1.10	Greatly preferred
17	Avoiding threatening me in the classroom by having unexpected quizzes.	3.65	1.23	
18	Raising my awareness of the importance of self-motivation.	3.62	1.04	
My English Teachers Encourage My Positive Self-evaluationby…				
19	Asking me to explain what I have learnt in each lesson.	3.39	1.11	
20	Asking me to evaluate my own strengths as an English learner	3.39	1.12	
21	Providing motivational feedback.	3.53	1.04	Greatly preferred
22	Complimenting students on their active participation in the classroom.	3.67	1.08	
23	Recognizing my effort.	3.67	1.09	
24	Offering rewards to successful students in the English classroom.	3.62	1.20	
	Average	**3.63**	**0.76**	**Greatly preferred**

As Table 4 shows, 22 teachers' motivational strategies were preferred at the preference level of "greatly preferred", while the rest two items obtained a different degree of preference. That is, these two items were rated at the preference level of "preferred". The three items with the highest mean value were item 3 "My English

teachers create the motivational conditions by being friendly with me." ($\bar{x}$=3.93), item 11 "My English teachers generate my motivation by using interesting teaching materials such as videos and games." ($\bar{x}$=3.76), and item 16 "My English teachers maintain and protect my motivation by avoiding making comparison between me and my friends." ($\bar{x}$=3.76). These three items belong to the first, second, and third category respectively. Regarding the highest mean value item concerning the friendly behaviors of the teachers, the students explained during the interview that the friendliness of the teachers made them feel relaxed while they were learning English. They felt free to ask for more explanations when they did not understand lessons. Overall, they preferred to learn English with the teachers who displayed friendly behaviors.

On the other hand, the three items with the lowest mean value were item 19 "My English teachers encourage my positive self-evaluation by asking me to explain what I have learnt in each lesson." ($\bar{x}$=3.39), item 20 "My English teachers encourage my positive self-evaluation byasking me to evaluate my own strengths as an English learner." ($\bar{x}$=3.39), and item 6 "My English teachers create the motivational conditions by providing ice-breaking activities at the beginning of the course." ($\bar{x}$=3.45). Regarding the items with the lowest mean value, items 19 and 20, the students stated that it would be better if the teachers asked them to do exercises or assignments for assessing their understanding. This is because sometime it was hard for them to explain what they have learnt in each lesson. The students also stated that they did not know how to evaluate their own strengths as an English learner; therefore, they did not prefer this strategy.

Table 5: Students' Preference for Teachers' Motivational Strategies Based on Categories.

Motivational strategy category	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Level of preference
Maintaining and protecting students' motivation	6	3.61	3.76	3.66	Greatly preferred
Creating the basic motivational conditions	6	3.45	3.93	3.65	
Generating students' motivation	6	3.55	3.76	3.64	Greatly preferred
Encouraging positive self-evaluation	6	3.39	3.67	3.54	
Total	**24**	**3.39**	**3.93**	**3.63**	**Greatly preferred**

Table 5 shows that the mean values of the students' preference for motivational strategies under all four categories fell in the range of "greatly preferred". The category with the highest mean value was the third category, maintaining and protecting students' motivation ($\bar{x}$=3.66), followed by creating the basic motivational conditions ($\bar{x}$=3.65), generating students' motivation ($\bar{x}$=3.64), and encouraging positive self-evaluation ($\bar{x}$=3.54) respectively. However, the mean value of each category was just slightly different meaning that the students' degree of preference for motivational strategies in each category was almost equal.

The Students' Perception of Their Own Motivation toward Learning English

On the whole, Table 6 shows that the average students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies was in the range of "agree" ($\bar{x}$=3.94) level. This indicates that participating students agreed that all 24 teachers' motivational strategies can motivate them to learn English. Table 6 summarizes the mean values of the students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies.

Table 6: Students' Perception of Their Own Motivation toward Learning English.

No.	Teachers' Motivational Strategy	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of perception
The following conditions motivate me to learn English.				
1	My English teachers create a pleasant and relaxed classroom atmosphere.	4.05	0.91	
2	My English teachers accept my mistakes as a part of learning process.	3.80	0.92	
3	The friendliness of my teachers	4.08	0.98	
4	The attention of my teachers	3.95	0.98	Agree
5	Teachers' understanding of my learning problems	3.83	1.04	
6	Teachers' use of ice-breaking activities at the beginning of the course	3.68	1.11	
I get motivated to learn English when my English teachers…				
7	Share their own experiences of learning the English language in the classroom.	3.89	1.01	
8	Remind me about the importance of English.	3.88	0.94	
9	Encourage me to set my own goals of learning English.	3.96	0.94	
10	Encourage me to learn English in my free time via the Internet, music, and movies.	4.04	0.94	Agree
11	Use interesting teaching materials such as videos and games.	4.04	0.99	
12	Assign the tasks that are not too easy or difficult for me.	4.09	0.92	
My motivation to Learn English is Maintained and Protected When My English Teachers…				
13	Start an English class with interesting activities.	4.11	0.89	
14	Provide me with new activities.	4.06	0.91	
15	Promote my self- confidence in learning English.	4.02	0.97	Agree
16	Avoid making comparison between me and my friends.	4.07	0.98	

Table 6: Students' Perception of Their Own Motivation toward Learning English (Cont.)

No.	Teachers' Motivational Strategy	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of perception
The following conditions motivate me to learn English.				
17	Avoid threatening me in the classroom by having unexpected quizzes.	4.05	0.99	
18	Raise my awareness of the importance of self-motivation toward learning English.	3.92	0.99	
I have positive self-evaluation and I am motivated to learn English when my English teachers…				
19	Ask me to explain what I have learnt in each lesson.	3.73	1.09	
20	Ask me to evaluate my own strengths as an English learner.	3.75	1.01	
21	Provide motivational feedback.	3.87	0.94	Agree
22	Compliment students on their active participation in the classroom.	3.96	0.95	
23	Recognize my effort.	4.04	0.99	
24	Offer rewards to successful students in the English classroom.	3.91	1.08	
	Average	**3.94**	**0.70**	**Agree**

Table 6 shows that the mean values of the 24 items fell in the range of "agree" ($\bar{x}$ =3.94). The three items with the highest mean value were item 13 "My motivation to learn English is maintained and protected when my English teachers start an English class with interesting activities." ($\bar{x}$ =4.11), item 12 "I get motivated to learn English when my English teachers assign the tasks that are not too easy or difficult for me." ($\bar{x}$=4.09), and item 3 "The friendliness of my teachers" ($\bar{x}$=4.08). These three items belong to the third, second, and first category respectively.

On the contrary, the three items with the lowest mean value were item 6 "Teachers' use of ice-breaking activities at the beginning of the course." ($\bar{x}$=3.68), item 19 "I have positive self-evaluation and I am motivated to learn English when my English teachers ask me to explain

what I have learnt in each lesson." ($\bar{x}$=3.73), and item 20 "I have positive self-evaluation and I am motivated to learn English when my English teachers ask me to evaluate my own strengths as an English learner." ($\bar{x}$=3.75). However, students' level of perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to the three items with the lowest mean value fell in the range of "agree".

Interestingly, the items with the highest and lowest mean value concern the teachers' use of activities in the classroom. Based on the interview, the students explained that the teachers' use of activities in the classroom could motivate them to learn English. This is because the interesting activities at the beginning of the class made the ordinary class more interesting. These activities could draw their attention. However, the students added that the activities should relate to the lessons that they were going to study. When the activities did not relate to the lessons, it was hard for them to switch their concentration to the lessons after doing activities. The students explained that most ice-breaking activities did not relate to English lessons; therefore, they felt lazy to start learning the new lessons after finishing ice-breaking activities. This finding from the interview probably explains why the mean value of the item 6 was lower than that of item 13 which also concerns the teachers' use of activities in the classroom.

Table 7: Students' Perception of Their Own Motivation toward Learning English Based on Categories of Teachers' Motivational Strategies

Motivational strategy category	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Level of perception
Maintaining and protecting students' motivation	6	3.92	4.11	4.04	Agree
Generating students' motivation	6	3.88	4.09	3.98	
Creating the basic motivational conditions	6	3.68	4.08	3.89	
Encouraging positive self-evaluation	6	3.73	4.04	3.87	
Total	**24**	**3.68**	**4.11**	**3.94**	**Agree**

Table 7 shows that the students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies under all four categories fell in the range of "agree". The category with the highest mean value was the third category, maintaining and protecting students' motivation ($\bar{x}$=4.04), followed by generating students' motivation ($\bar{x}$=3.98), creating the basic motivational conditions ($\bar{x}$=3.89), and encouraging positive self-evaluation ($\bar{x}$=3.87) respectively.

Correlation between the Students' Preference for Teachers' Motivational Strategies and Their Perception of Their Own Motivation toward Learning English

As Table 8 shows, the students' preference for all 24 teachers' motivational strategies significantly correlated with students' perception of their own motivation at the level of 0.01. Table 8 summarizes the correlation coefficients (r) of the correlation between these two variables by items.

Table 8: Correlation between the Students' Preference for Teachers' Motivational Strategies and The Students' Perception of Their Own Motivation toward Learning English.

No.	Teachers' motivational strategy	R	Correlation level
1	Creating a pleasant and relaxed classroom a tmosphere.	.48**	
2	Accepting my mistakes as a part of learning process.	.42**	Weak positive relationship
3	Being friendly with me.	.47**	
4	Paying attention to me.	.45**	
5	Understanding my learning problems.	.45**	
6	Providing ice-breaking activities at the beginning of the course.	.53**	Moderate positive relationship
7	Sharing their own experiences of learning the	.52**	
8	English language to students.	.50**	

Table 8: Correlation between the Students' Preference for Teachers' Motivational Strategies and The Students' Perception of Their Own Motivation toward Learning English (Count.)

No.	Teachers' motivational strategy	R	Correlation level
9	Encouraging me to set the goals of learning English.	.46**	
10	Encouraging me to learn English in my free time via the Internet, music, and movies.	.39**	Weak positive relationship
11	Using interesting teaching materials such as videos and games.	.38** .	
12	Assigning the tasks that are not too easy or difficult for me.	52**	Moderate positive relationship
13	Starting an English class with interesting activities.	.49**	
14	Providing new activities for me.	.45**	
15	Promoting my self- confidence in learning English.	.41**	Weak positive relationship
16	Avoiding making comparison between me and my friends.	.49**	
17	Avoiding threatening me in the classroom by having unexpected quizzes.	.50**	Moderate positive relationship
18	Raising my awareness of the importance of self-motivation.	.48**	Weak positive relationship
19	Asking me to explain what I have learnt in each lesson.	.53**	Moderate positive relationship
20	Asking me to evaluate my own strengths as an English learner.	.50**	
21	Providing motivational feedback.	.47**	Weak positive relationship
22	Complimenting students on their active participation in the classroom.	.41**	
23	Recognizing my effort.	.54**	Moderate positive relationship
24	Offering rewards to successful students in the English classroom.	.58**	

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01level.

As shown in Table 8, the correlation between the students' preference for teachers' motivational strategies and the students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies ranged from 0.38 to 0.58 and they were significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates that the correlations between these variables ranged from the correlation level of "weak positive relationship" to that of "moderate positive relationship". It was found that there were weak positive relationships for 15 items, while the rest 9 items were found to have moderate positive relationship.

It should be pointed out that 3 of 9 items with moderate positive relationship (items 6, 19, and 20) were the items with the lowest mean value for both the students' level of preference for teachers' motivational strategies and the students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies. This indicates that the teachers' motivational strategies which were least preferred by the students least motivated them to learn English. These findings were confirmed by the correlation coefficients of these three items which show that the students' preference for these three motivational strategies had significant moderate positive relationship with their perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to these three strategies.

Discussion and Conclusion

This section discusses the vocational certificate students' preference for the teachers' motivational strategies, their perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies and the correlation between these two variables.

Regarding the students' preference for the teachers' motivational strategies, overall, 22 motivational strategies were preferred at the "greatly preferred" level, whereas only two strategies were preferred at the "preferred" level. These two preferred strategies belong to the fourth category, encouraging positive self-evaluation, which was relatively least preferred by the students as shown in Table 5. The results from the interview show that these two items were not preferred by the

students because they thought that self-evaluation was not easy for them. Probably self-evaluation is a high level skill; therefore, the students could not do it by themselves without the teachers' guidance or self-evaluation tools. While two of the strategies under the fourth category placed a demand on the students, all strategies under the other three categories, creating motivational conditions, promoting students' motivation, and maintaining and protecting students' motivation, were performed by the teachers. Therefore, it was not hard for them to follow those strategies that the teachers used in the classroom. This might explain why teachers' motivational strategies under the fourth category was least preferred by the students. However, it should be noted that the mean value of each category of teachers' motivational strategies was just slightly different meaning that the students' degree of preference for the teachers' motivational strategies in each category was almost equal.

The findings obtained from the questionnaire and the interview confirmed that the most preferred motivational strategy of the first year vocational certificate students was the friendliness of the English teachers. This finding confirms the research result of Gorham and Christophel (1992) that a very motivating teacher behavior was friendly attitude of the teachers.

In regard to students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies, the students agreed that the teachers' use of all the 24 motivational strategies could motivate them to learn English. The participating students most agreed that they felt motivated if the class was started with interesting activities. This strategy belongs to the third category, maintaining and protecting students' motivation, which was clearly shown in Table 7 as the most motivating category. Interestingly, Table 5 shows that strategies under this category were most preferred by the students indicating that the strategies under the third category were most preferred and most motivate the students to learn English.

For the most motivating strategy, the interview with the students showed that interesting activities could attract their attention and

motivate them to learn English. According toDörnyei (1994), teachers must increase attractiveness of the lessons by employing interesting and attractive teaching activities to enhance students' learning motivation.

Interestingly, it was found that the three items with the lowest mean value (items 6, 19, and 20) of the students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies completely match the three items with the lowest mean value (items 6, 19, and 20) of the students' preference for teachers' motivational strategies. These three strategies were also found to have significant moderate positive relationship. This findings confirm that the first year vocational certificate students least preferred these three strategies and they also least motivated the students to learn English. On the other hand, only one of the three items with the highest mean value (item 3) of the students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English matches that of the students' preference for teachers' motivational strategies. This might be because the students varied in their preferred strategies which, in turn, affects their perception of their own motivation toward learning English. Therefore, only one matching item was found among the three items with the highest mean value.

Regarding the correlation between the students' preference for teachers' motivational strategies and their perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies, although, on the whole the correlation between these two variables was not very strong, the students' preference for all 24 teachers' motivational strategies significantly correlated with the students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English. These findings were supported by the interview results which show that all teachers' motivational strategies that were preferred by the students could motivate them to learn English. The students added that the teachers' use of more preferred strategies affects their strong desire to learn in that particular class. This particular finding can fill the gap of the inconclusive finding of previous study

by Cho and Teo (2013) because the correlation was found between the students' preference for teachers' motivational strategies and the students' perception of their own motivation toward learning English in relation to teachers' motivational strategies. This indicates that the teachers should employ the strategies that are preferred by the students in the classroom. All of the preferred strategies can enhance students' motivation toward learning English.

Recommendations

The results of this study suggest that the English teachers in vocational colleges should continually employ the 22 motivational strategies that were preferred by the students. Although the other two strategies, "asking students to explain what they have learnt in each lesson" and "asking students to evaluate their own strengths as an English learner", were preferred at the "preferred" level, it does not mean that the teachers should not employ these strategies in the English classroom. These two strategies were good ways to encourage students' positive self-evaluation, but the first year vocational certificate students may not be adequately prepared for them. Self-evaluation requires a high level skill and the students may not be ready to do it by themselves; hence, the teachers should provide the students with guidance and self-evaluation tools such as assignments, questionnaires, and check lists for self-evaluation. In addition, the teachers should find new strategies to encourage students' positive self-evaluation. This is because it was found that the strategies under this category were least preferred and they least motivated the students to learn English.

Moreover, the results of the study suggested that the teachers should employ the activities that serve purposes of English lessons. This is because it was found that the activities related to the lessons were preferred and they could motivate the students to learn English.

This research is a self-report study. The participants had to recall their levels of preference for teachers' motivational strategies and their perception of their own motivation toward learning English

in relation to those strategies in order to complete the questionnaire and give more detailed information during the interviews. To directly examine cause and effect relationship between the students' preference for teachers' motivational strategies and their motivation toward learning English, a different research design is required. Further studies could employ interventions which can explore direct effects of teachers' motivational strategies and students' preference for teachers' motivational strategies on students' motivation toward learning English.

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