

CHPATER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings on attitude and motivation as Social-psychological factors affecting non-native English speaking students on their English proficiency. These results were obtained from on-line questionnaires distributed to 207 graduate students from the August 2007 intake, who were enrolled in the Master's degree program in School of Environment, Resources and Development at Asian Institute of Technology.

77 students, representing around 33% of the total population of 207, completed this on-line questionnaire via <http://www.quicktionnaire.com/index.php?sid=15491&lang=en> and submitted it electronically. The result were presented using descriptive statistics and were tabulated in ranking format by frequency, means, standard deviation (S.D.) The correlation analysis through SPSS program version 16.0 was applied to this study to understand the relationship between English proficiency and factors on attitude, motivation and exposure to English.

The questionnaire was divided into four parts consisting of closed-ended questions, open-ended questions, and five-point Likert weighted scale to find out; 1) Background information 2) English Proficiency Level 3) Attitude, Motivation and Exposure to English and 4) the students' opinions on having English proficiency.

4.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 5. Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Female	45	58.4
Male	32	41.6
Total	77	100

Table 5 presents the gender of the total 77 respondents. The majority of respondents were female, 58.4 %, and the minority of the respondents were male, 41.6%.

Table 6. Age Range of the Respondents

Age Range of Respondents	Frequency	Percent (%)
25-30 years	53	68.8
31-35 years	16	20.8
36-40 years	8	10.4
Total	77	100

Respondents aged between 25-30 years were significantly shared more than half, 68.8%, of the total respondents. There were about 20.8% of aged between 31-35 years, while respondents aged between 36-40 years account for 10.4%.

Table 7. Number of years since starting to learn English

Number of years since starting to learn English	Frequency	Percent (%)
Less than 12 years	37	48.1
12-15 years	12	15.6
More than 15 years	28	36.4
Total	77	100

Table 7 shows that the majority of students started learning English less than 12 years ago.

Table 8. Experience in using English

Experience in using English in previous studies/jobs before joining AIT	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	41	53.2
No	36	46.8
Total	77	100

Respondent who had experience in using English before joining AIT accounted for 53.2% of the total number of respondents, whereas 46.8% had no such experience .

Table 9. Academic Background

Academic Background	Frequency	Percent (%)
Technical /Engineering	48	62.3
Science	25	32.5
Social Science/ Humanities	4	5.2
Total	77	100

The respondents who held a bachelor degree of a technical or engineer nature accounted for the largest portion of the total respondents, (i.e. 48 students or 62.3%). 25 respondents, 32.5%, were from a science background while respondents with bachelor degree in Social Science/Humanities comprised of only 5.2% of the total 77 respondents.

4.2 ENGLISH PROFICIENCY LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 10. English Proficiency Level

English Placement Test Score	Frequency	Percent (%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Interviewee Test Scores: (1st Test/EIT) 		
Less than 5.0	19	24.68
5.0-5.4	24	31.17
5.5-5.9	30	38.96
6.0 and above	4	5.19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Writing Placement Test Scores: (2nd Test/AWPT) 		
Less than 5.0	0	0.00
5.0-5.4	16	20.78
5.5-5.9	15	19.48
6.0 and above	46	59.74
Total	77	100

At the English Interviewee Test (EIT), only 5.19% of respondent obtained a score of 6.0 or above. The majority of the respondents' EIT score was between 5.0-5.4 points, 31.17%, and 5.5-5.9 point, 19.48 %.

The number of respondents who achieved a score of 6.0 and above from the Academic Writing Placement Test (AWPT) increased to 59.74 %, while no respondent received a score less than 5.0.

4.3 THE INTERNAL FACTORS, ATTITUDE AND MOTIVATION, THAT AFFECT ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF THE RESPONDENTS

The respondents were asked to rate their opinion about factors on attitude and motivation that could affect their English proficiency according to the degree of agreement or disagreement, starting as follows;

Strongly Agree (SA)	=	5	points
Agree (A)	=	4	points
Uncertain/Indifferent (U/I)	=	3	points
Disagree (D)	=	2	points
Strongly Disagree (SD)	=	1	points

4.3.1 EFFECT OF ATTITUDE ON ACQUIRING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Table 11 indicates that the factors on getting a better chance for job/ promotion after graduation than other colleagues has the highest mean – 4.57, followed by factor on advantage in pursuing their higher education at AIT – 4.53. The results suggest the respondents' perceptions in achieving advancement on their career path through higher education. However, from another aspect, this has not been reflected much in their opinion on factor of getting socially more respected if they know English well. – 3.65.

Table 11. Degree of Agreement about Factors on Attitude toward English Proficiency

Statements on Attitude	Mean	S.D.
1) I believe that with better English proficiency skill I will have a better chance to get job/	4.57	1.09

(table continues)

Table 11. (continued)

promotion after graduation than other colleagues.		
2) I believe that good English Proficiency Skill is useful for pursuing my higher education at AIT.	4.53	1.10
3) I like to know people from other countries and that requires good English skill	4.32	1.13
4) I could achieve higher GPA if I have good English proficiency	4.06	1.32
5) I think a well-educated-person should know English.	3.92	1.45
6) I will be socially more respected if I know English well.	3.65	1.60
Total	4.18	1.28

4.3.2 EFFECT OF MOTIVATION ON ACQUIRING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY SKILL

The respondents were asked to rate their opinion about factors on motivation that could affect their English Proficiency according to the degree of agreement or disagreement, starting as follows;

Table 12. Degree of Agreement about Factors on Motivation toward English Proficiency

Statements on Motivation	Mean	S.D.
1) Learning English is important for me to get career advancement or to get a good job after graduation.	4.60	1.09
2) Learning English will enable me to pursue for a higher education level in an international program.	4.52	1.10
3) Learning English is necessary in my field of study	4.31	1.22
4) Learning English enables me to join more freely in the multicultural activities with friends at AIT.	4.10	1.28
Total	4.36	1.17

The highest mean score, 4.60, fell in the factor of importance in learning English for the respondents to get career advancement or to get a good job after graduation. Similarly, the factor on Learning English will enable them to pursue a higher education level in an international program, with mean score – 4.52. These top-two-mean scores present those factors on motivation as the driving force of the respondents to pursue their higher graduation under an international program.

4.4 EFFECT OF ENGLISH EXPOSURE ON ACQUIRING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

The respondents were asked to rate their opinions about factors on exposure to English that could affect their English proficiency according to the degree of agreement or disagreement, as follows:

Table 13. Exposure to English

Statement on Exposure to English	Mean	S.D.
1) Regular presentations in English during my studies in AIT improve my English	4.38	1.14
2) The multicultural environment at AIT and interaction among various nationalities at AIT help me to improve my English.	4.30	1.12
3) Participation in extracurricular activities helps me to improve my English.	4.30	1.21
4) The course-instructors and method of teaching at the Language Center encourage me to improve my English.	4.10	1.17
5) Living on AIT campus allows me to use English in my daily life.	4.01	1.30
6) The course-content of the courses offered at the Language Center encourages me to improve my English.	3.90	1.17
7) I need to be good at English for accessing research	3.90	1.37

(table continues)

Table 13. (continued)

labs and the library at AIT.		
8) Participation in various gatherings like, Welcome show, Food festival, Cultural show organized by AIT help me to improve my English.	3.80	1.10
9) Reading e- mails sent from different units in AIT help me to get a better understanding of English.	3.79	1.36
Total	4.05	1.22

The factor regular presentations in English during the respondents' studies at AIT improve his/her English plays a major role in exposure to English with the top mean score of 4.38. The factor on 'Multicultural environment of AIT and interaction among various nationalities at AIT', and 'Participation in the extracurricular, activities helped them to improve their English were equally rated with the same mean score of 4.30.

4.5 THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG THE RESPONDENTS' ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TOWARDS FACTORS ON ATTITUDE, MOTIVATION AND EXPOSURE TO ENGLISH.

The findings addressed the strength of linear relationship in pairs among these variables; AWPT Score, attitude, motivation and exposure to English of the respondents.

According to Table 4.6.1, the significance of the correlation coefficient is at 0.01 level with two-tailed decision. The resulting coefficient in pairs between attitude and motivation accounts for the highest value of correlation coefficient at 0.926, followed by correlation coefficient value between exposure to English towards attitude and motivation at 0.889. The AWPT score's correlation coefficient with motivation, attitude and exposure to English presents the value at 0.411, 0.319 and 0.306 respectively.

Table 14. Correlation Coefficients Factors on Attitude, Motivation and Exposure to English on English Proficiency,

Variable		AWPT Score	Attitude	Motivation	Exposure to English
AWPT Score	Pearson Correlation	1	.319**	.411**	.306**
Attitude	Pearson Correlation	.319**	1	.926**	.889**
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	.411**	.926**	1	.889**
Exposure to English	Pearson Correlation	.306**	.889**	.889**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.6 THE RESULTS FROM INTERVIEWS ABOUT OPINION ON HAVING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Twenty five respondents from the total of 77 provided response to the descriptive type questions.

On the question of English proficiency of respondents, the majority of the student who responded generally felt that they have moderately good quality of English proficiency. The responses received included “it is moderate level”, “OK just enough to survive”, “Good but not adequate for further application”. Only two respondents felt that their English proficiency level was below standard.

The comments on this correlate with the fact that the majority of respondent scored between 5-6 in the AWP Test, which, according to score definition of AWPT score indicates that the students have moderate level of English.

On the question of improvement in teaching and social environment of AIT, they are looking to enhance their English proficiency, the respondent looks too diversified. On the aspect of improvement in teaching environment, few felt that faculties should spend more time with students. There were some respondents who felt that the test should be designed assess all areas like writing, reading, speaking and listening. On

Social aspect, the respondents generally agree on the point that the multicultural environment helps improve their proficiency if the students from different countries help each other more to improve their language and organize more social and community activities. There were a number of respondents who did not suggest any improvements but felt that the English proficiency classes provided by the language center at AIT helped to develop their skill of writing technical papers and presentations.

The majority of respondents felt that with a better communication skill in English they will have more chance to get high salary job globally and probably that serves a single most important driving factor of motivation in acquiring English proficiency skills. Some respondents consider the ability to express views to people from other countries, the ability to make friends with people from other countries and the increased ability to understand international news as some of the many benefits of acquiring English skills.

As mentioned earlier, since only some of respondents provided their views on these open- end questions, it is difficult to provide a generalized idea about their views on these issues. The author here discussed the responses which provide closest representation of the view of the respondents.