



## **Research Report**

# ***A Study on Factors Affecting Thai Taxi Drivers' English Competence***

**By**

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the factors affecting Thai taxi drivers' English competence. A sample of 342 taxi drivers answered questionnaires and performed tasks measuring their English language ability and the factors affecting their language ability. The taxi drivers are all Thais and were sampled from three zones within the Bangkok metropolis. The research instruments included the test and the questionnaires. The data collection was carried out from January to May 2016.

A structural equation model (SEM), based on relevant theories and research findings, was also constructed to explain the factors affecting the taxi drivers' English language competence. Based on the literature review, the following seven hypotheses were set:

1. There is a significant relationship between Thai taxi drivers' past education and training and their English language competence.
2. Thai taxi drivers' attitudes toward foreign passengers affect their English language competence and are related to their motivation to learn English.
3. Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English affects their English language competence.
4. Thai taxi drivers' independent English language learning behavior positively affects their English language competence.
5. There is a significant relationship between Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English and their attitudes toward foreign passengers.
6. Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English and their independent language learning behavior are related.
7. Thai taxi drivers' prior exposure to English is related to their independent language learning behavior.

A proposed model explaining the relationship between the exogenous and endogenous variables was tested against empirical data. For data analysis, LISREL version 8.72, statistical analysis software, was used to analyze the data. After some adjustments to the proposed model, it aligned and fitted with the data collected. The results showed that all of the set hypotheses above were confirmed by the empirical data.

The results showed that all of the set hypotheses were supported by the empirical evidence. The model was fitted with the Chi-square of 53.821, CFI of 0.996, NFI of 0.972, GFI of 0.977, and RMSEA of 0.022. The majority of Thai taxi drivers' English language competence was at a low level (Mean = 2.50). It was also found that their educational background and English language training significantly affected their English competence directly and indirectly.

The findings imply that the majority of Thai taxi drivers are motivated to learn and use English with foreign visitors. However, their humble English competence means that they need more support in terms of training opportunities, including content and methods that are flexible and practical.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Abstract.....</i>	<i>i</i>
<i>Acknowledgements.....</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Table of Contents .....</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>List of Tables.....</i>	<i>vii</i>
<i>List of Figures.....</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>List of Abbreviations .....</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>1. Introduction .....</i>	<i>1</i>
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	2
1.3 Significance of the Study .....	3
1.4 Aim and Research question .....	4
1.5 Definitions of Key Terms .....	4
1.6 Expected Benefits .....	6
1.7 Outline of the Report .....	7
<i>2. Literature review.....</i>	<i>8</i>
2.1 Thai Taxi Cab Drivers and Their Challenges .....	8
2.2 Characteristics of Thai Taxi Drivers' English .....	9
2.3 English Language Competence.....	11
2.4 Roles of Cultural and Attitudinal Elements .....	12
2.5 English Language Competence of Thai Taxi Drivers.....	13
2.6 Factors Affecting Language Competence.....	14
2.7 Relevant Studies.....	19
2.8 Structural equation modeling (SEM) .....	22

2.9 Hypotheses.....	27
<i>3. Method.....</i>	<i>28</i>
3.1 The Proposed Model.....	28
3.2 Sampling and Population.....	32
3.3 Research Instruments.....	34
3.4 Data Analysis.....	41
<i>4. Findings.....</i>	<i>42</i>
4.1 General Characteristics.....	42
4.2 Taxi drivers' English Competence.....	48
4.3 Attitudes and Motivation.....	50
4.4 Independent English language learning behavior (ILB).....	54
4.5 Structural Equation Modeling Analyses.....	57
4.6 Hypothesis Testing Results.....	61
<i>5. Discussions.....</i>	<i>63</i>
5.1 English Language Competence of Thai Taxi Drivers.....	63
5.2 Significance of education and training.....	65
5.3 Attitudes towards Non-Thai Passengers.....	65
5.4 Effects of Motivation.....	66
5.5 Independent English language learning behavior (ILB).....	67
5.6 Work Conditions and Language Development.....	68
<i>6. Conclusion and Recommendations.....</i>	<i>70</i>
6.1 Conclusion.....	70
6.2 Recommendations.....	71
<i>References.....</i>	<i>73</i>
Thai.....	73
English.....	75
<i>Appendices.....</i>	<i>81</i>
A: Tests and Questionnaires.....	81

B: Content Validity .....	89
C: LISREL Output .....	93
About the Researcher .....	106

DRAFT

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Population and samples .....	32
Table 2 Data collection zones.....	34
Table 3 English language competence's interpretation framework .....	36
Table 4 Interpretation framework of Attitudes towards foreign passengers .....	37
Table 5 Motivation interpretation framework .....	38
Table 6 ILB interpretation framework.....	39
Table 7 Reliability of scales.....	40
Table 8 Gender of respondents.....	42
Table 9 Age of respondents .....	43
Table 10 Number of Days off per week.....	44
Table 11: Work hours per week.....	45
Table 12 Education of respondents.....	46
Table 13 Frequency of English language training.....	47
Table 14 Types of taxis.....	48
Table 15 Education and training.....	48
Table 16: Self-assessment of English competence.....	49
Table 17 English language performance of the taxi drivers .....	50
Table 18 Affection-oriented attitudes towards foreign passengers (AOA) .....	51
Table 19 Behavior-oriented attitudes (BOA) .....	51
Table 20 Cognition-oriented attitudes (COA) .....	52
Table 21 Intrinsic motivation to learn English (IMO) .....	53
Table 22 Extrinsic motivation to learn English (EMO) .....	53
Table 23 Learning from experts (LFE).....	54
Table 24 Learning from media (LFM) .....	55
Table 25 learning by reading and note-taking (LBR).....	55



Table 26 Learning by using the language (LBU) .....	56
Table 27 Means and SD of the 4 Modes of Independent Language Learning Behavior.....	56
Table 28 Correlation between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.....	57
Table 29 Hypothesis testing results .....	61

DRAFT

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure1: Ordered Stages of L2 Development (Vainikka and Young-Scholten , 1991).....	10
Figure 2: Relationship between language, communication, and culture .....	12
Figure3: The Proposed Model.....	29
Figure 4: The relationship between five latent variables.....	58

DRAFT

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

No.	Abbreviation	Meaning
1	<b>AGFI</b>	Adjusted Goodness –Of-Fit Index
2	<b>AgrP</b>	Agreement inflection stage
3	<b>AOA</b>	Affection-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers
4	<b>ATF</b>	Attitudes toward Foreign Passengers
5	<b>BOA</b>	Behavior-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers
6	<b>CFI</b>	Confirmatory Fit Index
7	<b>COA</b>	Cognition-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers
8	<b>EAT</b>	Education and Training
9	<b>ELC</b>	English Language Competence
10	<b>EMO</b>	Extrinsic Motivation to learn English
11	<b>GFI</b>	Good of Fitness Index,
12	<b>ILB</b>	Independent English Language Learning Behavior
13	<b>IMO</b>	Integrative Motivation to learn English
14	<b>IP</b>	Inflected phrase stage
15	<b>LBR</b>	Learning by Reading and Note-taking
16	<b>LBU</b>	Learning by Using the language
17	<b>LFE</b>	Learning from experts
18	<b>LFM</b>	Learning from Media
19	<b>LISREL</b>	Linear Structural Relations
20	<b>MLE</b>	Motivation to Learn English
21	<b>NFI</b>	Normed Fit Index
22	<b>RMR</b>	Root Mean Square Residual
23	<b>RMSEA</b>	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
24	<b>SEE</b>	Self-Evaluation English Competence
25	<b>SEM</b>	Structural Equation Modelling
26	<b>TBC</b>	Test-based English Competence
27	<b>VP</b>	Verb phrase (bare verbs)
28	<b>LBU</b>	Learning by Using the language

# 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the background of this study and states the aim and objectives of the research. In this chapter, the researcher also provides definitions of key terms, the expected benefits, and acknowledges limitations of the study.

## 1.1 Background

Thai taxicab drivers, like most taxi drivers in the world, provide their services to both local and international passengers. Their service is straight forward – taking the passenger from one place to another. Providing the taxi service to the local passengers is not a big problem, and most of them manage to perform their duties with few problems. They, however, have more problems when they have to communicate with foreigners (non-Thai passengers). One of the major causes of those problems is their English competence, which has been found to be humble and many of them lacked necessary cultural knowledge (Thadphoothon, 2014). This realization has, however, never been substantiated with empirical data though systematic studies and problems remain unaddressed.

Taxi drivers' job is often unpredictable when it comes to the passengers. In many occasions, they are required to pick up foreign passengers. When they have to deal with foreign passengers, they have to deal with more service-related challenges such as speaking in English and conversing with those foreign visitors. Often, the communication breaks down. Previous research (Thadphoothon, 2014) reported that many Thai taxi drivers could not understand the English spoken by the foreign visitors, leading to their inability to take those passengers to their destinations. This might lead to many complaints regarding their service quality and tarnish Thailand's image as one of the world's top tourist destinations. An attempt by some private sector companies such as *Uber* and *Grab* encountered resistance and obstacles, firstly, by the majority of Thai taxi drivers, secondly, by the existing Thai transport laws (Tanakasempipat, and Thepgumpanat, 2017).

Despite having to deal with English use challenges on a daily basis, Thai taxi drivers' language competence and factors affecting their language competence have not been

studied and reported. This study is significant as it probes into their English language competence as well as the factors affecting it.

The present research aims to contribute to the existing body of literature by evaluating Thai taxi drivers' English competence and studying the factors contributing to their English language competence. The body of knowledge obtained would be useful for both the taxi drivers and foreign visitors. Moreover, policy makers would be better informed upon launching any policies aiming to improve the taxi service quality.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Taxi drivers have to face English language challenges almost on a daily basis. Besides, every situation they have to encounter is often a new one (Thadphoothon, 2014). Today, they may have to pick up a passenger from India, tomorrow may be a German tourist. Indeed, they have to deal with foreign visitors and solve their immediate problems. Despite unpredictable communication challenges, very few studies have been conducted to address fundamental issues such as their English language skills and the factors determining those skills. This lack of research may hinder any developmental attempts, for example, policies from the government to upgrade the service quality.

It must be acknowledged that some efforts have been made by the government authorities and non-profit organizations, including the media to help improve the English language ability of Thai taxi drivers. First and foremost is the effort by the public organization in charge of licensing all Thai taxi drivers, Thailand's Department of Land Transport (<https://www.dlt.go.th/en/>). The Department, according to Prachachat Online Business (2015), offered a training course for over 400 taxi drivers. The department has also allocated some of their budget to improve the drivers' English language skills. Traffic Radio Society FM 99.5 also organized a training program to enhance taxi drivers' language skills (The Bangkok Post, 2012). Meanwhile, the Office of the Education Council organized a training program to upgrade Thai cab drivers' English skills. The Social Development Unit of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, the local government of Bangkok, also

organized a training program to upgrade Thai taxi drivers' English skills (Social Development Unit of BMA, 2014).

Despite the efforts, the majority of Thai taxi drivers still struggle to communicate in English and this shortcoming significantly affects their image, harms their reputation, and the aspiration of Thailand to explore the benefits of its Thailand 4.0 economic model. According to Education First (2017), citizens with better English skills are directly related to citizens with higher income as well as a better quality of life.

Hence, we need a united effort to successfully plan and implement the policies. Previous research found that the majority of Thai taxi drivers lacked necessary English language skills to provide quality services to foreign visitors, both native and non-native speakers of English (Thadphoothon, 2014). In addition, their work conditions and factors affecting their language skills have not been systematically investigated. The role of the taxi drivers is crucial for Thailand's economic growth and its strategy to move itself out of the middle-income trap (Thailand's Ministry of Commerce, 2017). This study would contribute to the necessary discussions and measures needed to improve the quality of taxi services in Thailand; as well improve the level of English language learning in general.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

This research is significant for three reasons. Firstly, it is perhaps the first and only study in Thailand that actually measures the English language ability of Thai taxi drivers. In this study, the taxi drivers' English competence is measured from the combination of a self-report method and a well-designed test. This, in many respects, makes the findings of the drivers' English competence credible and reliable. Moreover, the subjects under the study were randomly sampled from the areas that they performed their jobs. Secondly, it has reviewed previous literature on language learning and builds a linear structural model to explain the complex nexus of variables that would affect the taxi drivers' English language ability. This would enhance our understanding of the complex social phenomenon. Findings would be useful for policy makers as well as researchers. Lastly, the research has been designed to investigate factors that would be applied to help improve the English skills of

Thai taxi drivers' English competence. Therefore, this would also contribute to the body of literature on second language acquisition.

## 1.4 Aim and Research question

The overarching aim of this study is to investigate the key factors determining Thai taxi drivers' English language competence. The question asked is: What are the salient factors that would affect the English competence of Thai taxi drivers?

## 1.5 Definitions of Key Terms

**Taxi drivers**, in this study, were the 342 Thai taxi drivers sampled to represent the Thai taxi drivers in this study.

**English Language Competence (ELC)** refers to the English language ability and skills of a person or language learner. In English language learning, the learners' language competence entails their grammatical knowledge as well as their ability to use the language or pragmatics (Canale and Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983). In this study, taxi drivers' English competence (ELC) refers to the Thai taxi drivers' English language skills and ability in general. This competence is measured by two factors, namely, (1) their self-assessment referred to as Self-evaluation English competence (SEE), (2) the test-based English competence (TBC), which is the taxi drivers' test performance based on the tests designed by the researcher. Their self-evaluation was determined by the taxi drivers' responses to a set of six self-evaluative statements with five levels of competencies in speaking, reading, writing, overall ability, grammar and vocabulary, and knowledge of foreign culture as for the English performance of the taxi drivers, it was tested via a set (TBC) of three measures: (1) a reading aloud test, (2) an oral interaction test, and (3) a 12-scenario test.

**Attitudes toward Foreign Passengers (ATF)** are the feelings and thoughts of individuals about or towards something, someone, or some phenomena. Those thoughts and feelings are the results of their past experiences, directly, indirectly, or the combination of both. In this study, the attitudes toward the foreign passengers refer to the perceptions of Thai taxi drivers toward the foreign customers or passengers. These attitudes are classified into three foci: behavioral, cognitive, and affective focus. The first focus is called the Affection-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers (AOA), the second focus is called the Behavior-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers (BOA), and the third is called the Cognitive-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers (COA). The scales are all the Likert's scales and all of the statements are developed by the researcher.

**Independent English Language Learning Behavior (ILB)** refers to Thai taxi drivers' responses to a set of items asking about their English language learning behavior. The construct has four components: (1) Learning from Experts (LFE), (2) Learning from Media (LFM), (3) Learning from reading and taking notes (LBR), and (4) Learning through using the language (LBU). This tool measured the frequency of their behavior. The samples respond to the set of Likert's type scale asking them to rate their frequency (e.g. always, never) of learning English independently.

**Motivation to Learn English (MLE)** refers to the reasons why people do something or why they behave in certain manners or ways. In English language learning, the reasons are classified into two categories: extrinsic (external such as monetary rewards) and intrinsic (internal such as having a sense of belonging) motivations (Gardner, 1985). In this study, motivation is determined from Thai taxi drivers' responses to a set of item addressing their



motivation to learn English. Their motivations are categorized into two types: intrinsic (integrative) and extrinsic (instrumental) motivations. Intrinsic motivation refers to the behavior driven by internal rewards such as pride, belongingness, and acceptance. Extrinsic motivation refers to the behavior driven by external rewards such as tips, money, promotion, income, or prizes..

**Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)** refers to a statistical method to analyze latent variables. Under SEM, the proposed relationships between the latent variables are proposed and based on relevant theories. Then the proposed relationship is tested against empirical data.

**Education and Training (EAT)** refers to the Thai taxi drivers' level of educational background and their English language training they have received. The samples respond to two items: Please state your highest education level, and (2) please identify any English language training you have received or undergone.

## **1.6 Expected Benefits**

Findings are expected to provide reliable and timely information for the authorities' concerned to help address the English language ability and skills of Thai taxi drivers. It is also expected that the findings will contribute to the literature on the salient factors leading to language proficiency.

## **1.7 Outline of the Report**

Chapter 1 gives the background of the study, the objectives, definitions of key terms, and the study significance and benefits. Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature and states the hypotheses. Chapter 3 explains the research methods, including the population and sampling technique, the tools and data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the research findings and Chapter 5 discusses the results. The last chapter concludes the research and gives some recommendations.

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## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter reviews the literature related to Thai taxi drivers' English language, communication and competence. It reviews the literature on factors affecting one's English competence and the related research studies. The topics under this chapter are as follows:

2.1 Thai Taxi Cab Drivers and Their Challenges

2.2 Characteristics of Thai Taxi Drivers' English

2.3 English Language Competence

2.4 Roles of Cultural and Attitudinal Elements

2.5 English Language Competence of Thai Taxi Drivers

2.6 Factors Affecting Language Competence

2.7 Relevant Studies

2.8 Structural equation modeling (SEM)

2.9 Hypotheses

### **2.1 Thai Taxi Cab Drivers and Their Challenges**

Thai taxi drivers face several challenges on a daily basis. To start with, the traffic in Bangkok poses a problem for them to perform their duties. When the traffic is bumper to bumper, it is hard for them to earn enough money to pay for the rent. The soaring prices of gasoline and natural gas lessen their income. Public opinion varies when it comes to Thai taxi drivers, many are positive, and some are negative, reflecting the nature of the profession.

Indeed, many of them enter their professions from various backgrounds, as the door is open for almost all Thais to work as taxicab drivers. All they need is a public driving license and some driving experience. This flexibility opens up an opportunity for all Thais to earn a living by driving taxi cabs. Thadphoothon (2014) conducted a classroom research to investigate the cross-

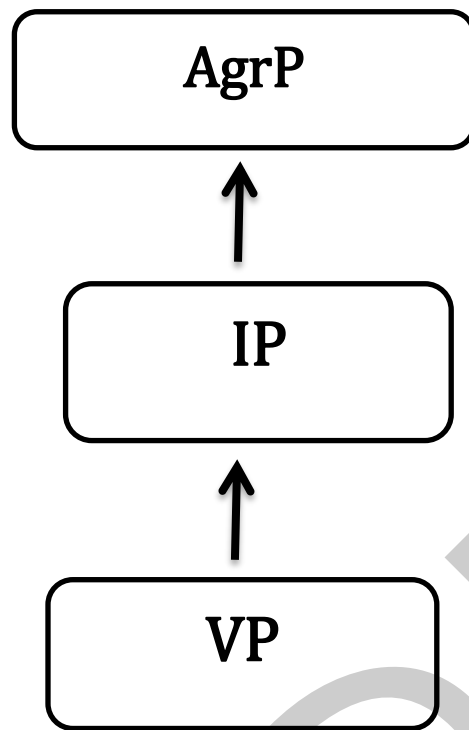
cultural communication challenges of Thai taxi drivers. He reported that their English language skills were poor and many lacked on-the-job training opportunities.

In the Thai context, as mentioned before, the word 'taxi driver' is loaded with pre-conceived notions. Such notions vary as some are positive and some are negative, depending on one's personal experience and background. For some, travelling by taxis in Bangkok may involve some elements of risks, especially for women (Danuvasin, 2015). It may not be surprising to learn that 47% of the people in Bangkok were not confident in the safety of taxis (ABAC Poll 2005, quoted in Seesan, Runkasiri, and Cooharajanane, 2012). At the same time, the same poll found that travelling by taxis is the most convenient type of transport. As workers, they are highly independent, and it must be acknowledged that Thai taxi drivers are among the most neglected workers in Thai society, despite being a part of the 'stakeholders' for the growth of Thai economy and other developmental ambitions. Furthermore, little research has been done to look closely into their lives, plights, challenges, and opportunities.

## **2.2 Characteristics of Thai Taxi Drivers' English**

Previous research conducted by Thadphoothon (2014) found that Thai taxi drivers' English syntactic forms varied according to their levels of proficiency. For the majority of them, their English was limited to the use of shorter sentences or fragmented phrases, individual words or shorter utterances. The linguistic characteristics of their English reflect the natural-order hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1982). The hypothesis states that language learners acquire grammatical structure in a pre-determined order. For example: they are hypothesized to acquire the present continues verb form before the past participle ones.

These findings confirmed what other researchers have discovered regarding the language structures acquired by migrant workers in many European countries. According to Vainikka and Young-Scholten (2007; 2011), the common order can be attributed to the innate universal learning processes of humans.



***Figure1: Ordered Stages of L2 Development (Vainikka and Young-Scholten , 1991)***

In this regard, their English use seemed to support the notion of ordered stages of L2 acquisition proposed by Dulay and Burt (1974), Krashen (1982), and Vainikka and Yong-Scholten (1991). The three stages are (1) the verb phrase (VP) stage where individual verbs are used with little or no inflection, (2) the inflected verb stage (IP), where some forms of inflection can be noticed, and (3) the agreement inflection stage (AgrP) where the learners use correct grammar.

## 2.3 English Language Competence

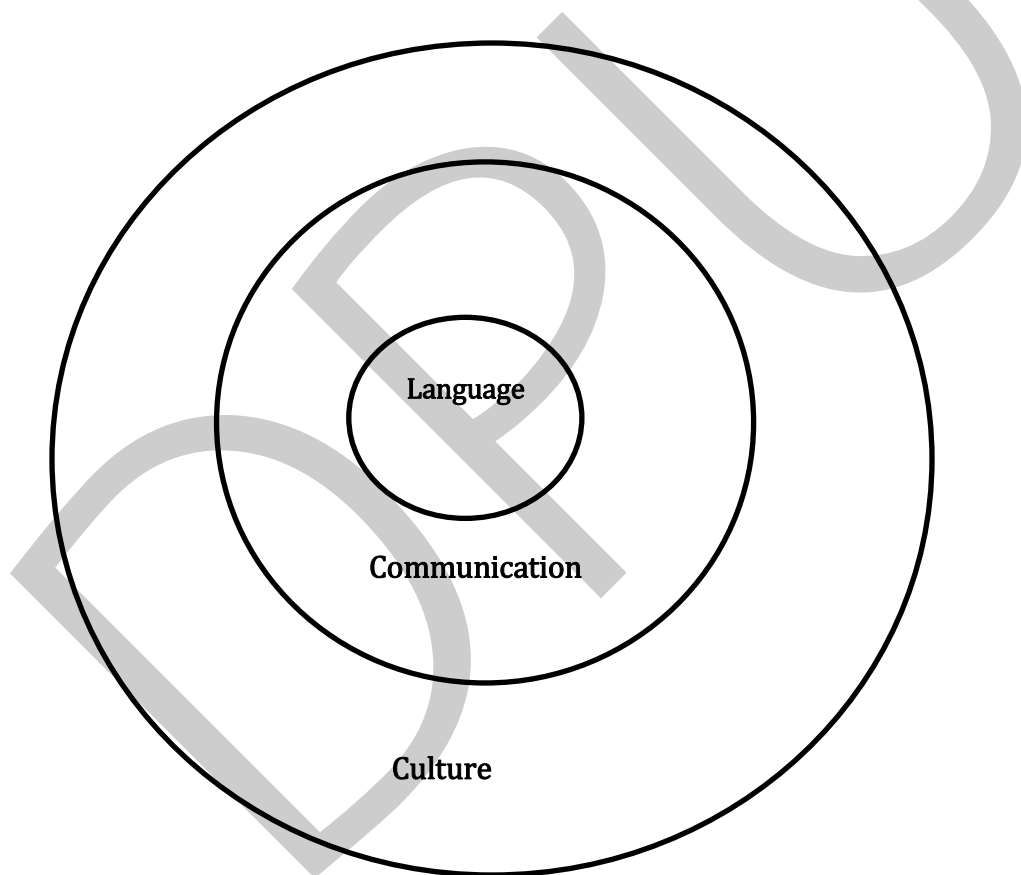
Competence or ability is a complex construct entailing several dimensions. In the literature, the term 'competence' is often associated with the term 'communicative', hence, 'communicative competence' – the ability to communicate successfully. The ability involves not only the mastery of grammar or language form, but also the language use or how to use the language appropriately.

Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist, divides language into two broad components: *langue* and *parole* (de Saussure, 1986). *Langue* refers to the rules of the language and *parole* means speech. In modern terminology, *langue* is the grammar and *parole* is the language use and both are essential for the process of meaning making.

Language learning and teaching scholars such as Canale and Swain (Canale and Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983) propose that the construct 'communicative competence' entails four components, namely, grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Similarly, Bachman and Palmer (1996) conceptualize communicative competence as having both language knowledge and pragmatic knowledge. In other words, a communicative competent person needs to know the grammar and vocabulary and use them for communication appropriately and effectively.

## 2.4 Roles of Cultural and Attitudinal Elements

It is widely accepted that language is part of culture and culture plays a crucial part in communication. Communication, by itself, is a very broad social phenomenon. It may or may not rely on text or verbal elements of language. For example, facial expressions can communicate feelings and emotions. Touching is another element of communication that requires no explicit language forms. Communication, verbal or non-verbal, is to a great extent influenced by culture.



*Figure 2: Relationship between language, communication, and culture*

The above figure shows that language plays an integral part in communication, and both language and communication are influenced by culture. There are many examples to show

the influences of culture on language. In Thai, Vietnamese, and many other Asian languages, the kinship terms are often used to refer to other persons who are not their blood-related relatives. This shows that societies have placed a great deal of value on harmony and togetherness. One would find many more terms referring to oneself and others in Thai language, when compared with English. This also shows the hierarchical tendency of the Thai social structure.

It is important to note that many taxi drivers, when they use English, especially when they greet 'Farang' passengers (Farang is slang for Caucasian), their verbal behavior may be perceived to be rude if they are not aware of the cultural elements embedded in greetings. For example, they may say, 'hey, you, where you go?' to mean, 'Excuse me sir, where would you like to go?' These expressions contain the pronoun 'you', which may sound inappropriate when it is used to address an acquaintance.

## **2.5 English Language Competence of Thai Taxi Drivers**

Previous studies pointed out that Thai taxi drivers' English skills were humble (Thadphoothon, 2014). Their language use was found to be limited to chunks or simple words. As discussed above, their language use reflects their levels of competence.

The challenge of having to speak English to Thai taxi drivers has been recognized by foreign visitors to Thailand. For example, an online discussion on the TripAdvisor website



recommended alternative strategies such as speaking Thai (Tripadvisor, 2016). However, some foreign visitors were surprised when they encountered Thai taxi drivers who could communicate well in English.

## **2.6 Factors Affecting Language Competence**

In this section, the literature related to the factors affecting one's language competence is reviewed. In the literature, the following are the salient factors affecting the language skills of individuals.

### *2.6.1 Attitudes*

One of the factors affecting one's language learning achievement is one's attitudes. In the context of second language acquisition, the notion of attitude is not a new construct (Gardner, 1985:1988). It has been cited as a factor contributing to the language learning variables such as persistence and achievement. In 1975, Burstall reported that primary and secondary school students' attitudes to learning French were significantly related to their success in the language.

Zeinivand, Azizifar, and Gowhary (2015) investigated the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' attitudes toward English and their speaking skills. They found a significant relationship between the learners' attitudes and their speaking skills.

In terms of attitudes, multicomponent models have been regarded as the most influential model. Where attitudes are evaluations of an object or event that has three components:

cognitive, affective, and behavioral (Brown 1992). The first is the cognitive component, referring to the beliefs, thoughts, and attributes that we would associate with an object. Many times a person's attitude might be based on the negative and positive attributes they associate with an object. The second is the affective component, referring to one's feelings or emotions linked to an attitude object. Affective responses influence attitudes in a number of ways. For example, many people are afraid of spiders. So this negative affective response is likely to cause one to have a negative attitude towards spiders. The third is the behavioral component, referring to one's past behaviors or experiences regarding an attitude toward an object. This is the idea describes why people might infer their attitudes from their previous actions.

In addition, Brown (1992) has pointed out that another influence was one's attitude towards speakers of the target language. He noted that students with a positive attitude toward the people speaking or using the target language were more likely to produce better pronunciation because it appears that they were not afraid of the second identity.

### *2.6.2 Motivation*

Motivation is what drives people toward a certain direction. It is one of the factors affecting learners' language ability (Gardner, 1985; Dornyei, & Schmidt, 2001)). Motivation has been perceived as having two dimensions: intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Intrinsic motivation is hypothesized to show itself when learners want to do something from within themselves, which is their internal desire to perform a particular task such as speaking English. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is when learners are moved by someone else or some outside force tries to make them do something.

Benson (1991) investigated the attitudes and motivation of over 300 Japanese university freshmen. He found that the majority of the subjects rated their English skills as low. Moreover, intrinsic (integrative) and personal reasons for learning English were more salient than the external or extrinsic ones. The students perceived English as being useful for some limited modern functions in the Japanese society.

Li and Pan (2009) investigated the relationship between motivation and achievement among 65 university students in China. They found that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations significantly influenced the students' language achievement. However, they reported that intrinsic motivation (integrative motivation) only significantly influenced the high achievers.

Research showed that students who were intrinsically motivated are bound to do much better in classroom activities since they are willing and eager to learn (Li and Pan, 2009). It is also noted that both kinds of motivation are embraced by the learners. According to Brown (2000), intrinsic (integrative) and extrinsic (instrumental) motivations are related. Learners are often motivated by both when they learn a second language. In formal schooling context, students are often found to possess both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons for their learning (Harter and Jackson, 1992).

Despite many conflicting research results, one thing is for sure, that is, motivated students are more successful in second language acquisition than those who are not motivated or less motivated.

### *2.6.3 Education and training*

Education and training play a significant role in language skill development. A report by: the Center for Applied Second Language Studies of the University of Oregon was sponsored by: the U.S. Department of Education (2010) and found that the total number of instructional hours significantly affected the language proficiency level of the students.

In English language learning, the students' proficiency depends on the length of their education, evidenced by the hours of instruction received. ETS (2015) reported that 80 percent of TOEIC takers had spent more than 6 years studying English. ETS also reports that test takers with higher educational levels scored on average higher than those with lower educational levels.

Previous research conducted by Thadphoothon (2014) also found a strong correlation between Thai taxi drivers' educational background and their English language skills.

### *2.6.4 Learning Habits*

Research has revealed that test performance is closely related to the students' learning habits. Estes and Richards (1985, p. 11), for example, suggested that test performance was related to the study behaviors of the students. Students who performed well were those who were equipped with the inquisitiveness factor. Furthermore, it was also found that the inquisitive students appear to approach their study with "an attitude of questioning,

constantly thinking of ways to make what they are learning their own (p. 11).” The two researchers believed that such the behavior made the students successful learners.

How the students learn L2 has been found to significantly influence the outcome of their learning. Six major groups of L2 learning strategies were proposed by Oxford (1990). One of them is the social strategies, e.g. asking questions, asking for help, talking to native speakers). According to Oxford (2013) social strategies were significantly related to L2 proficiency in two contexts: (1) a study on South African EFL students by Dreyer and Oxford (1996, cited by Oxford, p. 14) and (2) an investigation of native-English speakers learning a foreign language by Oxford and Ehrman (1995, cited by Oxford, p. 14).

Sabah Salman Sabbah (2016) investigated the effects of study habits on English language achievement among 160 college students in Doha, Qatar. The results showed that the students’ learning habits significantly affected their tests’ results or achievement.

Research has also reported the effect of note-taking, a desirable learning trait, on learning achievement. Previous studies reported relationship between note-taking and academic performance. Hamid Reza Haghverdi, Reza Biria,, and Lotfollah Karimi (2010), for example, reported that note-taking strategy instruction significantly affected the students’ academic performance.

In summary, the factors that were reviewed are based on research findings as well as language learning theories. They are within the scope of what Gardner (1985) referred to as the big four: aptitude, personality, attitudes, and motivation.

## 2.7 Relevant Studies

As discussed earlier, research conducted on the English language ability of Thai taxi drivers is rare in Thailand. This research study is one of the pioneers in this regard, in an attempt to systematically investigate the language skills and the factors related to their English language skills. The following are studies conducted in Thailand on the issues facing Thai taxi drivers across several dimensions.

Hirunpruek (1997) investigated the job satisfaction of Thai taxi drivers. The study aimed to find out what factors affected their satisfaction, and relation between those factors and taxi drivers' job satisfaction. A samples of 250 taxi drivers were purposely taken from five metropolitan districts across Bangkok. Those districts are Phaya-Thai, Talingchan, Bangkok-noi, Lardpraw and Yannawa. Data collection was done through interviews. The study revealed that the taxi drivers' satisfaction was at a moderate level due to the following factors: their income, the policy of the state, and their job-security. Safety was found to be the only factor that their satisfaction was found to be low. It was found that the factors that influenced their job satisfaction were (1) their level of education, (2) marital status and (3) type of holdings; however, age and workload (driving-time) were not related to their job satisfaction.

Junwanna (2010) developed a non-formal education program to improve Thai taxi drivers' vocational English skills. It was an experimental study with forty taxi-drivers in Bangkok purposively selected to participate in this research: they were divided into a control group

and an experimental group. An independent sample (T-test) was conducted to analyze the collected data to determine whether there was a significant difference between the two groups. Also, a multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the relevant predictors. The results were: (1) the taxi drivers in the experimental group scored higher on the test of vocational English skills than the controlled group at the significance level of 0.05, (2) the taxi drivers in the experimental group scored higher in the test of communicative skills than the controlled group at the significance level of 0.05, (3) the taxi drivers in the experimental group possess a more negative attitude against the Bangkok pollution problem solving ,ethics, image of taxi service enhancement and sense of place than the controlled group at a significance level of 0.05. Moreover, factors related to the development and implementation of a developed non-formal education program were (1) group of learners(2) learning content (3) instructors (4) learning activities (5) learning resources (6) and learning circumstances.

Assawapattanakul and Tunwanichakul (2012) investigated the attitudes of passengers toward the taxi service in Khon Khaen province in the northeastern part of Thailand. The samples were passengers of the taxi service. They found that main factors facing the satisfaction of the taxi service were the attitudes of the taxi drivers, the chartered taxi practices, the routes, and the coordination between the taxis and the call center.

Thadphoothon (2014) conducted a study to investigate the salient characteristics of the English language communicated by Thai taxi drivers as well as the problems they experience, as a result of their limitations in English. The setting and scope of the study

were limited to a single course and conducted during a single academic year. The data was collected from 42 Thai taxi drivers by 85 Thai undergraduates from Dhurakij Pundit University during the first semester of the academic year in 2013. All of the students involved in the study were those who were undertaking a course on cross-cultural communication (EN 238) which was offered as a major subject of the English Major Program. The interviews took place within Bangkok and Nonthaburi.

The students were instructed to work in pairs and to interview a taxi cab driver. The students asked cross-cultural communication questions about communication barriers, and attitudinal questions. After the interview process, they transcribed and translated the audio files. They then analyzed the verbal data using the skills and knowledge from the course. The findings reported here are the results of the teacher's research analysis of the various reports submitted by the students.

The teacher asked the students permission to further analyze their reports and they granted their permission. The teacher analyzed the interview scripts using a simple content analysis to identify the common characteristics of the English language used by the taxi cab drivers as well as their problems, attitudes, and how they have reportedly dealt with the challenges and the greater demands put upon them to use English skills and abilities.

The results showed that all of the taxi drivers faced two barriers: language and cultural. The majority of the drivers relied on simple words, short sentences, and Thai-style



pronunciation. It is noted that the English they used exhibits salient elements of organic grammar.

Based on the literature review and the review of the previously done studies, it is clear that Thai taxi drivers' English language competence and the factors contributing to their competence have not previously been explored.

## **2.8 Structural equation modeling (SEM)**

### *2.8.1 What is SEM?*

SEM is an abbreviation of 'Structural Equation Modeling', which is a statistical technique. This technique investigates many variables at the same time, so it is actually a multivariate statistical analysis technique used to analyze structural relationships among variables. The technique is the combination of factor analysis and multiple regression analysis, and it is used to analyze the structural relationship between measured variables and latent constructs (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1996). SEM has been widely used in social science studies.

SEM, according to Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen (2008, p. 53), "has become one of the techniques of choice for researchers across disciplines and increasingly is a 'must' for researchers in the social sciences". Why has SEM become popular among researchers? The answer lies in its feasibility to address complex social phenomena. Indeed, its

attractiveness also lies in its power to investigate complex social phenomena such as factors leading to the language competence of learners.

Wirachai (1995) explains that, basically, there are three purposes regarding the use of SEM in research. Firstly, SEM is used in the context of theory confirmation, i.e. through a method called confirmatory analysis. The researcher may construct a model based on a certain theory. He or she then evaluates the model to either confirm or reject the theory. Secondly, in some cases, SEM models are constructed to determine competing contexts. Here, the aim is to choose the best or most trusted one. The researcher constructs several models and tests them using the same set of data (Thin Ngam, 1993, cited in Wirachai, 1995). Thirdly, SEM is employed in the context of model generating situation. Here the researcher constructs the most reasonable model based on the existing theories. Through the process, he or she may adjust the model for evaluation using the same set of data. The present study proposes the relationship of the variables in the model under the third scenario, that is, model generation.

In SEM, researchers are required to define the variables upfront. For example, they need to study the variables beforehand. According to Statistics Solutions (2017), the typical steps in structural equation modelling include the following steps:

1. Defining individual constructs: This is the step when researchers define the constructs theoretically. In this study, each construct has been defined by the researcher, for example, attitudes towards foreign passengers.

2. Developing the overall measurement model: The measurement model is also known as path analysis, a set of relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables. Traditionally, this is shown by the use of arrows. The model follows the assumption of unidimensionality as it is based on the idea that latent constructs cause the measured variable and that the error term is uncorrelated within the measured variables. In a measurement model, an arrow is drawn from the measured variable to the constructs or latent variables.

3. Collect the data and design the study to produce the empirical results: In this step, the researcher must specify the model. The researcher should design the study to minimize the likelihood of an identification problem.

4. Assessing the measurement model validity: Assessing the measurement model is also called CFA. In CFA, a researcher compares the theoretical measurement against the reality model. The result of the CFA must be associated with the constructs' validity.

5. Specifying the structural model: In this step, structural paths are drawn between constructs. In the structural model, no arrow can enter an exogenous construct. A single-headed arrow is used to represent a hypothesized structural relationship between one construct and another. This shows the cause and effect relationship. Each hypothesized relationship uses one degree of freedom. The model can be recursive or non-recursive.

6. Examining the structural model validity: This is the last step. Here, a researcher examines the structural model validity – is the model valid? A model is considered a good

fit (valid) if the value of the chi-square test is found to be insignificant, and at least one incremental fit index (like the Confirmatory Fit Index (CFI), GFI, TLI, AGFI, etc.) and one badness of fit index (like RMR, RMSEA, SRMR, etc.) meet the predetermined criteria.

The above mentioned steps are crucial for any SEM analysis. Following the steps to proceed is crucial. As a matter of fact, the aim of the researchers is to test the model they have created or theorized against the observed data or empirical evidence.

### *2.8.2 Fit indexes*

To determine whether the data fit the proposed or constructed model, researchers rely on several indexes. Those indicate the fitness of the empirical data with the constructed model (the relationship between the latent variables). SEM analysts often resort to a combination of various indexes. According to Kenny (2015) and Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen (2008), the most widely used SEM indexes are the following: (1) Comparative Fit Index (CFI), (2) Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), (3) the Chi Square Test:  $\chi^2$ , which is used to determine how the proposed or theorized distribution fits the empirical distribution, (4) Goodness-of-fit statistic (GFI), (5) Adjusted goodness-of-fit statistic (AGFI), (6) Parsimony Goodness-of-Fit Index (PGFI), and (7) Normed Fit Index (NFI).

In conclusion, all of the indexes mentioned above indicate the fitness of the proposed model with the empirical data.

### *2.8.3 FIT indexes Interpretation*

Once the SEM analysis has been performed, the researcher needs to study the results of the analysis, looking at the number and/or indexes. He or she needs to interpret the meaning of those indices. Correct interpretation is crucial. Below are the guidelines for the interpretation of some commonly used indexes.

As for the Normed Fit Index (NFI), the value  $> 0.9$  means that the model is satisfactory fitted. In studies, NFI should be at least .90. This signifies the fitness of the model. As for the Goodness-of-fit statistic (GFI), the index should be at least .90. Likewise, the adjusted goodness-of-fit statistic (AGFI) should also be at least .90.

## 2.9 Hypotheses

Based on the literature review, seven hypotheses were determined:

1. There is a significant relationship between Thai taxi drivers' educational background and their past training (EAT) to their English language competence (ELC).
2. Thai taxi drivers' attitudes toward foreign passengers (ATF) affect their English language competence (ELC) and are related to their motivation to learn English (MLE)
3. Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English (MLE) affects their English language competence (ELC).
4. Thai taxi drivers' independent English language learning behavior (ILB) positively affects their English language competence (ELC).
5. There is a significant relationship between Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English (MLE) to their attitudes toward foreign passengers (ATF).
6. Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English (MLE) affects their independent language learning behavior (ILB).
7. Thai taxi drivers' English language competence (ELC) is related to their independent language learning behavior (ILB).

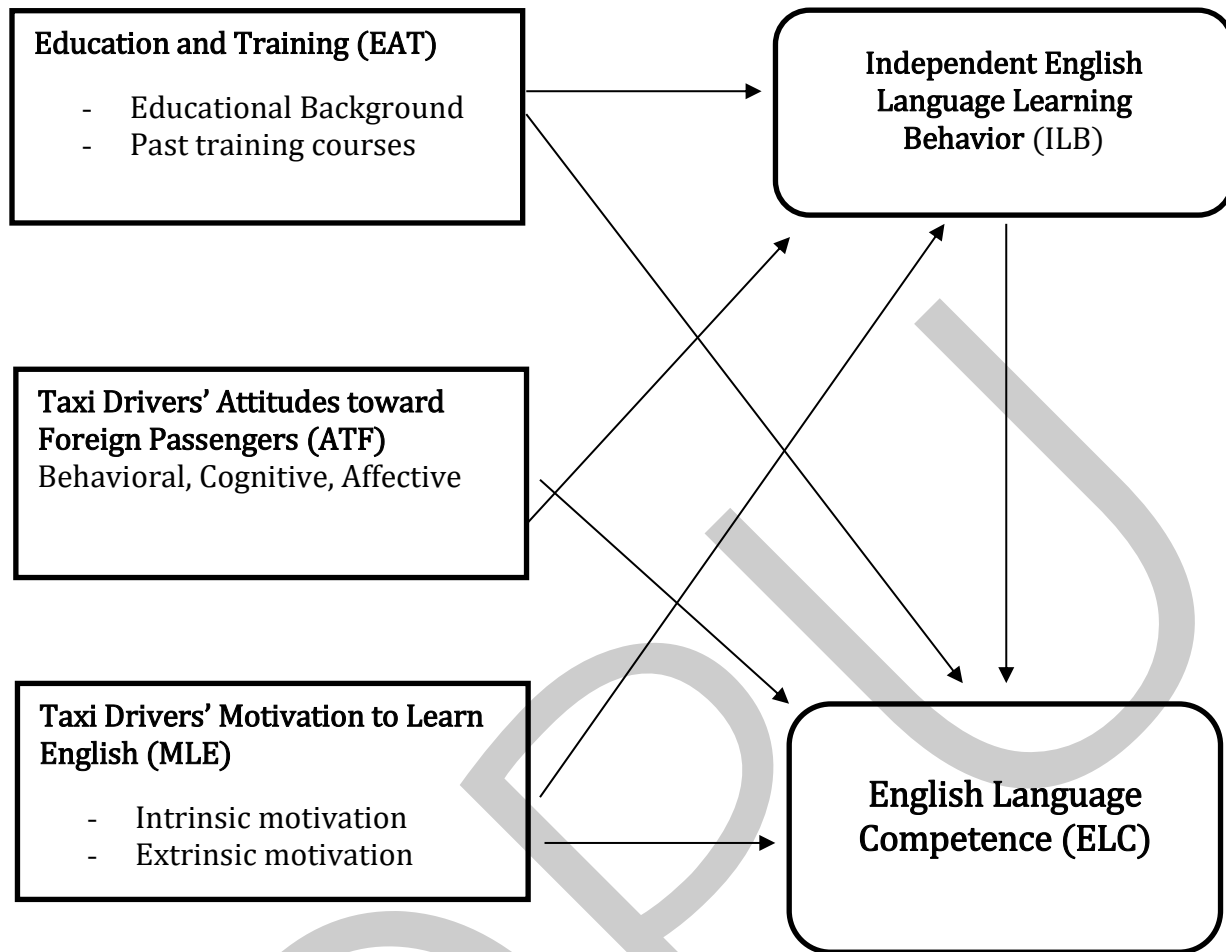
The hypotheses center around the overarching research question: what are the factors affecting the taxi drivers' English language competence?

### **3. METHOD**

This chapter presents the research method. First, it explains the proposed model, followed by the population and sampling. It covers the discussion on the research instruments, and it ends with data analysis.

#### **3.1 The Proposed Model**

The framework proposes that a comprehensive study on the Thai taxi drivers' communicative competence entails five latent variables. The overarching question is: What are the main factors affecting Thai taxi drivers' English language competence? Considering their work conditions and special situations, it is proposed the framework as seen below:



*Figure3: The Proposed Model*



The proposed model shows the relationship of the variables under the study. The model has been constructed based on the relevant theories and research findings. Under the model, taxi drivers' educational background and past language training (EAT) is hypothesized to affect their English language competence as well as their independent English language learning behavior (ILB). Their English language competence entails two components: (1) the competence based on self-evaluation and (2) the competence based on the tests.

Previous research showed that Thai taxi drivers employed a variety of communication strategies to achieve their goals. Despite their limited grammatical and lexical ability, many of them managed to provide taxi services successfully. Their language learning behavior is thus crucial for the development of their language competence. It is thus hypothesized that their learning behavior (ILB) affects their competence (ELC).

Based on the model, the direct variables are the following (1) the taxi drivers' educational background and past training (EAT), their attitudes towards foreigners (ATF), and their motivation to learn English (MLE). The indirect variable is their independent English language learning behavior (ILB). Their attitudes and motivation are hypothesized as salient in the prediction of their English language competence.

To sum up, it is hypothesized that the taxi drivers' English competence (ELC) is influenced by four factors: their attitudes towards the foreign visitors (non-Thai customers) (ATF), their motivation to learn English (MLE), their educational and training background (EAT), and their independent English language learning behavior (ILB). To test the hypotheses, the researcher shall rely on the analysis of the data collected from the Thai taxi drivers through the use of the tests and questionnaires.

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### 3.2 Sampling and Population

This study employed two sampling techniques: the stratified sampling and quota sampling techniques. First of all, the number of taxis was classified based on two taxi types: cooperative and personal taxis. The population and samples were based on the data from the Department of Land Transport (July 2015).

*Table 1 Population and samples*

Category	Taxi Drivers in Bangkok (Estimation)	Samples
Cooperative/Company Taxis	91,036	197
Personal Taxis	9,000	145
Total	100,936	342

The population of this study was the Thai taxi cab drivers in Bangkok. Based on the statistics from the Department of Land Transport, there were 100,936 registered taxi cab drivers in Bangkok. The samples were drawn of the population using stratified sampling technique. Based on Yamane's sample size formula (1967), it was found that 315 taxi cab drivers were needed to represent that population at a 5 percent random error level.

Secondly, the quota sampling technique was employed. The areas where the taxis operated were identified and classified into three zones. The data were collected from three zones of the Bangkok metropolis. According to the administrative division of Bangkok, the districts

are classified into three zones: (1) the inner zone, (2) the central zone, and (3) the outer zone, as follows:

The inner zone of Bangkok entails 21 districts: Phra Nakorn, Pomprab Suttrupai, Saphan Thawong, Pathumwan, Bang Rak, Yan Nawa, Sathorn, Bang Khor Laem, Dusit, Bang Sue, Phya Thai, Rach Thewi, Huay Khwang, Klong Toei, Jatujak, Thonburi, Klong San, Bang Kok Yai, Dindaeng, Wattana.

The central zone of Bangkok entails 18 districts: Phra Kanong, Prawet, Bangkokhen, Bang Kapi, Lad Prow, Bung Kum, Bang Plus, Pasi Chareon, Jonthong, Rachburana, Suanluang, Bang Na, Thung Kru, Bangkhae, Wang Thonglang, Kun Natao, Sapan Soong, and Sai Mai.

The outer zone of the Bangkok Metropolitan entails 11 districts: Minburi, Do Muang, Nong Jok, Lad Krabang, Taling Chun, Nong Khaem, Bang Khoontien, Las Si, Klong Samwa, and Tawee Wattana.

This study classified the zones of the Bangkok metropolis with the purpose of making sure that the data were the best representation of the target population. The classification was done via an existing area-based classification adopted by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's Department of Environment Control and Management (MBA Office of the Permanent Secretary, 2015).

**Table 2 Data collection zones**

Zones	Number	Percent
Inner Zone	115	33.63
Central Zone	112	32.75
Outer Zone	115	33.63
Total	342	100.0

Data was collected from the three zones. 115 respondents (33.63%) were collected from the inner zone. 112 (32.75%) were collected from the central zone, and 115 (33.63%) from the outer zone. Altogether 342 samples were randomly selected from the population to sufficiently represent Thai taxi drivers in this study.

The sample size of 342 is sufficient for the study. This is based on the data from the Department of Land Transport reporting that there were 100,936 registered taxi cab drivers in Bangkok in 2015. Moreover, the samples were drawn from the population using a stratified sampling technique, followed by quota sampling. Based on Yamane's sample size formula (1967), it is expected that 315 taxi cab drivers are needed to represent the population at a 5 percent random error level. Our samples totaled 342, well above the minimum of 315.

### **3.3 Research Instruments**

The instruments included the questionnaires and the tests. The instruments were as follows:

*Survey of Taxi Drivers' Background*– Questions will elicit responses from the taxi drivers. They will be asked about their experience, age, educational background, past training

courses, socio-economic status (income per month), and their workload (hours of work per week).

*Test of Thai Taxi Drivers' English Competence*– This is a set of tests being developed by the researcher. The set includes the taxi drivers' self-assessment of their English ability in four skills, their overall assessment of their English ability. They are also asked to assess their grammatical and lexical abilities, in addition to their perceived knowledge of the culture of the non-Thai passengers (See Appendix A). Next they are asked to read aloud a short passage, answer two questions, and respond to twelve situations. All of these are the measures of their English competence with the focus on communication.

*Test of Thai Taxi Drivers' English Competence* is constructed based on the notion of communicative competence by Canale and Swain (Canale and Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983) who propose that the construct 'communicative competence' has four components, namely, grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. It is also based on the notion of communicative competence posited by Bachman and Palmer (1996), conceptualizing communicative competence as having both language knowledge and pragmatic knowledge. In this study, the test has both the linguistic and pragmatic components. The correlation between the taxi drivers' self-evaluation of their own English language competence and their actual language performance was also significant at 0.01.

The interpretative framework for each sub-competence is as follows:

**Table 3 English language competence's interpretation framework**

English Language Competence (ELC)	Meaning
4.21-5.00	Excellent
3.41-4.20	Good
2.61-3.40	Fair
1.81 – 2.60	Poor
1.00 – 1.80	Very Poor

The English language competency test can be interpreted as follows: (1) a taxi driver with the score ranging from 4.21-5.00 is considered a person with excellent English, (2) a taxi driver with the score ranging from 3.41-4.20 is considered a person with good English, (3) a taxi driver with the score ranging from 2.61-3.40 is considered a person with fair English, (4) a taxi driver with the score ranging from 1.81-2.60 is considered a person with poor English, and (5) a taxi driver with the score ranging from 1.00-1.80 is considered a person with very poor English competence.

*Attitudes towards Foreign Passengers (ATF)* The questionnaire measures the taxi drivers' attitudes towards foreign passengers. It is based on Likert's scale with 14 items. Their responses shall be interpreted as follows:

**Table 4 Interpretation framework of Attitudes towards foreign passengers**

Attitudes toward Foreign Passengers (ATF)	Meaning
4.21-5.00	Very Positive
3.41-4.20	Positive
2.61-3.40	Neutral
1.81 – 2.60	Negative
1.00 – 1.80	Very Negative

The taxi drivers with a score between 4.12-5.00 are interpreted as those with very positive attitudes toward foreign passengers. In contrast, those with the score between 1.00-1.80 are considered those with very negative attitudes towards foreign passengers.

*Taxi Drivers' Motivation to learn English* (MLE) This Likert type questionnaire was used to measure the taxi drivers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to learn English.



**Table 5 Motivation interpretation framework**

Motivation to Learn English (MLE)	Meaning
4.21-5.00	Very motivated
3.41-4.20	Motivated
2.61-3.40	Neutral
1.81 – 2.60	Not Motivated
1.00 – 1.80	Not very motivated

Based on the Likert's type scale of 1 (the lowest)-to 5 (the highest), the taxi drivers with a MLE score between 4.21-5.00 are considered those who have the very high level of motivation to learn English and those with the MLE score lower than 2.61 are considered to be taxi drivers with a low to very low motivation to learn English.

**Independent English Language Learning Behavior (ILB)** The taxi drivers' responses on the questionnaires will be determined and analyzed. Their responses will be interpreted as follows:

*Table 6 ILB interpretation framework*

Independent English Language Learning Behavior (ILB)	Meaning
4.21-5.00	Very High
3.41-4.20	High
2.61-3.40	Medium
1.81 – 2.60	Low
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low

Based on the Likert's type scale of 1 (the lowest)-to 5 (the highest), the taxi drivers with ILB score between 4.20-5.00 are those who have the very high level of independent English language learning behavior; whereas, those with the ILB score lower than 2.61 are considered taxi drivers with low or very low levels of ILB.

In addition to the data from the test and the questionnaires, thirty taxi drivers will be randomly selected for an interview. They will be asked about their language learning behavior, their communication experience, how they cope with the language demands, and their motivation.

Prior to their actual use for data collection, each research tool mentioned above was evaluated by four experts to test their content validity (See Appendix B). Then they were tested on 30 taxi drivers to determine their reliability.

### *Reliability of the Instruments*

Three instruments, Attitudes toward Foreign Passengers (ATF), Motivation to Learn English (MLE), and Independent Language Learning Behavior (ILB) underwent a reliability determination process. They were put on a trial with samples of 30 taxi drivers. The results are as follows:

**Table 7 Reliability of scales**

Scale	Trialed Alfa (N=30)
Affection-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers (AOA)	.78
Behavior-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers (BOA)	.73
Cognition-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers (COA)	.71
Integrative Motivation to learn English (IMO)	.77
Extrinsic Motivation to learn English (EMO)	.72
Learning from experts (LFE)	.75
Learning from Media (LFM)	.76
Learning by Reading and Note-taking (LBR)	.72
Learning by Using the language (LBU)	.62

Overall, the reliability index of each scale was found to be satisfactory, except for the LBU scale (Alfa = .62). One explanation is the fact that the scale has only two items. The low number of items on the scale is recognized as a main factor affecting the reliability of the scale (Grondlund, 1976, pp. 117-122; Mehrens and Lehman, 1975, pp. 100-103, cited in Sukamonsan, 1999, p. 97).

Once the research tools underwent the quality-checking process, including the content validity (See Appendix B), they were used to collect the data from the taxi drivers presented earlier.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The data collected was analyzed by two statistical techniques: descriptive statistics and structural equation modelling technique.

The taxi drivers' answers on the tests and the questionnaires were analyzed to identify their driving experience, attitudes towards foreign passengers (ATF), their motivation to learn English (MLE), their educational background and previous English language training (EAT), their independent English language learning behavior (ILB), and their English language competence (ELC).

After that, the data was analyzed using the structural modeling analysis to test the hypotheses using the statistical package LISREL 8.72.

## 4. FINDINGS

The goal of this chapter is to present the research findings and discuss them. It has five sections. First, it presents the overall results. Second, it discusses the findings for the taxi drivers' English competence and attitudes. Thirdly, it discusses the general findings. Fourthly, it discusses the students' reflections. This chapter ends with a short summary.

### 4.1 General Characteristics

This section presents the overall results of the study. The findings are as follows:

*Table 8 Gender of respondents*

Gender	Number	Percent
Female	7	2.05
Male	335	97.95
Total	342	100

As presented above, most taxi drivers were male (335 or 98.00%). Only 7 of them or 2.05% were female.

**Table 9 Age of respondents**

Age (years old)	Number	Percent
18-27	2	0.58
28-37	28	8.09
38-47	100	29.24
48-57	129	37.72
58-67	71	20.76
68 or above	12	3.51
Total	342	100

In total, 342 (97.37%) responded to the survey regarding their age. The majority of the taxi drivers were between 28-67 years old (95.81%). Twelve of them (3.51%) were 68 years old or above.

*Table 10 Number of Days off per week*

Days off per week	Number	Percent
no at all	197	57.6
1 day	115	33.6
2 days	17	5.0
more than 2 days	13	3.8
Total	342	100.0

Almost 60 percent of Thai taxi drivers (197) did not take any day off in a week. This indicates their tough work conditions. One hundred and fifteen taxi drivers had a day off in a week (33.60%). About 9 % of them had two days off or more.

**Table 11: Work hours per week**

Work hours per week	Number	Percent
40 or lower	34	9.93
41-60	49	14.31
61-80	109	31.92
81-100	102	29.80
100 or more	48	14.00
Total	342	100

Taxi drivers worked long hours per week. 48 of them (14.0%) worked 100 hours or more in a week. There were 102 taxi drivers (29.80%) working between 81-100 hours per. It was found that 109 of them (31.92%) worked 61-80 hours in a week. 83 of them (24.20%) worked 60 hours or less per week.



*Table 12 Education of respondents*

Level	Number	Percent
Primary	115	33.63
Lower secondary	79	23.10
Upper secondary / Vocational Certificate	101	29.53
Higher Vocational education	18	5.26
BA or higher	29	8.48
Total	342	100.0

In terms of education, it was found that the majority of the respondents had primary education (115 or 33.63%). 79 of them (23.10%) had lower secondary education. It was found that 101 of them (29.53%) had upper secondary/vocational education. The number of taxi drivers with higher vocational education was 18 or (5.26%). Twenty nine of them or (8.48%) had BA or higher education.

*Table 13 Frequency of English language training*

Frequency of English Training	Number	Percent
Not at all	201	58.77
So far 1 training	85	24.85
Once a year	36	10.53
1-3 times a year	19	5.56
4 or more per year	1	0.29
Total	342	100.0

The table above shows that 201 (58.77%) of the taxi drivers said they received no English language training at all. Eighty-five of them (24.85%) said they had received only 1 training session. Only thirty-six of them (10.53%) had an English training once in 12 months. This table shows that the majority of Thai taxi drivers have very little English language training.

*Table 14 Types of taxis*

Taxi Type	Frequency	Percent
Hired	197	57.60
Personal	145	42.40
Total	342	100.0

The table shows that 145 taxi drivers (42.40%) said that they themselves owned the car. 197 of them (57.60%) said they hired the vehicle.

*Table 15 Education and training*

Factor	N	Mean	SD	Meaning
The highest educational level attained	342	2.32	1.22	Low
English language training received	342	1.63	.90	Low
Average	342	1.97	.78	Low

Most Thai taxi drivers sampled had attained low level of education. They also received little English language training per year.

## **4.2 Taxi drivers' English Competence**

The next table shows the taxi drivers' English language competence based on their own assessment.

*Table 16: Self-assessment of English competence*

Area	N	Mean	SD	Meaning
Speaking Skills	342	2.05	.825	Poor
Listening Skills	342	2.06	.838	Poor
Reading Skills	342	2.06	.893	Poor
Writing Skills	342	1.94	.829	Poor
Vocab& Gram Skills	342	1.80	.767	Poor
Overall Skills	342	2.04	.840	Poor
Cultural Skills	342	1.79	.815	Poor
Average		1.96	.82	Poor

The table above shows the taxi drivers' English competence. It was found that the average mean is only 1.96, which indicates that, in general, the taxi drivers assessed themselves as having weak English competence. The mean for the standard deviation was .82. They told us that they were poor at English.

*Table 17 English language performance of the taxi drivers*

Types	n	Mean	SD	Meaning
Reading Aloud	342	1.41	.69	Poor
Oral Interaction	342	1.44	.73	Poor
Scenario	342	1.61	.74	Poor
Average	342	1.78	.72	Poor

The table above shows the actual English performance of the taxi drivers. Their ability to read aloud was low. Their oral interaction skills as measured by their ability to orally answer two questions (see Appendix) were considered low. Based on their ability to respond to the scenarios, it was found that their comprehension was low too. This set of measures shows that their English competence was low.

### **4.3 Attitudes and Motivation**

For the measure of Thai taxi drivers' attitudes toward foreign customers, the reliability is .80. The results of the data analysis are as follows:

**Table 18 Affection-oriented attitudes towards foreign passengers (AOA)**

Statement	N	Mean	SID	Meaning
The foreign passengers I have serviced are moody and easily annoyed.	342	3.18	.96	Neutral
The foreign passengers I have serviced are kind.	342	3.78	.77	Positive
The foreigners I have met are friendly.	342	3.87	.723	Positive
The foreign passengers I have serviced are open-minded people.	342	3.63	.739	Positive
The foreign passengers I have serviced are generous.	342	3.83	.748	Positive
Average	342	3.65	.53	Positive

The table above shows the respondents' affection-oriented attitudes towards foreign passengers. On average, the taxi drivers had positive attitudes towards those customers. (M. = 3.65; SD = .53).

**Table 19 Behavior-oriented attitudes (BOA)**

Statement	N	Mean	SID	Meaning
The foreign passengers I have serviced tend to take advantages of Thai people.	342	3.12	.924	Neutral
The foreign passengers I have serviced often look down on Thais.	342	3.24	.948	Neutral
I try to avoid providing services to foreigners.	342	3.68	1.028	Neutral
Average	342	3.34	.70	Neutral

Overall, under the behavioral dimension, the taxi drivers had neutral attitudes towards the foreign passengers (Mean = 3.34, SD = .70)

*Table 20 Cognition-oriented attitudes (COA)*

Statement	N	Mean	SD	Meaning
The foreign passengers I have serviced have civilized cultures.	342	3.36	.787	Neutral
The foreigners I have met are fair.	342	3.72	.726	Neutral
The foreigners I have met are picky and choosy.	342	3.12	.915	Neutral
The foreigners I have met are reasonable people.	342	3.74	.785	Neutral
Average	342	3.48	.78	Neutral

Overall, within the cognitive dimension, the taxi drivers have neutral attitudes towards the foreign passengers (Mean = 3.48, SD = .78).

### *Motivation to learn English*

Two factors were investigated for the intrinsic motivation (IMO) and extrinsic motivation (EMO).

**Table 21 Intrinsic motivation to learn English (IMO)**

Statement	n	Mean	SD	Meaning
I am proud of myself.	342	4.15	.616	High
My friends say I am cool when I speak English.	342	3.67	.799	High
English can open doors to opportunities	342	4.13	.626	High
English provides me open perspectives of the world.	342	4.08	.650	High
Average	342	4.00	.66	High

The respondents' intrinsic motivation was found to be at a high level. The mean is as high as 4.0.

**Table 22 Extrinsic motivation to learn English (EMO)**

Statement	n	Mean	SD	Meaning
Extra money for me	342	4.16	.661	High
Better quality of life	342	3.91	.762	High
Necessary for taxi drivers	342	4.24	.680	High
Part of my duty	342	4.19	.723	High
Average	342	4.12	.70	High

In terms of their extrinsic motivation or external motivation to learn English, it was found that their external motivation was found to be at the high level with the mean of 4.12.



#### 4.4 Independent English language learning behavior (ILB)

The following are the general findings of the taxi drivers' responses to the items measuring their independent English language learning behavior. It has been hypothesized that the taxi drivers' independent language learning behavior would influence their language competence. Four factors were investigated, which were as follows:

1. Learning from Experts (LFE)
2. Learning from Media (LFM)
3. Learning by Reading and Note-taking (LBR)
4. Learning by Using the language (LBU)

**Table 23 Learning from experts (LFE)**

Statement	n	Mean	SD	Meaning
Practicing speaking with foreigners.	342	2.96	1.18	Low
Learning from experts.	342	2.76	1.08	Low
Seeking English language training.	342	2.32	1.12	Low
Learning from friends.	342	3.17	1.03	Moderate
Average	342	2.80	1.10	Low

The table shows the first dimension of the factor – language learning behavior and contains four items: (1) Practicing speaking with foreigners (Mean = 2.96), (2) Learning from experts (Mean = 2.76), (3) Seeking English language training (Mean = 2.32), and (4) Learning from friends (Mean = 3.17).

**Table 24 Learning from media (LFM)**

Statement	n	Mean	SD	Meaning
Listening to English songs.	342	2.68	1.13	Occasionally
Listening to language programs on the radio.	342	2.31	1.12	Occasionally
Learning from smart phones.	342	2.41	1.26	Occasionally
Watching language programs on TV.	342	2.19	1.07	Occasionally
Average	342	2.39	1.14	Occasionally

The table shows the second dimension of the factor – language learning behavior, containing four items: (1) Listening to English songs (Mean = 2.68), (2) Listening to language programs on the radio, (Mean = 2.31), (3) Learning from smart phones (Mean = 2.41), and (4) Watching language programs on TV (Mean = 19).

**Table 25 learning by reading and note-taking (LBR)**

Statement	n	Mean	SD	Meaning
Reading books.	342	2.46	1.13	Occasionally
Taking notes.	342	2.45	1.16	Occasionally
Reading posters, billboards, and/or signs.	342	3.33	.99	Occasionally
Average	342	2.75	1.09	Occasionally

The above table shows the analysis of the third dimension: Reading and Writing. The taxi drivers rarely read books as a means to learn the English language (2.46).

**Table 26 Learning by using the language (LBU)**

Statement	n	Mean	SD	Meaning
Use English in an improvised manner	342	3.51	.96	Sometimes
Observe how English is used in real situations.	342	3.41	1.02	Sometimes
Average	342	3.46	.99	Sometimes

The table shows the four dimensions of one of the independent factors --- learning English independently by using the language. There are two items under this: improvisation and observing the use of the language and, subsequently learning from that observation. The analysis shows that the taxi drivers often improvise when they use the language with foreign passengers (3.51). They sometimes learn from the many situations that they encounter (3.41).

**Table 27 Means and SD of the 4 Modes of Independent Language Learning Behavior**

Modes of independent language learning behavior	n	Mean	SD	Meaning
Learning from Experts (LFE)	342	2.80	.81	Sometimes
Learning from Media (LFM)	342	2.39	.90	Occasionally
Learning by Reading and Note Taking(LBR)	342	2.75	.87	Sometimes
Learning by Using the Language (LBU)	342	3.45	.92	Occasionally
Average		2.85	.87	Sometimes

The taxi drivers said they learned English on their own through the following: (1) by using the language (Mean = 3.45), (2) by learning from the media (Mean = 2.39), (3) by learning from the experts (Mean = 2.80), and (4) by reading and taking notes (Mean = 2.75). The highest mean is learning by doing and the lowest is reading and note-taking.

The table below shows the correlation between two components of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

***Table 28 Correlation between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation***

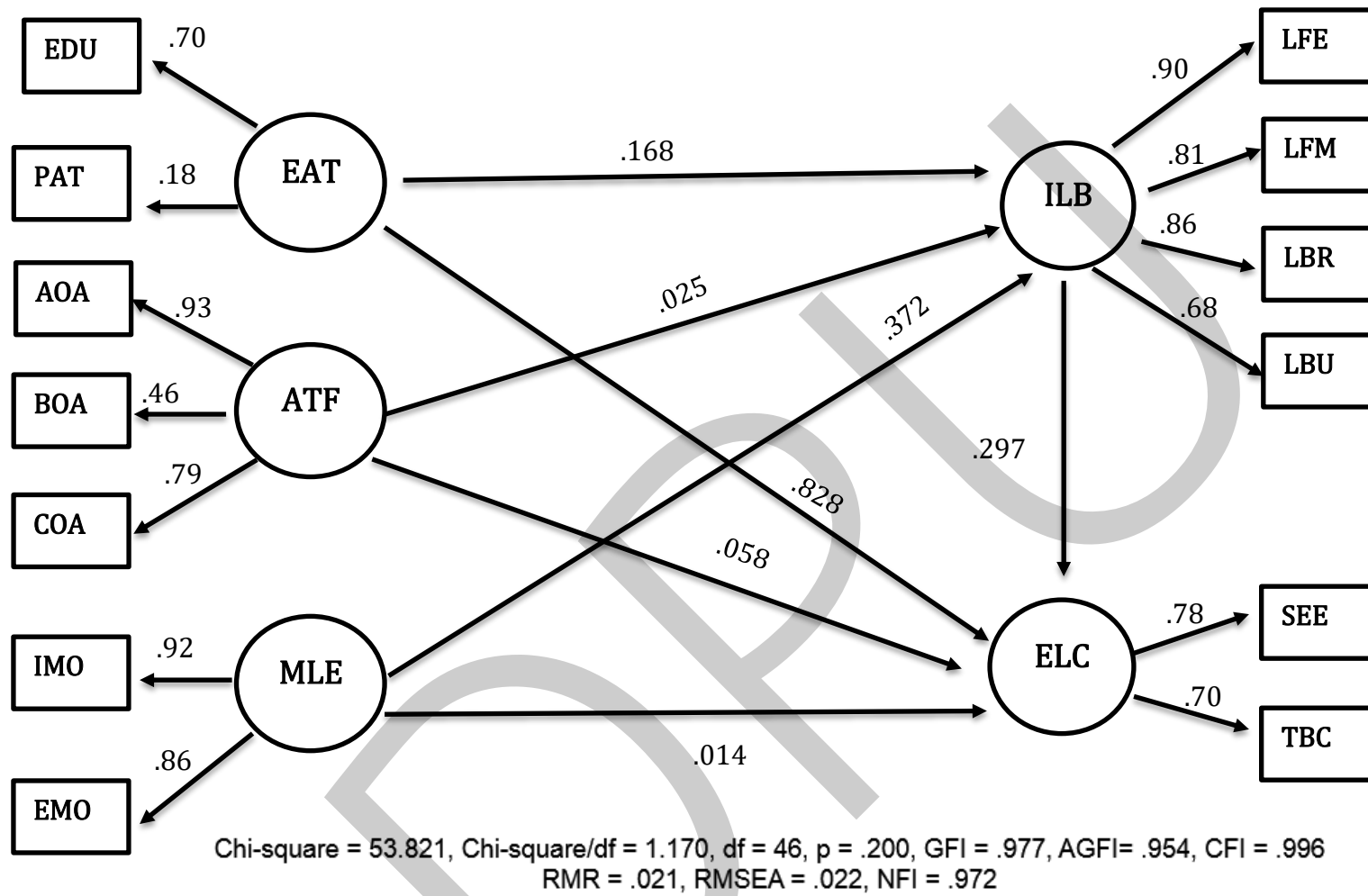
Type	Intrinsic Motivation (IMO)	Extrinsic Motivation (EMO)
Intrinsic Motivation	1.00	.79**
Extrinsic Motivation		1.00

\*p < 0.05

The table shows that the two factors are significantly correlated at .79. The taxi drivers' extrinsic (external) motivation is related to their intrinsic one.

The next level of analysis is the analysis at the linear structural analysis level or SEM. A statistical package, LISREL 8.72, was used for this analysis.

## **4.5 Structural Equation Modeling Analyses**



*Figure 4: The relationship between five latent variables*

The abbreviations for Figure 4 are as follows:

EAT = Educational background and English language training

EDU = Educational background

PAT = Past language training

ATF = Attitudes towards foreigners

AOA = Affection-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers

BOA = Behavior-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers

COA = Cognition-oriented attitudes toward foreign passengers

MLE = Motivation to learn English

IMO = Intrinsic motivation

EMO = Extrinsic motivation

ILB = Independent English Language Behavior

LFE = Learning from experts

LFM = Learning from media

LBR = Learning by reading and note-taking

LBU = Learning by using the language

ELC = English language competence

SEE = Self-evaluation competence

TBC = test-based competence

Based on the analysis, it was found that the proposed model, after some minor adjustments, is supported by the empirical data. The model is fitted. The followings indicators show how the data fits the model. The fit indicators include the following: the Chi-square, the Good of Fitness Index (GFI), the Adjusted Goodness –of-Fit Index (AGFI), Confirmatory Fit Index (CFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), RMR (the Root Mean Square Residual), and RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation).

The analysis yields the Chi-square of 53.821 with the ratio between the Chi-square and the degree of freedom of 1.170. The P value is as low as .200 with the Good of Fitness Index (GFI) as high as of .977. Similarly, the Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI) is found to be as high as .954. Other indicators include the Confirmatory Fit Index (CFI), which is as high as .996; the

Normed Fit Index (NFI) of .972. The Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) is as low as .021 and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is also at a low level of 0.22, which is below 0.05. All of these indexes indicate the fit amongst the observed data and the hypothesized relationships between the five latent variables.

#### Equations in Standardized Values

Two equations in standardized values were obtained as follows:

$$1. \hat{ILB} = 0.168 \text{ EAT} + 0.025 \text{ ATF} + 0.372 \text{ MLE}$$

$$2. \hat{ELC} = 0.828 \text{ EAT} + 0.058 \text{ ATF} + 0.014 \text{ MLE} + 0.297 \text{ ILB}$$

The first equation explains the equation for the taxi drivers' independent language learning behavior (ILB). Three latent variables predict the variance of ILB, namely, their education and training (EAT) with a standardized regression weight of 0.168, their attitudes towards the foreign passengers (ATF) with the standardized regression weight of 0.025, and their motivation to learn English (MLE) with the standardized regression weight of 0.372.

The second equation directly addresses the aim of the research: the factors affecting Thai taxi drivers' English language competence. The equation tells us that there are four latent factors (variables) contributing to the variance of the predicted variable, their English language competence (ELC). The factors include their past education and training (EAT) with the standardized regression weight of 0.828, their independent language learning behavior (ILB) with the standardized regression weight of 0.297. Two other significant factors are their attitudes toward the foreign passengers (ATE) with the standardized regression weight of 0.058 and their motivation to learn English (MLE) with a weight of 0.014.

## 4.6 Hypothesis Testing Results

*Table 29 Hypothesis testing results*

No.	Hypothesis	Result
1	There is a significant relationship between Thai taxi drivers' educational background and their past training (EAT) and their English language competence (ELC).	Accepted
2	Thai taxi drivers' attitudes towards foreign passengers (ATF) affect their English language competence (ELC) and are related to their motivation to learn English (MLE)	Accepted
3	Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English (MLE) affects their English language competence (ELC).	Accepted
4	Thai taxi drivers' independent English language learning behavior (ILB) positively affects their English language competence (ELC).	Accepted
5	There is a significant relationship between Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English (MLE) and their attitudes toward foreign passengers (ATF).	Accepted
6	Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English (MLE) affects their independent language learning behavior (ILB).	Accepted
7	Thai taxi drivers' English language competence (ELC) is related to their independent language learning behavior (ILB).	Accepted

The analysis shows that all hypotheses were supported by the empirical evidence. The study has revealed that there is a significant relationship between Thai taxi drivers' past



education and training (EAT) and their English language competence (ELC). The study found that the taxi drivers' attitudes toward foreign passengers (ATF) affect their English language competence (ELC) and their attitudes are also related to their motivation to learn the English language (MLE). There is evidence to support the hypothesis about the relationship between the taxi drivers' motivation to learn English (MLE) and their English language competence (ELC). Their motivation affects their English language competence. Besides, Thai taxi drivers' independent English language learning behavior (ILB) positively affects their English language competence (ELC). There is also a significant relationship between Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English (MLE) and their attitudes toward foreign passengers (ATF). Next, Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English (MLE) and their independent language learning behavior (ILB) are related. Finally, Thai taxi drivers' English language competence (ELC) is related to their independent language learning behavior (ILB).

## **5. DISCUSSIONS**

The researcher collected the data and analyzed it to answer the research questions with the aim to investigate Thai taxi drivers' English language competence and the factors contributing to the variation within that competence. The results were presented in Chapter 4. This chapter presents the discussions. They are as follows:

### **5.1 English Language Competence of Thai Taxi Drivers**

This study investigated the factors affecting Thai taxi drivers' English language competence. Data was collected from a sample of 342 Thai taxi drivers. They did language tests and answered questionnaires. This study found that the English language used by the taxi drivers, in general, was limited to a basic level and it focused mainly on communication, not style or grammatical accuracy.

Despite having a low English competence, many taxi drivers managed to get the job done, that is, taking the foreign passenger to his or her destination safe and sound. They compensated for their lack of linguistic resources with communicative strategies such as using maps, mobile phones, gestures, and asking for help. They exhibited a high level of problem-solving skills. Another explanation regarding their success level in providing their taxi service is their attitudes towards the foreign passengers and a high level of motivation, intrinsically and extrinsically.

Besides, their linguistic output, orally or in writing, supports the natural acquisition hypothesis (Dulay and Burt, 1974; Krashen, 1982, Vainikka and Young-Scholten, 2007; 2011). Weaker taxi drivers used bare infinitives without the necessary verbal inflection; whereas, more competent speakers used inflected verbs and correct subject-verb agreements. Another characteristic is their inability to sustain and develop a conversation (Thadphoothon, 2014). Many taxi drivers could not read English, but their spoken language could help them get the job done.

The finding confirms what has been reported by Thadphoothon (2014). Most of the taxi drivers were poor at English. Of the 42 taxi drivers surveyed, only 22% of them said their English was sufficient or adequate enough to cope with the demand of English. The majority of them (78% or 33 taxi drivers) said that their English was either poor or very poor.

As for the factors affecting their English language competence, it was found that their levels of education and training played a significant role in predicting their language competence, as the equation shows. This suggests that Thai taxi drivers with higher levels of education and training tend to have better English language skills. Other factors included their attitudes towards foreign passengers and their motivation to learn English. It was also found that their independent language learning (ILB) behavior significantly affected their English language competence.

## **5.2 Significance of education and training**

The study found a significant relationship between Thai taxi drivers' past education and training (EAT) and their English language competence (ELC). The direct effect of EAT on ELC is as high as .83. This shows how strong the effect is because taxi drivers with high EAT tend to exhibit high levels of ELC. This reveals one crucial thing - education and training matters when it comes to English language ability. Education and training (EAT) also effects their independent language learning behavior and the effect stands at .17. ILB functions as a moderating variable, as it influences their English language competence.

The study found that Thai taxi drivers' educational background and their past training (EAT) was a highly significant and potent factor determining the variance of their language competence. The analysis shows that the majority of Thai taxi drivers had a low level of English language training. This variable directly and indirectly affected the taxi drivers' English ability (ELC). Moreover, the variable also influences the taxi drivers' independent language learning behavior (ILB).

Even though, in general, Thai taxi drivers have lower English language skills, there are, still, some of them who possess good language skills. This is perhaps due to the fact that the taxi driving is a relatively open access job. Any Thai who has a vehicle and a public driving license can choose to earn a living by driving a taxi.

## **5.3 Attitudes towards Non-Thai Passengers**

The study found that Thai taxi drivers' attitudes toward foreign passengers (ATF) affects their English language competence (ELC) and are related to their motivation to learn the

English language (MLE). This shows how important attitudes are in the context of language competence and the second hypothesis is supported by the data.

The study revealed the link between the English ability of the taxi drivers and attitudes toward foreign passengers. The effect of the attitudes on the English competence was both positive and significant. This finding is consistent with previous studies (e.g. Burstall, 1975, Zeinivand, Azizifar, and Gowhary2015).

## **5.4 Effects of Motivation**

Thai taxi drivers' motivation to learn English (MLE) affects their English language competence (ELC). The correlation between their intrinsic motivation to learn English (IMO) and their extrinsic motivation (EMO) is significant at a 0.01 level of confidence ( $r = .789$ ). Their extrinsic motivation is related to their attitudes and English competence. It was also found that the taxi drivers' English competence is significantly related to their educational level. This shows that Thai taxi drivers were motivated to learn English and they were motivated intrinsically and extrinsically.

In basic correlational analysis, there is a .05 significant relationship between the English language competence of the taxicab drivers and their extrinsic motivation (.29). This finding contributes to the literature on the effects of motivation.

This research found that the taxi drivers' motivation to learn English affects their independent language learning behavior (ILB) (.37) as well as their English competence (.01). The total composite effect is as high as .38.

Our findings suggest that motivation to learn English does not mean that they have to choose either intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, as they can choose both types. This finding is in line with what Brown (2000) has discovered, that is, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are related. It is also supported by the research finding by Harter and Jackson (1992) on the co-occurrence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations and a study by Lemosa and Veríssimob (2014), which found that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations can co-exist and are not contradictory.

### **5.5 Independent English language learning behavior (ILB)**

Most Thai taxi drivers develop their English language skills on their own (Thadphoothon, 2014). In this study, Thai taxi drivers' independent English language learning behavior (ILB) positively affects their English language competence (ELC). Moreover, their motivation to learn English (MLE) and their independent English language learning behavior (ILB) are significantly related. These findings point to the importance of each variable.

Indeed, one of the major findings of this study is the finding on the role of the taxi drivers' independent English language learning behavior (ILB). This latent variable is found to significantly affect the taxi drivers' English language competence (ELC) with an effect size of .37. This linear relationship reveals the significance of their self-learning behavior. The structural model also reveals that the variable also functions as a moderating factor of the taxi drivers' English competence (ELC).

After the adjustment of the model, ILB has two functions: (1) as a factor affecting the taxi drivers' language competence (ELC) and (2) as the predicted variables explained by three other latent variables. In other words, ILB is influenced by other latent variables, namely, the taxi drivers' previous education attainment and training factor (EAT), motivation to learn English (MLE), and attitudes toward foreign passengers (ATF).

In educational literature, it is acknowledged that students' habits influence their learning outcomes. For example, a study conducted by Odiri (2015) found that there was a significant relationship between students' study habits and mathematics achievement. Thadphoothon (2017) also found that the students' frequency of note-taking was related to their learning outcome as measured by the test.

Taxi drivers' ILB is crucial for them because it affects their language ability. Past research revealed that Thai taxi drivers with good English took notes and often used English with foreigners (Thadphoothon, 2014). Given the fact that most taxi drivers have to work long hours and have little time to relax, their ability to 'independently' develop themselves is detrimental to their service quality and, subsequently, their own quality of life.

## **5.6 Work Conditions and Language Development**

The motivation of Thai taxi drivers was found to be at the high level (Mean =3.52). Both types of their motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic, were found to be at a high level and they were closely related as discussed earlier. This shows that Thai taxi drivers were very motivated to learn English, which is in line with the past research (Thadphoothon, 2014). However, their motivation was hindered by their work conditions. This finding was supported by previous research conducted by Salathong (2011), reporting that taxi drivers receive very few training opportunities. In fact, most of them did not receive any on-the-job training, so their job security and safety were low.

Under the above conditions, Thai taxi drivers were under severe constraints. Therefore, any effort to help develop their English language skills should be carried out in ways that

are understanding of their work constraints. In addition to language development, considering the number of complaints regarding their provision of taxi service, it would be useful to provide training for them on manners and cross-cultural communication. Previous research has found that the manners of taxi drivers affected the satisfaction of their service (Assawapattanakul and Tunwanichakul, 2012). To address the quality issues, the Thai authority has launched a new policy called 'taxi OK' (Thai PBS, 2018). Under the new policy, new taxis are required to be equipped with tracking devices and smart applications. However, the new mechanism has not addressed the language problems facing most Thai taxi drivers.

Their motivation to learn English is high, which implies that most taxi drivers would like to improve their English. However, the kind of English language they preferred learning is for communication, not for examination. Given the condition of their work, the majority of Thai taxi drivers prefer to learn English on their job and for practical purposes.



## **6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate Thai taxi drivers' English language competence and the key factors affecting it. A total of 342 Thai taxi drivers were sampled and asked to answer questionnaires and language tests aimed at determining their English language ability. Structural modeling statistics was used to a set of hypotheses. The study hypothesized that several behavioral and attitudinal factors influenced the taxi drivers' English language competence.

The study, through the evidence of SEM analysis, revealed that the following factors: educational background, English language training, motivation to learn English, attitudes toward foreign passengers, and their independent English language learning behavior influenced Thai taxi drivers' English language competence. The highlights of the study entail the discovery of a significant relationship between their motivation to learn English and attitudes to foreign passengers. It was also found that their intrinsic and extrinsic motivations were significantly related and their motivation to learn English influenced their self-learning behavior as well as their English competence.

The findings were significant for many stake holders wishing to improve the language skills of Thai taxi drivers. Considering the fact that as high as 70% of them have to encounter foreign customers per day, it is essential that they are equipped with language and cross-

cultural communication skills. It was obvious that the taxi drivers in this study had problems when they served foreign customers, and the major causes of those were their language skills, cultural knowledge, awareness, and their attitudes towards foreign passengers.

In addition to the findings regarding the factors determining their English language competence, this study also revealed insights regarding their work conditions. For example, working condition are a key factor contributing to their quality of life, significantly affects their English language development, which has been overlooked by the authorities and Thai society at large, despite being an integral part of the Thai economy. There seems to be a strong link between their heavy workload and long hours in the hectic traffic of Bangkok, illustrated by the finding that almost sixty percent of them worked seven days a week. This most likely prevents them from formal language training and self-development.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

On the basis of the research findings and implications, the researcher would like to offer some recommendations for both future studies and policy makers as follows:

### **Recommendations for future studies**

1. This study only investigated that taxi cab drivers in the Bangkok metropolis. Future research should investigate the drivers in other areas around Thailand, especially in Thailand's big cities such as Phuket, Khon Kaen, Chiangmai, and Pattaya .

2. It is recommended future studies should investigate the actual language use of the taxi drivers in action in a greater scope. This would enable us to explore greater dimensions of language use and cross-cultural communication factors, and how drivers learn the language independently.

3. Most taxi drivers under investigation were male. There should be a study focusing only the female taxi drivers, investigating their needs, motivation, and communication strategies.

#### Recommendations for policy makers

1. This study found that most taxi drivers in the study expressed a strong desires to undergo some forms of training in order to develop their English skills. Such the desires should prompt Thai society to recognize their needs and provide the appropriate forms of training. Hence, when the authorities or relevant organizations design any training program, they should take into consideration the drivers' background, needs, and workload.

2. With the advent of new media and online technologies such as websites and smartphone applications, authorities should help make contents and audio files available on various platforms. One practical approach is perhaps to offer them learn-by-yourself CDs so that they can learn anytime on the job. This would enable them easier access to learning materials and they can learn on the go on their own.

3. In terms of the teaching/training, authorities should recognize that most taxi drivers lack necessary English language skills. They certainly need more training that is specific an dto the point. Thai society needs to help them to upgrade their services, realizing that they are the very first individuals to leave an impression on foreign visitors and first impressions are important.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **A: Tests and Questionnaires**

#### **Factors Affecting Thai Taxi Drivers' English Competence**

##### Introduction

The research project titled “Factors Affecting Thai Taxi Drivers' English Competence” aims to investigate the key factors affecting the English competence of Thai taxi drivers. The data is collected from the tests and the questionnaires. They are as follows

- 1) General Information
- 2) Tests of Thai taxi drivers' English competence (ELC)
- 3) Measure of Attitudes toward foreign passengers (ATF)
- 4) Measures of motivation to learn English (MLE)
- 5) Measures of independent language learning behavior (ILB)

Operational definitions are as follows:

1. The term ‘foreigners’ refer to both people speaking English as their mother tongue such as those from Australia, England, and the United States and people whose mother tongue is not English such as Japanese . Chinese and Korean who might speak English as a second language.
2. English Language Competence refers to the ability to communicate in English through the four macro-skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In this study, the taxi drivers' English competence is measured through their self-assessment and the ability to perform the tests designed by the researcher.
3. Attitudes toward foreign passengers refer to the feelings of Thai taxi drivers toward the foreign passengers. These feelings can be positive, neutral, or negative. The attitudes are measures based on the questionnaire designed by the researcher.
4. Motivation to learn English refers to the drive to perform action. In this study, the motivation of Thai taxi drivers to learn English is measured by the Likert's scale designed by the researcher.
5. Independent Language Learning Behavior refers to Thai taxi drivers' English language learning behavior, entailing learning by trials and errors, learning from the media, learning from experts, learning by reading and taking notes.

The data and information shall be analyzed and reported for the academic purposes. The results will be reported in an overall fashion without any reference to an individual.

Thank you very much for your understanding and cooperation.

## General Information

Please mark (/) in the choice that is true to you.

### 1.1 Age (years old)

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1 27-18 | <input type="checkbox"/> (2 37-28      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (3 47-38 | <input type="checkbox"/> (4 57-48      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (5 67-58 | <input type="checkbox"/> (6 68 or more |

### 1.2 Gender

- ☐ 1) Female
- ☐ 2) Male

### 1.3 Your highest educational attainment

- ☐ Primary Education
- ☐ Lower Secondary Education
- ☐ Upper Secondary Education or Vocational Certificate
- ☐ Diploma / High Vocational Certificate
- ☐ BA or Higher

### 1.4 How often have you attended English training programs?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely (e.g. once as a taxi driver)
- ☐ Sometimes (Once a year)
- ☐ Often (Twice a year)
- ☐ Very often (Three times or more a year)

### 1.5 Taxi type

- |                             |             |                             |          |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) | Cooperative | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) | Personal |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|----------|

## 2. Test of Taxi Drivers' English Competence

### 2.1. Self-evaluation

Please rate your current English language competence by marking X in the box.

Skills/Level	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Speaking					
Listening					
Reading					
Writing					
Overall					
Vocab and Grammar					
Knowledge of foreign cultures					

### 2.2 Read aloud Test --- Please read aloud the texts below:

Hello, my name is Somsak Jaidee. I'm from Roi-Et. I have been working as a taxi driver for ten years. Before I became a cab driver, I used to work as a farmer growing rice.

I like driving, but I don't like the traffic. The traffic in Bangkok is very heavy during the rush hours. Nowadays, I feel that too many cars are out on the streets of Bangkok.

### 2.3 Oral Skill Test – Please listen to the questions and orally answer them.

How long have you been working as a taxi driver?  
Do you like your job as a taxi driver? Why?

**2.4 Scenario Test** --- Please response, in writing or speech, to the following situations.

2.4.1. Which English expression would you use to greet a foreign passenger?

2.4.2. When a foreign passenger tells you his desired destination, but you could not hear it clearly, what would you say to him or her?

2.4.3. If you want to ask to emphasize that the destination is the Jatujak Weekend Market, what would you say to the foreign passenger?

2.4.4. When a foreign passenger said 'Thank you' to you, how would you response to him or her in English?

2.4.5. When given a tip by a foreign passenger, which expression would you use in return to the giver?

2.4.6. If you were to ask the passenger whether he or she would like to take a shortcut, how would you ask him or her?

2.4.7 What would you say to a foreign passenger if you needed to go to the toilet at the next gas station?

2.4.8 If you were to inform the passenger about the fare's method of paying, that the fare is to be collected based on the meter, how would you tell the passenger?

2.4.9 If you would like to ask a passenger whether to go straight or to turn left, how would you say to them in English?

2.4.10 In English, what would you say to a foreign passenger if you would like him or her to pay for the express way?

2.4.11 When you have reached the destination and would like to ask the passenger for confirmation whether it is the correct destination, how would you say it to the passenger in English?

2.4.12 When you have reached the destination and you would like to let the foreign passenger know about it, what would you say to the passenger in English?

### 3. Measure of Attitudes toward Foreign Passengers

Please read each item carefully and choose the best answer that represents your true feeling.

	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The foreign passengers I have serviced are kind. (A)					
2	The foreign passengers I have serviced tend to take advantages of Thai people. (A)					
3	The foreign passengers I have serviced have civilized cultures. (C)					
4	The foreign passengers I have serviced are generous. (A)					
5	The foreign passengers I have serviced often look down on Thais. (A)					
6	The foreign passengers I have serviced are moody and easily annoyed. (A)					
7	The foreigners I have met are friendly. (A)					
8	The foreign passengers I have serviced are open-minded people. (A)					
9	The foreigners I have met are fair. (C)					
10	The foreigners I have met are picky and choosy. (C)					
11	The foreigners I have met are reasonable people. (C)					
12	I like listening to foreign songs. (B)					
13	Foreign-made products are high in quality. (B)					
14	I try to avoid providing services to foreigners. (B)					



#### 4. Motivation to Learn English

Please read each item carefully and choose the best answer that represents your true feeling.

Statement		Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Being able to use English makes me proud of myself. (INMO)					
2	Having English skills helps me earn extra more money. (TOMO)					
3	My friends would admire my ability to speak English well. (INMO)					
4	My quality of life will be much better if I have good English skills. (TOMO)					
5	English opens doors for learning opportunities. (INMO)					
6	I like cultures and customs of English speaking countries. (INMO)					
7	Being able to communicate in English broadens my perspectives. (INMO)					
8	Having English language skills is a requirement for taxi drivers. (TOMO)					
9	Learning English is part of the job of taxi drivers' responsibilities. (TOMO)					

## 5. Independent English Language Learning Behavior

Please read each item carefully and choose the best answer that best represents your experience and perception.

Item	Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Often	Always
Practice speaking in English with foreigners.					
Listen to English songs.					
Learn English by reading books or textbooks					
Seek opportunities to undergo English language training					
Listen to English lessons on radio					
Learn English from smart phone applications					
Watch TV programs that teach English					
Learn expressions and words from experts or people who know					
Take note of new words or phrases					
Take notice and learn from the environment such as signs and billboards					
Learn and observe from capable taxi drivers					
Improvise without feeling shy when speak with foreigners					

Learning through observation of language use from the situations encounter.					
Learn English directly from native speakers.					
Practice speaking English with foreigners.					

DRAFT

## B: Content Validity

The content validity was also performed by asking five experts to assess the content of the items in the questionnaires. The question asked is: “How essential is the item in assessing/measuring the given construct?” In this study, there are 5 experts in the panel, namely:

1. Dr. Suntaree Satarasara
2. Asst. Prof Dr Peansiri Ekniyom
3. Asst. Prof Dr. Sroisithorn Issarankura
4. Asst. Prof. Dr. Rosukhon Swatevacharkul
5. Asst. Prof. Dr. Sutheera Nimitwiwat

Based on Lawshe (1975), the lowest ratio (CVR) for a panel of 5 is .75, which means that each item requires a consensus of at least 0.75 to be considered relevant to the given construct.

### Attitudes towards foreign passengers

Item	1	2	3	4	5	CVR
The foreign passengers I have serviced are kind. (A)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
The foreign passengers I have serviced tend to take advantages of Thai people. (A)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
The foreign passengers I have serviced have civilized cultures. (C)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
The foreign passengers I have serviced are generous. (A)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
The foreign passengers I have serviced often look down on Thais. (A)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
The foreign passengers I have serviced are moody and easily annoyed. (A)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
The foreigners I have met are friendly. (A)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
The foreign passengers I have serviced are open-minded people. (A)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
The foreigners I have met are fair. (C)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
The foreigners I have met are picky and choosy. (C)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
The foreigners I have met are reasonable people. (C)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
I like listening to foreign songs. (B)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Foreign-made products are high in quality. (B)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
I try to avoid providing services to foreigners. (B)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00

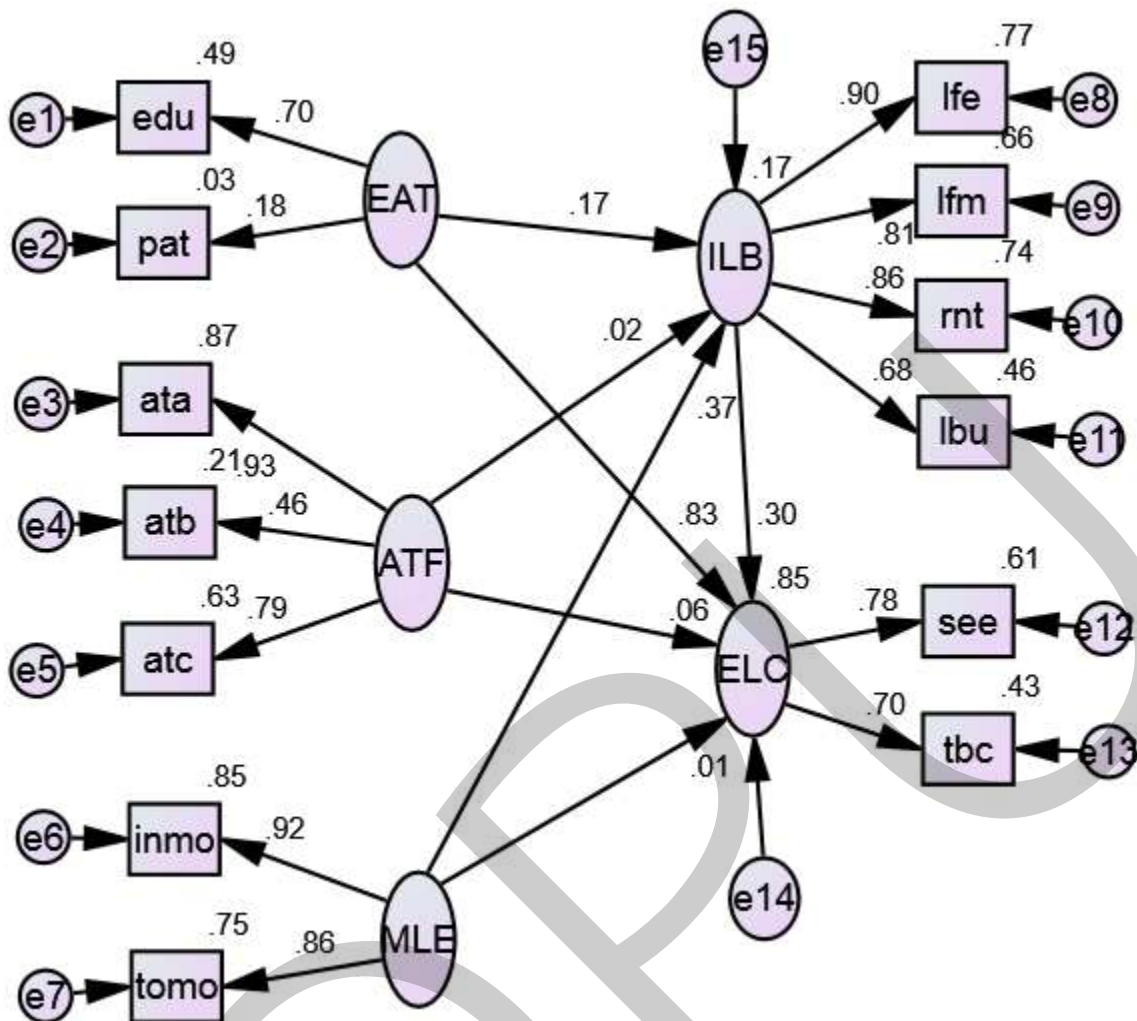
## Motivation to learn English

Item	1	2	3	4	5	CVR
Being able to use English makes me proud of myself. (INMO)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Having English skills helps me earn extra more money. (TOMO)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
My friends would admire my ability to speak English well. (INMO)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
My quality of life will be much better if I have good English skills. (TOMO)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
English opens doors for learning opportunities. (INMO)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
I like cultures and customs of English speaking countries. (INMO)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Being able to communicate in English broadens my perspectives. (INMO)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Having English language skills is a requirement for taxi drivers. (TOMO)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Learning English is part of the job of taxi drivers' responsibilities. (TOMO)	X	X	X	X	X	1.00

## Independent English language learning behavior

Item	1	2	3	4	5	CVR
Practice speaking in English with foreigners.	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Listen to English songs.	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Learn English by reading books or textbooks	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Seek opportunities to undergo English language training	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Listen to English lessons on radio	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Learn English from smart phone applications	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Watch TV programs that teach English	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Learn expressions and words from experts or people who know	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Take note of new words or phrases	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Take notice and learn from the environment such as signs and billboards	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Learn and observe from capable taxi drivers	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Improvise without feeling shy when speak with foreigners	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Learning through observation of language use from the situations encounter.	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Learn English directly from native speakers.	X	X	X	X	X	1.00
Practice speaking English with foreigners.	X	X	-	-	X	0.60

### C: LISREL Output



Chi-square = 53.821, Chi-square/df = 1.170, df = 46, p = .200, GFI = .977, AGFI = .954, CFI = .996  
 RMR = .021, RMSEA = .022, NFI = .972



**Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)**

			<b>Estimate</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Label</b>
ILB	<---	EAT	.146	.079	1.850	.064	par_9
ILB	<---	ATF	.037	.089	.414	.679	par_11
ILB	<---	MLE	.563	.095	5.910	***	par_13
ELC	<---	EAT	.533	.211	2.524	.012	par_10
ELC	<---	ATF	.064	.084	.758	.448	par_12
ELC	<---	MLE	.016	.084	.192	.848	par_14
ELC	<---	ILB	.220	.065	3.393	***	par_18
edu	<---	EAT	1.000				
pat	<---	EAT	.187	.076	2.473	.013	par_1
ata	<---	ATF	1.000				
atb	<---	ATF	.638	.081	7.924	***	par_2
atc	<---	ATF	.792	.068	11.647	***	par_3
inmo	<---	MLE	1.000				
tomo	<---	MLE	1.002	.091	11.000	***	par_4
lfe	<---	ILB	.966	.046	20.934	***	par_5
lfm	<---	ILB	.984	.054	18.178	***	par_6
rnt	<---	ILB	1.000				
lbu	<---	ILB	.835	.060	13.909	***	par_7
see	<---	ELC	1.000				
tbc	<---	ELC	.878	.096	9.175	***	par_8

**Standardized Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)**

			Estimate
ILB	<---	EAT	.168
ILB	<---	ATF	.025
ILB	<---	MLE	.372
ELC	<---	EAT	.828
ELC	<---	ATF	.058
ELC <--- MLE			.014
ELC	<---	ILB	.297
edu	<---	EAT	.699
pat	<---	EAT	.179
ata	<---	ATF	.930
atb	<---	ATF	.459
atc	<---	ATF	.794
inmo <---		MLE	.923
tomo <---		MLE	.865
lfe	<---	ILB	.900
lfm	<---	ILB	.811
rnt	<---	ILB	.860
lbu	<---	ILB	.679
see	<---	ELC	.779
tbc	<---	ELC	.701

**Correlations: (Group number 1 - Default model)**

			Estimate
EAT <-->		ATF	-.113
ATF <-->		MLE	.258
EAT <-->		MLE	-.031
e2 <-->		e8	.336
e9 <-->		e11	-.311
e4 <-->		e6	-.325
e4 <-->		e14	.439
e1 <-->		e9	.132
e8 <-->		EAT	-.245
e10 <-->		ATF	.167
e13 <-->		e15	-.196
e1 <-->		E2	-.100

**Variances: (Group number 1 - Default model)**

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
EAT	.736	.289	2.545	.011	par_28
ATF	.252	.029	8.731	***	par_29
MLE	.244	.030	8.245	***	par_30
e15	.464	.050	9.320	***	par_31
e14	.046	.085	.540	.589	par_32
e1	.769	.279	2.756	.006	par_33
e2	.785	.062	12.584	***	par_34
e3	.039	.019	2.074	.038	par_35
e4	.384	.031	12.528	***	par_36
e5	.093	.014	6.772	***	par_37
e6	.042	.021	2.044	.041	par_38
e7	.083	.021	3.869	***	par_39
e8	.145	.017	8.374	***	par_40
e9	.281	.028	10.155	***	par_41
e10	.193	.021	9.414	***	par_42
e11	.454	.039	11.645	***	par_43
e12	.197	.030	6.579	***	par_44
e13	.271	.028	9.658	***	par_45

**Squared Multiple Correlations: (Group number 1 - Default model)**

	Estimate
ILB	.167
ELC	.849
tbc	.435
see	.607
lbu	.461
rnt	.744
lfm	.657
lfe	.775
tomo	.748
inmo	.853
atc	.630
atb	.211
ata	.866
pat	.032
edu	.489

**Factor Score Weights (Group number 1 - Default model)**

	tbc	see	lbu	rnt	lfm	lfe	tomo	inmo	atc	atb	ata	pat	edu
<b>MLE</b>	.000	-.010	.005	.004	.008	.012	.278	.607	-.004	.066	-.012	-.001	.001
<b>ATF</b>	-.004	-.007	-.002	.018	-.003	-.009	-.006	.037	.225	.050	.674	.001	-.001
<b>EAT</b>	.307	.445	.021	.078	-.009	-.163	.018	-.083	-.010	-.120	-.029	.101	.282
<b>ILB</b>	.021	.067	.134	.238	.211	.347	.020	.029	-.006	-.011	-.019	-.048	-.005
<b>ELC</b>	.225	.339	.033	.075	.034	-.004	-.023	.024	-.013	.071	-.038	.033	.115

**Total Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)**

	<b>MLE</b>	<b>ATF</b>	<b>EAT</b>	<b>ILB</b>	<b>ELC</b>
<b>ILB</b>	.563	.037	.146	.000	.000
<b>ELC</b>	.140	.072	.565	.220	.000
tbc	.123	.063	.497	.193	.878
see	.140	.072	.565	.220	1.000
lbu	.470	.031	.122	.835	.000
rnt	.563	.037	.146	1.000	.000
lfm	.554	.036	.144	.984	.000
lfe	.544	.035	.141	.966	.000
tomo	1.002	.000	.000	.000	.000
inmo	1.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
atc	.000	.792	.000	.000	.000
atb	.000	.638	.000	.000	.000
ata	.000	1.000	.000	.000	.000
pat	.000	.000	.187	.000	.000
edu	.000	.000	1.000	.000	.000

**Standardized Total Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)**

	<b>MLE</b>	<b>ATF</b>	<b>EAT</b>	<b>ILB</b>	<b>ELC</b>
<b>ILB</b>	.372	.025	.168	.000	.000
<b>ELC</b>	.125	.065	.878	.297	.000
tbc	.088	.046	.615	.208	.701
see	.097	.051	.684	.231	.779
lbu	.253	.017	.114	.679	.000
rnt	.320	.021	.144	.860	.000
lfm	.302	.020	.136	.811	.000
lfe	.335	.022	.151	.900	.000
tomo	.865	.000	.000	.000	.000
inmo	.923	.000	.000	.000	.000
atc	.000	.794	.000	.000	.000
atb	.000	.459	.000	.000	.000
ata	.000	.930	.000	.000	.000
pat	.000	.000	.179	.000	.000
edu	.000	.000	.699	.000	.000



**Direct Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)**

	<b>MLE</b>	<b>ATF</b>	<b>EAT</b>	<b>ILB</b>	<b>ELC</b>
<b>ILB</b>	.563	.037	.146	.000	.000
<b>ELC</b>	.016	.064	.533	.220	.000
<b>tbc</b>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.878
<b>see</b>	.000	.000	.000	.000	1.000
<b>lbu</b>	.000	.000	.000	.835	.000
<b>rnt</b>	.000	.000	.000	1.000	.000
<b>lfm</b>	.000	.000	.000	.984	.000
<b>lfe</b>	.000	.000	.000	.966	.000
<b>tomo</b>	1.002	.000	.000	.000	.000
<b>inmo</b>	1.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
<b>atc</b>	.000	.792	.000	.000	.000
<b>atb</b>	.000	.638	.000	.000	.000
<b>ata</b>	.000	1.000	.000	.000	.000
<b>pat</b>	.000	.000	.187	.000	.000
<b>edu</b>	.000	.000	1.000	.000	.000

**Standardized Direct Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)**

	MLE	ATF	EAT	ILB	ELC
ILB	.372	.025	.168	.000	.000
ELC	.014	.058	.828	.297	.000
tbc	.000	.000	.000	.000	.701
see	.000	.000	.000	.000	.779
lbu	.000	.000	.000	.679	.000
rnt	.000	.000	.000	.860	.000
lfm	.000	.000	.000	.811	.000
lfe	.000	.000	.000	.900	.000
tomo	.865	.000	.000	.000	.000
inmo	.923	.000	.000	.000	.000
atc	.000	.794	.000	.000	.000
atb	.000	.459	.000	.000	.000
ata	.000	.930	.000	.000	.000
pat	.000	.000	.179	.000	.000
edu	.000	.000	.699	.000	.000

**Indirect Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)**

	MLE	ATF	EAT	ILB	ELC
ILB	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
ELC	.124	.008	.032	.000	.000
tbc	.123	.063	.497	.193	.000
see	.140	.072	.565	.220	.000
lbu	.470	.031	.122	.000	.000
rnt	.563	.037	.146	.000	.000
lfm	.554	.036	.144	.000	.000
lfe	.544	.035	.141	.000	.000
tomo	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
inmo	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
atc	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
atb	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
ata	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
pat	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
edu	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

**Standardized Indirect Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)**

	<b>MLE</b>	<b>ATF</b>	<b>EAT</b>	<b>ILB</b>	<b>ELC</b>
ILB	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
ELC	.111	.007	.050	.000	.000
tbc	.088	.046	.615	.208	.000
see	.097	.051	.684	.231	.000
lbu	.253	.017	.114	.000	.000
rnt	.320	.021	.144	.000	.000
lfm	.302	.020	.136	.000	.000
lfe	.335	.022	.151	.000	.000
tomo	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
inmo	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
atc	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
atb	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
ata	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
pat	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
edu	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

## About the Researcher

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