AN INVESTIGATION INTO STUDENTS’ MOTIVATION TO LEARN ENGLISH IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN VIETNAM

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autonomy, competence, motivational intensity, extrinsic/intrinsic motivation, higher education, L2 motivation, mixed methods research, relatedness, second language learning/acquisition, self-determination theory, Vietnam.
Abstract

The present research program used self-determination theory to investigate students’ motivation to learn English in Vietnamese higher education. It was made up of two studies utilising mixed methods to address five key objectives. Study 1 used quantitative questionnaires (n = 422; 180 English major students, 242 non-English major students) to (1) identify the types of motivation to learn English reported by the two groups of English learners; (2) explore whether English major and non-English major students differed in their motivation; (3) consider whether these two groups differed in their levels of motivational intensity (effort) expended on their English learning and self-perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness to significant others; (4) examine the relationships between motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for both groups. Study 2 employed focus groups (n = 36; 18 English major students and 18 non-English major students) to further inform the results of Study 1 and to address the final research objective (5) explore students’ perceptions of how lecturers, peers and parents influence their motivation to learn English.

Study 1’s findings revealed that the majority of both English major and non-English major students exhibited three types of motivation: personal/professional development motivation (highest levels compared with remaining types of motivation), intrinsic motivation, obligation/avoidance motivation. In addition, a small number of students in both groups reported amotivation (unable to understand the importance of learning English). English major students endorsed higher levels of intrinsic motivation and lower levels of obligation/avoidance motivation than their
non-English major peers. English major students reported higher levels of motivational intensity (effort) and felt more competent than their non-English major counter-parts in their learning of English. Regarding the relationships between different types of motivation and motivational intensity, for both English major and non-English major students, higher levels of intrinsic motivation were associated with higher levels of motivational intensity, and lower levels of amotivation. For non-English major students only, higher levels of obligation/avoidance motivation and personal/professional development motivation were associated with higher levels of motivational intensity. Regarding the relationships between different types of motivation and autonomy, competence and relatedness, for both groups, the more students felt connected to significant others such as lecturers and peers, the higher levels of intrinsic motivation and personal/professional development motivation, and the lower levels of amotivation they reported when learning English. For non-English major students only, the more they felt autonomous and competent in the learning of English, the higher levels of intrinsic motivation, personal/professional development they endorsed.

Study 2’s findings generally supported Study 1’s findings in that both English major and non-English major students were motivated to learn English to prepare for future professional prospects (the most dominant reason), to develop them personally, to respond to internal interest and passions, and to respond to external pressure/obligation from significant others. A small number of English major and non-English major students were unable to see the importance of learning English. More English major students felt intrinsically motivated than their non-English major peers, and fewer numbers of English major students felt obligated to learn English.
Furthermore, Study 2’s findings indicated that students’ motivation to learn English was greatly influenced by lecturers, peers and parents. Noticeably, the students felt intrinsically motivated when they felt connected to these significant others. In contrast, if these significant people did not support their need for relatedness to them (i.e., did not care for them), they would feel obligated to learn English and even unable to understand the importance of learning English. Peers and parents motivated the students by showing their positive attitudes toward English and the learning of English. Moreover, lecturers enhanced the students’ motivation by focusing on practice of English, teaching flexibly and using innovative methods of giving feedback and assessment.

The present research has made a significant contribution to the practice of teaching and learning English in higher education in Vietnam, and the broader literature on L2 acquisition in Asia since it addressed the existing research gaps. This research has also contributed to self-determination theory regarding how this theory worked in investigating motivation to learn English in a collectivist culture of Vietnam.
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## List of Abbreviations and Terms

The table below is a list of key terms and abbreviations with their meanings related to the context of the present research.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key terms/Abbreviations</th>
<th>Meanings related to the contexts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td>refers to having no goals to undertake a task or not seeing the importance of engaging in a task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>refers to engaging in a task in order to satisfy one’s interest and passion in the task itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introjected regulation</td>
<td>refers to the reason to carry out an academic task in order to avoid the feeling of shame or guilt or in order to seek approval of significant others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified regulation</td>
<td>can be recognised when an individual carries out a task because this person values the task itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>English for special purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic motivation</td>
<td>refers to the motivation to involve in a task not because of the inherent interest in the task, but to arrive at some instrumental end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External regulation</td>
<td>is characterised by undertaking a learning task in order to achieve a reward or avoid punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English major students</td>
<td>students who are studying English as the focus of the degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-English major students</td>
<td>students who are majoring in other specialist areas such as engineering and art. Learning English is a smaller part of their wider degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for autonomy</td>
<td>refers to an individual’s need to have freedom of choice and the freedom to act without any control or pressure from external forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for competence</td>
<td>refers to the need to feel competent and effective in interactions with other people and the social environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for relatedness</td>
<td>pertains to feeling cared for by, and caring for others, and feeling respected by significant others such as employers, teachers, peers and family members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation</td>
<td>motivation to learn English in order to respond to obligation from external sources or to avoid negative feelings for not learning English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development motivation</td>
<td>motivation to learn English to pursue prestigious future professions or to develop personally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDT</td>
<td>self-determination theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA</td>
<td>second language acquisition</td>
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Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

QUT Verified Signature

Signature: _______________________________

Date: ________________

22/5/2015
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview

The English language, widely considered as a global language, has been identified by the Vietnamese government as the most important foreign language at all national education levels in Vietnam, particularly in higher education as a result of globalisation (Hoang, 2008a; Lam, 2011; Loi, 2011; Trinh, 2005; Wright, 2002). It has been highlighted in the legal documents issued by the Vietnamese government and the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) that Vietnamese higher education students need to acquire an English level proficient enough to communicate effectively in a global working environment (see, for example, MoET, 2003; MoET, 2004). Different from this expectation, research has indicated that both English major and non-English major students (two broad groups of English learners) demonstrate poor levels of English proficiency (detailed later in Chapter 2), which has concerned the researcher, also a lecturer teaching English in Vietnamese higher education. In an attempt to make her contribution to improve the quality of the teaching and learning of English in higher education in Vietnam, the researcher extensively reviewed the second language acquisition (SLA) literature and learnt that success or failure in SLA is determined by a range of factors including aptitude, intelligent and motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Ellis, 1994; Gardner, 1960). While a large body of research in second language acquisition has found that motivation has the great potential to enhance learners’ levels of second language proficiency (Brown, 2004; Dörnyei, 1998, 2001a; Ellis, 1994; Gardner, 2010; Gardner & Lalonde, 1985; Ushioda, 2006), limited research on motivation to learn English has been conducted in the context of teaching and learning English in
Vietnamese higher education (Phan, 2010). As such, the present research program aimed to address this gap.

Drawing on self-determination theory, the present program of research aimed to investigate (1) the types of motivation that English major and non-English major students (two broad groups of English learners in Vietnamese higher education) reported when they learn English; (2) the similarities and/or differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students; (3) the similarities and/or differences in their levels of motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness, given these factors are critical in learning a second language; (4) the relationships between motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for two groups of English learners; and (5) English major and non-English major students’ perceptions of how their motivation is influenced by significant others including parents, teachers and peers.

To begin, this introductory chapter gives an overview of how globalisation has impacted on the role of English in Vietnam in general and on English teaching and learning in higher education in particular. It then outlines self-determination theory, which provides a theoretical perspective for the research. This is followed by a succinct explanation of an operational definition of motivation to learn a second language used throughout the thesis. The subsequent sections discuss the scope of this research, research questions, the research design and the research program’s significance. The last section gives a summary of the introductory chapter and an outline of the subsequent chapters in the thesis.
Globalisation and English Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in Vietnam

Globalisation in Vietnam

Due to the vast and complex nature of globalisation, definitions of the construct vary. For example, Giddens (1990) defined globalisation as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (p. 64).

Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton (1999) offered a more elaborate definition:

Globalisation can be located on a continuum with the local, national and regional. At one end of the continuum lie social and economic relations and networks which are organised on a local and/or national basis; at the other end lie social and economic relations and networks which crystallise on the wider scale of regional and global interactions. Globalisation can be taken to refer to those spatio-temporal processes of change which underpin a transformation in the organisation of human affairs by linking together and expanding human activity across regions and continents (p.15).

Although consensus on defining globalisation has not been reached, it is widely accepted that the processes of globalisation are multi-faceted and globalisation has economic, social, political, communication, cultural, religious, legal and linguistics dimensions, which are all interlinked in a complex fashion (Merriam & Mohamad, 2000). There is no doubt that globalisation is having an impact upon all countries in the world (Waks, 2006).

Globalisation is said to have exerted influences in Vietnam since the country embarked on an economic reform policy (known as the open-door policy or the doi moi policy) in 1986 (Dang & Marginson, 2013; Glewwe, 2004). Manifestations of globalisation in Vietnam can be seen in many aspects of the country, particularly the roles of English in Vietnam, its foreign language policies and the teaching and learning of English (Dang, Nguyen, & Le, 2013).
Impact of globalization on the role of English and the foreign language policy in Vietnam

Role of the English language in Vietnam

One result of globalisation in Vietnam is that English has become the most popular foreign language (Lam, 2011; Loi, 2011; Nguyen, 2009, 2011; Nguyen, 2003; Sullivan, 1996). This may be attributed to three key reasons. First, English will help Vietnam enhance international relations and economic cooperation (To, 2010). English is now a global language and used as a medium of communication within international organisations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APECT), and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Crystal, 1997). Second, English is essential for job candidates in Vietnam who wish to find well-paid jobs. In Vietnam today, English language proficiency is one of the foremost requirements that employers seek in job candidates (Son, 2011). Third, English is deemed important for higher education students. With a good command of English, students are able to understand useful learning materials which are available in English only. Moreover, being competent in the use of English may earn graduates a chance to study in a prestigious university overseas (Loi, 2011; Son, 2011).

Impact of globalisation on the foreign language policy in Vietnam

Globalisation has also exerted influences on the foreign language policies in Vietnam (Baldauf Jr & Nguyen, 2012; Lam, 2011; Nguyen, 2011). Between 1975 and 1986, as Vietnam was allied with the Soviet Union, Russian was the major foreign language in Vietnam. The Russian language was taught as a compulsory subject in Grades 10 to 12 (aged 16 to 18 years) and in higher education institutions (MoET, 1986). However, in the late 1980s, with Russia’s influence decreasing and the impacts of globalisation being felt, the Vietnamese government encouraged
Vietnamese people to learn English. At all levels of education from Grades 6 to 12 (aged 12 to 18 years), students were given the freedom to choose which foreign language to study, and an increasing number of students chose to study English (MoET, 1994). In 1994, the Vietnamese Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet signed an Order (No 442/TT), requiring that all government officials had to study a foreign language, preferably English. In doing so, the Vietnamese government hoped that English would become the most popular foreign language studied (Vo, 1994).

In 2008, the Vietnamese government approved a national education project entitled “Teaching and learning foreign languages in the national education system in the period of 2008 – 2020”. The project, worth approximately five billion US dollars, aimed to reform the teaching and learning of foreign languages at all educational levels in Vietnam. This project indicated that of four foreign languages which are taught at all educational levels in Vietnam (English, French, Russian and Chinese), English is identified as the most important foreign language (MoET, 2008b; Nguyen, 2003). The Vietnamese government’s prioritising English over other foreign languages can be seen in many ways. First, the government has spent money and effort to reform English coursebooks for students from Grades 3 to 12 (aged from 9 to 18 years). Second, in higher education, the Government required institutions to implement an extensive English language program in which the class hours for English learning were increased. Moreover, due to this project, since 2008, educational workshops on how to improve the teaching and learning of English for students at all educational levels (primary, secondary and higher education) have been conducted by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) (Hoang, 2008a; Ngan, 2011).
In summary, globalisation has impacted on Vietnam in many ways, in particular, in respect of the roles of English and foreign language policies (Dang & Marginson, 2013; Dang et al., 2013; Nguyen, 2011). Since 1986, English has become the dominant foreign language at all levels of education (Hoang, 2007). As the present research program focused on motivation to learn English in higher education, the following section discusses the teaching and learning of English in Vietnam’s higher education sector.

**English Teaching and Learning in Vietnamese Higher Education**

English language programs in Vietnamese higher education can be categorised into two groups: English major programs and non-English major programs (Hoang, 2008a; To, 2010). In the former programs, students choose to learn English as the major component of their degree, and in the latter, students must learn English as a minor component of their wider degree (i.e., engineering or economics).

**English major programs**

English major programs are provided in a range of Vietnamese universities such as the University of Language and International Studies, Hanoi Teachers’ Training College, and Hanoi University of Education (To, 2010). In English major programs, students normally study macro English language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), English-speaking culture and literature, linguistics and English-Vietnamese interpreting/translation (To, 2010). Upon successful graduation, English major students can work as either interpreters/translators or teachers of English (Hoang, 2008a).
Non-English Major Programs

According to Hoang (2008a), at the time of his research, 94% of Vietnamese higher education students learnt English in non-English major programs. In a non-English major program, universities are allowed decide on how much time is spent on teaching English and where in a degree it will be taught (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2012). For example, at some universities, non-English major students are required to learn English for five class hours each week for the first five fifteen week semesters of their degree, and do not study English in their last year at university (HaUI, 2012, 2015). In contrast, in other universities (e.g., Hanoi University of Water Resources – HUWS) students study English for six class hours a week for the first three semesters (HUWS, 2012), and do not study English for the rest of their degree. Moreover, English teaching content varies across universities. For example, students at some universities (e.g., Hanoi University of Industry – HaUI) learn general English (also called English for daily communication) in the first four semesters and English for special purposes (i.e., students majoring in engineering learn English words and phrases that are specifically used in engineering) in the fifth semester (HaUI, 2012). Students at HUWR learn general English and do not learn English for special purposes at all.

In summary, there are two sets of English language programs in higher education in Vietnam, being the English major, and non-English major programs. These broader groups of programs differ in the amount of time spent in learning English and the resources used within the classroom (a more detailed discussion about these differences can be found in Chapter 2). In addition, students who enrol in an English major degree choose to learn English, and do so as their major focus of their degree,
while students who enrol in a non-English major degree are required to learn English as a minor component of their studies.

Despite the fact that English is of major importance for both English major and non-English major students, research evidence has indicated that the English proficiency demonstrated by both groups is low (see Chapter 2). According to Tran and Baldauf Jr (2007) and Le (2011), Vietnamese students’ low English proficiency may be due to their lack of motivation, and/or loss of motivation. Since motivation is one of the most critical factors contributing to L2 learners’ success or lack thereof, along with a number of gaps identified in this area (see later in this chapter), it is imperative to investigate students’ motivation to learn English in Vietnam. Furthermore, given above mentioned differences between English major and non-English major programs, it is postulated that English major students and non-English major students may differ in their knowledge of English and their motivation to learn English. As such, it is important to investigate whether there are motivational differences between these two groups of English learners, as uncovering what these differences are may allow for consideration of strategies to enhance motivation in both groups.

**Working Definition of Second Language (L2) Motivation**

There have been numerous definitions of motivation to learn a second language/foreign language. For example, Gardner (1985b) defined L2 motivation as “the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language” (p. 10). Another definition of L2 motivation, by William and Burden (1997) defined the construct as “a state of cognitive and emotional arousal; which leads to a conscious decision to act, and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal/goals” (p. 120).
In the current research program, a working definition is proposed below. This definition is strongly influenced by the Deci’s (1980a) and Deci and Ryan’s (1985) works whose self-determination theory was chosen as the theoretical framework of the present research.

Motivation in second language learning refers to the extent to which individuals make choices about what goals they would like to pursue, and the effort they will spend to attain these goals. Motivation in second language learning may be enhanced or undermined by the learning context.

**An Overview of Self-Determination Theory**

The current research program employed self-determination theory (SDT) to explore students’ motivation to learn English as it is argued that SDT may provide a sound theoretical perspective to investigate the intricate layers of L2 motivation (Ma, 2009). SDT, initially developed by Deci and Ryan (1985) and then elaborated by researchers all over the world, is concerned with supporting people’s innate and natural tendencies so that they can act in effective ways (Deci, 1980a, 1980b; Deci & Ryan, 1985). SDT embraces an ‘organismic’ (individuals have an innate propensity to interact with the external environment in order to exist and develop) and ‘dialectic’ (motivation can be enhanced or undermined by social and contextual factors) perspective of human motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

According to SDT, motivation can be classified broadly as intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to “the human need to be competent and self-determined” (Deci, 1980b, p. 27). An intrinsically motivated individual pursues an “activity in the absence of a reward contingency or control” (p. 34), and undertakes the activity for the pleasure and satisfaction that accompany the activity.
Extrinsic motivation refers to the motivation to engage in a task not because of the inherent interest in the task, but to arrive at some instrumental end such as learning English to get a good job in the future (Deci, 1980b). Traditionally, extrinsic motivation was believed to be non-autonomous or non self-determined (de Charms, 1968). However, in SDT, extrinsically motivated individuals still demonstrate a certain levels of self-determination as long as they are able to internalise external values and see the importance of engaging in the task (Deci & Ryan, 1985). As such, extrinsic motivation is classified into different types, some of which are more self-determined than the others (Deci & Ryan, 2012). In education research, there are three types of extrinsic motivation (Vallerand et al., 1993). The first type of extrinsic motivation is ‘external regulation’, which is the least self-determined, and is characterised by undertaking a learning task in order to achieve a reward or avoid punishment. The second type of extrinsic motivation is ‘introjected regulation’, which is more self-determined than external regulation, and refers to carrying out an academic task in order to avoid feelings of shame or guilt or in order to seek approval of significant others such as teachers. The third type, ‘identified regulation’ can be recognised when an individual carries out a task because this person values the task. Identified regulation is the most self-determined extrinsic motivation.

SDT posits that different types of motivation may predict different outcomes. In the realm of second language acquisition, past empirical research has identified that higher levels of intrinsic motivation and self-determined types of extrinsic motivation were associated with higher levels of motivational intensity (effort). In contrast, higher levels of less-determined types of extrinsic motivation and
amotivation were associated with low levels of motivational intensity (Noels, 2001a, 2001b, 2009).

Furthermore, according to SDT, people in all cultures have three basic psychological needs: autonomy (the need to have freedom of choice), competence (the need to feel capable of successfully completing the task) and relatedness (the need to feel cared for by other significant others). These three needs are hypothesised by SDT to be predictors of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000). Research in second language acquisition has indicated that higher levels of autonomy, competence and relatedness were associated with higher levels of intrinsic motivation and self-determined types of extrinsic motivation. Meanwhile, lower levels of the three needs were associated with higher levels of less self-determined types of motivation and amotivation (Noels, 2001a, 2001b, 2005, 2009; Noels, Clement, & Pelletier, 2001).

Since effort, autonomy, competence and relatedness have been indicated to be significant factors in second language acquisition, this research aimed to examine whether English major and non-English major students differ in their levels of motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness. Furthermore, the relationships between motivation and these factors were examined for English major and non-English major students.

Although SDT highlights that humans are active and able to use their innate tendency to interact with the environment to grow and develop, it also maintains that social factors (e.g., significant people such as parents) may facilitate or undermine this natural process (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Specifically, SDT hypothesises that social factors may influence people’s motivation through the mediation of three basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence and relatedness). Specifically, social
factors that support the attainment of these needs are said to lead to increased
intrinsic motivation and identified regulation, while those that undermine these needs
are said to lead to increased external regulation and amotivation. Since
lecturers/teachers, peers and parents are considered significant people in Vietnamese
culture (discussed further later on), this research sought to explore students’
perceptions and experiences of the influences these people exert on their motivation
to learn English. SDT is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Research gaps
A number of research gaps were identified:

First, although motivation is such an important factor in second language acquisition
(SLA), empirical research in this field is scant in Vietnam. Examining a few
available studies that have explored motivation to learn English among Vietnamese
higher education students (these studies are discussed in Chapter 3), revealed that
only one study explicitly examined the types of motivation demonstrated by English
major students (n = 7). This research program argued that it is imperative to identify
the types of motivation exhibited by Vietnamese students, as Dörnyei (2001c)
postulates that understanding students’ motivation to learn a second language may
assist lecturers, language policy makers and curriculum designers to better address
students’ needs and goals and expectations in learning English.

Second, none of the above studies attempted to explore the similarities and/or
differences in motivation between English major students (who choose to study
English as the major component of their degree), and non-English major students
(who are required to study English as a minor component of their wider degree).
While it is clear that both groups of learners have a different focus when learning
English, less is known about whether they differ in their goals for learning English, their levels of English proficiency and their motivation. As such, this research program aimed to identify possible similarities and differences between both groups of English learners.

Furthermore, although self-determination theory has been widely applied in other areas such as work and education much less research has been conducted to examine if this theory is applicable when investigating L2 motivation in a collectivist culture. This research program attempted to fill this gap by replicating previous research (Noels, 2001a, 2001b, 2009) to investigate the relationships between motivation and a range of factors (motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness) with two samples of Vietnamese higher education students (English major and non-English major students).

Moreover, while much has been written about how teachers/lecturers may influence students’ motivation to learn a second language, little is known about the influences that parents and peers may have on students’ motivation to learn a second language. This research argues that besides lecturers, peers and parents are very significant people in the Vietnamese culture, and these people may exert strong influences on students’ motivation to learn English (Phan, 2010). As such, this research aimed to explore students’ perceptions of how lecturers, peers and parents may influence their motivation to learn English.
Research Questions

The present research program aims to answer five research questions:

1) What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?

2) What are the similarities and differences and in motivation between English major and non-English major students?

3) What are the similarities and differences in the level of effort, autonomy, competence and relatedness between English major and non-English major students?

4) What are the relationships between motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for English major and non-English major students?

5) In what ways do lecturers, peers and parents influence Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English?

Research Design

This research program comprised a pilot study and two main studies using a mixed methods research design to answer the five research questions. The research design for each of these studies is summarised below.

Pilot Study

The questionnaire consisting of three pre-existing measures used in Study 1 (see Appendix A) and focus group questions discussed in Study 2 (see Appendix B) were piloted with a total of 13 second year students (7 English major and 6 non-English major students) in a university in Vietnam. In the present research, as the participants were Vietnamese, these measures were slightly modified and translated to
Vietnamese, their native language (the issues relating to instrument translation are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). First, students were asked to complete the questionnaire and comment on the clarity and cultural appropriateness of each item of the Vietnamese version of the questionnaire. After that they participated in focus group discussions. Based on the participants’ comment and the researcher’s observations during the focus groups, the researcher considered making the necessary changes to the instruments (see more in Chapter 4).

**Study 1**

Study 1 used a questionnaire made up of three pre-existing quantitative measures: the language learning orientation scale – Intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation subscale (LLOS – IEA) (Noels et al., 2000); the motivational intensity measure (Gardner, 2010); and the basic psychological needs measure (Carreira, 2012). Study 1 aimed to address Research questions 1–4. The questionnaire was completed by 422 second year students (180 English major students and 242 non-English major students) at a multidisciplinary university in Hanoi in Vietnam. Factor analysis using SPSS, inter-factor and inter-scale correlations, and tests of internal consistency were used to explore the underlying structure of the questionnaire items and show the evidence of validity and reliability of the translated questionnaire for this study’s population. Mean analyses (descriptive analyses) were generated to uncover the types of motivation evident for English major and non-English major students, which aimed to answer Research question 1. To identify the similarities and differences in motivational subtypes, the levels of effort expended and self-perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness between English major and non-English major students, two-way MANOVAs and ANOVAs were conducted (RQs 2, 3). Correlation analyses and standard multiple regressions were generated to
examine the relationship between the variables of interest in the present research program (RQ4).

**Study 2**

Study 2 aimed to further inform the results of Study 1 by understanding in a greater depth the reasons why English major and non-English major students wanted to study English, and the similarities and/or differences in motivation between these groups of English learners (RQs 1 and 2). Furthermore, Study 2 investigated students’ perceptions of how significant people may influence their motivation to learn English (RQ5). Study 2 employed six focus group discussions, involving 36 students (18 English major and 18 non-English major students) who completed the questionnaire. To prepare the students for the focus groups and to give a chance to those who might be less vocal in the focus groups to share their motivation to learn English, approximately 20 minutes prior to each focus group, the students were asked to provide their written responses to a number of questions that were discussed further in the focus groups. It was noted that the focus groups and students’ written responses were conducted in Vietnamese, and then translated to English using back translation for analysis. The main focus of this study was to explore Vietnamese higher education students’ perceptions of how lecturers, peers, and parents influenced their motivation to learn English. However, during the focus groups, they were encouraged to talk about motivation in learning English more broadly in order to add to and clarify the findings of Study 1.

**Significance of the research**

The current program of research which explored motivation to learn English of both English major and non-English major students in higher education in Vietnam is significant at both practical and theoretical levels. At a practical level, since
motivation plays a pivotal role in contributing to students’ English proficiency, which is the first priority of Vietnamese higher education, the present research is timely. Specifically, this research has identified what types of motivation English major and non-English major students report in learning English, the similarities and/or differences between the two groups regarding their motivation, and possible ways to enhance students’ motivation to learn English. These findings may help significant others such as lecturers, peers and parents and the Vietnamese higher education sector as a whole to improve students’ motivation. These understandings may help to improve the quality of the teaching and learning of English in higher education in Vietnam.

At a theoretical level, the present research complements existing literature of L2 motivation as it addressed the gaps in this area. In particular, this research has provided an insight into what motivates higher education students of different majors (i.e., English major students and non-English major students) to learn English, and how significant others (i.e., lecturers, peers and parents) may influence their motivation to learn English in a Vietnamese collectivist culture. Furthermore, the findings of this research have contributed to self-determination theory with regard to its applicability and understanding in researching motivation within the Vietnamese cultural context.

In addition, since little research has used mixed methods to explore L2 motivation (Comanaru & Noels, 2009), this research has made a contribution to the methodology by providing the rationales of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data and delineating a clear procedure of analysing, converging and combining two data sets in single research. This research has indicated that collecting both quantitative and qualitative data enabled the researcher to bring out the best of
both paradigms to investigate the intricate layers of students’ motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

**Thesis Outline**

The thesis is made up of eight chapters.

Chapter 1 has provided an overview of the current program of research. The research context, theoretical framework and research gaps have been identified and discussed, which assisted the researcher to pose five research questions. The two studies comprising this research were briefly presented. Chapter 1 ended with the significance of the current research program.

Chapter 2 outlines the broader context of the current program of research by focussing on Vietnam, its unique culture, special socio-economic conditions, and education system, particularly the higher education sector and the teaching and learning of the English language in higher education institutions in Vietnam.

Chapter 3 presents a brief history of L2 motivation research, introducing the development of L2 research and focusing more on two constructs (motivational intensity and L2 Ideal self), as these constructs were relevant to discuss the findings of this research. Chapter Three extensively discusses self-determination theory as it was used as the theoretical framework. A range of empirical studies are reviewed and discussed, which helped to identify the gaps for the present research.

Chapter 4 describes the research design and methodology of the research. This chapter explains why a mixed-methods design was employed, and offers a detailed description of issues relating to participant selection, the data collection instruments, procedures of data collection and data analyses.
Chapter 5 discusses the research methods for Study 1 such as participants, instruments and the validation of the translated instruments and the data analyses. Most significantly, Study 1 presents the findings for RQs 1–4. This chapter ends with a summary of the chapter and findings.

Chapter 6 outlines the methodological issues for Study 2 (the participants, the focus groups, and qualitative content analysis for the focus group data). In study 2, for clarity purposes, the findings from the English major and non-English major students are presented separately and synthesised and compared and contrasted in the conclusion.

Chapter 7 synthesises the findings in Study 1 and 2 and discusses the findings for each research questions in relation to the theoretical framework (SDT) and the relevant literature (i.e., the context of learning English in higher education in Vietnam, globalisation).

Chapter 8 provides the summary, conclusion and recommendations for further research. Limitations of the present research program are also discussed.
Chapter 2: The Broader Context of Vietnam

Overview

An understanding of the context where learners are learning a second language is a major advantage for a researcher in developing a holistic picture about their motivation to learn this language (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Nakata, 2006). Hence, a discussion of the broader context of Vietnam, where the present research program was located, was believed to be imperative in investigating Vietnamese higher education students’ motivation to learn English. In this chapter, the first section provides a brief overview of Vietnam, including demographic information, significant historical events and cultural values. The second section discusses the impact that globalisation and Vietnam’s historical and socio-economic context has had on higher education. The last two sections detail the development of English in Vietnam and the teaching and learning of English in Vietnamese higher education institutions.

Vietnam: The Land, History, People and Culture

Demographic Information

Vietnam is a tropical, S-shaped country on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia, bordered on the north by China, on the west by Laos and Cambodia, on the east by the South China Sea (Pacific Ocean) and in the southwest by the Gulf of Thailand (Figure 2.1). Vietnam covers an area of 128, 000 square miles (332, 800 sq.km), and is divided into three parts: the North, with the major city of Hanoi (the country’s capital), the Central Area, with the major city of Da Nang, and the South, with the major city of Ho Chi Minh. In the imagination of the Vietnamese people, North and South Vietnam resemble two heavy rice baskets, and the Central Area is like a
shoulder pole carrying these baskets. This imagery fits neatly with the reality of the country, in that North Vietnam and South Vietnam are the main rice-producing and heavily populated areas while the Central Area is the thin, less productive, and less densely inhabited coastal region (Ashwill & Thai, 2005).

Using data from the World Fact Book, created and maintained by the Central Intelligence Agency (2014) in the United States of America, the population of Vietnam in 2014 was approximately 93 million inhabitants, making Vietnam the world's fifteenth most populous country. Vietnam is a multi-ethnic country (54 ethnic groups) with the Viet people (Kinh) comprising nearly 90% of the whole population and the other 53 groups representing just over 10%. There are eight language groups in Vietnam. However, the official language in Vietnam is Vietnamese, the language of the Viet people (To, 2010).
Figure 2.1 The Map of Vietnam

Vietnamese History: Significant Historical Events

Vietnam has a long history. However, in the following section, only some significant events in the history of Vietnam are depicted because these events have influenced Vietnamese society, the economy, culture, higher education and foreign language policies (Fry, 2009).

Struggles against foreign domination from 111 BC to 1975

Branigin (1994) considered the history of Vietnam “a saga of recurrent strife, turmoil, invasion, occupation and hardship” (p. 22). The saga began from 111 BC when the Chinese invaded and ruled the country, resulting in constant rebellions against the Chinese as the Vietnamese tried to reclaim their land. This period of Chinese domination did not end until 939 AD when Vietnam succeeded on the battle of the Bach Dang River. Vietnam enjoyed peace for nearly a thousand years from 939 AD to 1858 and was then colonised by the French, who remained in the country for nearly 100 years until 1954 (Karnow, 1983). In 1954, as a result of the Geneva agreement, Vietnam was temporally divided into two parts: the socialist North and the capitalist South, to wait for a general election in the whole country. However, during this time, the USA came to the South and ignited the North–South Vietnam war (Karnow, 1983). This war did not end until 1975, causing the loss of approximately 3.4 million Vietnamese lives (Pham & Fry, 2004b). After the war, North Vietnam and South Vietnam were united and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was proclaimed in 1976.

Isolation from the outside world from 1976 to 1994

In the late 1970s, Vietnam became involved in the Cambodian war to help “stop the genocide of the Pol Pot regime” (Wright, 2002, p. 237) and to protect the Vietnamese border from the Red Khmer incursions. This event resulted in bad relationships
between Vietnam and some countries in the world. For example, in 1979, in order to ‘teach Vietnam a lesson’, China instigated a war on the border between Vietnam and China (Wright, 2002). Although this war lasted for only a few weeks, diplomatic relations between China and Vietnam were damaged and ceased for 12 years from 1979 until 1991. Moreover, in the same year of 1979, the United States imposed a trade embargo on Vietnam to stop the country from being involved in the Cambodian war. The US-led trade embargo, which prevented other capitalist countries in Western Europe from providing financial aid and technical support to Vietnam, was not lifted until 1994.

The legacies from wars, foreign colonisation and isolation were believed to place Vietnam in challenging circumstances (Fry, 2009). In late 1980s when globalisation started to spread worldwide, Vietnam was one of the world’s five poorest countries with its doors tightly closed to the outside world (Glewwe, 2004). Civil unrest occurred as many people who endured poverty, and lacked a chance to have an education protested against the irrational and subjective policies of the government (Pham, 2000). Such difficult situations pushed Vietnam and its government to conduct a number of reforms in the economic sector (Pham, 2011).

**Economic reforms since 1986 to the present (2015)**

The Vietnamese government responded to the economic situation at that time by introducing an economic reform policy (known as the *doi moi* policy) in the late 1980s. The *doi moi* policy began with the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party in December 1986. At the meeting the Government replaced the centrally planned economy with a market-oriented one. A series of important policy changes were implemented in many areas including the state economic sector and the foreign trade and investment sector (Glewwe, 2004; Pham & Fry, 2004a; Tran, 2003).
Changes in the state economic sector

In 1988, the government closed what they argued were ineffective state-owned enterprises, and in doing so reduced the number of employees in the state sector. The remaining state-owned enterprises were consolidated and granted more autonomy in mobilising capital, and thus, had more responsibility in conducting their business (Le, 2003). This policy change reduced the central government budget deficit from 8.4% in the state sector to 1.7% in 1992 (Glewwe, 2004).

Changes in the foreign trade and investment sector

In the late 1980s, barriers to exports and imports were removed. This change meant that Vietnamese consumers had more choice of both domestic and imported goods in the market (Le, 2003). For the first time in the history of Vietnam, the Vietnamese people were considered masters of the market. In 1987, the foreign investment law was passed and implemented in early 1988. The implementation of this law meant that foreign-owned companies were allowed, for the first time, to do business in Vietnam, and the monopoly on foreign trade granted to a small number of state trading companies was eased. The policy change in this sector helped Vietnam open its doors to the outside world and resulted in greater opportunities for Vietnam to participate in the international economy (Glewwe, 2004). As a result, Vietnam, in 2012 had economic relations with 176 countries in the world and is a member of many regional and international trade organisations such as the Association of Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN), and the World Trade Organisation (World Bank, 2005).

The doimoi economic reform policy was timely and has had far-reaching impacts on all aspects of life in Vietnam (Le, 2003; Ronnås & Sjöberg, 1991; Volkmann, 2005). In particular, Le (2003) argued that the policy was critical in reducing poverty in
Vietnam. One outcome of this poverty reduction was that more school-aged children started school and greater numbers have gone on to higher education (Glewwe, 2004).

Table 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary (grades 1 to 5, aged between 6-11 years)</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower secondary (grades 6 to 9, aged between 12-15 years)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper secondary (grades 10 to 12, aged between 16-18 years)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education (aged between 18-21 years)</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1, based on the Vietnamese government’s statistics of net enrolments at all educational levels between 1993 and 1998 (cited in Nga, 2002) indicates a sharp increase in the net enrolments at all educational levels. Most significantly, the enrolment rates tripled in higher education from 3% to 9%.

**Vietnamese Cultural Values**

The Vietnamese indigenous culture, to which almost 90% of the Vietnamese population belong, is the dominant culture of Vietnam. The Vietnamese indigenous culture was formulated by the country’s geographic features and Vietnamese people’s living conditions. During the nearly thousand years of Chinese domination, this culture adopted and adapted some cultural values from Confucianism and Taoism and Buddhism (Tran, 2008; Tuong, 2002). The Vietnamese indigenous culture has also been influenced by Western cultural values through the period of French domination and globalisation (Pham & Fry, 2004a). Culture is all pervasive and therefore plays a role in teaching and learning. In order to understand the complexity of motivational factors that Vietnamese higher education students might
experience, an understanding of the values central to the Vietnamese cultural context is imperative. The following section explores elements of Vietnamese cultural values including collectivism, filial piety, respect for knowledge and teacher and respect for sustained effort.

**Collectivism or sense of belonging**

The Vietnamese indigenous culture is shaped by the country’s geographical features and its people’s living conditions. Like other countries in the Southeast Asian region, the Vietnamese economy is based on wet-rice agriculture, which itself relies heavily on nature (To, 2010). Living in a tropical zone with frequent floods, storms, and many unexpected natural calamities, the Vietnamese people have learnt that cooperating with each other is the best way to protect their crops against natural disasters (To, 2010). As such, they have formed strong community bonds and maintain a developed sense of belonging or collectivism (Tuong, 2002). According to Hofstede (1986), collectivism pertains to a value system in which people’s actions, beliefs, attitudes and identities are determined to a large extent by the community they belong to (i.e., their families and class). In a collectivist culture, from birth onwards, individuals’ lives are considered to belong not only to them, but also to the community (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). This community is believed to “protect the interests of its members, but in turn expect their permanent loyalty” (Hofstede, 1986, p. 307). As collectivists, Vietnamese people tend to seek harmony in the community they belong to, and each individual is encouraged to strive for common benefits and observe moderation (Tuong, 2002).

**Filial piety**

During nearly a thousand years of Chinese domination, the Vietnamese indigenous culture incorporated many values from Confucianism (Pham & Fry, 2004b). Among
them is filial piety. In Confucian philosophy, filial piety is a virtue of respect that individuals must show for their parents and ancestors (McLeod & Nguyen, 2001; Tuong, 2002). It is widely believed that when individuals are born, they are indebted to their parents for giving them life and taking care of them. Therefore, in order to repay their debt, they have to obey their parents and take care of them when they are old (Glewwe, 2004). Besides these duties, striving for academic success is the most common way for young people to show their filial piety to their parents. In Vietnamese culture, an individual’s academic success is believed to reflect their parents’ emotional and intellectual support. As such, their success brings a ‘good name’ or pride to their families and their parents and help the child repay their debt to their parents (Tuong, 2002).

Respect for knowledge and teachers

Influenced by Confucian teachings, Vietnamese people show respect for knowledge and teachers (Dang, 2009; Nguyen, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2006). Knowledge is believed to be more valuable than wealth and material success because it is believed that with knowledge, people can create everything (Tran, 2006). In Vietnamese society, a poor and educated person may be admired and given more respect than a rich person who is uneducated. It is such a belief that encourages people to learn by any means. Respect for knowledge leads them to respect well-educated people, especially teachers. Teachers may be considered ‘gurus’, who possess knowledge and therefore are not to be contradicted (Nguyen et al., 2006; Thijs, 1996). The important role of the teacher is strongly emphasised in a number of Vietnamese proverbs, one of which states “Không thay do may lam nen” (Without a teacher, you cannot do anything).
Respect for sustained efforts (resilience)

Respect for sustained efforts is another cultural value. Vietnamese people believe that with effort they can overcome difficulties in their life. At school, Vietnamese students from Grade 1 to Grade 12 (aged between 6 - 8 years) are required to study moral subjects, which are lessons about how to behave well and how to become good Vietnamese citizens. In these lessons, effort is strongly emphasised and considered to be the most important determinant of an individual’s success, including academic success. Effort is even thought to be more important than one’s intelligence or aptitude (Tran, 2008).

In summary, Vietnam has a long history which is characterised by struggles against foreign domination, isolation from other countries, poverty and economic reforms. It has a rich culture, dominated by the Vietnamese indigenous culture. Both Vietnamese history and culture have exerted influences on Vietnamese education, particularly Vietnamese higher education which is discussed in the following section (Pham & Fry, 2004b).

Higher Education in Vietnam

Foreign Reliance of Vietnamese Higher Education before 1986

If the history of Vietnam before 1986 was characterised by successive foreign domination, colonisation, national separation and reunion, its higher education in this period was claimed to be heavily foreign reliant and not well endowed (Harman, Hayden, & Nghi, 2010; Pham & Fry, 2004b; Vallely & Wilkinson, 2008). Table 2.1 summaries and synthesises a number of characteristics of the higher education sector during this period.
### Table 2.2

**Vietnamese Higher Education before 1986**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Important historical landmarks</th>
<th>Formation, development and typical features of Vietnamese higher education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>111 BC – 939</td>
<td>Chinese domination</td>
<td>No higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>939 – 1858</td>
<td>Freedom, legacies from Chinese domination was strongly embedded in the feudal society</td>
<td>The Royal College, the first higher education institution in Vietnam was built in 1076, resembling China’s higher education sector (Pham &amp; Fry, 2004b). Underpinned by Chinese Confucian and Taoist ideologies, higher education mainly provided moral training, and was characterised by examination-orientation, heavily text-book based teaching and rote-learning. The opportunity to have higher education was mainly offered to ‘the son of dignitaries’ in the feudal dynasty (Huyen, 2002; Sloper &amp; Lé, 1995).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858 – 1954</td>
<td>French colonisation</td>
<td>The education sector received a minimum investment by the colonial regime, resulting in 95% of the population being illiterate (MoET, 1995). Over nearly a century, only a few French-style institutions were established, with the aim of training being to provide technical workers for the colonial economy (Wright, 2002).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954 – 1975</td>
<td>North-South division with the North allied with the Soviet Union and the South supported by the United States</td>
<td>Higher education in the North was influenced by the Soviet Union, which was highly centralised, narrowly specialised and primarily theory-based. Training in higher education was provided to a limited number of people (Pham &amp; Fry, 2004a; Vallely &amp; Wilkinson, 2008). Higher education in the South was strongly influenced by the USA. For example, the curricula were developed or borrowed from the USA. Higher education was practical and aimed at developing the economy (Pham &amp; Fry, 2004a).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975 – 1986</td>
<td>North-South reunification and supported by the Soviet Union</td>
<td>The higher education system was modelled on the Soviet Union’s education system with all universities and colleges being narrowly specialised and fully funded by the state (George, 2010; Le, 1991). Access to higher education was limited to those who either demonstrated very good academic records or had a good political background. The educational focus was heavily theoretical, which were unable to produce the skilled workforce required by the labour market (Pham &amp; Fry, 2004a).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tragic historical legacies were believed to be a major reason for the Vietnamese higher education’s poor performance and low quality, even compared with those of the regional countries in Southeast Asia (Harman et al., 2010; Vallely & Wilkinson, 2008). Since 1986 when Vietnam embarked on a number of social and economic reforms, this ineffective higher education sector increasingly demonstrated weaknesses when failing to provide the highly skilled workers required by a new economy (Pham, 2011; Tran, 2013). To make two ends meet, since 1986, the
Vietnamese government attempted to implement a number of reforms within the higher education sector (Pham, 2011).

**Higher Education Reforms between 1986 and 2015**

*The first 20 year reforms (1986 – 2005)*

Reforms took place in a number of key areas, including the governance of higher education. One major change is the increase in diversity of higher education institutions (Fry, 2009; Hayden & Thiep, 2010). Before 1986, all institutions were publicly-run. Pham and Fry (2004b) note that at the time of their writing, there were four kinds of institution: (1) public institutions run by the state, (2) semi-public institution owned and managed by a public authority and funded by charging tuition fees, (3) private institutions and (4) foreign-owned institutions. Noticeably, the Vietnamese government’s approval of the diversity of higher education institutions has resulted in a sharp increase in the number of higher education institutions in Vietnam from 83 institutions in 1983 (Hayden & Thiep, 2010) to 419 in 2012 (Schuman, June 2014), a fivefold increase over a period of 30 years. Similarly, the number of higher education students in Vietnam increased dramatically from 600,000 students in 1986 (Fry, 2009) to over 1.6 million in 2011 (London, 2011).

Moreover, public higher education institutions are no longer fully funded by the government. They are now allowed to find financial support from different sources including charging tuition fees and seeking foreign investment (Fry, 2009). As such, students in public higher education institutions now have to pay tuition fees and are no longer assigned jobs on completion of their degree (Pham, 1995). Another major change is the change from specialised universities to multidisciplinary ones. Before 1986, all institutions of higher education in Vietnam were specialised universities, focusing on a single area of study such as economics and law. Today, many
institutions are multidisciplinary, offering a wide range of academic programs (Fry, 2009).

In sum, from 1986 to 2005, significant changes took place in the higher education system, including increased size and diversification. Since 2005, Vietnam’s higher education system has continued to change (Pham & Fry, 2004a). The next section discusses how the Vietnamese government has responded to the changes occurring in the higher education system due to the impact of globalisation.


In order to be accepted to be a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 2007, Vietnam had to commit to allowing foreign competition within the higher education sector (Welch, 2010). Therefore, one of the central concerns specified in the Higher Education Reform Agenda promulgated by the Vietnamese government for the period of 2006 and 2020 relates to internationalisation in the higher education system in Vietnam (MoET, 2005). Internationalisation in the education system is defined as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (Knight, 2003, p. 2). Internationalisation in higher education can be seen through policies and practices undertaken by the government of each country and its higher education institutions to cope with new academic trends in the globalised context. The following section discusses how the Vietnamese government has responded to the new circumstance of internationalisation in higher education.

**Internationalisation in higher education in Vietnam**

In this regard, three major changes have been implemented in the higher education sector in Vietnam. First, the Vietnamese government has provided incentives to
encourage foreign institutions to open their branches in Vietnam or to cooperate with Vietnamese institutions of higher education to provide highly qualified training programs. Consequently, the number of foreign higher education institutions doing business in Vietnam is increasing. The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (RMIT) from Australia and Troy State University from the United States are two examples of foreign higher education institution which have branches in Vietnam. Second, to attract international students to study in the institutions of higher education in Vietnam, the Vietnamese government has implemented an ‘advanced degree program’, in which English is used as the only medium of instruction. As outlined in the legal document, this program would be first applied to 10 % of higher education students in major universities in Vietnam since 2010 and will be expanded to a larger number of higher education students across institutions in Vietnam in coming years (MoET, 2008a). Third, Vietnamese students are now encouraged to study overseas. Since 2005, the Vietnamese government has funded about 5,000 students of higher education students to study in countries which have an advanced education system such as the USA, England and Australia (MoET, 2007).

Internationalisation in higher education: Opportunities and challenges

Internationalisation of higher education has brought both opportunities and challenges to Vietnam’s higher education sector (Fry, 2009). One of the opportunities is that with Vietnam joining the ‘international education market’, the opportunity exists to exchange experiences and learn from international higher education institutions. Hence, the quality of Vietnam’s higher education institutions might be improved (Le, 2008; Pham & Fry, 2004a).

It is believed that in the globalised context, higher education is increasingly considered “a commercial product to be bought and sold in the market” (Altbach &
Knight, 2007, p. 234). In order to be competitive in the global market, a country’s higher education institutions should meet international standards for quality of teaching and learning, learning and teaching facilities and training programs (Pham & Fry, 2004a). Pham and Fry (2004a) argued that it is difficult for Vietnam to meet these standards because its higher education system has a number of weaknesses. Of these weaknesses, a number of researchers (for example Di Gropello, 2007; Lam, 2011; Le, 2004; Le & Barnard, 2009; MoET, 2008b; 2010) have highlighted that Vietnamese higher education students’ lack of proficiency in the English language is a particular hindrance to international integration of Vietnam’s higher education. Without a good command of the English language, Vietnamese students will not be able to be accepted in the international training programs where English is used as the only means of instruction. Moreover, Vietnamese higher education students’ lack of English proficiency prevents them from accessing various sources of information available in the outside world as it is largely produced in English (Crystal, 2003; Hoang, 2014). Accessing and understanding information from many sources is considered vital in the age of globalisation (Crystal, 1997).

In summary, the Vietnamese higher education system has been influenced by significant historical events, the economy and globalisation. Since the country was accepted as an official member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 2007, Vietnam has prioritised internationalisation of higher education. One of the challenges which Vietnam has faced in the process of internationalisation of the higher education sector is Vietnamese higher education students’ unsatisfactory English proficiency. In order to understand why Vietnamese students have encountered difficulties in their English learning, it is necessary to look at a broader context of the teaching and learning in Vietnam and in higher education institutions.
A Brief History of English in Vietnam

Denham (1992) argued that language and politics have had a close relationship in Vietnam, with the latter influencing the medium of instruction as well as the choice of foreign language to be studied in Vietnam’s schools and universities. Therefore, in order to understand how English as a foreign language has developed in Vietnam, and to track development in the way in which English has been taught and learnt, it is helpful to discuss the issue in relation to Vietnam’s political history (see Table 2.3).

Table 2.3

The Fluctuation in the Development of English in Vietnam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Major political concerns</th>
<th>Position of English in the society and educational system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1954</td>
<td>Chinese domination and French colonisation with attempts to spread their own languages (Chinese and French) to the colonised country</td>
<td>English language was brought to South Vietnam by the American businessmen in the first half of the twentieth century (Vuong, 2010). English was only used by a limited number of people for commercial purposes (Lam, 2011), and was not an important foreign language to be taught and learnt in the national education system (Le, 2011).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954 - 1975</td>
<td>North – South separation, with the capitalist South backed by the USA and the socialist North supported by the Soviet Union</td>
<td>In South Vietnam English, the language of the ally, was widely considered the key for Southern Vietnamese to pursue well-paid jobs (Wright, 2002). English was promoted to develop in the education system to become the most popular foreign language (Do, 2006). In North Vietnam English, the language the enemy of Northern Vietnamese, was not a popular foreign language. English was taught only as an elective subject in school and as a major to a limited number of students in two universities: Hanoi University of Teachers of Foreign Languages and Hanoi Foreign Languages University (Do, 2006).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975 - 1986</td>
<td>South–North reunification, forming the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, isolation from the capitalist countries</td>
<td>The use of English language underwent a crisis with its almost complete disappearance in both the society and educational system (Wright, 2002). In higher education, a very limited number of students enrolled in an English language major program (Do, 2006).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986 - 2014</td>
<td>Open doors to the world, global economic integration</td>
<td>English, as the global language, is becoming the most important foreign language in Vietnam (Gayle, 1994; Khoa, 2008; Shapiro, 1995). A good command of English is believed to be a major advantage for Vietnamese people to obtain success in social and professional life (Sakellariou &amp; Patrinos, 2000; Trinh, 2005). English is the most preferred foreign language at all school levels (Nguyen &amp; Nguyen, 2007; Ton &amp; Pham, 2010)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
English Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in the Global Era

Since 1986, all higher education students in Vietnam have been required to learn a foreign language, preferably one out of four most popular foreign languages in Vietnam, namely English, French, Chinese or Russian (Hoang, 2008a). Given the increasingly higher status of English as the international language in Vietnam, English has been emphasised to be the most important foreign language in at all levels of education, particularly higher education (see, for example, MoET, 2003, 2004, 2007). Thus, not surprisingly, English is the language chosen by a majority of higher education students (Le, 2007). Hoang (2008b) estimated that around 94% of Vietnamese undergraduates and 92% of graduate students were studying English.

An Overview of English Major Programs and Non-English Major Programs

English language instruction in Vietnam’s institutions of higher education has been categorised into two sets of programs, namely English major programs and a non-English major programs (Le, 2000). The former are for students who learn English as the major component of their degree. The latter are for students who are majoring in other specialist areas such as engineering, economics and law. Learning English is a smaller part of their wider degree. An overview of these English programs is summarised in Table 2.3 below.
Table 2.3
An Overview of Two English Programs in Higher Education in Vietnam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>English major program</th>
<th>Non-English major program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-requisites and levels of English proficiency before starting the programs</td>
<td>Students must pass the university entrance exams designed by the Ministry of Education and Training that comprises three papers (an English test, a Maths Test and a Literature test) (MoET, 2012).</td>
<td>Students must pass the entrance exams relevant to the particular discipline and university they wish to attend (MoET, 2012). Students must choose to study a foreign language, and those who choose to study English will do so throughout their study (Hoang, 2008a). The majority of non-English major students show limited levels of English proficiency at the beginning of English courses (Hoang, 2008a).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculums</td>
<td>Since 2012, each university has been able to develop its own (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2012). Students study English language skills (listening, writing, reading and speaking), literature and cultures of English-speaking countries, grammar, theories of phonetics and phonology. Students who are training to become teachers of English study theories of second language acquisition. Students who are training to work as translators or interpreters study theories and practice of translation/interpreting (Duong, 2007; HaUI, 2012; Trinh, 2005).</td>
<td>Universities can design the English language learning component (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2012). Students learn general English (sometimes called English for communication), which may include English grammar and English language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) (HaUI, 2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class hours/week</td>
<td>Roughly 15-20 class hours per week, for each 15 week semester, over four years is spent on learning English (Duong, 2007; To, 2010; Ton &amp; Pham, 2010).</td>
<td>Roughly 3-6 class hours per week, over the first four to six fifteen-week semesters, is spent on learning English (To, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class size</td>
<td>Range from 40 to 50 students in each class (Dang, 2004; Huong, 2004).</td>
<td>There are about from 50 to 105 students in an English class in a non-English major program (Le &amp; Barnard, 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language environment</td>
<td>English is used by lecturers and students for the majority of the time in English classes. Outside the classroom, students have limited opportunities to practise English with native speakers or people who speak English as an international language (Le, 2004)</td>
<td>Both Vietnamese and English are used by Vietnamese teachers and students during class time. Students rarely have a chance to use English outside the classroom (Le, 2004).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>A range of assessments methods are used, including assignments, written tests, oral tests and presentation (Dang, 2004)</td>
<td>Written tests at mid-term and final term are common. The majority of these written tests focus on grammar elements (Dang, 2004).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements for university graduation</td>
<td>Based on their academic achievement in their last three years, a number of four and last year students are chosen to write a thesis in English about a topic of interest. The remaining students are required to sit English tests designed by each university (HaUI, 2012).</td>
<td>Students must complete their English units of study with satisfactory results and complete an end-of-course test (Huong, 2004). Since 2011, a large number of universities have used an international English test such as the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) as the end-of-course English test (HaUI, 2012).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although English is of great importance for Vietnamese higher education students, both English major and non-English major students have been criticised for having limited levels of English proficiency (Kieu, 2010). Specifically, Hoang’s (2008c) research revealed that out of a sample of 60 first year non-English major students in their second semester, 50 students (80%) showed poor results in four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) when tested using the Key English Test (KET). KET has been identified as the easiest level of a five-level standardised testing system called the Cambridge English as the Second Language Examination (CESLE). He also found that 50% of the students in his research could not communicate in English in simple situations. In another study, Do (2012) found that 90% of third year non-English major students (N = 990) from five universities in South Vietnam did poorly on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). On this test, students can receive a maximum of 990 points, and employers in Vietnam require job candidates to have a TOEIC certificate with a minimum score of 550 points. Approximately 90% of Do’s participants, however, scored between 360-370 points, indicating that these Vietnamese students fell well below employers’ requirements.

Regarding English major students, Pham (2004) estimated that out of 50 students in their fourth and final year in an English major class, fewer than ten demonstrated a level of English proficiency sufficient for posts as interpreters, translators or teachers of English. According to a number of researchers (e.g., Le & Barnard, 2009; Mai & Iwashita, 2012; Ngan, 2011), the students’ low levels of English proficiency may be due to a number of challenges, which are discussed in the following section.
Challenges with the Teaching and Learning of English in Higher Education

Ineffective teaching and learning approaches

Influenced by the Confucian educational philosophy, Vietnamese students believe that knowledge refers only to factual information, residing in the textbook. Therefore, their job is to ‘take’ and internalise it by rote memorisation rather than to co-construct new knowledge, and later on use that knowledge for examination purposes (Duong & Nguyen, 2006; Lewis & McCook, 2002; Loi, 2011; Pham, 2011). Furthermore, as they consider teachers “the complete source of knowledge” (Nga, 2002, p. 4), they are neither willing to participate in dialogic learning with their teachers nor challenge their teacher. Many researchers (e.g., Le, 2000, 2011; Pham, 2011; Tuong, 2002) have argued that while the Confucian ideologies about education may encourage Vietnamese students to study very hard to gain knowledge, such beliefs could be hindrances preventing them from becoming independent, critical language learners and users.

In respect of teaching methodologies, for many decades, the Grammar – Translation method has been a dominant teaching method in the English classes in higher education in Vietnam (Huong, 2004; Kam, 2002; Le, 2007; Nhan & Lai, 2012). Following this method, lecturers emphasised ‘factual information’ such as linguistic forms and structures rather than English communication (Duong & Nguyen, 2006; Hoang, 2008a). English grammar rules and sentences structures are normally taught deductively in the learners’ first language. Students are required to rote learn these rules prior to translating them into their first language (i.e., Vietnamese). This teaching approach is said to produce many Vietnamese people being ‘deaf and dumb’, unable to communicate meaningfully in English despite several years’ study (Le, 2011; Ngan, 2011). Furthermore, due to the Confucian ideology as well as the
collectivist culture, teachers/lecturers prefer controlling teaching practices and are unwilling to support dialogic learning and knowledge exchanging (Le, 2011).

Recently Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasises effective communication of meanings rather than mere linguistic forms (Richards, 2005), was introduced into English classrooms in higher education in the late 1990s in Vietnam (Lam, 2011). Although lecturers express positive attitudes toward this method, evidence has indicated that their adaptation and application of this Western innovative teaching methods is either limited or ineffective (see more in Le, 2004; Le, 2011; Mai & Iwashita, 2012; Tomlinson & Dat, 2004). Lecturers’ ineffective application of this Western teaching method, according to a number of researchers (e.g., Le & Barnard, 2009; Lewis & McCook, 2002; Pham, 2007), is due to lecturers’ own lack of English proficiency, and students’ lack of a language environment conducive for communicative practices.

**Lack of teachers proficient in English**

A major challenge that higher education institutions in Vietnam have experienced is a lack of lecturers, particularly those who are proficient enough to teach English (Hoang, 2008a; Trinh, 2005). Yet lecturers are an important element in second language acquisition, particularly in a foreign language learning environment (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). Due to an undersupply of proficient lecturers, available lecturers must teach extra hours and take on extra classes. High teaching time may leave them little time to prepare English lessons and improve their own English language proficiency and English teaching methods. This may affect the quality of teaching and learning English in higher education in Vietnam (Kam, 2002).
Lack of a language environment conducive for practising English

Lack of an environment conducive for learning English is another challenge which has impacted upon the effective teaching and learning of English in Vietnam in general and in higher education institutions in particular (Hoang, 2008; Nguyen, 2010; Vu, 2012). Canale and Swain (1980) argued that L2 learners must be provided with an opportunity to interact with highly competent speakers of the language so that they can develop communication skills. However, the learning environment of English in Vietnam is described as “a cultural island where the teacher is expected to be the sole provider of experience in the target language” (Le, 2000, p. 74). As a result, students have little chance to practise English outside the classroom with English native speakers or highly competent non-native speakers of English (Huong, 2004; Le, 2004; Ton & Pham, 2010). Therefore, it may be argued that the lack of a good language environment for communications in English may affect the teaching and learning of English in institutions of higher education in Vietnam (Hoang, 2008a).

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, it has been shown that an understanding of the Vietnamese history and culture is imperative to understand the formulation, development, and operation of Vietnamese higher education, as well as Vietnamese people’s beliefs about values in learning and their English teaching and learning styles. In the context of globalisation, Vietnamese contemporary higher education (2006 onwards) has encountered a number of challenges in the process of internationalisation of the higher education sector, with one of the major challenges pertaining to improving higher education levels of English proficiency for both English major and non-English major students. While theories of second language acquisition (L2)
motivation posits that learners’ success or failure in learning a second language depends much on their motivation, empirical research about Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English is scant. Recently little has been known regarding, for example, what types of motivation they (English major and non-English major students) report in learning English, and whether English major and non-English major students differ in their types and levels of motivation given that several differences exist in the English and non-English major programs. As such, the current research program aimed to investigate students’ motivation to learn English.
Chapter 3: Motivation to Learn a Second Language

Overview
This chapter starts with a discussion of what motivation is and then a working definition of second language (L2) motivation for the current study is proposed. Following this is a brief history of L2 motivation research which highlights the four key perspectives that have shaped the understanding about L2 motivation theory. In the subsequent section, self-determination theory (SDT) is discussed and justified as the theoretical framework of the current study. The final section summarises and discusses the research findings of selected L2 motivation research studies, a majority of which were guided by self-determination theory and conducted globally and in Vietnam. These studies provide an overall picture of the motivation research field that has used self-determination theory and they help to identify the research gaps for the current research program.

Definition of Motivation to Learn a Second Language
To date, researchers commonly defined motivation for engaging in an activity as “why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity and how hard they are going to pursue it” (Dörnyei, 2001a, p. 27). However, what is less clear is how motivation to learn a second language can be conceptualised. According to Dörnyei (2001c) there are a number of challenges which prevent a consensus regarding a clear definition of L2 motivation. The first challenge for researchers is to identify if people’s behaviours are directed by their conscious or unconscious thoughts. The second challenge is based on whether L2 motivation relates to ‘cognition’ (thoughts) or ‘affect’ (feeling). The third challenge relates to the question of whether L2 motivation is influenced by context. The last challenge
relates to time and concerns the question of whether L2 motivation is a product (a stable state) or a process (a changing phenomenon).

The past few decades have seen many efforts to define L2 motivation. For example, Gardner (1985b), known as the founder of the L2 motivation research field, defined L2 motivation as “the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language” (p. 10). As evident from his definition, Gardner believes that three constructs, namely ‘effort’, ‘desire’ and ‘attitudes’ are internal and come from within L2 learners. This appears that Gardner adopted an individualistic view of motivation. A limitation of this view is it does not consider the contribution of the broader context that shapes the motivation of individuals within a specific cultural and historical context.

Another definition of L2 motivation has been put forward by William and Burden (1997) who argued that motivation to learn L2 is “a state of cognitive and emotional arousal; which leads to a conscious decision to act, and; which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal/goals” (p. 120). As apparent from their definition, L2 motivation has both cognitive and affective components and motivational changes come under the control of conscious thoughts. Moreover, they argued that L2 motivation is influenced by both internal and external factors (context) and L2 has a temporal aspect.

_A working definition of L2 motivation_

In seeking to provide a working definition for the current study and in attempt to address the aforementioned challenges in defining L2 motivation, it is argued that Vietnamese higher education students’ motivation to learn English may be construed as:
• under the control of conscious thoughts
• comprised of both cognitive and affective components
• influenced by Vietnamese English learning contexts.

Each of these dimensions is now considered.

First, learning English within the context of the higher education sector in Vietnam is a rather long process (between 3-4 years depending on whether students are non-English or English majors). During this learning process, students may experience a number of challenges such as difficult English mid-term/final term assignments or tests. In order to overcome these challenges and to sustain the English learning process, students must set their own goals, expend efforts and participate actively in language learning activities. Such learning behaviours are said to be controlled by students’ conscious thoughts (Bandura, 1991; Dörnyei, 2001c).

Second, as mentioned earlier, Vietnam’s socio-historical and cultural characteristics have shaped Vietnamese students’ thoughts and beliefs about the values of learning English and ways of learning English and the role of lecturers and students. According to Eccles et al. (1983), such thoughts and beliefs (cognition) direct their motivated behaviours, encouraging them to choose to study English and determining the degree of effort they invest in learning English. As such, the ‘cognitive’ aspect is critically important when investigating Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English. However, Dörnyei (2001c) has rightly pointed out that ‘affect’ plays an equally important role as ‘cognition’ in influencing individuals’ behaviour. He argued that emotions such as anger, pride, gratitude, shame or anxiety, are also likely to shape human behaviour. Therefore, it is anticipated that Vietnamese students’ motivation relates to both cognition and affect.
Third, L2 learners’ motivation may be influenced by a range of contexts. Researchers (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 1985; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009; Ushioda, 2001; Williams & Burden, 1997) have indicated that both broader dimensions such as cultural norms and socio-economic policy, and contextual factors relating to immediate learning contexts such as teachers, peers and learning activities exert influences on their motivation to learn a second language. Vietnamese society, its economy as well as higher education have undergone a number of changes recently, which may influence Vietnamese higher education students’ motivation to learn English (Phan, 2010).

With regard to the aforementioned challenges, a working definition for the current research is proposed below. This working definition is influenced strongly by self-determination theory (Deci, 1980b; Deci & Ryan, 1985), which is used as the theoretical framework in the current research program.

Motivation in language learning refers to the extent to which individuals make choices about what goals they would like to pursue, and the effort they will spend to attain these goals. Motivation in language learning may be enhanced or undermined by the learning context.

**The Development of L2 Motivation Research**

For many years, aptitude and intelligence were considered the most important determinants of L2 learners’ success or failure in learning a second language (Nakata, 2006). However, Gardner and Lambert (1959), believed that besides aptitude and intelligence, motivation might play an additional and important role (Dörnyei, 2003a). This belief motivated them to conduct empirical research to investigate the role of motivational factors in French language acquisition among English speaking learners. Interestingly, this research marked the starting point of the long and continuing history of L2 motivation research (Dörnyei, 2001b). The L2
motivation research has evolved over time and been viewed from four key perspectives, including the socio-psychological perspective, the cognitive-situated perspective, the process-oriented perspective and recently the socio-dynamic perspective (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). The next section discusses these perspectives and provides a brief overview of a number of landmark theories which have been built upon these four perspectives.

**Socio-Psychological Perspective: Gardner’s Socio-Psychological Theory of L2 Motivation**

Gardner and other psychologists such as Lambert and Clément (1959, 1985), are widely recognised as the founders of L2 motivation research. As social psychologists, they posit that learning a second language “must be viewed as a central social psychological phenomenon” (p. 193), and is different from learning academic subjects such as Maths and Physics. Gardner and Lambert (1972) argued that motivation to learn a second language distinguishes itself from motivation to learn other subjects. They reasoned that a second language learner not only learns new knowledge such as grammar and vocabulary, this learner needs also show willingness to be integrated with the community speaking this second language. As a result, at its early age, L2 motivation research, viewed by the socio-psychological perspective, was an independent research area that did not have any connection with the mainstream motivational philosophy (for reviews, see Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). As Gardner’s socio-psychological theory of L2 motivation is one of few theories which explicitly discuss types of motivation and his and colleagues’ socio-educational model comprises the ‘motivational intensity’ construct (Dörnyei, 2001c), which related to the present research program, these areas are discussed below.
According to Gardner and Lambert’s (1959) conceptualisation of L2 motivation, individuals are motivated to learn by either integrative or instrumental orientations. While the former pertains to the willingness to learn the second language in order to identify with the target language community, the latter refers to motivation to learn an L2 to gain pragmatic/utilitarian values such as obtaining a good job. Gardner and Lambert’s (1959) research findings highlighted that integratively-oriented students expended more effort in learning a second language and were more successful in acquiring the second language than instrumentally-oriented students. In other words, an integrative orientation played a more dominant role than an instrumental orientation.

While the integrative – instrumental dichotomy had been “at the centre of L2 motivation research for several decades” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 85), dissatisfaction with the conceptualisation of the integrative motivation construct has been growing (for a review, see Au, 1988). Noticeably, empirical research conducted in L2 learning contexts other than in Canada (i.e., English learning context in Indonesia and Taiwan) indicated that while instrumental motivation was applicable, integrative motivation did not exist in the context where the students were learning English as a foreign language and had little chance to integrate into English native community (Lamb, 2004; Warden & Lin, 2000). Due to the similarities of the English learning context in Vietnam with those in Indonesia and Taiwan (i.e., learning English as a foreign language in a non-English language community), the present research argued that the construct of integrative motivation may be not useful in the present study.
Socio-educational model of second language acquisition

The second important aspect of Gardner’s theory is the socio-educational model of second language acquisition (SLA). The socio-educational model aimed to represent the role of various individual difference characteristics of the students in second language learning. According to Gardner’s (2006) most recently adapted version of socio-education model of second language acquisition (see Figure 3.1), motivation is made up of effort (motivation intensity), desire to learn the L2 and attitude towards learning the L2. A motivated L2 learner displays all these elements in learning a second language. Motivation is supported mainly by ‘integrativeness’, and ‘attitudes to L2 learning situation’ (Gardner, 2010).

![Figure 3.1 Socio-Educational Model of Second Language Acquisition (Gardner, 2006)](image)

Of the three factors (effort, desire to learn the L2 and attitudes towards the L2) which are subsumed in motivation, effort or motivational intensity is considered the most important aspect (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005). In Masgoret and Gardner’s (2003) meta-analysis of several decades of research in motivation, they found that effort or
motivational intensity was the most important factor contributing to an individual’s L2 achievement or predicting an individual’s L2 proficiency.

In Vietnamese culture, as previously mentioned, effort is one of the most critical factors contributing to success in engaging in a task. In respect of education, effort is even considered more important than aptitude or intelligence. It is argued in the current research program that effort is critical for Vietnamese students when they learn English in higher education. Without effort, there may be little learning (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005). As such, the current research program aims to investigate the level of effort Vietnamese students expend in their English learning.

Gardner’s socio-psychological motivation theory was influential as this theory dominated the motivation research for approximately three decades from 1959 to 1990 (Dörnyei, 2001a, 2001b). However, in the 1990s, a number of researchers (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Skehan, 1991) claimed that L2 motivation is a multi-faceted concept which should be viewed from different perspectives. Specifically, these researchers called for an expansion of L2 motivation theories incorporating cognitive elements in mainstream motivational psychology (i.e., motivation in general education) in their L2 motivational models. The following section looks at how L2 researchers responded to this call.

Expanding the Concept of L2 Motivation: The Cognitive-Situated Perspective

In the 1990s, second language (L2) motivation researchers (e.g., Belmechri & Hummel, 1998; Clément & Kruidenier, 1983; Noels, Clément, & Pelletier, 1999; Williams & Burden, 1999) started to utilise a number of influential cognitive motivation theories in mainstream motivational psychology such as expectancy and value theory, goal theory, self-determination theory and attribution theory (Dörnyei,
Furthermore, these researchers in this time period were interested in investigating how factors in the classroom context such as lecturers and L2 learning environment influence L2 motivation. As such, L2 motivation research during this period were said to have a cognitive-situated perspective (having cognitive elements and situated in the classroom context) (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

One of the most remarkable works in this perspective was Noels and her colleagues’ (2001a, 2001b, 2009; 2001; 1999; 2000; 1996) successful application of self-determination theory to investigate different types of L2 motivation, the roles of these individual types in L2 learning and how L2 motivation could be enhanced or undermined by the social factors (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Since these areas were relevant to the aims of this research, self-determination theory was chosen as the guiding theory for this research. The rationale for choosing self-determination theory, the theory itself and Noels and colleagues’ works are discussed and reviewed in a later section of this chapter.

**A current trend of L2 motivation research: The socio-dynamic perspective**

Currently, researchers (e.g., Dörnyei, 2009a; Ushioda, 2009; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009) have viewed motivation using the socio-dynamic perspective (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). This perspective is characterised “by a concern with the situated complexity of the L2 motivation process and its organic development in dynamic interaction with a multiplicity of internal, social and contextual factors” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 72). One of the well research-based theories in this perspective is Dörnyei’s (2005, 2009a) L2 motivational self-system. Of the three components informing this theory, the L2-Ideal Self construct has received much discussion. According to Dörnyei (2009a), an individual’s personality may consist of two selves: the actual self and the future ideal self. While the actual self refers to the person
he/she is at the present, the future ideal self pertains to the future image that he/she wishes to become. Between the actual self and ideal self, there is normally a gap, and individuals’ desire to reduce this gap motivates them to engage in the L2 learning task. Individuals are different in how they build up their future self-image and what this ideal self is like (Dörnyei, 2005). For some people, the ideal self is formulated out of their own experiences and social demands; however, for others, this ideal image may be built on what they admire from the significant people in their lives (i.e., teachers, friends and parents) (Dörnyei, 2005). The present research argues that the L2-Ideal Self construct may provide an explanation for how lecturers, peers and parents motivate Vietnamese higher education students to learn English.

The five-decade-long L2 motivation research indicated that L2 motivation is a well-researched area. Of a range of motivational theories, self-determination theory, a macro motivational theory from the cognitive perspective, was chosen due to its potential to provide a useful lens to investigate students’ motivation to learn English as a foreign language in the learning context of Vietnamese higher education. Self-determination theory is discussed below.

**Self-Determination Theory: A Theoretical Framework**

Self-determination theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan (1985; 2002) in mainstream motivational psychology, is considered one of the most comprehensive theories of human motivation (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008). SDT embraces an organismic and dialectic perspective of viewing human motivation. By organismic, Deci and Ryan (1985, 2012) propose that humans are active living creatures who can use their innate ability/propensity to interact effectively with the environment and other people in order to grow and develop a more elaborated and unified system of self. By dialectic, they imply that this propensity or natural tendency can be
undermined or facilitated by some clear and specifiable social and contextual factors (Ryan & Deci, 2002). This organismic and dialectic perspective is explicated in the section that follows by examining some key concepts of SDT.

**Intrinsic/Extrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination**

Self-determination distinguishes motivation of two broad types: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, based on the levels of self-determination an individual demonstrates when engaging in a task (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000, 2012; Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2002). Self-determination is defined as “a quality of human functioning that involves the experience of choice … [and] an internal locus of control” (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 38). Self-determination is present in intrinsic motivation and some types of extrinsic motivation such as identified regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2012).

**Intrinsic motivation**

According to Ryan and Deci (1985), intrinsic motivation is the motivation to pursue an “activity in the absence of a reward contingency or control” (p. 38). Intrinsic motivation is proposed to be the most self-determined type of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2012). When intrinsically motivated, an individual engages in a task because he/she finds the task enjoyable and pleasant. These positive feelings originate from the fact that participating in the task is voluntary (i.e., this individual does not feel coerced to do it) and that the task is optimally challenging. Most importantly, self-determination theory emphasises that when intrinsically motivated, individuals engage in the task for its own rewards. Such individuals tend to expend much effort on the task, and persist in the task for long time. In school contexts, students who are intrinsically motivated tend to remember things easily, and exhibit high levels of persistence in a learning task (Deci & Ryan, 2012).
Vallerand and colleagues (1989; 1992) extended the concept of intrinsic motivation in school contexts. They divided intrinsic motivation into three subscales including (1) intrinsic motivation to know (IM–knowledge), which refers to the fact that learning to understand things or mastering the outside world can be great fun and satisfying; (2) intrinsic motivation to accomplish (IM–accomplishment) which can be defined as engaging in an activity that is interesting when achieving positive outcomes; and (3) intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation (IM–stimulation) which refers to an activity which an individual finds interesting, exciting and great fun.

**Extrinsic motivation and internalisation of external regulation**

While being intrinsically motivated to undertake a task is ideal, not all individuals feel this way about all tasks (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Individuals may be required to carry out many tasks which are imposed upon them or controlled by others. For example, in schools, students are asked to learn many academic subjects, complete exams and follow school rules yet they may not find any of these activities interesting or motivating. In order to persist with these tasks and accomplish them, individuals need to exercise extrinsic motivation to perform the required behaviours (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Extrinsic motivation refers to motivation to engage in an activity as a means to an end. Extrinsically motivated individuals are regulated by external forces such as tangible rewards (i.e., money and medals), praise and punishment (Deci, 1980b).

Traditionally, extrinsically-motivated individuals were characterised as being non-autonomous, which is antithetical to self-determined (de Charms, 1968). However, in the perspective of self-determination theory, extrinsic motivation is conceptualised differently. Based on the assumption that humans possess an innate ability to
internalise external regulation and integrate external values into an internal value system, Deci and Ryan (2002) postulate that due to the extent this process of internalisation occurs, individuals can be autonomous when exercising this extrinsically-motivated behaviour. Internalisation refers to the natural process in which individuals become aware of the importance of engaging in a task and take ownership for the task, instead of feeling obligated and forced to engage in the task requirements (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

In respects of education, extrinsic motivation is further classified into three subtypes. These types of motivation are believed to differ in their levels of self-determination or autonomy that individuals exhibit in engaging in an academic task (Deci, 1980b; Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2002; Vallerand, 1997; Vallerand et al., 1992, 1993). According to self-determination theory, these subtypes of motivation can be arranged along a continuum, showing the development of self-determination/autonomy. The first subtype is termed external regulation and is the least autonomous/self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. In school contexts, when students experience external regulation, they engage in tasks in order to get external rewards like their teacher’s praise or to avoid punishment. As such, they may not want to do the task but have to do so. Thus, in this case, they are controlled by external forces and have no self-determination. The second subtype is introjected regulation, which is still quite controlling and external. Individuals who strive to complete a task in order to avoid feelings of shame or guilt or to seek approval of other people are said to have introjected regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2002). The third subtype is identified regulation which involves self-determination or an autonomous form of extrinsic motivation. When individuals consciously value the importance of completing a task and manage to accomplish it, they exercise a certain level of self-determination.
Development of Self-Determination: A Self-Determination Continuum

According to Deci and Ryan and their colleagues (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Rigby, Deci, Patrick, & Ryan, 1992; Ryan & Deci, 2000), motivation is conceptualised as falling on a continuum from amotivation to extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. As can be seen from Figure 3.2, amotivation is placed at the far left of the continuum. Amotivation refers to the situation when people are unable to see the relationship between their actions and the consequences of their actions. Amotivated people have no motivation or no self-determination. When individuals are amotivated or unmotivated, they show indifference to ongoing activities or show no intention to participate in these activities. When they are asked to undertake a task, they may act passively or be unwilling to do so. According to Deci and Ryan (2002), amotivation occurs when individuals feel that they are unable to complete an activity successfully (low perceived competence) (Bandura, 1977) or they do not value the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

Extrinsic motivation is in the middle of the continuum. As previously mentioned, extrinsic motivation can be divided into four subtypes, which show the extent to which external regulation is internalised and the level of autonomy/self-determination individuals may experience. External regulation and introjected regulation are considered the less self-determined forms of motivation, and identified is referred as a more self-determined form of motivation.

At the far right of the continuum is intrinsic motivation, which is considered the most self-determined form of motivation. As previously mentioned, intrinsically motivated individuals engage in activities because of their inherent interest and to satisfy their curiosity. Intrinsically motivated individuals are self-determined by definition (Schunk et al., 2008).
This section has discussed both types of motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation) and qualitative scales (more or less self-determined types of motivation) in self-determination theory. It is evident that individuals may demonstrate different types of motivation when engaging in a task, and that different types of motivation predict different learning outcomes. This research argued that it is imperative to identify what motivates students to engage in the learning of a second language since this understanding may help to improve their learning outcomes (i.e., their levels of efforts and L2 proficiency) (Vandergrift, 2005). Given the fact that self-determination offers clear conceptualisation of motivation, the present research used this theory to identify the types of motivation reported by Vietnamese higher education students to learn English. Furthermore, it is anticipated that self-determination theory will be a valuable framework to understand potential differences in the types and levels of motivation to learn English of English major and non-English major students.
Motivation and educational outcomes

Self-determination theory posits that different types of motivation may lead to different outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Specifically, high levels of self-determined motivation (identified regulation, and intrinsic motivation) are associated with positive outcomes (i.e., long persistence in learning, high levels of effort expended in learning and achievement). In contrast, low levels of self-determination (external regulation and amotivation) are associated with negative outcomes such as not valuing the task, demonstrating negative emotions and even failure (Deci & Flaste, 1996; Deci & Porac, 1978; Deci & Ryan, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2002).

Past empirical research studies in a range of learning contexts have supported this hypothesis. For example, both Daoust, Vallerand and Blais’s (1988) study in France and Kusurkar and colleagues’ (2013) study in the Netherlands found that participant students (French high school students and Dutch university students) who had more self-determined (autonomous) types of motivation such as intrinsic motivation persisted in learning for a longer time and expended higher levels of effort in learning tasks than those who had less self-determined types of motivation (amotivation, external regulation and introjected motivation). In the similar vein, Pintrict and De Groot’s (1990) research findings indicated that American seventh graders’ intrinsic motivation and self-determined forms of extrinsic motivation significantly and positively correlated to positive academic performance. Gottfried’s (1985, 1990) studies conducted in the United States also lent support for self-determination theory as indicated in their research findings that elementary and junior high school students’ intrinsic motivation was strongly positively correlated with achievement in mathematics and reading skills.
Other research studies (e.g., Ryan & Connell, 1989; Vallerand et al., 1989) investigated the influence of students’ motivation on their emotions. Vallerand, et al.’s (1989) research findings showed that French elementary school students who had intrinsic motivation and identified motivation displayed more positive emotions such as enjoyment of academic activities in the class than those who had other forms of motivation. Similarly, in Ryan and Connell’s (1989) study, intrinsically motivated school children in the United States found school joyful and interesting whilst amotivated/demotivated students tended to show disruptive learning behaviours and even wanted to drop out of school.

This section has indicated that motivation is a critical factor in education. Specifically, within self-determination theory, empirical studies have indicated that different types of motivation predict different outcomes. Of a range of variables identified as the outcomes of motivation in self-determination theory such as achievement and effort, this research particularly focused on effort in language learning. As earlier mentioned, in second language acquisition, effort has been identified as the most important factor contributing to success in learning a second language. Effort has been indicated to mediate the relationship between motivation and L2 achievement and proficiency (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). This research aimed to measure the levels of effort expended in learning English by both English major and non-English major students and investigate the relationship between different types of motivation and effort for the two groups of English learners in higher education in Vietnam.

**Basic psychological needs as determinants of motivation**

Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000) propose that there are three innate psychological needs which underlie people’s motivation to act: a need for autonomy, a need for
competence and a need for relatedness. First, the need for autonomy (or self-determination), the most important need within self-determination theory, refers to an individual’s need to have freedom of choice and the freedom to act without any control or pressure from external forces. When being autonomous, individuals “experience their behaviour as an expression of the self” (Ryan & Deci, 2002, p. 8).

Second, the need for competence is the need to feel competent and effective in interactions with other people and the social environment. The need for competence encourages individuals to seek challenges that are optimal for their capacities. In undertaking optimally challenging tasks, individuals have a chance to maintain and enhance their capacities, which is critical in their growth and development process (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Competence is not a skill which can be attained by an individual, rather it is an individual’s felt sense of being confident and effective in undertaking a task (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Third, the need for relatedness pertains to feeling cared for, and caring for others, and feeling respected by significant others such as employers, teachers, peers and family members.

Self-determination theory postulates that three needs, autonomy, competence and relatedness are the determinants/components of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Specifically, people become interested in a task and/or find the task important for their growth and development only when the task engagement is perceived as voluntary (without any coercion from external forces) and the task itself is optimally challenging. Furthermore, when feeling secure and cared by other people, which characterise the satisfaction of need for relatedness, people tend to initiate the task and find the task enjoyable. In contrast, if these needs are not satisfied, there is a strong likelihood that people feel controlled, incompetent and isolated. As a result, they may find engaging in a task obligatory and uninspiring and even waste of time.
(Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, & Leone, 1994; Deci & Flaste, 1996; Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2012; Deci et al., 1991). Self-determination theory emphasises that autonomy is the most important determinant of intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2012).

In second language learning, researchers (e.g., Ma, 2009; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Noels, 2005; Noels et al., 2001) have become increasingly cognisant of the significant roles of these three psychological needs (see the findings of these studies later in this chapter). Therefore, the present research made an effort to compare the levels of these needs between English major and non-English major students and to verify the relationship between autonomy, competence, relatedness and motivation for a sample of Vietnamese English major and non-English major students.

**Motivation and social and contextual factors**

According to SDT, although individuals have innate propensities to regulate their actions, they are under the influences of social and contextual factors. Both proximal social and contextual factors (i.e., significant others) and distal factors (i.e., the history, culture and policies) may either facilitate or hinder their innate abilities to act. Importantly, within self-determination theory, social and contextual factors have been identified to influence motivation through the mediation of three basic psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2002). More specifically, when these factors satisfy these three needs by giving individuals the freedom to do what they want to do (supporting autonomy), providing them with positive feedback about their performance (supporting competence) and supporting their sense of belonging to the community that they are participating in (supporting relatedness), individuals’ intrinsic motivation and other self-determined extrinsic motivations are enhanced, which in turn improve their general motivation to act and support their natural growth and development. In contrast, when the social and contextual factors
thwart or do not allow satisfaction of these three needs (i.e., controlling individuals’
behaviour and giving them negative feedback about their performance), they may
undermine or even diminish individuals’ motivation (Deci et al., 1991). Deci and
Ryan (2002) posit that of all these needs, satisfaction of need for autonomy is the
most important for intrinsic and self-determined extrinsic motivation.

**Satisfactions of Psychological Needs: Cultural Aspects**

SDT argues that three psychological needs are universal and people in different
cultures need to feel these needs in order to be healthy. However, because of the
differences in cultures which may lead to differences in values, these needs may be
described and satisfied differently (Deci & Ryan, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2002). As the
concept of needs is important in SDT and satisfaction of needs is beneficial for
human motivation, it is important to consider if people in different cultures perceive
the importance of these three basic psychological needs differently.

**Autonomy**

Autonomy in learning has become the central concern in education research for the
past few decades and there are many definitions of autonomy. Holec (1981), who is
considered the pioneer of research about autonomy, defined it as the learner’s
“ability to take charge of their own learning” (p. 3). He elaborated by stating that
autonomous learners are those who determine their own learning objectives, define
learning content to be learnt, and select learning strategies, while monitoring and
evaluating their learning progress. Viewed by this definition, Asian students,
especially those who are from Confucian cultures such as those in China, Korea and
Vietnam are often said to lack autonomy because they seem to be passive in class
and rarely ask questions to clarify understanding (Dang, 2010; Le, 2000).
However, in Littlewood’s (1999) view, autonomy can be seen in two forms: proactive and reactive autonomy. People exhibit proactive autonomy when they are able to “regulate the direction of the activity as well as the activity itself” (p. 75), which seems to be similar to Holec’s (1981) conceptualisation of autonomy. People with proactive autonomy take responsibility for setting learning objectives, independently select learning strategies and evaluate their learning. Meanwhile, reactive autonomy refers to people’ ability to “regulate the activity once the direction has been set” (p. 75). Littlewood (1999) hypothesised that influenced by Confucian ideologies that emphasise the roles of significant others, East Asian students may have more reactive autonomy than proactive autonomy. As such, they prefer to work on a task chosen by an important person such as teachers or parents who they believe to have more experience in and knowledge of this task. Once the direction has been set, they might still be able to regulate their action and become more responsible for it. While emphasising that, Littlewood (1999) argued that Asian students still have the same capacity for proactive autonomy as students in Western countries.

According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), autonomy might be a culturally bound concept and the concept of autonomy is related to the Western culture but not Eastern culture. Iyengar and Lepper’s (1999) study supported this claim as their research finding indicated that Asian American children who were influenced by Confucian ideologies and values preferred to engage in activities which were chosen by other important people such as parents and teachers, while Anglo American children preferred to choose the activity themselves. He maintained that lack of choice did not influence Asian American children’s motivation while it diminished Anglo American children’s motivation.
However, a number of more recent studies conducted in a range of cultures and learning contexts found that the concept of autonomy is universal. For example, in Clarke and Gieve’s (2001) study, both Chinese students and British undergraduate students were found to be autonomous. In the same vein, d’Ailly’s (2003) reported that Taiwanese elementary children showed similar levels of autonomy to those of American children. For both groups, a higher level of autonomy was positively related to better academic performance. In the learning context of Hong Kong, Spratt, Humphreys and Chan (2002) found that although learners might like their teachers to direct their English learning activities in the classroom, they were able to regulate their learning and select their English learning tasks outside the classroom. Hyland’s (2004) empirical research findings confirmed Spratt et.al.’s (2002) findings in that Hong Kong learners of English reported high levels of proactive autonomy when they actively set their own learning objectives and sought opportunities to practice their English outside the classroom. In line with Chan’s (2002) study, in Lamb’s (2004) study conducted in Indonesia, Indonesian students of English were autonomous both inside and outside the classroom. In the classroom, they actively participated in group work and independently chose their topics of interest. Outside the classroom, they were able to select best effective learning strategies to improve their listening skills (i.e., watching programs in English). The aforementioned studies showed that autonomy is an important concept in both Western and Eastern cultures.

**Competence**

There has been little argument concerning the need for competence for engaging in a learning task (i.e, learning a second language) (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In Miller and Meece’s (1999) study, American third graders did not like to engage in easy reading and writing tasks because these tasks were viewed as boring and not challenging.
They highlighted that participants displayed greater levels of intrinsic motivation when participating in activities which were optimally challenging to their abilities. When taking part in such activities, they were able to explore new things and feel interested in these activities.

However, Schmidt and Savage (1992) found that the level of challenge of the learning task did not play a significant role in Thai elementary school participants’ motivation. These participants preferred to engage in activities which were easy. Schmidt and Savage (1992) postulated that the concepts of optimal challenge may be expressed differently in different contexts and cultures, which might suggest that Thai students felt motivated only when they felt able to complete the task successfully.

**Relatedness**

The need for relatedness has been shown to be important for students’ motivational efforts and learning outcomes. In Furrer and Skinner’s (2003) study conducted in the United States, when parents, teachers and peers supported elementary school children’s need for relatedness (i.e., they showed that they loved and cared for and respected these students), students showed a greater level of school engagement, which in turn, predicted their motivation and perceived control over their study. In line with Furrer and Skinner’s (2003) findings, Legault, Green-Demers and Pelletier’s (2006) identified that lack of relatedness to parents caused Canadian children to perform negative behaviours, such as not valuing school and playing truant. They stressed that children’s relatedness to parents and peers played a more important role than that of children’s relatedness to teachers.
Freeman, Anderman, and Jensen (2007) highlighted that teachers should be warm and friendly to their students to increase students’ relatedness to their teachers, which helped increase their motivation to deeply engage in the learning tasks. Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) suggested teachers can support their students’ sense of relatedness to their peers by asking them to work in groups and encourage them to work in collaboration.

Based on the above discussion of the relationship between social factors, basic needs and motivation, it is argued that Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English could be facilitated by the Vietnamese social and contextual factors. Due to the scope of the present research, only a number of proximal social factors were examined, namely lecturers, peers and parents. This research argues that since lecturers, peers and parents are considered significant in the Vietnamese culture (see Chapter 2), it is necessary to investigate how these people influence Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English.

**Justification for Self-Determination Theory to Explore Motivational Factors in Learning English in Higher Education in Vietnam**

There are a number of reasons why self-determination theory was chosen as the main guiding theory in the current research program. Firstly, self-determination theory is one of the most influential motivation theories, which has been applied successfully in a variety of research fields including education (Ryan & Deci, 2002; Taguchi et al., 2009), and recently to second language acquisition (for reviews, see Noels, 2001a, 2001b; Noels, 2009; Noels et al., 2001). For this reason, it is argued that that SDT may provide a useful framework to explore motivational factors in learning English in Vietnam. Secondly, unlike a number of theories of motivation which view motivation as a unitary concept (see, for example, Bandura, 1996), self-
determination theory identifies different types of motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation) and quality of motivation (i.e., some kinds of motivation such as intrinsic motivation and identified regulation are more autonomous/self-determined than the other kinds such as external regulation and introjected regulation). It is argued in this program of research that an understanding of both types and qualities of motivation is crucial as this knowledge may make it easier to investigate how L2 motivation operates and what types of motivation relate to what learning outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Lastly, self-determination theory captures the dynamic dimension of motivation (Vandergrift, 2005), and discusses how motivation can be enhanced or undermined by social and contextual factors (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Given the unique nature of social contexts in learning English in Vietnam, particularly in higher education, it is important to investigate how these factors influence higher education students’ motivation when they learn English in Vietnam.

In summary, self-determination theory (SDT) is one of the most influential theories of human motivation. In SDT, motivation is classified into types, some of which are better predictors for positive learning outcomes than others. SDT also highlights the roles of social and contextual factors in supporting motivation. SDT has been applied in various areas such as work, sports and education. As the current research employs SDT to investigate Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam, the following section discusses how SDT has been used in L2 motivation research.

**Application of Self-Determination Theory in Exploring L2 Motivation**

Noels and colleagues (2001a, 2001b, 2009; 2001; 1999; 2000) were said to offer “an explicit treatment of self-determination theory in L2 contexts” (Dörnyei, 2001c, p. 60). The work of Noels and colleagues has made a significant contribution to the
field of L2 motivation and self-determination theory. Their contribution can be understood in four main ways: (1) they generated an instrument to measure learners’ intrinsic and extrinsic motivation/orientations to learn a second language; (2) they explored the relationship between motivation and L2 learning outcomes such as effort and persistence in learning the L2; (3) they investigated the relationship between motivation and three psychological needs (a need for autonomy, competence and relatedness); and (4) they examined if students’ perceptions of their teachers’ communicative style impacted upon their sense of self-determination and enjoyment of L2 learning. These four contributions are discussed more below.

**Measuring intrinsic and extrinsic L2 motivation/orientations**

The first major contribution of Noels and her colleagues’ work was their generation and validation of an instrument to assess intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to learn a second language. In particular, Noels et al. (2000), basing on self-determination theory, created the Language Learning Orientations Scale – Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic motivation and Amotivation subscales (also known as the LLOS – IEA) to measure different types of motivation that L2 learners exhibit when learning a second language. Drawing on a sample of 159 university students learning French as a second language in a Canadian university, Noels et al.’s (2000) study aimed to examine the underlying structure of their newly created instrument and to explore whether the instrument was valid and reliable to measure L2 motivation. In Noels et al.’s (2000) study, participants discriminated motivation into different types which represent the development of self-determination. Specifically, participants experienced amotivation when they had no goals to learn a second language which were either intrinsic or extrinsic. These participants were able to classify extrinsic motivation into three subtypes, namely external regulation, introjected regulation and
identified regulation. Noels et al.’s (2000) postulated that while external regulation and introjected regulation are considered less self-determined/autonomous forms of motivation, identified regulation is addressed as a more self-determined form of motivation. Furthermore, in Noels et al.’s (2000) study, intrinsic motivation was also further broken down into three intrinsic motivation subscales (intrinsic motivation—knowledge, intrinsic motivation—accomplishment and intrinsic motivation—stimulation), which are considered to be the most self-determined forms of motivation to learn a second language. Noels et al.’s (2000) argued that Canadian participants’ conceptualisation of motivation was in line with self-determination theory. Furthermore, Noels et al.’s (2000) generated a number of correlations between different types of motivation and a number of variables hypothesised to be the outcomes and predictors of motivation in self-determination theory (see more below). In general, Noels et al.’s (2000) study indicated that the instrument that they created basing on self-determination theory was valid and reliable to measure L2 motivation. As the present research used the LLOS-IEA to assess Vietnamese higher education students’ motivation to learn English, the information relating to the validity and reliability of the LLOS-IEA is detailed in Chapter 4.

**Motivation and L2 learning outcomes**

The second contribution of Noels and her colleagues’ work was their successful attempt to identify the relationships between motivation and a range of second language learning outcomes such as effort/motivational intensity, L2 anxiety and self-perception of L2 achievement. In general, the findings from their studies conducted in Canada found that the participants who had more self-determined forms of motivation (intrinsic motivation, identified regulation) had more positive L2 learning outcomes (i.e., high levels of effort, self-perceptions of L2 achievement and
low levels of L2 anxiety). In contrast, those who reported high levels of amotivation and less self-determined types of motivation were more likely to have negative L2 learning outcomes such as low levels of motivational intensity (effort), high levels of L2 anxiety and failure (for more information, see Noels, 2001a, 2001b, 2003, 2005; Noels, 2009; Noels et al., 2001; Noels et al., 1999).

Noticeably, a number of Noels and colleagues’ studies particularly examined the relationships between different motivational orientations (types of motivation) with motivational intensity. For example in Noels et al.’s (1999) study, the findings from 332 university students, who were learning French as a second language in a Canadian university, revealed that while intrinsic motivation and identified regulation were positively and significantly with motivational intensity, amotivation was negatively and significantly correlated with motivational intensity. These findings were generally confirmed by Noels et al.’s (2001) study which involved 59 Canadian students learning English as second language and Sugita McEown, Noels and Saumure’ s (2014) study (N = 128 Canadian learners of Japanese as a foreign language). All of these above mentioned studies found that self-determined types of motivation, particularly intrinsic motivation were associated with positive second language learning outcomes, thus, were beneficial for second language acquisition.

**Relationships between motivation and basic psychological needs**

The third major contribution of Noels and her colleagues pertains to their attempts to examine the relationships between different subtypes of motivation and three basic psychological needs. In general, their empirical studies conducted in a range of learning contexts lent support to self-determination theory. For example, Noels et al.’s (2001) study findings suggested that for their sample of Canadian students learning English as a second language, higher levels of autonomy and competence
were associated with higher levels of self-determined types of motivation (intrinsic motivation and identified motivation) and low levels of amotivation and external motivation. These findings were confirmed by Noels’ (2001a) study which involved American learners of Spanish as a second language. It is noted that in both studies, while the relationships between motivation and autonomy and competence were at the centre of attention, the relationships between motivation and relatedness were neglected (Noels, 2009). In Noels and colleagues’ more recent study on Canadian university students’ motivation to learn Japanese (Sugita McEown, Noels, & Saumure, 2014), they addressed this limitation by examining the relationship between motivation and all three needs (autonomy, competence and relatedness). This study was in line with their previous studies and supported self-determination theory in that autonomy, competence and relatedness were positively and significantly correlated with more self-determined types of motivation. By contrast, these needs were negatively and significantly correlated with external regulation and amotivation.

**Teachers’ influences on students’ motivation to learn an L2**

The fourth contribution of Noels and colleagues’ work was that they examined the relationship between teachers’ communicative styles and students’ motivation. According to self-determination theory, individuals’ motivation is influenced by social and contextual factors that influence their perceptions of competence and autonomy and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Noels et al. (1999) postulated that in the context of learning an L2, teachers’ communicative style, which refers to the communicative manner in which teachers interact with their students, is one of the most important factors in the environment. In an L2 learning context, if students believe that teachers support their autonomy (i.e., teachers encourage students to
make their own decisions about their learning) and competence (i.e., teachers provide
students with informative and clear feedback about their progress), their autonomy
and perceived competence may be enhanced. As a result, they may develop interests
in learning an L2, persist with L2 learning and hopefully attain success (Noels et al.,
1999). In contrast, if students perceive that they are controlled by teachers and are
not given informative feedback about their progress, their autonomy and perceived
competence may be undermined. Consequently, they may learn an L2 as a means to
an end (i.e., to please their teachers or to meet course requirements).

Both studies (Noels, 2001a; Noels et al., 1999) conducted in two different countries
of Canada and the USA yielded similar results. That is, teachers’ controlling style
was positively and significantly strongly related to amotivation and negatively
correlated with more self-determined forms of motivation (identified regulation and
intrinsic motivation). Furthermore, teachers’ supporting students’ competence was
negatively and significantly correlated with amotivation while positively and
significantly correlated with more self-determined types of motivation such as
intrinsic motivation.

In sum, Noels and her colleagues have made an important contribution to our
understanding of L2 motivation and how SDT could be applied to researching
motivation to learn a second language (Dörnyei, 2001b; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).
However, as Noels and colleagues admitted, there were three key limitations in their
work. The first limitation relates to the contexts of their studies. Most of their studies
were conducted in Canada with English-speaking or French-speaking students
learning a second language (Noels, 2009). Since social and contextual factors are
important factors in the SDT, more research replicating Noels and colleagues’
studies need to be conducted in a variety of cultures. As such, these studies may
bring more insights to understand the influence of cultural factors on students’ motivation to learn a second language (Comanaru & Noels, 2009; Noels et al., 2000). The second limitation is that, although the role of teachers in influencing students’ motivation has been explored in a number of research studies (e.g., Noels, 2001a; Noels et al., 1999), the role of parents and peers has not been examined. The third limitation is that while the relationships between motivation and autonomy and competence were extensively examined in Noels and colleagues’ studies, such a relation between motivation and relatedness has not been given enough attention. More research needs to be conducted to consider this relationship.

Review of Research on Motivation to Learn English Globally

To set a sound background for the present research and to identify the research gap, this section specifically reviews research on motivation to learn English as a second/foreign language, conducted elsewhere rather than Vietnam. Based on the reviewing process of the existing relevant empirical studies, two general research areas were found. First, a number of studies were interested in exploring types and/or levels of motivation to learn English reported by English learners. Specifically, using a quantitative questionnaire to 500 university students in a Taiwanese university, Warden and Lin (2000) found that participants were motivated to learn English to get some instrumental benefits such as good jobs. Noticeably, the great majority of participants reported that they did not have any intrinsic motivation to learn English and they were learning English only because of being required to do so. In the other learning context of Indonesia, the participants (N = 168 university students) in Bradford’s (2007) quantitative study reported the highest levels of extrinsic motivation to learn English to gains pragmatic benefits such as jobs and money and very low levels of integrative motivation to identify with English native
communities. In a recent mixed methods study conducted in the same Southeast Asian region, Hayes (2014) found that Thai university students (N = 95) exhibited strong motivation to learn English to prepare for future profession. In a different English learning context of Turkey, Köseoğlu’s (2013) mixed methods research (a survey with 523 university, followed by focus groups with five students from each faculty) confirmed a number of findings of the aforementioned studies conducted in the Southeast Asian region in that Turkish university students reported very high level of instrumental motivation and very low level of integrative motivation. Based on the findings of these empirical studies, it is evident that in a range of English learning contexts, students were mostly extrinsically motivated to learn English (i.e., to get pragmatic benefits such as good jobs and good English marks), while reporting low levels of either integrative motivation (i.e., to integrate with English native communities) or intrinsic motivation to learn English. It is also noted that these studies only investigated motivation to learn English among non-English major students. Yet, understanding motivation to learn English among English major students is of equally importance as these students are parts of English learners (Phan, 2010).

Second, other studies aimed to examining how significant others (teachers, peers and parents) may influence students’ motivation to learn English as a second/foreign language. A number of studies exploring the influences of teachers on students’ motivation to learn English were conducted in a range of learning contexts. In particular, in both Cheng and Dörnyei’s (2007) quantitative study in Taiwan and Astuti’s (2013) qualitative study in Indonesia, Taiwanese teachers (N = 387) and Indonesian teachers (n= 2) and school students (n = 30) believed that a good rapport between teachers and students enhanced students’ motivation to learn English. In the
other studies, using the quantitative research method, both Ruesch, Bown, and Dewey’s (2012) survey study (N = 126 students aged 18-26 in North America) and Moskovsky and colleagues’ (2013) study (N = 310: 14 teachers; 196 students aged 12-25 years) found that teachers might enhance students’ motivation to learn English by using language learning games or humour in teaching. Meanwhile, in Cheng and Dörnyei’s (2007) quantitative study (N = 387 Taiwanese teachers of English in a range of schools and universities) and Sugita McEown and Takeuchi’s (2014) survey study (N = 222 Japanese university students), students and teachers did not value language games and fun-elements.

Besides examining the influences of teachers on students’ motivation to learn English, a smaller number of empirical studies aimed to explore the influences of parents on students’ English learning motivation. Noticeably, using mixed methods research (a questionnaire with 411 high school students, followed by written accounts by 80 students and focus groups with 14 students in English, Germany and Netherlands) Bartram (2006) found that parents could motivate the students by helping them to construct their understanding of and positive attitudes to learning a second language (English). In line with Bartram’s (2006) research findings, in Fan and Williams’s (2010) quantitative study, participants (N = 15,325 adolescences and their parents) reported that parents’ encouragements significantly enhanced students’ motivation to learn English. While these two studies valued the parental influences on students’ motivation to learn English as a second/foreign language, Kyriacou and Zhu’s (2008) mixed methods research (610 questionnaire and 64 interviews) did not find the similar results. In their research, participants perceived the influences of parents on their motivation as very small.
Based on the review of these empirical studies, it is argued that given the lack of literature on the influences of significant others (especially those of parents and peers) on students’ motivation to learn English, it is necessary to conduct further research on these areas. Furthermore, despite studies investigating the influences of teachers, peers and parents on motivation to learn English among young learners (i.e., primary, school children), there exists a gap in knowledge of motivational influences that significant others exert on adult learners (i.e., higher education students). As such, the present research aimed to fill these gaps.

**Review of Research on Motivation to Learn English in Vietnam**

Although there is a wealth of literature of L2 motivation in many countries across the world, there has been limited research in this topic in Vietnam (Phan, 2010). To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, there are only four empirical studies about motivation to learn English in the Vietnamese higher education context. These studies are reviewed and discussed below.

The first study is Phan’s (2010) qualitative case study which aimed (1) to explore motivational types that Vietnamese English major students had when they learnt English in higher education in Vietnam; and (2) to investigate factors affecting their motivation. This study involved seven female English major students in their second year and eight lecturers from one university. To gather comprehensive data, this researcher used semi-structured interviews with both lecturers and students and students’ weekly diaries and emails over the course of ten months. The two main findings of the study were: (1) the students did have intrinsic motivation; however, most of the time this group of students demonstrated other kinds of motivation such as external motivation, introjected motivation, identified motivation and demotivation (diminished motivation). The motivation of these students was
influenced by their perceived value of learning English, factors relating to the learning environment (lecturers, peers, schools) and family and social network (parents and cultural values). Phan’s (2010) study further discussed that in formal learning environments, participants revealed to have intrinsic motivation when their lecturers provided them with informative feedback and when they made English language activities interesting and challenging. In informal learning environments (i.e., at home), these participants were intrinsically motivated to learn English when they could choose what they wanted to learn. These participants were demotivated to learn English when their lecturers were not willing to help them to learn English and their classmates did not show support for them.

In the second study, Tran (2007) explored factors affecting Vietnamese English major students’ motivation and attitudes when they learnt English writing in higher education in Vietnam (N = 30). Based on the qualitative data, collected from open-ended questionnaires and documents such as writing syllabus and course books, the researcher found that both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation were important for participants when they learned English writing. Specifically, English major students demonstrated extrinsic motivation to write in order to get good marks/scores for their writings. However, the researcher maintained that intrinsic motivation was critical for the participants because with it, they could write creatively and passionately. The study also revealed that the participants’ intrinsic motivation for learning English writing could be enhanced if they were assigned interesting writing topics or given an opportunity to write and given informative and positive feedback by teachers.

Taking a different approach, Tran and Baldauf Jr’s (2007) case study investigated demotivating factors in learning English as a foreign language in higher education in Vietnam. The study involved 100 non-English major students who were
asked to write a stimulated recall essay about their experiences relating to demotivation. The study found that students indicated that they had been demotivated to some extent in their English study. These students showed that demotivation was caused by internal factors (i.e., students’ past failure in learning English, students’ negative attitudes about learning English and students’ low self-efficacy) and external factors (i.e., teachers’ providing negative feedback and boring textbooks). Of these factors, the researcher outlined that the largest source of demotives (demotivating factors) was related to teachers. Teachers’ inappropriate communicative styles (i.e., negative feedback on students’ class performance and lack of care for students) and ineffective teaching methods (i.e., boring ways of conveying knowledge, using teacher-centred approaches) were demotivating factors.

Luu’s (2011) replicated Tran and Baldauf Jr’s (2007) study by conducting research to examine what Vietnamese non-English major higher education students perceived as demotivating factors when learning English. The analysis of data collected from a survey questionnaire with non-English major students in a university in Vietnam (N = 147) revealed that there were two main sources of students’ demotivation, including (1) student-related factors (i.e., low self-esteem, past failures of English learning, lack of chance to use English in everyday conversations); (2) teacher-related factors (i.e., teachers’ low proficiency of English language and teacher-centred teaching methods). Luu’s (2011) study confirmed Tran and Baldauf Jr’s (2007) study’s findings in that teachers’ inappropriate teaching methods, insufficient levels of English proficiency and lack of care for students were perceived by students as the largest sources of their demotivation in learning English in higher education in Vietnam.
These studies are useful as they offer an insight into what may motivate or demotivate Vietnamese higher education students to learn English and effective ways to motivate them to learn English. Of the four studies, only Phan’s (2010) study was framed within self-determination theory (SDT). The present research program was interested in examining how this Western theory works in the context of teaching and learning English in a collectivist culture of Vietnam, given the fact that little is known regarding this respect. As such, the present research hoped to add some insights into the theory itself. Moreover, in all of the aforementioned studies, participants were either English major or non-English major students. As such, it is challenging to identify the potential similarities and differences between the two groups in their motivation to learn English. Yet an understanding of these differences/similarities is imperative to better address their specific needs in the learning of English, and to improve their English learning outcomes such as English proficiency (Dörnyei, 2009b). Furthermore, in Vietnamese higher education there are pre-conceptions that English major students are more motivated to learn English than their non-English major peers, and that non-English major students learn English only to meet the course requirements (Tran and Baldauf Jr. 2007). As pre-conceptions influence lecturers’ and students’ beliefs about the teaching and learning of English (Hofstede 1986), and potentially the quality of the teaching and learning of English that occurs, it is necessary to conduct research to compare the motivation to learn English of both groups. Thus, this research investigated motivation to learn English demonstrated by both English major and non-English major students.

Moreover, while lecturers’ impacts on students’ motivation were extensively discussed in these studies, little has been researched regarding the influences from peers and parents on students’ motivation. In Phan’s (2010) study – the only one
study addressing this issue, she only examined English major students’ perceptions of how peers and parents influenced on their motivation to learn English. Given the important roles of significant people in students’ second language learning, this research aimed to fill the gap by providing more insight into the influences that lecturers, peers and parents exert on students’ motivation to learn English from the perceptions of both English major and non-English major students.

As such, the current research included both groups of students and had five objectives:

1) to identify what types of motivation Vietnamese higher education students report in their study of English

2) to explore the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students

3) to investigate if these two groups of English learners in higher education in Vietnam differ in the level of effort, and self-perception of autonomy, competence and relatedness

4) to examine the relationships between different types of motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for English major and non-English major students

5) to explore students’ (both English major and non-English major students) perceptions of how their lecturers, peers and parents may influence their motivation in order seek ways to improve their motivation to learn English.

Conclusion
This chapter showed that L2 motivation research has a long history, characterised by L2 motivation having been viewed from different research perspectives and
paradigms. The self-determination perspective has been shown to provide a useful framework to understand motivation to learn a second language in a variety of L2 learning contexts. In the context of learning English in Vietnam, there has been limited research in L2 motivation. In this small body of L2 motivation research, only one research study was framed in self-determination theory. In order to provide more insight about the applicability of SDT in L2 motivation research in different cultures, the current research program applies the self-determination theory to understand motivation factors of Vietnamese higher education when they learn English.
Chapter 4: Research Design

Overview

This chapter considers methodological issues of this program of research. In the first section, a brief overview of the development of methodology used in motivational research is discussed, which provides the rationale for why mixed methods research was selected for this research. Issues relating to instruments, participant selection, procedures of data collection and data analyses are presented for each study of this two-study research program. The last section of the chapter concerns ethical issues and limitations of the entire research.

Methodology

Development of Research Paradigms in L2 Motivation Research

Research into L2 motivation, dominated by the quantitative paradigm for over four decades since its birth until 1900s, has still been popular (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Underpinned by positivist principles, researchers believe that they can ‘measure’ L2 learners’ motivation, and determine the relationships between some motivational variables to test their preconceived research hypotheses and to enhance their “aggregation of knowledge” (Dörnyei, 2001c, p. 193). In the early days, following the principles of quantitative social psychology, L2 motivation researchers made use of various rating scales particularly developed by Gardner and Lambert (1972) to measure some motivational variables such as attitudes towards the L2 community and attitudes towards the L2 learning. The data obtained by these rating scales were then processed by inferential statistical procedures such as correlation, regression (for reviews, see Au, 1988). Currently, the quantitative paradigm continues to be popular in L2 motivation research and researchers (e.g., Taguchi et al., 2009) also
used advanced quantitative methods such as structural equation modelling (SEM) to interpret large and multivariate data sets (Dörnyei, 2001b). Despite the fact that quantitative measures have enabled researchers to measure motivational variables (i.e., types of motivation) and to identify the causal relationships between these variables for a large population sample, quantitative researchers in L2 motivational area have admitted a number of limitations relating to collecting quantitative data only. One limitation of quantitative research is their inability to provide detailed descriptions of a particular individual’s L2 motivation (Noels, 2009).

To address limitations identified in the quantitative paradigm, in the 1990s, traditional quantitative research methodology has been complemented by qualitative approaches to investigate L2 motivation (Dörnyei, 2001b). Construed by constructivism (also known as interpretivist), each individual’s understanding of the world and reality (i.e., a person’s motivation to learn English) is built up from his/her own experience. Since people’s experiences about the world vary, there are multiple interpretations of the reality and truth (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As such, it is believed that researchers need to ‘listen’ to individual participants in order to understand what motivate them to learn a second language (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011; Ushioda, 2008). Qualitative researchers in L2 motivational research, pioneered by Ushioda (1996), have made extensive use of interpretive techniques such as in-depth interviews, and case studies to gather a rich and sensitive explanation for and/or interpretation of the identified patterns/relationships (Dörnyei, 2003a; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). However, qualitative approaches have their downside which pertains to the reliability of the data, and generalisability of the result (see more in Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
For the past few years, mixed methods research which utilises both quantitative and qualitative approaches has been used (for reviews of research using mixed methods, see Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Researchers in this area (e.g., Comanaru & Noels, 2009; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011) have highlighted that a combination of both quantitative and qualitative in research may allow researchers to gain broad and deep understandings of this multi-faceted construct in a particular context. As such, this research argued that mixed methods research may provide the research with effective tools/methods to investigate motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam.

**Locating this Research Program as Mixed Methods Research**

This present research used mixed methods to answer five research questions:

**RQ1.** What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?

**RQ2.** What are the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students?

**RQ3.** What are the similarities and differences in their levels of motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness between English major and non-English major students?

**RQ4.** What are the relationships between motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for English major and non-English major students?

**RQ5.** In what ways do lecturers, peers and parents influence Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English?
Mixed methods research is defined as “research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both quantitative and qualitative approaches and methods in a single study or program of inquiry” (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007, p. 4). Along with quantitative and qualitative paradigms, mixed methods research emerged as an alternative research paradigm which adopts pragmatism as its philosophical principle (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Morgan, 2014). Underpinned by this philosophical system, people’s understanding about the nature of the world/knowledge and reality is restricted by “the nature of that world” (Morgan, 2014, p. 1048). However, their interpretation of the nature of the world is also shaped by their own experiences about that world.

Within pragmatism, positivism (quantitative) and constructivism (qualitative) are not necessarily opposing paradigms, but are a “natural complement” to one another (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 14). Most noticeably, quantitative and qualitative paradigms can be combined effectively as long as researchers clearly define their purposes of doing so (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

According to a number of mixed methods researchers (e.g., Creswell, 2011; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003), one of the major intents of conducting mixed methods research is to convert and/or triangulate two different data sets (quantitative and qualitative data) to answer the same research questions, thus to ensure the validity of the inferences. However, in many cases, collecting an additional data set (qualitative or quantitative data) allows researchers to address an important research question that the remaining data set is unable to adequately address (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). In such a case, mixed methods assist the researcher to obtain a complete picture of the phenomenon under study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). In mixed methods research, researchers can decide at what stage
and how two data sets are mixed to attain their research aim and answer their research questions (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009).

In the present research, a quantitative method was necessary to answer research questions 1, 2, 3, 4 (see above) as the quantitative data, inferential statistics such as correlations allowed the researcher to draw the inferences about the relationships between the variables of interests (different types of motivation, motivational intensity). However, regarding RQ1 “What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?” and RQ 2) “What are the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students?”, given little has been known about students’ motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam, it was felt that giving a chance for students to ‘talk’ more about the reasons why they were learning English would add more insights and depth to the findings yielded from the questionnaire. As such, the qualitative data were collected through focus groups with the students. The final answers to these research questions were drawn from both data sets.

As Dörnyei (2001c) indicates, although an understanding of what people’s types of motivation are, is important, knowing how to enable participants to improve their motivation is equally important. With this in mind, the additional objective of collecting qualitative data was to address RQ 5) ‘In what ways do lecturers, peers and parents influence Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English?’ Therefore, in this research, qualitative and quantitative methods were integrated and combined to serve the researcher’s practical research purposes (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011).
## Research Design

### Outline of the Current Mixed Methods Research Design

The present research program comprises a pilot study and two main studies. Its outline is presented in Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Data Collection Instruments</th>
<th>Purposes</th>
<th>Procedure of Data Collection</th>
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| Pilot    | Thirteen Vietnamese students (7 English major and 6 non-English major) who were studying in a university in Hanoi, Vietnam | - 21-item Language Learning Orientation Scale-Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation and Amotivation Subscales (LLOS–IEA) (Noels et al., 2000)  
- 10-item Motivational Intensity Scale (Gardner, 2010)  
- 12-item Basic Psychological Needs Scale (Carreira, 2012)  
- Semi-structured questions (focus groups) | To pilot the translated questionnaire in order to ensure the equivalence of the translated questionnaire and the original questionnaire | - Translated questionnaire was administered to students  
- Discussions with students about the wording of the questionnaire were conducted |
| Study 1  | 422 second-year students including 180 English major and 242 non-English major students in a multidisciplinary institution of higher education in Vietnam | - 21-item Language Learning Orientation Scale-Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation and Amotivation Subscales (LLOS–IEA) (Noels et al., 2000)  
- 10-item Motivational Intensity Scale (Gardner, 2010)  
- 12-item Basic Psychological Needs Scale (Carreira, 2012) | - To identify the types of motivation reported by English major and non-English major students  
- To explore the similarities and differences in types of and levels of motivation between English major and non-English major students  
- To investigate the differences in the level of motivational intensity, self-perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness between English major and non-English major students.  
- To examine the relationships between different types of motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness | Online questionnaire was sent to students |
| Study 2  | 36 students (18 English major and 18 non-English major students) who completed the questionnaire were asked to take part in two focus groups (six students in each focus group) | Semi-structured focus group questions | - To explore why English major and non-English major students were studying English and if English major and non-English major differed in their motivation to learn English (to verify the finding in Study 1)  
- To explore students’ perceptions of how parents, teachers and peers influence their motivation | - Before each focus group began participants were asked to provide a written response to a number of questions which were further discussed in the focus group  
- Guided questions were asked to facilitate focus group discussions  
- Focus groups were conducted in Vietnamese |
The Pilot Study had two objectives: (1) to pilot the translated questionnaires and (2) to pilot the focus group questions. As the participants of the program of research were Vietnamese students, the questionnaire was translated into Vietnamese. The translated questionnaire was piloted with a small number of participants in order to get their feedback on accuracy, clarity and cultural appropriateness of all items in the translated questionnaire. The issues relating to instrument translation, participant selection and the procedure of the pilot study are discussed later in this chapter.

Study 1 sought to answer RQs 1–4. In order to address these research questions, a questionnaire made of three measures was employed as the data collection instruments. A detailed explanation of each measure used in Study 1 occurs later in this chapter.

Study 2 aimed to provide more explanation for RQ1, RQ2, and explored perceived influences that their lecturers, peers and parents have on their motivation, which addresses RQ 5. Study 2 collected qualitative data by means of focus groups and students’ written responses to a number of questions. The original qualitative data were in Vietnamese, which were then translated to English for analysis. The translation process of qualitative data is detailed in Chapter 6.

**Sampling Issues**

**Research site**

In the current research program, a multidisciplinary institution of higher education where the researcher has worked for ten years was selected as the research site. This institution is located in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. It is one of the biggest institutions of higher education in Vietnam with over 40,000 students who major in eighteen different disciplines such as English language, engineering, tourism and
hospitality, economics, accountancy, information technology, electrical and electronic engineering and teaching. Of these students, English-major students account for a small number (approximately 1,000 students), with the remainder being non-English major students.

There are two reasons why this institution was selected. First, according to Marshall and Rossman (2010), being familiar with an area brings considerable advantages for researchers in gaining access to the research site. Hence, having worked in this institution for ten years, the researcher had ease of access for data collection. Secondly, as the current research program involved both English major and non-English major students, this institution of higher education was ideal as both types of English learners attend.

**Participant Selection**

**Participants of pilot study**

In order to select participants for the pilot study, an invitation letter was sent via email to 50 English major and non-English Vietnamese students (aged between 17 and 21 years), inviting them to take part in the survey questionnaire and focus groups. A total of 13 students (7 English major and 6 non-English major) who agreed to take part in the pilot study were selected, as it is recommended that the translated survey instruments need to be piloted with a group of between three to ten people who are as close to the future participants as possible (Beauford, Nagashima, & Wu, 2011). This group of participants had similar characteristics to the participants of Studies 1 and 2 in that they are Vietnamese, fell within the same age range (aged from 17-21 years), and were studying English. Most importantly, they were able to comment on the wording of the translated scales. After completion of the questionnaires, these participants also took part in the focus groups. Litosseliti (2003)
postulates that a focus group can be conducted with between three and ten people. For the purposes of the focus group in the pilot study, 7 English major students were allocated in one group and 6 non-English major students were asked to work in another group.

**Participants of Study 1**

The participants for Study 1 were drawn from all second-year English major and non-English major students. To recruit the participants for Study 1’s online questionnaire, the researcher sought permission and assistance from the Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages in the university where this research was conducted. The Dean provided the researcher with the contact information of the lecturers who were teaching English to second year English major and non-English major students. The researcher asked these lecturers to help advertise this research and participant recruitment. In particular, these lecturers introduced this research and asked the students to provide their email addresses for the researcher to email the link to the questionnaire if they were interested in participating in the online questionnaire. A total of 650 students provided their email addresses, 422 students (180 English major students and 242 non-English major students) completed and submitted the online questionnaire. This represents a 65% return rate.

This participant pool was targeted for two main reasons. Firstly, all university students in Vietnam are either English-major or non-English major students. As previously mentioned, English major students have chosen to learn English, and learning the English language is the main focus of their degree. In comparison, non-English major students have a different focus for most of their degree (i.e., be it engineering, teaching, or science), and must study English as a minor component of their degree (To, 2010). As such, these two groups of English learners may differ in
their knowledge of the English language, their motivation to learn English and the goals they wish to attain when they learn English in higher education in Vietnam.

Secondly, the participants of the study were in their second year of university. As these students had studied English in higher education for one year, they may have clearer goals and greater experience in learning English than their peers in their first year. This greater experience might enable them to better understand and articulate their attitudes toward studying English, and the challenges or successes they are having regarding learning English.

**Participants of Study 2**

All participants involved in Study 1 were invited to participate in Study 2. When provided with the questionnaires for completion in Study 1, the students were briefly introduced to Study 2 and invited to take part in the focus groups of Study 2. Those who were interested in participating in the focus groups were advised to email the researcher. A total of 36 students (18 English major students and 18 non-English major students) were selected (the information about participant selection can be found in Chapter 5). Each focus group comprised either six English major students or non-English major students, as it was believed that the small number of students in each group would encourage participants to discuss freely and openly their thoughts and ideas about their motivation to learn English, particularly the perceived influences that their parents, teachers and peers have on their motivation (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Powell & Single, 1996)
Measurement Issues

The questionnaire (Study 1)

Using questionnaires in research is beneficial in terms of money and time. First, questionnaires are economical as they can supply a large amount of data at a relatively low cost (Dörnyei, 2003b). Second, respondents do not have to spend an excessive amount of time completing questionnaires since they are relatively simple and straightforward (McClelland, 1994). Research has indicated that simplicity of questionnaires increases the overall respondent accuracy (Long, 1986).

In Study 1, a questionnaire with three measures (see Appendix A) was employed to explore the motivational types that English major and non-English major endorsed in their study of English in higher education in Vietnam. The questionnaire also aimed to examine the similarities and differences between two groups of English learners in their levels of motivation, motivation intensity (effort) and self-perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness. Furthermore, they were used to explore the relationships between motivation and a number of variables identified as important in L2 such as motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness in the English and non-English major samples. In the following section, three scales are described. In Study 1, as three measures of the questionnaire were translated to the participants’ first native language, the issues relating to instrument translation are then discussed. This section ends with a description of how the questionnaire was administered.

Description of the measures used in the present research program

Language Learning Orientation Scale – Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation and Amotivation Subscales (LLOS–IEA). The LLOS-IEA, developed by Noels et al. (2000) comprises 21 items (statements) which represent the different reasons for
individuals to learn a second language. These 21 items form seven subscales, including amotivation (three items), introjected regulation (three items), identified regulation (three items) and intrinsic motivation – knowledge (three items), intrinsic motivation – accomplishment (three items) and intrinsic motivation – stimulation (three items). Amotivation taps into individuals’ perception of having no reason or no motivation to learn English (e.g., ‘I don’t understand why I am learning English’). External regulation represents external influences for learning English in order to get external tangible and/or intangible rewards such as high marks or to satisfy somebody (e.g., ‘In order to get a better salary later on’). Introjected regulation pertains to the reasons for learning English to avoid the feeling of guilt or shame (e.g., ‘I am studying English because I would feel guilty if I don’t know English’). Identified regulation assesses the internal influence for learning English (e.g., ‘Because I think it is good for my personal development’). Intrinsic motivation – knowledge, intrinsic motivation – accomplishment and intrinsic motivation – stimulation tap into individuals’ enjoyable feelings in gaining more knowledge (e.g., ‘For the satisfied feeling I get in finding out new things’), in having accomplishment (e.g., ‘For the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult exercises’), and in being stimulated by second language learning (e.g., ‘For the “high” feeling I experience while speaking in the second language’).

The LLOS–IEA measure asks participants to indicate the extent to which each statement corresponds with their opinion from 1 (does not correspond at all) to 7 (corresponds exactly). Participants circle the response which seems to best reflect them most of the time. A high mean score on a particular subscale (such as intrinsic motivation) indicates a high level of that certain subtype of motivation (i.e., intrinsic motivation).
The LLOS–IEA demonstrates adequate reliability and validity. Drawing from a sample of 159 university students in Canada who were learning French as a second language, Noels and colleagues (2000) conducted exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of 21 items and reliability analyses to assess the distinctiveness and reliability of each subscale. EFA yielded a seven-factor solution, with factors labelled as amotivation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, intrinsic motivation – knowledge, intrinsic motivation – accomplishment and intrinsic motivation – Stimulation. The seven factors showed an acceptable Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .82 for amotivation; .75 for external regulation; .67 for introjected regulation; .84 for identified regulation; .85 for intrinsic motivation – knowledge; .88 for intrinsic motivation – accomplishment; and .85 for intrinsic motivation – stimulation. Additional studies that have used this measure have found acceptable Cronbach alphas for some, but not all, of the seven subscales (Mahdinejad, Hasanzadeh, Mirzaian, & Ebrahimi, 2012; Pae, 2008; Vandergrift, 2005). As the LLOS–IEA has not been used to assess Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English, exploratory factor analysis was necessary to understand the underlying component structure of this measure. The results of the factor analysis are discussed in Chapter 5.

*Motivational Intensity Scale.* Motivational intensity reflects the degree of effort that an individual expends on their learning, and it is believed that without effort, there will be little learning (Gardner, 2010). Motivation Intensity is one subscale in the Attitude/Motivational Test Battery (AMTB) developed by Gardner (1985a) which indicates appropriate reliability and validity. There are many versions of AMTB, and the present study used the latest version of the motivation intensity subscale in the international version of AMTB (Gardner, 2010). In terms of
convergent reliability, motivational intensity was shown to be positively correlated with interest in foreign languages and attitudes toward English speakers’ second language proficiency, English grades, English achievement and intention to continue second language learning (Gardner, 2006; Gardner, Tremblay, & Masgoret, 1997). Regarding discriminant validity, motivational intensity demonstrated a negative correlation with second language anxiety (Noels et al., 2001). Gardner (2006) reported Cronbach alpha of internal consistency for motivational intensity at .80 and a three-month test-retest reliability index of .67.

This 10-item measure was developed to assess students’ effort and engagement in learning a second language. There are five positively worded items (e.g., ‘I make a point of trying to understand all of the English I see and hear’), and five negatively keyed items (e.g., ‘I don’t bother checking my assignments when I get them back from my English teacher’). Participants are asked to rate the extent to which each statement is true for them on a 7-point scale (1= strongly disagree; 7= strongly agree). These five negatively worded items were reverse scored before analysis. Thus, a high score indicated a high level of effort and engagement when learning a second language. This scale has been used in several studies and has demonstrated good reliability with a Cronbach alpha of .80 (Comanaru & Noels, 2009) and .86 (Noels, 2001a).

*Basic Psychological Needs Scale* (Carreira, 2012) was developed to assess students’ perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness in an English learning context in Japan. This measure consists of three subscales, including autonomy, competence and relatedness. Four items assess students’ feelings of autonomy (e.g., ‘I am willing to participate in English lessons’), four items ask about students’ perceptions of competence (e.g., ‘I consider myself good at English’) and
four items evaluate students’ feelings of relatedness to teachers and peers (e.g., ‘I learn cooperatively with my classmates during English lessons’).

With regards to convergent validity, Carreira (2012) reported that autonomy correlated positively and significantly with competence and relatedness. Autonomy, competence and relatedness were significantly and positively correlated with intrinsic motivation. These three subscales showed a good internal consistency reliability index of .80 for autonomy; .79 for competence and .78 for relatedness. In Carreira and colleagues’ (2013) study, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for these three subscales were reliable, being .84 for autonomy; .75 for competence; and .78 for relatedness.

The 12-item measure asks participants to rate the extent to which each statement corresponds with their opinions on a 4-point scale (1= strongly disagree; 4= strongly agree). The negatively worded items were reverse scored before analysis. A high score on a particular subscale (e.g., autonomy) indicates high levels of that construct (e.g., autonomy).

Translation of the measures into the participants’ native language

Translating an instrument from one language to another is needed when potential participants do not speak or are not fluent in the language available in existing instruments (Beauford et al., 2011). According to Duffy (2006), translation of instruments is a complex and time-consuming process because it requires investigators to show the evidence of equivalence (equivalence of content and equivalence of constructs) between the translated items and the original ones. In the current research program, as all three measures were available in English, these measures were translated into Vietnamese, the native language of the participants. In
order to ensure the equivalence between the translated instruments and the original ones, the translation process strictly followed the rigorous four steps suggested by Weeks et al (2007), including:

- translation from the source language (English) to the target language (Vietnamese)
- back translation of study instrument (target to source language),
- piloting the instrument
- committee approval for final versions.

The first step was translating from the source language to the target language. Three measures used in Study 1 were translated from English to Vietnamese by the researcher as she had spent sufficient time in an English speaking country to be aware of the potential cross-cultural differences between Vietnamese and English. Furthermore, as she had eight years’ experience of teaching translation skills to Vietnamese learners of English, she was familiar with translation tasks. All of these ensured the equivalence in content and constructs of the translated instruments (Prieto, 1992).

When translating the three measures into Vietnamese, the researcher decided to make slight modifications to the LLOS–IEA so that this measure fitted the research context as well as Vietnamese culture (Ember & Ember, 2009). For instance, the phrase “the second language” in the original LLOS–IEA was replaced by ‘English’ as the present study investigated motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam. The phrase “a good citizen” in “To show myself that I am a good citizen” was replaced by “a good student” as the participants of the present study were university students. Furthermore, the phrase “I am studying English” was added to
the beginning of all items in the subscales of this measure. It was felt that when adding this phrase, the statements would be clearer for Vietnamese students.

Noticeably, it was felt that the item “Because I have the impression that it is expected of me” does not fully capture the influence of Vietnamese culture on students’ decision to learn English. As Phan (2011) posits, Vietnamese students may learn English as they are required to do so by the university, lecturers and parents and/or just to please significant others. As such, this item was reworded as bellow “Because I have to meet the requirements/expectations of my university/lecturers/parents”. See Table 4.2 below for each item of the LLOS–IEA as it appeared in its original form, and how it appeared after slight modification. The translation was revised by another bilingual who was undertaking a PhD degree in an Australian university and was fluent in English at the time of the research. At this stage, the reviewer suggested minor modifications to a few items, to which the researcher agreed.
### Table 4.2

**Modification of the Measures’ Items in the LLOS–IEA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>Original items</th>
<th>Used items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td>I cannot come to see why I study a second language, and frankly I don’t give a damn</td>
<td>I don’t know why I am studying English, and frankly, I don’t care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honestly, I don’t know. I truly have the impression of wasting my time in studying a second language</td>
<td>Honestly, I don’t know why I am studying English. I truly have the impression of wasting my time in studying English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I don’t know; I can’t come to understand what I am doing studying a second language</td>
<td>I can’t understand what I am doing studying English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Regulation</td>
<td>Because I have the impression that it is expected of me</td>
<td>Because I have to meet the requirements/expectations of my university/lecturers/parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In order to get a more prestigious job later on</td>
<td>I am studying English in order to get a more prestigious job later on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In order to have a better salary later on</td>
<td>I am studying English in order to get more academic success later on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introjected Regulation</td>
<td>To show myself that I am a good citizen because I can speak a second language</td>
<td>I am studying English to show myself that I am a good student because I can speak English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Because I would feel ashamed if I couldn’t speak to my friends from the second language community in their native tongue</td>
<td>I am studying English because I would feel ashamed if I could not speak English when I communicate with my friends from English speaking countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Because I would feel guilty if I didn’t know a second language</td>
<td>I am studying English because I would feel guilty if I didn’t know English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified Regulation</td>
<td>Because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language</td>
<td>I am studying English because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Because I think it is good for my personal development</td>
<td>I am studying English because it is good for my personal development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Because I choose to the kind of person who can speak a second language</td>
<td>I am studying English because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic Motivation – Knowledge</td>
<td>For the pleasure that I experience in knowing more about the literature of the second language group</td>
<td>I am studying English for the pleasure that I experience in knowing more about the literature of the English speaking group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For the satisfied feeling I get in finding out new things</td>
<td>I am studying English for the satisfied feeling I get in finding out new things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Because I enjoy the feeling of acquiring knowledge about the second language community and their way of life</td>
<td>I am studying English because I enjoy the feeling of acquiring knowledge about the English speaking community and their way of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic Motivation – Accomplishment</td>
<td>For the pressure I experience when surpassing myself in my second language studies</td>
<td>I am studying English for the pleasure I experience by improving my English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For the enjoyment I experience when I grasp a difficult construct in the second language</td>
<td>I am studying English for the enjoyment I experience when I grasp a difficult construct in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult exercises in the second language</td>
<td>I am studying English for the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult exercises in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic Motivation – Stimulation</td>
<td>For the ‘high’ I feel when hearing foreign language spoken</td>
<td>I am studying English for the good feeling when hearing English spoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For the ‘high’ feeling that I experience while speaking in the second language</td>
<td>I am studying English for the good feeling that I experience while speaking in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For the pressure I get from hearing the second language spoken by native second language speakers</td>
<td>I am studying English for the pleasure I get from hearing English spoken by English native speakers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second step was back translation, which is also known as ‘blind translation’ (Brislin, 1970). Another Vietnamese-English bilingual person who was not exposed to the original version of the instrument was asked to back translate the translated instrument to the source language (Brislin, 1970; Werner & Campbell, 1970). Two versions of the instruments (the back translated version and the original version) were compared by an English native scholar. The English native scholar identified several discrepancies between the two versions (due to the slight modifications). However, in the discussion between the English scholar, the back translator and the researcher, it was determined that these differences were just minor and most importantly did not result in discrepancies in the meaning of the items across the two versions.

The third step was piloting the translated instrument (Schuman, 1966; Werner & Campbell, 1970). In this study, the translated measures were tested for face validity with 12 participants (Schuman, 1966). These participants were asked to complete the translated instrument and make note of any questions which were not clear or were inappropriate for them. In general, the students reported that almost all questionnaire items were meaningful for them. However, a total of 8 students commented that they would prefer to use the phrase ‘cong viec tot’ (a good job) rather than ‘cong viec danh gia’ (a prestigious job) as the phrase ‘cong viec tot’ sounded more familiar to them. After further discussions, first with these students and then with several lecturers of English in a university, it was obvious that in English two phrases ‘a prestigious’ and ‘a good job’ have similar meanings. However, in Vietnamese the phrase ‘cong viec tot’ would be more suitable to use in a questionnaire for students. As such, the researcher changed the wording from ‘cong viec danh gia’ (meaning a prestigious job) to ‘cong viec tot’ in the Vietnamese version (meaning a good job).
The fourth step was enlisting the support of a committee comprising five bilinguals. These people discussed and made any necessary changes to the translated instrument so that it could be used for the large sample of participants. Although translating an instrument from one language to another language is complex, Weeks et al. (2007) postulated that if conducted properly, a translated instrument is cost effective for researchers, easy to understand and culturally appropriate for the target participants.

**Focus groups (Study 2)**

A focus group is defined as “a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research” (Powell & Single, 1996, p. 499). The focus groups were conducted in Study 2 for three reasons. First, focus groups are characterised as a valuable tool to gather participants’ attitudes, beliefs and experiences of a social issues (Krueger & Casey, 2009). It was anticipated that Vietnamese higher education students’ perceptions of the influences that lecturers, peers and parents had on their motivation might be understood through focus group discussions. Secondly, Peter (1993) highlighted that when participants are assembled in groups, they may feel supported by other group members. As mentioned early, due to their collectivist culture, Vietnamese students may like working in groups, and feel confident when able to cooperate with each other. As such, the focus group gave an opportunity for the participants in this study to share their beliefs, understandings and experiences relating to issues of how parents, teachers and peers influenced their motivation. Thirdly, focus groups enabled the researcher to gather information from different angles at the same time. Therefore, it offered an invaluable way to explore Vietnamese higher education students’ diverse viewpoints of how their parents, teachers and peers influence their motivation.
Questioning strategies

According to Krueger and Casey (2009) there are two questioning strategies which are often used by moderators/researchers in focus groups: topic guide and questioning route. The topic guide is “a list of topics or issues to be pursued in the focus group” (2009, p. 37). This list of topics or issues reminds moderators about what needs to be asked during focus groups. The questioning route is a list of questions which is predetermined by moderators or by a group of experts. These questions were asked in the focus group in the current program of research. In Study 2, the researcher used the questioning route comprising eight key open-ended questions. These questions were formulated based on the theoretical framework (self-determination theory), which focused on asking why the students were studying English and how social factors might influence an individual’s motivation. In Study 2, to assist students to thoroughly understand focus group questions and easily share their opinions, the focus groups were conducted in Vietnamese (see Chapter 6 for issues relating to translating the focus group’s data from Vietnamese to English). All groups were asked the same questions in order to compare information across groups (Krueger & Casey, 2001; Litosseliti, 2003; Sim, 2001). Examples of the questions used in the focus groups of Study 2 are: ‘How do your friends feel about you learning English?’ and ‘How do you think your teacher might influence your motivation to learn English?’. The list of key questions asked in focus groups can be found in Appendix B.

It was noted that prior to the focus group, the students in each group were asked to provide their written answers and comments on a provided sheet of paper for a number of questions, the majority of which were asked in the focus group. This was done so as shy/quiet participants who may be less vocal during the focus group
discussion, would be able to contribute their ideas in writing. In addition, it means that the participants had time to think about the questions before they were asked verbally, offering them time to formulate meaningful and detailed responses. These questions can be found in Appendix B.

**Relationship between moderators and participants**

Building a good relationship with participants in focus groups ensures the effectiveness of the focus groups (Sim, 2001). In the current program of research, the researcher facilitated the focus groups in a warm and respectful manner. The researcher observed that during the focus group, participants felt comfortable and shared information freely. Kruger and Casey (2009) highlight that moderators should truly believe that participants have valuable information to share. They stress that showing respect for participants is one of the most essential factors affecting the quality of focus groups. The researcher also outlined to participants that personal information shared in the focus groups should not be discussed with others outside the group, and that participants should only share information that they feel comfortable for others to hear. While sensitive information might be shared in the focus groups, the researcher provided all participants with the contact details for the university’s counselling service so that participants could access support if necessary.

**Overview of Data Analyses**

The data analysis of the current research program consisted of two phases: quantitative data analysis and qualitative data analysis. The analytical methods of two data sets are presented in Table 4.3.
Table 4.3

Outline of Data Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims/Research questions</th>
<th>Instruments</th>
<th>Data analysis technique employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To show evidence of validity and reliability of the translated measures</td>
<td>The LLOS-IEA (Noels et al., 2000)</td>
<td>Exploratory factor analysis, inter-factor and inter-scale correlations, tests of internal consistency reliability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivational Intensity Scale (Gardner, 2010)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological Needs Scale (Carreira, 2012)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 1: What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?</td>
<td>The LLOS-IEA (Noels et al., 2000)</td>
<td>Descriptive analyses (mean analyses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivational Intensity Scale (Gardner, 2010)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological Needs Scale (Carreira, 2012)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 2: What are the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students</td>
<td>Two-way MANOVAs to compare means</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3: What are the similarities and differences in their levels of motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness between English major and non-English major students?</td>
<td>Two-way ANOVAs and MANOVAs to compare means</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 4: What are the relationships between motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for English major and non-English major students?</td>
<td>Inferential techniques such as correlations, regressions to show the relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 5: In what ways do lecturers, peers and parents influence Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English?</td>
<td>Focus groups (pre-determined questions)</td>
<td>Mayring’s (2000) qualitative content analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Quantitative data analysis**

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 21 was used to analyse the quantitative data. A number of statistical techniques were used. As three measures used in Study 1 were translated from English to Vietnam, exploratory factor analysis, inter-factor and inter-scale correlations (tests of convergent and divergent validity) and tests of internal consistency for each measure in the translated questionnaire were generated to show evidence of validity and reliability of these measures in this research.
In order to identify types of motivation reported by English major and non-English major students (RQ1), mean analyses were used. To examine if English major and non-English major students differed in their levels of motivation (RQ2) a number of two-way MANOVAs were generated to show mean differences in individual types of motivation between the two groups.

A two-way ANOVA and a number of two-way MANOVAs were conducted to explore whether English major and non-English major students differed in their levels of motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness (RQ3).

Correlations were generated to examine the relationships between motivation and a number of interests such as motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness. Furthermore, a number of standard multiple regressions were formulated to examine the contribution of different types of motivation to the levels of motivational intensity (RQ4).

**Qualitative data analysis**

Study 2’s data emanated mainly from focus group discussions, which were then added to the data of the written responses to the questions used in the focus groups and students’ individual emails. These data were analysed using qualitative content analysis. Content analysis has been defined as “[a] research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 24). As a research technique, content analysis assisted the researcher in grasping new insights into a particular phenomenon/event under study (students’ motivation to learn English and how their motivation is influenced by other people) (Weber, 1990). Content analysis must be replicable, which pertains to the essence of reliability. Replicability requires different
researchers using the same technique to study the same phenomenon/event at
different time obtaining the same results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mayring, 2000). In
the present study, the researcher used explicit rules of coding outlined by
Krippendorff (2013) and applied these rules equally and systematically to every unit
of analysis. Furthermore, the researcher acknowledged that the results from content
analysis must be valid. As such, each category was carefully devised, revised and
always upheld with sufficient evidence from the data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Mayring,
2000).

Central in content analysis is researchers’ using explicit coding agenda to compress
large data into meaningful categories (Krippendorff, 2013; Mayring, 2000; Weber,
1990). According to Mayring (2000), categories refer to words or concepts with
similar meanings or connotations, and can be formulated inductively or deductively.
The former is effective when there is no existing literature about the phenomenon
under study or the literature relating to the phenomenon is fragmented. The latter is
the most utilitarian in case existing theories are tested using new samples and under
new research conditions (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Since a gap in the literature of
motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam has been identified, along
with a lack of literature about how students’ motivation is influenced by lecturers,
peers and parents, the present study employed inductive category development with
the following five steps.

Preparation phrase

In this phrase, the researcher first considered choosing units of analysis (i.e., several
key words, sentences, and portions of pages with important information or whole
interviews/focus groups). Graneheim and Lundman (2004) proposed that whole
textual documents (whole interviews, observational protocols) are the most suitable
analytical units since an interview as a whole may provide sufficient context for researchers to make meaningful inferences. Following this proposal, each focus group recording in the present study was transcribed verbatim. While verbatim transcription was a lengthy process, it afforded the researcher an opportunity to become familiar with the data (Krueger, 2006; Krueger & Casey, 2009). Data from each focus group were then combined with those from the students’ written answers for a number of questions and emails and observation notes on the basis of focus group questions and research questions. Where there was repetition (same participant saying the same thing), the data from additional sources were discarded. Colour coding was used to identify data sources.

It was noted that whilst the original data from the focus group discussions and students’ written answers and emails were in Vietnamese, the findings from these data would be finally reported in English in the present research program. Thus, all the Vietnamese data in Study 2 were translated to English and analysed in English. To ensure the trustworthiness of the translated data and the research rigour (Temple & Young, 2004), the researcher employed the procedure involved in back translation (Brislin, 1970; Liamputtong, 2010). The original data were translated from Vietnamese to English by the researcher and revised by a Vietnamese-English bilingual person. This English version data was back translated to Vietnamese by another PhD Vietnamese student who was studying in Australia, and not exposed to the original data. Then, a lecturer who was teaching the Vietnamese literature in a Vietnamese university was asked to compare the original data and back-translated version and determined if equivalence (i.e., vocabulary, ideas and conceptual equivalences) were maintained. At this stage, this person advised that two versions shared 95.4% similarities in meaning at the sentence levels. The detail process of
back translation can be found in the section about the translation of instrument earlier in this chapter.

As soon as the unit of analysis was identified, following Hsieh & Shannon’s (2005) advice of qualitative analysis, the researcher read the data like reading a novel to have a sense of the data as a whole, and kept reading the document word by word several times. During reading, a number of questions were foremost, including ‘Who is speaking?’; ‘What is she/he telling about?’ ‘What is happening?’ ‘In what context is it happening?’ and ‘Why is it happening?’ Such intensive and critical reading enabled the researcher to become immersed in the data, which assisted her making valid inferences from the data (Berg & Lune, 2004).

Open data coding

The data coding was conducted with the aid of Word processing. The researcher created two data files in Word, with one file consisting of all the data from the English major students and another file comprising the data collected from the non-English major students. For each file, the researcher generated a table with four columns. The research questions, along with the questions used the focus group were listed in the first column. The answers by participants in Groups 1, 2, 3 (for the English major students) or Groups 4, 5,6 (non-English major students) were arranged in the remaining three columns. The researcher read the answers several times and highlighted key words and concepts. All common key words and concepts were noted and their frequencies were tallied in the right margin. On doing word counts, as suggested by Mayring (2000), the researcher was aware of several issues, including participants using synonyms or using the same word differently in different contexts. For example, it was noted that two words “stimulating” and “motivating” were used interchangeably by the participants when recalling their memorable
English learning experiences. Initial headings (open categories) were then formulated basing on the common key words and concepts and noted in the left margin.

**Devising and revising category**

The headings/open categories were carefully and systematically revised through the whole document. Any repetition was removed, and necessary adjustments were made. The revised categories were then subsumed into a more generic and higher-order category depending how they related or differed from each other. At this stage, a tentative definition of each category was devised based on the data and available theoretical grounding. The researcher also discussed with her supervisors, about the categories and the definitions. Their constructive feedback and comments assisted with further refinement of categories and their operational definitions.

**Making inferences and determining levels of abstraction**

Making meaningful and valid inferences from the data is the most challenging step in qualitative data analysis (Krippendorff, 2013). In the present study, the researcher utilised her knowledge of the study context as well as understanding of the data to make sense of the categories. The researcher reconstructed the meaning from the data by identifying the relationships between categories and represent how well these categories might answer the research questions and describe the research topic (i.e., students’ motivation types and motivational influences from lecturers, peers and parents) (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Mayring, 2000).

**Preparation for reporting of results**

The last step was to prepare for reporting the results. The researcher studied all categories and highlighted the most compelling evidence to be included in the report to back up these categories. The compelling evidence was the exact quote from the
focus groups, students’ written responses and students’ emails, which contained the key words and concepts. In the present study, each quote is provided along with its sources (i.e., who said it, where it was taken).

**Ethical Considerations**

As the current study involved human subjects, a number of ethical issues were considered. First, prior to conducting Study 1 and 2 of the current research program, the researcher submitted an ethics application to the QUT Ethics Committee for approval, and obtained written permission to conduct the program of research from a university in Vietnam.

Second, participants were informed about the intent of the current research program, and the time and location of the particular study in which they were asked to participate. Students were advised that their participation in the current research program was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any stage. All information collected was kept confidential and anonymous. Specifically, the online questionnaire and the recordings of the focus group discussions were protected by password, and only accessible by the researcher and her supervisors. The transcriptions of the focus group discussions and students’ written accounts were stored in a locked filling cabinet within the researcher’s office.

Furthermore, the participants in Study 1 were informed that the questionnaire was anonymous and the questionnaire in Study 1 would not ask any identifying information. Therefore participants’ identities were protected. In Study 2, participants’ identities were kept confidential, and all data were made non-identifiable before being reported.
Limitations of the Research Program

Addressing limitations is one way to enhance the validity of research. A limitation of the current research program was that the study looked at the participants learning of English in one university in Vietnam. As such, the research program’s findings may not be generalisable for English learners in other universities in Vietnam or in other countries across the world. For this reason, future research which replicates this study needs to be conducted in other learning contexts where students are learning English as their second language.

A further limitation was that the data collected did not allow for causal relationships to be established. Rather, the data provided valuable insight into motivational types reported by Vietnamese higher education students, possible differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students, and factors that may impact on Vietnamese students’ motivation when learning English. Using quantitative and qualitative data in this study enabled a rich picture to emerge of Vietnamese higher education students’ motivation when learning English. As the Vietnamese government has prioritised the learning of English by Vietnamese students as a key policy direction in education in Vietnam, it is timely to gather data on factors that impact on the success of this process.

Conclusion

In summary, the current research program used a mixed method design to investigate motivational factors of Vietnamese higher education students when they learn English in Vietnam. Two different data sets including both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from questionnaires and focus groups to answer five research questions. It was argued in this chapter that using mixed methods in this study enabled the researcher to understand the complexity of Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam.
Chapter 5: Study 1

Overview

This chapter outlines the methods used for Study 1, including the participants, measures, data collection procedure, and analysis methods. Subsequently, the quantitative results of the present study are presented, followed by a summary of the whole chapter.

The aims of collecting quantitative data were four-fold. First, the present study aimed to identify what types of motivation English major and non-English major students reported in their English learning process in Vietnamese higher education. Second, Study 1 examined whether these two groups of English learners differed in their English learning motivation. Moreover, given the critically significant roles of a number of motivational factors (i.e., motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness), Study 1 investigated whether the English major students and their non-English major peers differed in their levels of these factors. Furthermore, the present study aimed to understand the relationships between autonomy, competence and relatedness and motivational subtypes for English major students and non-English major students.

As such, Study 1 addressed four research questions.

1) What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?

2) What are the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students?
3) What are the similarities and differences in their levels of motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness between English major and non-English major students?

4) What are the relationships between motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for English major and non-English major students?

**Methods**

**Participants**

Study 1’s participants were second year students in a multi-disciplinary university in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. Of the roughly 720 students, who were informed of the online questionnaire, 650 students agreed to provide their contact email addresses in order for the researcher to email them the link to the questionnaire. A total of 422 students completed and submitted the questionnaire with a response rate of 67.3%. Of this number, there were 180 English major students (167 females, 13 males) and 242 non English major students (119 females and 123 males). Participant ages ranged between 19 and 22 years ($M = 20.16$, $SD = .41$). Most participants (407; 96.7%) were Kinh (Viet people), the majority ethnic group of Vietnamese people; and only a small number (14; 3.3%) belonged to ethnic minorities (e.g., Dao, San Diu and Nung). At the time of the research, most participants (417; 98.82%) had studied English for more than nine years, and only five students (1.18 %) had studied English between six and eight years.

**Measures**

The present study employed three established measures including (1) the Language Learning Orientation Scale- Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation and Amotivation Subscales (LLOS–IEA) (Noels et al., 2000), (2) the Motivational
Intensity Scale (Gardner, 2010), and (3) the Basic Psychological Needs Scale (Carreira, 2012) (see Appendix A). As all three measures were available in English only, it was deemed necessary to translate them to Vietnamese to assist the participants in understanding the measures. Following four rigorous steps for back translation (Weeks et al., 2007), along with questionnaire piloting with 13 students, the measures were slightly modified to make them more culturally and contextually relevant to Vietnamese students (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). The information relating to measure modification as well as steps involved in back translation can be found in Chapter 4. The following section provides a description of the English version original measures as well as ways the translated measures were used for a sample population of Vietnamese higher education students.

The LLOS-IEA

The 21-item LLOS-IEA measure was developed by Noels and colleagues (2000) to assess levels of different types of second language learning motivation. The information relating to the reliability of validity of this measure can be found in Chapter 4.

In the present study, exploratory factor analysis was conducted for the 21 items of the Vietnamese version of the LLOS-IEA to understand the underlying structure of these items (Croakes & Steed, 2003). In addition, inter-factor correlation and internal consistency reliability analyses were generated to provide more information about the measure’s construct validity and reliability (DeVelilis, 2012). The result of exploratory factor analysis produced a four-factor solution. The four factors were respectively labeled amotivation, obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation. A detailed
explanation of the factor analysis process can be found later in this chapter in the Results section. Three items of amotivation tap into individual’s sense of having no reasons or motivation for learning English (e.g., ‘I don’t know why I am studying English, and frankly I don’t care’). Four items of obligation/avoidance motivation tap into external influences for learning English to meet requirements and/or expectations from the universities or parents, teachers, or to avoid negative feelings such as shame or guilt for not learning English well (e.g., ‘I am studying English because I would feel guilty if I don’t know English’). Six items of personal/professional development motivation (e.g., ‘I am studying English because I think it is good for my personal development’) represent the reasons for learning English in order to gain instrumental benefits as these benefits are important for individuals’ future personal and professional development. Eight items of intrinsic motivation represent internal or personally satisfying reasons to learn English as individuals find English learning interesting and enjoyable (e.g., ‘I am studying English because I enjoy the feeling of acquiring knowledge about the English speaking community and their way of life’). Participants were asked to rate the degree to which they disagreed or agreed with each statement on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Participants ticked the response that reflected them the best most of the time. The four-factor solution was demonstrated to be reliable with Cronbach alphas of .75 for amotivation; .61 for obligation/avoidance motivation; .79 for personal/professional development motivation; and .89 for intrinsic motivation.

Furthermore, instead of calculating a total score for each variable, a mean score was computed. The mean score for each subscale was calculated by adding all items in each subscale and dividing this total score by the number of subscale’s items.
advantage of computing the mean score is that subscales with different numbers of items will have the same range of scores, which may assist the interpretation of the data analysis (Gardner, 2010; Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, & Mihic, 2004). A high mean score on each subscale indicates a high level of that construct.

Motivational Intensity Measure

The Motivational Intensity Measure (Gardner, 2010) is a 10-item measure which assesses an individual’s level of effort expended in learning a second language (see Chapter 4 for further details relating to psychometric properties of the measure). In this study, to provide evidence for the psychometric soundness of the Vietnamese version of the Motivational Intensity Scale, the measure’s items were factor analysed. Based on the previous studies (e.g., Gardner, 1985b; Noels et al., 2000), it was expected that a one-factor solution would be evident for the present study’s sample population. As such, the present study specified a one-factor solution with a factor loading cut-off point of .30 (Pallant, 2013). Of the 10 items, nine loaded onto a single factor. This factor was labelled motivational intensity, in line with previous studies. The item ‘I don’t pay much attention to the feedback I receive in my English class’ was discarded from further analysis as it did not load on this factor. The process of factor analysis is discussed in detail later in this chapter. The present study indicated that the Motivational Intensity Scale possessed an acceptable reliability with Cronbach alpha of .76.

The measure used a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Participants were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement by choosing the response that is true for them most of the time.
Prior to mean score generation, four negatively keyed items were reverse scored. A high mean score of the Motivational Intensity Scale indicates a high level of effort.

*Basic Psychological Needs Measure*

The 12-item Basic Psychological Needs measure (Carreira, 2012) was designed to assess self-perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness. A detailed description of this measure can be found in Chapter 4. In the present study, the Basic Psychological Needs Measure was translated into Vietnamese. The Vietnamese version of this measure was validated for a Vietnamese higher education sample using exploratory factor analysis and inter-factor correlations. Factor analysis produced a three-factor solution as expected, labelled relatedness ($\alpha = .68$), competence ($\alpha = .65$) and autonomy ($\alpha = .75$), demonstrating similarity with the original factors. The details of the exploratory factor analysis of the Basic Psychological Needs can be found later in this chapter.

Four items in relatedness reflect relationships between learners and their friends and teachers (e.g., ‘I enjoy studying with teachers and classmates’). Three items in competence evaluate the feelings of being able to learning English well (e.g., ‘I consider myself good at English’), and three items in autonomy assess feelings of learning English from one’s own wish and willingness (e.g., ‘I am willing to participate in English lesson’). Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Prior to computing a mean score for each variable, these negatively-keyed items were reverse scored. A high mean score for a particular subscale reflects a high level of that construct.
Procedure

To collect the data for Study 1, the researcher utilised the online survey method. Prior to administrating the questionnaire to students, permission to conduct the study was granted by the Vice Rector of the university where the study was conducted, and ethical clearance was obtained from Queensland University of Technology. Participant recruitment was assisted by the Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and lecturers of English in the Vietnamese research site. Specifically, the Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages provided a list of nine English major classes and 50 non-English major classes, along with the number of students in each class and contact details of their lecturers. In order to have a relatively equal number of English major and non-English major students, the researcher approached all nine English major classes, containing roughly 270 students. Out of the 50 non-English major classes (around 3,000 students), the researcher approached 10 classes, comprising 550 students (three classes at the beginning, three at the end, and four in the middle of the non-English major class list).

The researcher contacted the lecturers of these 19 classes to inform them of the current research program, research objectives, and to ask them to assist with participant recruitment. Specifically, at the beginning of their following lectures, they agreed to disseminate an information sheet about the study, including the study objectives, and the nature of the online questionnaire. These lecturers then advised those who were interested in taking part in the online questionnaire to provide their email addresses on a piece of paper and put it in a box placed at the back of the class. Furthermore, the lecturers also provided the researcher’s contact details to students and encouraged them to contact the researcher for more information. The researcher collected the box containing potential participants’ email addresses at the end of each
lecture. Of the 770 students who were informed about the online questionnaire, 650 students (250 English major students and 400 non-English major students) provided their email addresses.

Upon reviewing the email addresses, the researcher sent the link to the online anonymous questionnaire via provided emails, along with the information sheet for the online questionnaire participants. The students were advised that prior to starting the questionnaire, it was essential that they read the information sheet, which explained the research objectives, questionnaire anonymity and confidentiality. The potential participants were also made aware that their participation in the online questionnaire was voluntary and they could withdraw from the questionnaire at any time. However, the decision to complete and to submit the competed questionnaire indicated their consent to participate in this research study. The researcher’s contact details were provided on the information sheet; however, no student contacted the researcher to ask further questions.

The online questionnaire was open for three weeks. To optimise response rates for the questionnaire, the researcher asked the lecturers of the aforementioned English classes to alert the students to the online questionnaire timeline. Furthermore, one week prior to closing the online questionnaire, the researcher resent the participating students the link to the questionnaire to remind them of the closing date. In the end, the desired minimum sample size (422 participants) was obtained, and the overall response rate for the online questionnaire was 64.9%. The response rate was slightly higher for the English major students (180 out of 250 – 72%) than the non-English major students (242 out of 400 – 61%).
**Data Analysis**

In order to answer four research questions, Study 1 employed the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 to analyse the quantitative data collected from the questionnaire. A number of statistical techniques were conducted, including exploratory factor analysis, reliability tests, MANOVAs, ANOVAs, correlations and standard multiple regressions.

**Results**

**Data Screening**

Before conducting the statistical analyses outlined in the previous section, the data were screened for missing data, univariate, bivariate and multivariate outliers, normality, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity and singularity. While there was no missing data for the main variables of interest, two values were missed for a demographic variable (birthplace) as the researcher used a ‘reminder’ function available in the QUT key survey packet. This function enabled the researcher to ask if participants wanted to answer the questions they had skipped prior to submitting the questionnaire. One case was removed due to answering “1” (strongly disagree) for all questions as retaining this case would not contribute to the remaining data (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). As such, a total of 421 cases were retained for further analyses.

Next, all the variables of interests were scanned for multicollinearity and singularity. The former indicates problems of having too strongly correlated variables (i.e., correlation coefficients at or above .90), and the later refers to the problem of variable redundancy (one variable is a combination of other variables) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Inspecting the correlation matrix of all subscales revealed that no
correlation index was at or above .90. As such, the LLOS–IEA, Motivational Intensity and Psychological Needs are not likely to be singular and multicollinear.

The data set was then checked for outliers including univariate, bivariate and multivariate outliers. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) suggested that univariate outliers indicate cases with a large standardised scores on one variable. For a large sample (i.e., over 400 cases), a case with a standardized score out of the range ± 3.29 is considered to be an outlier. Following these cut-off points, nine outliers were detected for amotivation, four outliers for personal/professional development regulation, two outliers for autonomy and one for competence, making a total of 16 univariate outliers. Since the cases containing these outliers were part of the intended population, they were not deleted (Hair et al., 2010). However, it is important that outliers are handled in a suitable way (e.g., deleting cases having outliers or modifying scores for outlying cases) so that they do not result in Type I and Type II errors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). As it was recommended that modifying values of less than 5% of the total cases would not have any impact on results of further statistical analyses, the researcher decided to replace the scores on variables for the 16 outlying cases (accounting for 3.8% of total cases) by nearest low or high scores within ± 3.29 standard deviation. In this way, these values were still extreme; however, they did not substantially depart from the majority (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Due to this score alteration, there were no univariate, bivariate or multivariate outliers in the present study’s data set.

Last, the data set was examined to determine if it met assumptions for normality and homoscedasticity for a full sample and grouped sample. Tests of normality, box plots, graphs and Z scores values for skewness and kurtosis showed that amotivation was slightly positively skewed. Meanwhile personal/professional motivation and
Intrinsic motivation were slightly negatively skewed. Curran, West and Finch (1996) and West, Finch and Patrick (1995) recommend that for a large sample population (i.e., 400 cases), inferential statistical tests such as t-tests and correlations are robust with moderately nonnormal distributions (i.e., variables’ skewness values within ± 2 and kurtosis values within ± 7). In this case, results generated from these tests are reliable. As all skewness and kurtosis values for variables of interests in the present study were within the above suggested ranges (Table 5.9), transformations of these variables were not necessary for the present research.

**Factor Analysis**

**Factor analysis of the LLOS–IEA**

To determine the best items for each subscale of the Vietnamese-version of the LLOS–IEA, factor analysis of this 21-item measure was conducted (Noels et al., 2000). Prior to factor analysis, the data were screened to assess if they met assumptions for this statistical technique. The first assumption requires multivariate normality, which refers to normality for individual variables and joint variable normality. This assumption was violated as some variables departed from normality. As such, instead of using Maximum Likelihood method which may work best for normally distributed data (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999), the present study used Principal Axis Factoring for non-normal distributions (Costello & Osborne, 2011). The second assumption concerns the sample size. While there has been little agreement on how large a sample size is adequate for factors to be analysed, it is suggested that the larger, the more reliable (Pallant, 2013). Costello and Osborne (2011) indicated that a ratio of five cases to one item is adequate, a ratio of 10 cases to one item is good, and a ratio of 20 cases to one item is very good.
The sample size of the present study (N = 421) was very good for the factor analysis of 21 items comprising the LLOS–IEA (above a 20 to 1 ratio).

The third assumption refers to the strengths of inter-item correlations. This assumption was satisfied as many correlation indices above .30 were detected (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Furthermore, the value for Bartlett’s test of sphericity (p = 0) was statistically significant (Bartlett, 1954), and the Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index was .88 and above the cut-off value of .6, suggesting that the dataset was suitable for factor analysis (Kaisor, 1970).

Factor analysis of the LLOS–IEA was conducted using Principle Axis Factoring. Based on Noel and colleagues’ (2000) study, it was expected that a seven-factor solution would be produced. However, only four factors with eigenvalues above 1 were identified. The scree plot also confirmed this result.

To assist with interpretation of these four factors, Oblimin rotation was conducted. The rotation indicated a simple factor structure with no item cross loading on more than one factor (loading cut-off above .30). Table 5.1 delineates the factors loadings on four factors and the total variance explained for each factor.
## Table 5.1

*Pattern Matrix for Principal Axis Factoring Analysis with Oblimin Rotation of the LLOS–IEA*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors and Items</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1: Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I am studying English for the pleasure that I experience in knowing more about</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the literature of the English speaking group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I am studying English because I enjoy the feeling of acquiring knowledge about</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the English speaking community and their way of life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I am studying English for the enjoyment I experience when I grasp a difficult</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>construct in English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I am studying English for the satisfied feeling I get in learning new things</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I am studying English for the pleasure I get from hearing English spoken by</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English native speakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I am studying English for the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of accomplishing difficult exercises in English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I am studying English for the good feeling when hearing English spoken</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I am studying English for the good feeling that I experience while speaking in</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2: Personal/professional development motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I am studying English in order to get a good job later on</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I am studying English in order to get a more academic success later on</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I am studying English because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I am studying English for the pleasure I experience by improving my English</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. I am studying English because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than one language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I am studying English because I think it is good for my personal development</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3: Amotivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I can’t understand why I am studying English</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I don’t know why I am studying English, and frankly, I don’t care</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I don’t know why I am studying English. I truly have the impression of wasting</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my time in studying English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4: Obligation/Avoidance Motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I am studying English because I would feel guilty if I don’t know English</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. I am studying English because I would feel ashamed if I could not speak English</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when I communicate with my friends from English speaking countries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I am studying English to show myself that I am a good student because I can</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speak English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Because I have to meet the requirements/expectations of my university/lecturers</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of variance explained</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eigenvalues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.88%</td>
<td>8.42%</td>
<td>5.99%</td>
<td>3.54%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the present study, the four-factor solution explained 46.82% of the total variance. Eight items loading on Factor 1 pertained to satisfaction and enjoyment of engaging in English learning activities which were stimulating and optimally challenging. Therefore, Factor 1 was labelled intrinsic motivation. Six items loading on Factor 2 relate to learning English for personal and professional development, and thus was labelled personal/professional development motivation. Factor 3 consists of three items, which pertains to unable to see the importance of learning English. As such, Factor 3 was then labelled amotivation. Noels and colleagues (2000) also labelled this factor, containing the same items, amotivation. Factor 4 comprises four items, representing reasons of learning English to meet expectation or requirements of parents and teachers and university; and/or to avoid negative feelings such as shame or guilt when not learning English well. Factor 4 was labelled obligation/avoidance motivation.

It was noted that the factor loadings of the LLOS-IEA in this present study shared both similarities and differences with those in the original measure. Regarding the similarity, three items 12, 19, 29 were loaded into one factor, similar with the original measure (see Table 5.2)

Table 5.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amotivation</th>
<th>Amotivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19. I can’t understand why I am studying English.</td>
<td>19. I cannot come to see why I study a second language, I frankly I don’t give it a damn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I don’t know what I am study English, and frankly I don’t care.</td>
<td>12. Honestly, I don’t know. I truly have the impression of wasting my time in studying a second language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I don’t know why I am studying English, I truly have the impression of wasting my time in studying English.</td>
<td>29. I don’t know; I can’t come to understand what I am doing studying a second language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, the remaining items loaded differently compared with the original measure (see Table 5.2). In the present study, the new factors were labelled, basing on the meaning of items loaded on each factor (e.g., for personal/development motivation)

Table 5.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differences in Factor Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factors and Items in Study 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1: Intrinsic motivation (8 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I am studying English for the pleasure that I experience in knowing more about the literature of the English speaking group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I am studying English because I enjoy the feeling of acquiring knowledge about the English speaking community and their way of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I am studying English for the enjoyment I experience when I grasp a difficult construct in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I am studying English for the satisfied feeling I get in learning new things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I am studying English for the pleasure I get from hearing English spoken by English native speakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I am studying English for the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult exercises in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I am studying English for the good feeling when hearing English spoken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I am studying English for the good feeling that I experience while speaking in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. For the pressure I experience when surpassing myself in my second language studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2: Personal/professional development motivation (6 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I am studying English in order to get a good job later on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I am studying English in order to get a more academic success later on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I am studying English because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>27. I am studying English for the pleasure I experience by improving my English.</strong> 21. I am studying English because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language. 15. I am studying English because I think it is good for my personal development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Because I choose to be kind of person who can speak a second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Because I think it is good for my personal development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4: Obligation/avoidance motivation (4 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I am studying English because I would feel guilty if I don’t know English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. I am studying English because I would feel ashamed if I could not speak English when I communicate with my friends from English speaking countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I am studying English to show myself that I am a good student because I can speak English.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Because I have to meet the requirements/expectations of my university/lecturers/parents.
In sum, the factor analysis using principal axis factoring followed by Oblimin rotation resulted in a four-factor solution. This result indicated that the participants were able to discriminate different reasons (types of motivation) for them to learn English. In the next section, inter-factor correlation analyses are discussed, which helps provide more evidence of construct validity for the LLOS–IEA in the present study (DeVellis, 2011).

**Inter-factor correlations and internal consistency reliability**

According to self-determination theory, different kinds of motivation, including amotivation (no motivation), extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation differ in the levels of self-determination they may represent. Specifically, these motivational types can be arranged along a self-determination continuum with amotivation (no self-determination) and intrinsic motivation (most self-determination) being at the two ends of the continuum. SDT proposes that inter-correlations between different types of motivation demonstrate a simplex pattern, which refers to “correlations among adjacent scales would be positive and higher than those with more theoretically distant scales” and “the kinds of motivation that are more self-determined would be inversely related to those that are less self-determined” (Noels et al., 2000, p. 71). In the present study such ‘a simplex pattern’ did exist, considering the size and magnitude of correlations between the four types of motivation (see Table 5.4), which are discussed below.

Inter-correlation coefficients were generated for amotivation, obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation. It was expected that amotivation would be significantly and negatively correlated with intrinsic motivation, personal/professional development motivation and obligation/avoidance motivation. Intrinsic motivation would significantly and
positively correlate with personal/professional development motivation and obligation/avoidance motivation.

Table 5.4

Inter-factor Correlations and Cronbach Alpha Coefficients for Motivational Subscales of the LLOS–IEA (total sample, N = 421)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Cronbach alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development motivation</td>
<td>-.29**</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

As expected and shown in Table 5.3, there were significant and negative correlations between amotivation and intrinsic motivation ($r = -.40, p = .01$) and between amotivation and personal/professional development motivation ($r = -.29, p = .01$). Amotivation was negatively but not strongly correlated with obligation/avoidance motivation. Obligation/avoidance regulation was positively and more highly correlated with personal/professional development regulation ($r = .39, p = .01$) than intrinsic regulation ($r = .30, p = .01$). Intrinsic regulation correlated positively and more strongly with personal/professional development regulation ($r = .44, p = .01$) than obligation/avoidance regulation ($r = .30, p = .01$). The magnitude and sizes of inter-factor correlations of the LLOS–IEA in the present study revealed the existence of the ‘simplex pattern’ as mentioned above (Vandergrift, 2005). As such, it can be concluded that a four-factor solution of the LLOS–IEA in the present study was appropriate, and the four factors were conceptually consistent with self-determination theory.
In addition, internal consistency reliability analyses with Cronbach alpha were generated for subscales of the LLOS–IEA in the present study. Amotivation, personal/professional development motivation, and intrinsic motivation were reliable at Cronbach alphas of .75, .79, and .89, respectively. Obligation/avoidance motivation had a lower Cronbach alpha (α = .61). Pallant (2013) argues that it is very common that short scales (those with fewer than 10 items) have low Cronbach alphas at .5. In this case, the researcher should consider the values of corrected inter-item correlations. A scale is considered to be reliable if the magnitude of its corrected inter-items correlations is above .30. As no corrected inter-item correlations were below .3, obligation/avoidance regulation was reliable in the present study.

Factor analysis of the motivational intensity measure

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted with the 10-item Vietnamese version of the Motivational Intensity measure in order to identify the underlying structure of this translated version (Pallant, 2013). Prior to factor analysis, five negatively-keyed items were reverse scored. The data set was then screened to determine whether it met the assumptions for exploratory factor analysis. As the Motivational Intensity measure did not meet the assumption for multivariate normality, principle axis factoring was employed as a method for factors to be analysed. The sample size of 421 cases, which indicates a ratio of approximately 42 cases to an item to be factor analysed, was considered excellent (Costello & Osborne, 2011). The correlation matrix between 10 items of the Motivational Intensity measure showed that there are many correlations above .30. Furthermore, the value for Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant at $p = 0$, and the Kaiser Meyer - Olkin (KMO) index was .82. For the aforementioned reasons, the Motivational Intensity measure was suitable for exploratory factor analysis.
Based on previous studies (Gardner, 1985a; Gardner et al., 1997), it was expected that a one-factor solution would be produced. Therefore, it was specified that one factor to be extracted with a loading cut-off value of .30 (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5

*Pattern Matrix for Principal Axis Factoring Analysis with Oblimin Rotation of the Motivational Intensity Measure*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors and Items</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35. I really work hard to learn English</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. I keep up to date with English by working on it everyday</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. When I have a problem understanding something in my English class, I always ask my teacher for help</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. When I am studying English, I ignore distractions and pay attention to my task</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. I tend to give up and not pay attention when I don’t understand my English teacher’s explanation of something (reverse)</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. I put off my English homework as much as possible (reverse)</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I make a point of trying to understand all the English I see and hear</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. I don’t bother checking my assignments when I have them back from my English teacher (reverse)</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. I can’t be bother trying to understand the complex aspect of English (reverse)</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. I don’t pay much attention to the feedback I receive in my English class (reverse)</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total variance explained</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eigenvalue</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The one-factor solution explained a total of 28.6% variance. Nine items in Factor 1 represent different ways to show effort when learning English. As such, Factor 1 was labelled motivational intensity. Previous studies (Gardner, 1985a; Gardner et al., 1997) also labelled this factor motivational intensity. It was noted that item 38—“I don’t pay much attention to the feedback I receive in my English class”—did not load on Factor 1. This item was then deleted from further analysis.

**Inter-scale correlations and internal consistency reliability**

To provide evidence for the construct validity of the Motivational Intensity measure, inter-scale correlations were conducted (Table 5.6). In terms of convergent validity, it was expected that motivation intensity would significantly and positively correlate with more self-determined types of motivation (e.g., intrinsic motivation, personal/professional development motivation). In terms of discriminant validity,
motivation intensity was expected to significantly and negatively correlate with amotivation.

As expected, motivational intensity was significantly and negatively correlated with amotivation ($r = -0.34, p = 0.01$). Motivation intensity was positively and significantly correlated with obligation/avoidance motivation ($r = 0.10, p = 0.05$), personal/professional development motivation ($r = 0.21, p = 0.01$) and intrinsic motivation ($r = 0.52, p = 0.01$). Motivational intensity correlated more strongly with intrinsic motivation than the remaining types of motivation.

Table 5.6
Correlations between the Motivational Intensity Measure and the LLOS–IEA ($N=421$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivational intensity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td>-.34**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development motivation</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>-.29**</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)

To assess the internal consistency reliability of the Motivational Intensity measure, Cronbach alpha was generated. In the present study, the Motivational Intensity measure reported an acceptable level of internal consistency reliability with an alpha of .76.

Factor analysis of the basic psychological needs measure

The Vietnamese version of the 12-item Basic Psychological Needs measure (Carreira, 2012) was factor analysed to understand the underlying structure of this measure for the present study’s sample population. Prior to factor analysis, the data set was assessed to determine if it met five assumptions required for factor analysis. The first assumption concerned the sample size. The present study’s ratio of cases to be factor analysed (35:1) was very good (Costello & Osborne, 2011). The second
assumption related to multivariate normality was not met, as the data set violated the assumption of multivariate normality. As such, Principal Axis Factoring was employed in order to ensure good factor extraction (Costello, 2009). The third assumption, pertaining to the strengths of inter-item correlations, was met, as many correlation coefficients above .30 were detected. The last two assumptions were also met, as the value for Barlett’s test of sphericity was statistically significant at p < .01 and the index for the Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was .84 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Principal Axis Factoring of a 12-item Basic Psychological Needs measure was conducted. Based on Carriera’s (2012) study, it was expected that a three-factor solution would be evident. As expected, the Basic Psychological Need measure yielded a three-factor solution with eigenvalues above 1. To aid with a decision of how many factors should be retained in the present study, the scree plot was examined. The scree plot confirmed that a three-factor solution was appropriate.

These three factors explained a total of 42.58% of the variance. Both orthogonal (Vaximax) and oblique (Oblimin) rotation methods were conducted to see the simple structure of the Basic Psychological Needs measure. Oblimin rotation produced a clearer pattern matrix with only one item cross loading on two factors. The results from Oblimin rotation are presented in Table 5.7.
Table 5.7

Pattern Matrix for Principal Axis Factoring Analysis with Oblimin Rotation of the Basic Psychological Needs Measure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors and Items</th>
<th>Factors 1</th>
<th>Factors 2</th>
<th>Factors 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1: Relatedness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Everybody in the class enjoys English lessons</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. I enjoy studying with teachers and classmates during English lessons</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>-06</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. English lessons are well-organised and structured</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. I learn cooperatively with classmates during English lessons</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>-18</td>
<td>-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. I voluntarily speak with classmates during English lessons</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2: Competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. I consider myself good at English</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.81</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. I consider myself bad at English (reverse)</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.52</td>
<td>-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. I fully understand what I have been taught in English lessons</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>-.45</td>
<td>-03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. I am capable of performing well if I study English hard</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3: Autonomy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. I don’t voluntarily participate in English lesson (reverse)</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. I am not willing to speak in English lessons (reverse)</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. I am willing to participate in English lessons</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total variance explained</td>
<td>29.92%</td>
<td>7.12%</td>
<td>5.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eigenvalues</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five items loading on Factor 1 reflect feelings of caring for other people and a desire to be cared for by others, thus were labelled relatedness. Three items loading on Factor 2 reflect perceived competence in learning English, and were labelled competence. Three items loading on Factor 3 pertain to the self-perceptions of willingness to engage in English learning activities, and were labeled autonomy. Carriera (2012) also labeled these factors relatedness, competence and autonomy, respectively.

It was noted that some items loaded differently in the present study compared to Carriera’s (2012) study. Item 50- ‘I am capable of performing well if I study English hard’ did not load on any of these three factors. This item was removed from further analysis. Furthermore, item 54- ‘I fully understand what I have been taught in English lessons’ cross loaded moderately on Factors 1 and 2. However, this item was retained in further analysis, as its placement in Factor 2 (competence) reflects the construct of a need for competence outlined in self-determination theory (Ryan &
Deci, 2002). Moreover, removing item 54 resulted in a decrease in the Cronbach’s alpha for Factor 2.

**Inter-factor correlations and internal consistency reliability**

According to self-determination theory, autonomy, competence and relatedness are closely related and positively correlated with each other (see more in Chapter 3). As such, it was expected that there would be positive and significant correlations between these factors. As expected, the inter-factor correlations of the Basic Psychological Needs measure (see Table 5.8) clearly reflected this relationship and provided more evidence of validity for the measure in this present study.

Table 5.8

*Inter-factor Correlations and Cronbach Alphas for Subscales of the Basic Psychological Need Measure (N= 421)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Cronbach alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relatedness</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

As indicated in Table 5.7, relatedness was significantly and positively correlated with competence ($r = .27, p = .01$) and autonomy ($r = .47, p = .01$). In the present study, relatedness was more strongly correlated with autonomy than competence. Competence was more strongly correlated with autonomy ($r = .35, p = .01$) than relatedness ($r = .27, p = .01$)

Cronbach alphas for autonomy, competence and relatedness were generated to evaluate the internal consistency reliability of these subscales for the present study’s sample population. As can be seen in Table 5.6, Cronbach’s alpha for autonomy was at .75, indicating acceptable internal consistency for this factor. However, the present study yielded lower Cronbach alphas for competence ($\alpha = .65$) and for relatedness ($\alpha = .65$).
Inspecting corrected inter-item correlations of competence and relatedness revealed that no correlation coefficients were below .30, indicating that competence and relatedness were reliable in the present study (Pallant, 2013).

In summary, principal axis factoring of the 12-item Basic Psychological Needs Measure followed by Oblimin rotation showed that the measure’s items clearly loaded on three factors which accounted for 42.58% of the total variance. Tests of internal consistency reliability with acceptable Cronbach alphas indicated that this measure was reliable in the present study. In the following section, further analyses with variables of interest to answer the posed research questions are presented.

**Descriptive Statistics**

The main focus of the present study is to understand whether English major and non-English major students differed in their motivation to learn English (e.g., types of motivation and levels of motivation). Therefore, the findings from descriptive analyses for all variables of interest used in the present study are presented separately for English major and non-English major students (see Table 5.9). As mentioned in the data screening section, normality assumptions were violated for a number of variables, including amotivation, personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation. However, the values for skewness and kurtosis of all variables fell within the suggested ranges (skewness values within ±2 and kurtosis values ±7). As such, inferential statistics tests involving these variables such as correlations are robust with normality issues (i.e., yielding reliable results). For ease of interpretation of results of further statistical analyses in the present study, instead of transforming skewed variables, the present study used untransformed variables for further analysis.
Table 5.9
Mean Levels, 95 % Confidence Interval of the Means, Standard Deviation and Kurtosis and Skewness Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS</th>
<th>NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95% Confidence Interval</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation (mean score ranges 1-7)</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development motivation (mean score ranges 1-7)</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation (mean score ranges 1-7)</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational intensity (mean score ranges 1-7)</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy (mean score ranges 1-4)</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence (mean score ranges 1-4)</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatedness (mean score ranges 1-4)</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To answer RQ1 “What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?” mean analyses were conducted.

As can be seen from Table 5.9, the mean score for all motivational subtypes must fall between 1 (low level) and 7 (high level). As such, it can be inferred that English major students reported a moderately low level of amotivation ($M = 1.73$, $SD = .76$), a moderate level of obligation/avoidance motivation ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 1.21$), a high level of personal/professional development motivation ($M = 6.10$, $SD = .59$) and a moderately high level of intrinsic motivation ($M = 5.43$, $SD = .73$). The majority of English major students reported the highest levels of personal/professional motivation (see more in Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1 Mean Scores of Four Subtypes of Motivation Reported by English Major and Non-English Major Students
Table 5.9 indicated a similar pattern of motivation for non-English major students. Specifically, non-English major students endorsed a low level of amotivation ($M = 1.94$, $SD = .85$), a moderate level of obligation/avoidance motivation ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 1.06$), a high level of personal/professional development motivation ($M = 6.08$, $SD = .78$), and a moderately high level of intrinsic motivation ($M = 5.43$, $SD = .73$). Similar to their English major peers, non-English major students endorsed highest levels of personal/professional development motivation (Figure 5.1).

Comparing English major students’ motivation and non-English major’s motivation

The second main objective of the present study was to explore if English major and non-English major students differed in their levels of different types of motivation. Furthermore, as previous studies (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Kissau & Salas, 2013; Mori & Gobel, 2006; Narayanan, Rajasekaran Nair, & Iyyappan, 2007; Williams, Burden, & Lanvers, 2002) have shown that gender may influence motivation, the present study examined if male and female students differed in their levels of the four previously mentioned types of motivation, and if the differences and/or similarities in motivation between English major students and non-English major students were influenced by their gender differences. As such, a two-way MANOVA was conducted (a 2 x 2 MANOVA), with two independent variables: study majors (e.g. English major or non-English major) and gender (male or female), and the four dependent variables (four motivational types), which addressed RQ 2:

RQ2. What are the differences or similarities in motivation between English major and non-English major students?
Prior to proceeding with the MANOVA analysis, the data set was tested to determine if it conformed to the assumptions required for the test. The data met assumptions for linearity, multicollinearity, multivariate outliers (see more in data screening). However, the data violated the multivariate normality assumption as some of the variables, including amotivation and personal/professional development motivation slightly departed from normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Tabacknick and Fidell (2007) states that MANOVAs are robust to modest multivariate normality violations provided that the sample size is large enough (minimum 20 cases in each cell). As the MANOVA conducted in the present study contained eight cells (2 independent variables x 4 dependent variables), the minimum sample size required to ensure the robustness would be 160 cases (8 x 20). As such, the present sample size of 421 cases exceeded the required sample and was able to compensate for the violations to multivariate normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The data set was further checked to determine if it met the assumptions of homogeneity (equal) of variance-covariance matrices. This assumption was violated as Box’s M test ($p = .001$) was significant. As such, the present study reported the statistics from Pillai’s Trace (Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006). Levene’s tests were significant for obligation/avoidance motivation and intrinsic motivation, indicating that the data did not conform to the assumption of equal variance. In the present study, a more stringent alpha level of .0125 was set to determine if the univariate F tests for these variables were significant (.05 divided by 4, which was the number of tests) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

*Interaction effect between major (English major students and non-English major students) and gender (males and females)*

The two-way MANOVA analyses were conducted to investigate the interaction effect between major and gender on levels of four types of motivation. The result
revealed that there was a statistically significant interaction effect between major and gender on the combined motivational types, $F(4, 414) = 3.399, p = .009$; Pillai’s Trace = .03, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. However, when the results for individual types of motivation were considered separately, the interaction effect between major and gender was not significant for any type of motivation, using a new adjusted alpha (.0125). These results indicated that possible differences or similarities in the levels of amotivation, obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation between English major and non-English major students or between males and females were not as a result of the interaction of gender and major (Pallant, 2013).

**Main effect of major**

The present study then examined the main effect of major on motivation. Specifically, it aimed to identify if English major and non-English major students differed in their levels of amotivation, obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation. The results showed that the main effect of major at the multivariate level was statistically significant, $F(4, 414) = 16.77, p < .0001$, Pillai’s Trace = .14, partial $\eta^2 = .14$, indicating that English major and non-English major students differed on their motivation to learn English.

To determine what particular types of motivation the two groups differed, the main effect of major at the univariate level was further considered. As can be seen in Table 5.10, the F tests for amotivation and personal/professional development motivation were not significant using the new Bonferroni adjusted alpha (.0125). These results indicated that English major and non-English major students did not differ in their levels of amotivation and personal/professional development motivation.
For obligation/avoidance motivation, the F test reached a statistically significant level, \( F(1, 417) = 10.27, p = .001 \), partial \( \eta^2 = .03 \). English major students (\( M = 3.30, SD = 1.21 \)) scored significantly lower on obligation/avoidance motivation than non-English major students (\( M = 3.97, SD = 1.06 \)).

For intrinsic motivation, there was significant effect of major, \( F(1, 417) = 24.48, p < .001 \), partial \( \eta^2 = .06 \). English major students (\( M = 5.43, SD = .73 \)) scored statistically higher on intrinsic motivation than non-English major students (\( M = 4.72, SD = 1.12 \)).

Table 5.10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>English major students (n = 180)</th>
<th>Non – English major students (n = 241)</th>
<th>Tests of Between-Subject Effect</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation*</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development motivation</td>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation*</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at \( p < .01 \)

**Main effect of gender**

The main effect of gender was first checked at the multivariate levels. The F test reached a significant level, \( F(4, 414) = 4.27, p < .01 \), Pillai’s Trace = .04, partial \( \eta^2 = .04 \), indicating that males and females differed on their motivation. However, at univariate levels, the F tests showing the effect of gender on amotivation, obligation/avoidance and intrinsic motivation were not significant, suggesting that males and females did not differ in their levels of these motivation types (see Table
5.10). The effect of gender was only statistically significant on personal/professional development motivation, $F(1, 417) = 16.14, p < .0001$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$, indicating that males ($M = 5.93, SD = .63$) scored statistically lower on personal/professional development motivation than females ($M = 6.17, SD = .63$).

Table 5.11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Males (n = 135)</th>
<th>Females (n = 286)</th>
<th>Tests of Between-Subject Effect</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation (mean score ranges 1-7)</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation* (mean score ranges 1-7)</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at $p < .0001$

Comparing English major students and non-English major students in their levels of motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness

According to self-determination theory (SDT), people regardless of cultural background, ages and social status demonstrate three psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. STD hypothesises that it is essential that people feel autonomous, competent and related to surrounding people and their environment. The present study examined whether English major and non-English major students differed on their levels of these variables to answer RQ 3:

RQ3. What are the similarities and differences in their levels of motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness between English major and non-English major students?
Motivational intensity

The mean score for motivational intensity ranged from 1–7, therefore, it could be inferred that both English major student ($M = 4.56, SD = .79$) and non-English major students ($M = 4.08, SD = .98$) scored moderately on their levels of this variable.

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the main effect of gender and major as well as the interaction effect between them on motivational intensity. The data set met the assumptions of normality and outliers. However, the data did not conform to the assumption of homogeneity of variance as Levene’s Test of Equality of Variance was found significant at $p = .009$. However, Pallant (2013) claims that ANOVAs are reasonably robust to violation of this assumption. Furthermore, a more stringent alpha level was set (significant at .01) in order to determine if the F test for motivational intensity was significant.

The two-way ANOVA analysis revealed that the interaction effect between major and gender on motivational intensity was not significant, indicating that gender did not moderate the influence of major on motivational intensity. The main effect for gender was not significant, suggesting that males ($M = 4.01, SD = 1.01$) and females ($M = 4.41, SD = .87$) did not differ significantly on their levels of motivational intensity. The mean difference between males and females was only .13 (95% confidence interval).

However, there was a significant main effect of major on motivational intensity, $F (1, 417) = 8.65, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$, indicating that English major students ($M = 4.56, SD = .79$) had significantly higher levels of motivational intensity than non-English major students ($M = 4.08, SD = .98$). The mean difference between English major students and non-English major students was .46 (95% confidence interval).
Autonomy, competence and relatedness

The mean score ranges for autonomy, competence and relatedness were from 1-4. Table 5.12 revealed that both English major and non-English major scored moderately on autonomy, competence and relatedness.

A 2 x 2 MANOVA, involving two independent variables (major and gender) was conducted to examine if English major students differed from non-English major students in their levels of autonomy, competence and relatedness and if gender moderated the relationships between major and autonomy, competence and relatedness. The data set met all assumptions, including linearity, multicollinearity, singularity, outliers and normality. Furthermore, Box’s M and Levene’s tests were not significant for all variables, including autonomy, competence and relatedness, suggesting the assumption for equal variance-covariance matrices was not violated. As the data conformed to the required assumptions, the statistics provided by Wilks’ Lambda were used in the present study (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). To avoid Type 1 error, a more conservative alpha level (.017) was set to determine the significance of the univariate F tests for autonomy, competence and relatedness by dividing .05 by the number of test (three) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Interaction effect between major and gender

The F test showing the interaction effect between major and gender was not significant at multivariate levels. At univariate levels, the F tests for the interaction effects between major and gender on autonomy, competence, and relatedness, were all non significant. The results indicated that in all cases, the possible differences between English major and non-English major students (or between males and females) in their levels of autonomy, competence and relatedness were not due to the interaction effect of gender and major.
Main interaction effect of major

The significant F test for the main effect of major at multivariate levels, \( F(3, 415) = 7.97, p < .00001; \) Wilk’s Lambda = 7.97, partial \( \eta^2 = .06 \), indicated that English major and non-English major students differed significantly at the multivariate level. The main effect of major was then examined at the univariate level to see what exact variable English major and non-English major students scored differently on.

The F tests for the main effect for both autonomy and relatedness were found not to be significant (at alpha = .017), suggesting that English major students were not different from their non-English major peers in their levels of these two variables.

However, for competence, the main effect of major was statistically significant, \( F(1, 417) = 23.18, p < .0001, \) partial \( \eta^2 = .053 \), indicating that English major \((M = 2.59, SD = .42)\) scored higher than non-English major students \((M = 2.36, SD = .41)\) on competence. The mean difference on this variable between English major and non-English major at 95 % confident interval was .32.

| Table 5.12 |
| Mean Levels and Standard Deviations for Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness between English Major and non-English Major Students, F Test for the Main Effect of Major and Significant Levels |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>English major students (n = 180)</th>
<th>Non-English major students (n = 241)</th>
<th>Tests of Between-Subject Effect</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy (score ranges 1 – 4)</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence (score ranges 1 – 4)</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatedness (score ranges 1 – 4)</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at \( p < .0001 \)
Main effect of gender

The main effect of gender was also examined at both multivariate and univariate levels. The results revealed that the F tests were all not significant, suggesting that male and female students did not differ in their levels of any basic needs variable (e.g., autonomy, competence and relatedness).

Correlations between Motivational Subtypes and Motivational Intensity, Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness

As mentioned earlier, self-determination theory posits that different kinds of motivation may result in different outcomes (learning engagement, effort and achievement). Specifically, people having more self-determination types of motivation (e.g., intrinsic motivation) may be more deeply engaged in learning, expend more effort, and ultimately be more successful. In contrast, those who are learning with less self-determined types of motivation and/or have no motivation (amotivation) are believed to lose interest in learning, expend little effort and find it hard to achieve academic success (Deci & Ryan, 2012).

In addition, self-determination theory hypothesises that three basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence and relatedness) are able to predict motivation. That is, the more people feel these needs are supported, the greater level of self-determination they feel. However, if these needs are not met, individuals may not feel obligated to be engaged in activities.

The present study was interested in exploring the relationships of motivational subtypes, motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for Vietnamese higher education students. The Person’s product-moment correlation matrices were generated and presented separately for English major and non-English major students to see correlation patterns for these two groups. As multiple
correlations were generated, to avoid Type 1 error, the present study used Bonferroni
adjusted alpha levels of .001 to consider the significance of each correlation
coefficient. The correlations analyses sought answers to Research question 4:

RQ4. What are the relationships between motivation and motivational
intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for English major and non-
English major students?

Relationships between motivation and motivational intensity

English major students

Table 5.13 presents the correlations between different types of motivation and
motivational intensity. For English major students, as expected, amotivation
correlated negatively and significantly with motivational intensity ($r = -.25, p < .001$). As such, higher levels of amotivation were associated with lower levels of
motivational intensity. Obligation/avoidance motivation was not significantly
correlated with motivational intensity, suggesting that higher levels of
obligation/avoidance motivation were not significantly associated with higher levels
of motivational intensity. Personal/professional development motivation was
positively but weakly correlated with motivational intensity. Intrinsic motivation was
significantly and positively correlated with motivational intensity ($r = .36, p < .001$),
suggesting that higher levels of intrinsic regulation were associated with higher
levels of motivational intensity.

Non-English major students

For non-English major students, the relationships between motivational subtypes and
motivational intensity demonstrate both similarities and differences with those for
English major students. Amotivation was significantly and negatively correlated with
motivational intensity \((r = -0.37, p < .001)\), with higher levels of amotivation associated with lower levels of motivation intensity. However, all remaining types of motivation (obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development motivation, and intrinsic motivation) correlated strongly and positively with motivational intensity, indicating that higher levels of these motivational types were associated with higher levels of motivational intensity. It was noted that motivational intensity was most strongly correlated with intrinsic motivation \((r = 0.53, p < .001)\) and more strongly correlated with personal/professional development motivation \((r = 0.26, p < .001)\) than obligation/avoidance motivation \((r = 0.21, p < .001)\).

Table 5.13

_Pearson’s Product-moment Correlations between Motivational Subtypes and Motivational Intensity, Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness for English Major and non-English Major Students_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivational Subtypes</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivational Intensity</td>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Relatedness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English major students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development motivation</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-English major students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>-.32**</td>
<td>-.26**</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development motivation</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at Bonferroni adjusted alpha of .001 levels (2-tailed)

_Relationships between motivation and autonomy, competence and relatedness_

_English major students_

Autonomy, competence and relatedness were all negatively and weakly correlated with amotivation, suggesting that lower levels of these three constructs are not associated with higher levels of amotivation. Autonomy and competence were positively but not significantly correlated with the remaining types of motivation.
(obligation/avoidance motivation and personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation).

Relatedness was positively and not significantly correlated with obligation/avoidance motivation. However, relatedness positively and significantly correlated with personal/professional motivation and intrinsic motivation, indicating that the more English major students felt related to their lecturers and peers, the higher levels of personal/professional motivation and intrinsic motivation they may endorse. Of note, relatedness was more strongly correlated with intrinsic motivation ($r = .32, p < .001$) than with personal/professional development motivation ($r = .20, p < .001$).

**Non-English major students**

Autonomy ($r = -.32, p < .001$), competence ($r = -.26, p < .001$), and relatedness ($r = -.21, p < .001$) were significantly and negatively correlated with amotivation, suggesting that the more autonomous, competent and connected to significant others non-English major students felt, the less amotivated they appeared. Autonomy, competence and relatedness were positively but not significantly correlated with obligation/avoidance motivation, indicating that the higher levels of these three constructs were not associated with higher levels of obligation/avoidance motivation. Autonomy was positively and strongly correlated with the two remaining types of motivation, including personal/professional development and intrinsic motivation. Specifically, autonomy was more strongly correlated with intrinsic motivation ($r = .53, p < .001$) than with personal/professional development ($r = .26, p < .001$).

Competence correlated positively and strongly with both personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation. It was noted that the correlation between competence and intrinsic motivation ($r = .35, p < .001$) was higher than with
personal/professional development motivation \((r = .35, p < .001)\). The above size and magnitude of the correlations between competence and personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation indicated that higher levels of competence were associated with higher levels of these two types of motivation.

Relatedness was positively and strongly correlated with personal/professional development motivation \((r = .31, p < .001)\) and intrinsic motivation \((r = .34, p < .001)\), indicating that higher levels of relatedness were associated with higher levels of personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation.

### Contribution of Different Types of Motivation to Motivational Intensity

The previous section has shown the correlations between four types of motivation and motivational intensity for English major and non-English major students at the univariate levels. In order to examine the correlations between these variables at multivariate levels (i.e., the relative contribution of each type of motivation to effort that individuals may expend in English learning), standard regression analyses were conducted for English major and non-English major students as separate groups.

The present study’s data set was also checked to determine it met all assumptions required for the multiple regression technique. The assumptions, including multicollinearity, singularity, outliers, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity were all met (see more in Data Screening). Furthermore, to optimise a possibility for generalisability of the results, the sample size was considered (Pallant, 2013).

Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) proposed the following calculating formula for sample size required for this statistical test, \(N > 50 + 8m\), where \(N\) refers to the number of cases and \(m\) indicates the number of independent variables. As the present study considered four aforementioned types of motivation as independent variables, an
adequate sample size for the technique would be over 90 (N > 50 + 8 x 5 = 90). As such, both English major students (180 cases) and non-English major students (241 cases) satisfied the sample requirement.

Table 5.14

*Predictive Power of Motivational Subtypes to Levels of Motivational Intensity for English Major and non-English Major Students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Equation</th>
<th>Coefficients</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>R²</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English major students (n = 180)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>7.67*</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-2.07*</td>
<td>-.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-1.11</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>4.01**</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-English major students (n = 241)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>26.13*</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-2.90*</td>
<td>-.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.43</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.65</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>6.93**</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: r = bivariate correlation; pr = partial correlation; sr = semi-partial correlation.
* p< 0.05
** p< 0.01

Standard multiple regression was conducted for English major and non-English major students. Four types of motivation (amotivation, obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development and intrinsic motivation) were entered in the equation as a block to explore their predictive power to motivation intensity. Table 5.14 revealed that for both English major and non-English major students, the F-tests were significant. As such, the combination of amotivation, obligation/avoidance motivation, personal development motivation and intrinsic motivation predicted motivational intensity.

For English major students, the index of determination (R²) indicated that the four types of motivation accounted for 15% of the variance in motivation intensity. Amotivation (β = -.15, p < .05) was a significant negative predictor of motivational
intensity. Specifically, greater levels of amotivation were associated with lower levels of motivational intensity. Intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .36$, $p < .001$) statistically and positively predicted levels of motivational intensity, indicating that higher levels of intrinsic motivation were connected with greater level of motivational intensity. However, obligation/avoidance motivation ($\beta = .11$) and personal/professional development motivation ($\beta = .13$) did not independently and significantly predict motivational intensity.

A similar result was revealed for the non-English major students, with the combination of the four types of motivation explaining 31% of the total variance in motivational intensity. Amotivation significantly and negatively predicted motivational intensity ($\beta = -.18$, $p < .05$), and intrinsic motivation significantly and positively predicted motivational intensity ($\beta = .49$, $p < .001$). Similar to the results for the English major students, obligation/avoidance motivation and personal/professional development motivation did not significantly predict motivational intensity (Table 5.14).

**Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed methodological issues specifically for Study 1. The information relating to the participants, measures, data collection and data analysis methods has clearly presented throughout the chapter, which aimed to answer four research questions. The answers for Study 1’s research questions are summarised below.

RQ1. What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?
English major students’ motivation to learn English in Vietnamese higher education

Table 5.15 indicates that English major students had low levels of amotivation, moderate levels of obligation/avoidance motivation, moderately high levels of intrinsic motivation and high levels of personal/professional development motivation when they learn English in Vietnam. English major students endorsed the highest levels of personal/professional motivation and the lowest levels of amotivation. These findings indicated that English major students were most motivated to pursue good future professions and personal growth and development. These findings also suggested that English major students were also intrinsically motivated to learn English.

Non-English major students’ motivation to learn English in Vietnamese higher education

Non-English major students reported similar motivational patterns. Specifically, they endorsed low levels of amotivation, moderate levels of obligation/avoidance motivation, moderately high levels of intrinsic motivation and high levels of personal/professional development motivation. These findings also showed that non-English major students were most motivated to learn English to prepare for their future job and to improve themselves. Non-English major students were also intrinsically motivated to learn English.

The findings from both English major and non-English major students revealed that Vietnamese students despite their study majors (English major and non-English major) exhibited similar motivational patterns when learning English.
Table 5.15

Summary of the Findings for the Research Questions 1-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Levels of endorsement</th>
<th>Comparison between English major and non-English major students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English major students</td>
<td>Non-English major students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td>Low levels</td>
<td>Low levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/avoidance motivation</td>
<td>Moderate levels</td>
<td>Moderate levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional development</td>
<td>High levels</td>
<td>High levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>Moderately high levels</td>
<td>Moderately high levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ2. What are the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students?

As can be seen in Table 5.15, English major and non-English major students were not significantly different in their levels of amotivation and personal/professional development motivation. However, they differed in their levels of obligation/avoidance motivation and intrinsic motivation. In particular, English major students felt less obligated and more intrinsically motivated to learn English than their non-English major peers.

RQ3. What are the similarities and differences in their levels of motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness between English major and non-English major students?
Table 5.16 revealed that English major students invested higher levels of motivational intensity than their non-English major peers in learning English. Furthermore, English major students felt more competent than non-English major students. However, both English major and non-English major reported similar levels of autonomy and relatedness when learning English in the Vietnamese higher education.

Table 5.16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Levels of endorsement</th>
<th>Comparison between English major and non-English major students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English major students</td>
<td>Non-English major students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational Intensity</td>
<td>Moderate levels</td>
<td>Moderate levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English major students scored significantly higher on Motivational Intensity than non-English major students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Moderate levels</td>
<td>Moderate levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English major and non-English major students did not significantly differ in their levels of Autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Moderate levels</td>
<td>Moderate levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English major students scored significantly higher on Competence than non-English major students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatedness</td>
<td>Moderate levels</td>
<td>Moderate levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English major and non-English major students did not significantly differ in their levels of Relatedness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ4. What are the relationships between motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for English major and non-English major students?

English Major Students

For English major students, amotivation was negatively and significantly correlated with motivational intensity. This finding indicated that the more English major
students felt amotivated, the less levels of effort they invested in learning English. Intrinsic motivation was positively and significantly correlated with motivational intensity, suggesting that the more English major students felt intrinsically motivation, the more levels of effort they invested in learning English. However, there were no significant correlations between obligation/avoidance motivation and personal/professional development motivation and motivational intensity.

Regarding the relationships between different types of motivation and three basic needs (autonomy, competence and relatedness), all these three needs were negatively and weakly correlated with amotivation, suggesting that the more English major students feel autonomous, competent and connected to significant people, the less they felt amotivated in learning English. Unexpectedly, no significant correlations were found between autonomy and competence with obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation. Relatedness was positively and significantly correlated with both personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation.

Non-English Major Students

The correlations between different types of motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for non-English major students shared both similarities and differences with their English major peers. Particularly, amotivation was negatively and significantly correlated with motivational intensity, indicating that the more non-English major felt amotivated, the less levels of motivational intensity they expended in learning English. All remaining types of motivation (obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development motivation and
intrinsic motivation) correlated positively and significantly with motivational intensity.

Autonomy, competence and relatedness were negatively and significantly correlated with amotivation. These findings suggested that the more non-English major students felt autonomous, competent and connected to significant people, the less they felt amotivated in learning English. While these three needs did not correlate significantly with obligation/avoidance motivation, they correlated positively and significantly with personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation.

In short, regardless of their study major (English major and non-English major) the students reported a variety of motivation in learning English in Vietnamese higher education. The most prevalent type of motivation for both English major and non-English major students was to learn English in order to pursue good future careers and personal growth and development. However, based on the above findings a number of differences were found between English major and non-English major students (i.e., regarding the levels of number of types of motivation, motivational intensity and the feeling of competence). The reasons why there were such similarities and differences between English major and non-English major students in terms of their motivation, and the meaning of these findings are discussed further in Chapter 7.
Chapter 6: Study 2

Overview

This chapter begins with a detailed description of the participants, data collection methods and an analytical framework for Study 2’s qualitative data. Following this, the results of this study are discussed, with the findings on English major students presented before those of the non-English major students.

The present qualitative study had two objectives: first, to clarify the findings of Study 1 by examining the reasons/motivation for both English major and non-English major students to learn English, and the similarities and/or differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students; and second, to explore students’ perceptions of what influences lecturers, peers and parents may have on their motivation.

The first objective addressed Research Questions 1 and 2:

- **RQ1.** What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?
- **RQ2.** What are the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students?

The second objective addressed Research Question 5:

- **RQ5.** In what ways do lecturers, peers and parents influence Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English?
Methods

Participants

The participants for Study 2 were drawn from second year English major and non-English major students who completed and submitted Study 1’s online questionnaire. A total of 36 students, aged 19 – 21 years, including 18 English major students (10 males and 8 females) and 18 non-English major students (8 males and 10 females) volunteered to participate in the research. These students were allocated into six groups on the basis of homogeneity (i.e., each group consisted of all English major or non-English major students), equal size (six students in each focus group) and where possible, gender balance. As such, 18 English major students were arranged into three focus groups (Groups 1-3), and 18 non-English major students were allocated into the other three focus groups (Groups 4-6).

Procedure

Permissions to conduct Study 2 were granted by the relevant bodies, including QUT’s Ethics Committee and the university where the present study was conducted. Participant recruitment for Study 2 was initiated when opening the online questionnaire for completion. Specifically, the researcher attached a flyer for Study 2 on the last page of the online questionnaire, which was only visible to participants once they completed their questionnaire. The participants were invited to read the flyer, and decide if they would like to participate in a focus group. Those who were interested in participation were advised to contact the researcher via her provided email address to indicate their wish to participate in Study 2 and provide some information, including gender, study major and best contact details. A total of 63 students (40 English major students and 23 non-English major students) responded. The researcher then made a list of potential participants along with their provided
personal information, which assisted her in forming and scheduling focus groups. With an attempt to have gender balance in each group to capture a range of viewpoints, the researcher decided to choose all 10 male English major students. Among the 30 English major females, the researcher chose eight students (two in the beginning, two at end, and two in middle of the list). A total of these 18 students were allocated into three groups 1 - 3.

To recruit non-English major participants, besides the gender issue, the researcher aimed to select those studying a variety of majors. As there were only eight females majoring in four specialities (Accounting, Finance and Banking, Engineering and Tourism and Hospitality), all these students were recruited. Then 10 male students were selected from four other study majors, who together with the females formed the other three groups 4 - 6. The focus group schedule was sent to these potential participants, asking them to confirm their participation within two days. At this stage, all of these 18 English major and 18 non-English major students agreed to proceed. In addition, another email was sent to those who were not selected to explain the situation and to provide a chance to attend an informal meeting and chat with the researcher if they so wished.

The focus groups were conducted in the researcher’s office in Vietnam. To make each group of the participating students feel comfortable, the researcher warmly welcomed them at the door, led them into the room, and encouraged them to join ‘ice-breaking’ conversations with her and other participants. Moreover, the researcher provided refreshments for the participants during each focus group as a way to thank them for being involved in the present study.
Once all participants had arrived for their focus group, the researcher outlined the objectives, confidentiality as well as the voluntary nature of the present study. With regard to confidentiality, it was highlighted that the participants’ personal information, including their names, class and university would not be disclosed. Instead, participants in each of these six groups were addressed as Male/Female 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Moreover, the students were advised that the information discussed in the focus group should not be disclosed to anyone outside the focus group. Regarding the voluntary nature of the study, the participants were informed that they were able to leave the focus group, and that in this case, any information they had provided would be discarded from further analyses.

The students were encouraged to read the information sheet for participants carefully before signing the consent form. Before the focus groups began, participants were asked to note their written responses in Vietnamese to a number of questions (see below):

1) Please list the main reasons for you to learn English; how have these reasons directed your present study regarding your persistence and resilience to learn English?

2) From your own English learning experiences in the university, can you please tell how your lecturers of English have influenced your motivation to learn?

3) Reflect from your own experiences of how your friends have influenced your motivation to learn English?

4) Are your parents a source of motivation for you to learn English? How do you think your parents may have influenced your motivation to learn English in higher education?
As soon as all participants finished writing, the focus groups began. Each focus group was audio-tape recorded and lasted between one to two hours. During the focus group, the researcher acted as the focus group moderator, asking questions, taking notes, and promoting even participation (Krueger & Casey, 2001). All the focus group discussions were conducted in Vietnamese.

During each focus group, the researcher observed that most participating students seemed comfortable and eager to openly discuss their ideas with each other. At the end of the focus group, the researcher debriefed the discussed information, asking if participants agreed with the summary and/or wanted to contribute further. The students were alerted that they could email the researcher if they wanted to share additional information relating to the focus group. In the end, 18 students (10 English major students and 8 non-English major students) exchanged 20 emails with the researcher within a two month period.

**Data Analysis**

The present study’s data, which combined written responses to the stimulus questions, the focus group discussions, and the students’ emails, were analysed using qualitative content analysis. The data was objectively and systematically compressed in to multi-level categories (i.e., main categories and sub categories) following five steps in Mayring’s (2000) model of inductive category development: (1) preparing for the text/document for analysis and translating this document from Vietnamese to English (see Chapter 4 for translation and back translation process), (2) formulating open-coding, (3) generating higher order categories,(4) making inferences and determining the levels of abstract, (5) and preparing for reporting the results. These steps can be found in more detail in Chapter 4.
It was noted that when reporting data, for ethical considerations, participants were given pseudonyms (e.g., Female 1, Male 1), and all the names mentioned in the data (i.e., names of lecturers and other peers mentioned by the participants) were replaced by pseudonyms (e.g., Lecturers 1, 2). Furthermore, the original data sources were noted (e.g., FG for focus group, WR for written responses and E for email). Therefore, the piece of information following a participant’s quote ‘Female1, Group 1, FG’ can be understood as being provided by the first female student in Group 1 during the focus group discussion.

Results

Reasons to Learn English

This section presents the findings from English major and non-English major students for the following research questions:

RQ1. What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?

RQ2. What are the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students?

The Findings from English Major Students

The qualitative data from the English major participants indicated that they had a variety of reasons for learning English. These reasons were broadly categorised into five groups as bellow.

To gain prestigious_good professions

Two thirds of the participating students (12 out of 18) were learning English to pursue what they perceived as good future professions. These students were aware of
the growing status of English in Vietnam (i.e., as an international language and the most important foreign language), which had created a wide range of well-paid jobs, particularly for graduates with English majors such as tour guides, interpreters, translators and teachers of English. The students added that besides these jobs, English major graduates are welcomed to apply for a number of very competitive and prestigious posts such as journalists and bank officials. For these students, their professional prospects would be assured provided they studied English well. As such, they strongly believed that their decision to learn English as their major was a rational decision:

*I think that graduates of English major are easy to get a well-paid and popular job. Moreover, they always look relaxed and have a ‘glossy’ appearance. I hope to get a good job later on.* (Male 2, Group 1, FG)

*I am learning English in the university in order to find a job. If you have studied English as a major, you can get apply for a number of posts. It is not the case for people learning other majors. For example, if you major in engineering, you can only apply for a post of an engineer… Studying an English major means you are not restricted to do a particular type of jobs. The job market for an English major graduate is growing.* (Male 3, Group 2, FG)

**Personal development**

One third of participants (6 out of 18) indicated that they were learning English in order to pursue personal growth and development. In their perceptions, personal growth and development meant more self-confidence, more knowledge about the world, and ultimately become a better person. The students reasoned that in a global era, where English is a medium of international communications, it was essential that they had a good command of English. Being proficient in English helped enhance their self-confidence when communicating with foreigners. Moreover, having a good command of English provided them with access to extensive sources of knowledge, including online sources, books and international television broadcasting programs.
English is very popular these days. Many interesting books are written in English. Many useful programs have been broadcast in English. I think I am learning English because English is an effective medium for me to get to know more knowledge of the world. (Female 2, Group 1, WR)

Knowing English assists me to approach different sources of knowledge such as books and internet all over the world. Knowing English also makes me more confident in communications with people from other countries, and encourages me to get to know more knowledge and cultures of other countries in the world. So I think I am learning English to improve myself at the present and in the future. (Male 1, Group 1, FG)

Interest and passion

More than half of English major students (n = 10) expressed their personal interest and strong passion for learning English. The students noted that their love of English made them decide to study English as a major. They found it fun and enjoyable to learn more about the English language, English speaking countries and cultures and their people. “...the more I learn English, the more I love it... As such, I decided to learn more about English in the university. For me it is such a pleasure to get to know more about English as a language and English speaking countries” (Female 2, Group 2, FG).

These students (n = 10) had a strong belief in their ability and competence for learning English well. They felt self-confident when taking part in learning activities conducted in class (e.g., English communication tasks).

I love communicating with people from different cultures... As English is very popular all over the world, you will be able to use English to communicate with foreign people in Vietnam. For example, you can talk to a Japanese person in English. It is just like English helps lift the language barrier between people speaking different languages, which is amazing ... This is why I am learning English. [...] I always feel really comfortable in English communicative lectures. I always feel excited. (Female 3, Group 2, FG)

I love to learn to communicate in English. I believe I will be able to become an independent speaker of English if I try my best... I often volunteer to speak in English in front of the class. (Male 1, Group 1, FG)
Moreover, their love for English and learning English was a great advantage, assisting them to overcome numerous ‘ups and downs’ in the English learning journey. For them, the positive moments (i.e., getting good marks and being able to communicate in English) were perceived as accomplishments and/or positive outcomes of their previous learning effort, as well as encouragement for their future. However, the negative experiences (i.e., not getting desired English scores) could not thwart their love of English. Rather, these experiences made them realise that efforts expended in their actual learning did not seem to be adequate. The following excerpts portrayed this viewpoint.

*I feel proud of myself as I have learnt English for 11 years. I think I am rather talented at learning English although at the moment I haven’t got good English scores in class […]. Bad results only entail more effort next time. Anyway, I am learning English not because of marks or scores. I am learning it out of my interests and curiosity to know more about English.*

(Female 2, Group 1, FG)

*I love learning English speaking skills. Although I know I will make a lot of mistakes when I speak in English, I still volunteer to speak in English. It [making mistakes] does not bother me much as I will learn from my mistakes after all … If you are not brave to make mistakes, you will never know that you will make mistakes…:) [original symbol] and be able to correct them.”*

(Male 1, Group 1, WR)

**Obligation and avoidance of negative feeling**

A third of English major students (n = 6) were learning English as a way to respond to the pressure from external sources such as parents and lecturers and university. Four students stated that they were asked by their parents to study English to only pursue the university pathway. As these students believed that it was their duty to please their parents and to listen to their advice, they studied English. However, as they noted, learning English as a major was not their interest and/or goal, and they did not feel the learning rewarding and enjoyable.
To tell the truth, I don’t like to study English very much. I wanted to become a Physician. However, my parents did not believe that I was able to pass the entrance exams to study the major I wanted. They asked me to try English exams. [...] I am studying English major at the moment, just to please my parents. However, right at the beginning I did not feel motivated to learn it. I just think I need to finish it. When I graduate, I don’t think I will be able to do translation or interpreting as a job. I will learn other things to do and earn money. (Female 1, Group 1, E)

I am studying English because I did not pass the entrance exam to any university but this university. I need to go to university otherwise I my parents would be very upset. (Female 2, Group 1, FG)

Others (n = 2) highlighted that too many exams, uninteresting and impractical learning content made their learning of English demotivating. They stated that they felt under pressure to learn English to pass the exams and to please the lecturer. For example:

I used to like learning English when I was smaller. However, now learning English is just like a burden for me. I don’t like to spend hours on the boring things just because they might be a part of the coming exams, which is very stressful. I thought learning in the university should be more interesting and students have more freedom. The only reason I can think of why I am learning English at the moment is to pass the exam and to get the degree soon. (Male 2, Group 3, WR)

Unable to see the importance of learning English

A small number of English major students (n = 3) were unable to see the importance of their present learning of English. One student stated that she herself had made the choice of learning English and had been excited to learn more about English. However, her present learning of English did not meet her expectations since it was too challenging, impractical, unengaging and irrelevant to her personal goals.

I used to think learning English in the university were more interesting and practical than learning it in the high school. However, some of the English subjects I have learnt in the last two semesters are very boring and too academic [...]. I don’t know why I have to study them. Are they preparing us for the future? I can’t understand the lectures. I am just like deaf and dumb [...]. I got nothing from these lectures. (Female 1, Group 1, E)
Two students commented that lacking timely support and guidance both psychologically and academically from significant people, particularly from their lecturers (i.e., lack support in how to set goals for learning or attain the learning goal) resulted in the students’ feeling incompetent and undirected in their learning. For these students, the previous goals they had set became irrelevant to their present situation, thus, impossible and not worthy to attain.

*I often feel really depressed that I haven’t been able to identify the goals for learning English. Many people said that they are learning English in order to get a good job later on. However I am not sure what job I will be able to do in the future... [...] If I only learn English as a major, it is not enough for me to get a good job. Besides English, you need to learn other skills and knowledge... There are not many jobs for an English major graduate besides interpreter or translator. I am very worried.* (Female 2, Group 2, FG)

The Findings from Non-English Major Students

The data from non-English major students revealed that students had a range of reasons for learning English, with some emerging from internal sources, such as an intrinsic love for the language, whereas others resulted from external sources, such as pressure from the university, parents and the wider environment. The following section presents the main categories of reasons motivating students to learn English, from their own perspectives.

Enhancing future career pathways

Learning English in order to prepare for future jobs was felt to be one of the most common themes as two thirds (12 out of 18) of participants mentioned it. According to students, globalisation spawned an increased number of transnational ventures and businesses elsewhere and in Vietnam. They indicated that this created both opportunities as well as challenges for them as potential job seekers. Regarding the challenges, they had to strive to become well-qualified in their specialised areas such as engineering, and to be fluent in the use of English, as the international language.
As such, non-English major students felt that learning English was important, positioning it as an important ‘minor’ component of their wider degree. Some students even remarked that mastering the knowledge of their particular specialised study major and ignoring English would be a major disadvantage for job seekers in the today’s competitive job market. These views are reflected in the following statements.

*The number of foreign companies or joint ventures in Vietnam is increasing. However, to get a job in one of these companies is not easy at all. [...] Of 1000 job applicants, Nokia [a mobile company] only selected 30 people for interviews in English. Nokia considered job applicants’ qualification only when they passed the English interview. However, a majority of these people were not successful as they did not meet the required English proficiency. [...] I think learning English is important for me to prepare for my future job. (Male 1, Group 6, WR and FG)*

*I have learnt that when you are applying for a job, knowing English is a great advantage for you to get a job ... It is likely that employers will chose the job applicant with a better English proficiency among those with the same qualification. That is to say, although English is just a minor component for us now, it is as important as our specialised subjects. As such, besides learning English in the university, I also spend hours learning English at home and in the language centre. (Female1, Group 6, FG)*

**Personal development**

A small number of non-English major participants (n = 4) were learning English as it helped open a door to the outside world and provided them with a tool to explore that unfamiliar territory of knowledge. Therefore, engaging in this endeavour was beneficial for their personal growth and development, making them more self-confident and self-efficacious in their everyday life. In a student’s words:

*Knowing English will help you enter a new door, and provide you chance to explore interesting knowledge to develop yourselves. For example, for me as I know English I am able to surf the internet and search for everything I need in this virtual world. I think it is great source of knowledge. Thanks to English, I myself know how to use new technical machine by reading the manual available only in English. (Female 1, Group 5, FG)*
Responding to external pressure/obligation

Half of the participating students (n = 8) stated that their motivation to learn English, at one point or another was driven by external pressure. The pressure was primarily due to the university requiring students to study English at the expense of their true passion. When the learning happened as a result of external pressure and high obligation, the students showed increased tensions and reduced interest in learning. The students also indicated an intention to quit learning the subject (English) in the shortest possible period of time. For example,

$I am learning English firstly because it is the compulsory subject in the curriculum. In other words, we are forced to learn English. When you feel that you are forced to do something, you will not highly evaluate or enjoy the task very much. I just want to finish learning it as soon as I can. (Male 1, Group 5, WR)$

$I am learning English just because English subject is included in the curriculum in the Vietnamese higher education. (Male 3, Group 6, FG)$

The pressure was also due to an exam-driven teaching and learning focus. A student commented that he was studying English only to prepare for exams. This student highlighted that he only invested a minimum level of effort in learning English to pass the exam. Once the exam was over, he stopped investing further effort in learning English. Another student indicated her dissatisfaction when exams were emphasised. For both students, when learning occurred because of external pressures such as exams, it was not interesting.

$English is a scary subject. I have to pass English exams. Otherwise, I will not be allowed to continue my study in the university. [...]. However, I only study English one week before the end-of-semester exams. (Male 1, Group 4, FG)$

$For me, there are too many English tests and exams. We have to spend much time preparing for exams [...]. I am learning English only to pass the exams. I haven’t felt motivated to learn it so far. I haven’t got other reasons at the moment. (Female 4, Group 1, FG)$
Interest and passion

Having interest in and passion for the English language was a motivation for a third (n = 6) of non-English major students to learn English. They were learning out of their own wish and without any tension such as passing exams or getting good English scores. They showed an eagerness to explore new things about English since it was an area that brought them satisfaction. This is illuminated in the following statement:

*The reason why I am learning English is simply I like it. I started to like learning it when I first studied in the university. I like learning it all the time. I like listening to English songs, news. Although I do not understand much of this stuff, I still enjoy my time. In the English class, I often volunteer to answer the questions, which is not because of getting any marks but just for fun.* (Male 1, Group 6, FG)

Unable to see the importance of learning English

Three students reported that they were unable to see the importance of learning English. One student explained that he was not interested in getting good marks, believing that he was not capable of doing so. Another student majoring in engineering added that while for other people, English was important for their future professions she did not have the same views. For these students, learning English was like a burden on them, adding more stress to their already stressful academic lives.

*I haven’t felt motivated to learn English yet. I already have to study my specialised subjects very hard, and now I have to study English. I got a pretty good English result in the previous semester … However, this is because I cheated in the exam … my friend let me see his test. I am very afraid of learning English.* (Male 1, Group 4, FG)

*I am always asking myself why I have to learn English. It is so boring when I haven’t got any good reasons to motivate me to learn. People keep saying that English is very important for job. However, they do not tell me how and what is important. Learning English for job? I am just in my second year and getting a job is in the far future … not a clear purpose.* (Female 3, Group 1, FG)
Impact of Lecturers, Peers and Parents on Students’ Motivation

The following section presents the findings for the last research question:

RQ5. What are students’ perceptions of the influences that their lecturers, peers and parents have on their motivation to learn English?

The Findings from the English Major Students

Impact of Lecturers on Students’ Motivation

A clear majority of English major students (14 out of 18) noted that their motivation to learn English was most strongly influenced by their lecturers. Their experiences as well as views relating to lecturers’ motivational influences were complex and each student represented his/her own idiosyncrasies regarding their lecturers’ motivational influences. This complexity might be due to the fact that motivation is a multi-faceted construct, and individuals’ experiences and perceptions of a phenomenon may vary. Despite this complexity, there still existed commonalities, which are demonstrated in Table 6.1 and presented in the following section.
### Table 6.1

**Lecturers’ Motivational Influences – Findings from English Major Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer-related factors</th>
<th>Students’ feelings and motivation</th>
<th>Students’ cognition and classroom behaviours/performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The relationship between lecturers and students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive relationship</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Display closeness to students verbally or nonverbally by being friendly, considerate,</td>
<td>• Feel related/close to lecturers</td>
<td>• Able to recognise the importance of the learning task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enthusiastic and warm</td>
<td>• Feel competent and autonomous in their learning</td>
<td>• Endeavour to develop exploratory and creative learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be supportive and understanding</td>
<td>• Feel safe in the learning</td>
<td>behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be open and welcome students’ feedback and/or criticisms</td>
<td>• Feel interested and find the learning enjoyable</td>
<td>• Persist for longer time in learning to pursue success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative relationship</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be moody, overly strict, inconsiderate and distant</td>
<td>• Feel isolated or distant from lecturers</td>
<td>• Do not value learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use disparaging comments</td>
<td>• Feel learning irrelevant to personal goals</td>
<td>• Refuse to engage in activities for deeper learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ridicule and tease students’ mistakes</td>
<td>• Feel obligated to learn</td>
<td>• Quit learning mentally or physically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Impose thoughts on students</td>
<td>• Feel less autonomous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Suppress comments and feedback</td>
<td>• Find learning risky</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pedagogical approaches</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Focus on practice</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teaching language functions</td>
<td>• Find learning fun, meaningful</td>
<td>• See the relevance of learning to their personal goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote use of the language in real-life communications</td>
<td>• Become interested in learning</td>
<td>of learning to communicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote ‘fun-elements’ in learning the language</td>
<td>• Feel responsible for own learning</td>
<td>• Engage in learning voluntarily</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Emphasise learner-centeredness</td>
<td>• Feel more autonomous</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Make use of group work and pair work</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Focus on theory</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Emphasise rote learning</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus on the teaching of language forms</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Approach to teaching guideline and materials</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Flexible teaching approach</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Adapt learning activities according to students’ psychological and cognitive needs</td>
<td>• Feel cared for by lecturers as learning needs are addressed timely</td>
<td>• Engage in the activities with a great effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wisely use of the coursebook</td>
<td>• Feel interested to learning something new</td>
<td>• Attempt to complete the task successfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adjust the teaching schedule</td>
<td>• Feel curious to discover new knowledge</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rigid teaching approach</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Unwillingly engage in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strictly follow the course book and teaching schedule Unwilling to incorporate out of</td>
<td>• Feel bored and tired of repetitive pace, and procedure of learning</td>
<td>• Refuse to spend more effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>course book activities and knowledge with the readily made materials.</td>
<td>• Lose curiosity in learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feel obligated and less autonomous to learning</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uninteresting contents</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Feedback/assessment

**Structure and informative feedback**
- Articulate explicit and structured directions about learning tasks
- Offer on-going academic support.
- Provide informative/constructive feedback about students’ task performance

**Chaotic and ambiguous feedback**
- Provide no or inadequate and confusing directions/orientation about ‘what to do’
- Offer inadequate or inappropriate feedback on students’ academic performance
- Provide no or a minimum of guidance and support on task performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feel more competent about learning</th>
<th>Feel more self-confident about possibility to complete the learning task successfully</th>
<th>Engage voluntarily and confidently in the learning task</th>
<th>Stay longer in the task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feel confused about what to do and what will be done</td>
<td>Feel incompetent in learning</td>
<td>Hesitantly and unwillingly participate in learning tasks</td>
<td>Stop the task midway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel scared and resistant to participate in learning tasks</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Lecturers’ linguistic competence and knowledge of English subject matters

**Competent and well-prepared lecturers**
- Have a good command of English language (i.e., good pronunciation, fluent speaking skills)
- Have a sound knowledge of the English subjects and teaching content
- Display confidence in own proficiency

**Incompetent lecturers**
- Poor knowledge of English (i.e., poor pronunciation)
- Display uncertainty about the teaching contents
- Display lack of linguistic competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admire lecturers and become interested in their lessons</th>
<th>Feel absorbed in lectures</th>
<th>Endeavour to follow the role model</th>
<th>Have intention to engage in activities conducted by these lecturers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confused</td>
<td>Become sceptical about lecturers’ ability and qualification</td>
<td>Refuse to listen to lecturers’ talk</td>
<td>Feel obligated to engage in learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Relationships between students and teachers

**Positive relationship**

All but one of the English major students (n = 17) revealed that having a good relationship with students was one of the most effective ways for lecturers to increase students’ motivation to learn English. To build a good rapport with students, it is desirable for lecturers to always display closeness either verbally or non-verbally with their students. To be specific, lecturers needed to be caring, understanding, and
sympathetic with the students and their difficulties that they encountered in both their academic and non-academic life. For example:

She [lecturer] cared for me a lot. One day I came to class and felt very upset. I could not concentrate on learning. She came to me and asked very gently what happened to me and if I had any difficulties in learning or private life. Of course, I could not share my entire personal problem to her. However, I felt good that she was really sympathetic and listening. I felt released and became more engaged in her lecture. (Female 1, Group 2, FG)

She [lecturer] was sharing, understanding, and so close to us. She joined us in every lecture. She did not want to show that she was powerful ... We were not afraid to make mistakes. She was there to encourage us and support us .... Since most of us liked her, we often felt interested in whatever she asked us to do. [...] We all felt very comfortable in her lectures, eager to volunteer to participate in almost all class activities. (Male 1, Group 3, FG)

Clearly in both excerpts, those who felt cared for by their lecturers tended to develop a strong sense of connectedness to their lecturers and thus, heightened interest in ‘caring for’ their lecturers. Such a dual process of ‘being cared for’ and ‘caring for’ significantly benefited their study. Specifically, when being cared for by, the students explained that they felt safe and secure about their learning despite the fact that they were pursuing the ‘risky’ business of learning a foreign language. These students were willing to engage in the learning without any fear of making mistakes. When they cared for their lecturers, they became interested in what their lecturers were asking the class to do.

Furthermore, the data revealed that lecturers’ respect for and openness to their students’ feedback and criticisms were essential for students’ motivation. According to English-major students (n = 5), the lecturer-student relationship was not one-way, but reciprocal and reflexive. They no longer preferred to be considered knowledge recipients, who said nothing, did nothing and passively took in knowledge. Rather, they expressed a desired to co-construct their learning. For example, English major students stated that they wanted to contribute to lectures, and raised their voices
about their learning expectations and providing feedback on whether these
expectations were met. To assist with students’ knowledge co-construction, it was
vital for lecturers to view the learning and teaching phenomenon from students’
perspectives or listen carefully and openly to their comments to better address their
learning needs.

*She [lecturer] understands us. She knows how we feel and often encourages us to tell how we feel about her lectures [...]. When she feels that we do not understand anything about her lectures, she will try to get to know about the reasons and respond to them. She has really listened to us and respected us.* (Female 3, Group 3, FG)

*It is important that lecturers talk to students and listen carefully to know if they need any help with their study and if they are satisfied with their learning. [...] These things have really engaged us in the lesson.* (Female 1, Group 1, FG)

**Negative relationship**

In contrast, a negative lecturer-student relationship was believed to negatively
influence English major students’ learning and their motivation. Over two thirds of
students (n = 13) stated that lecturers who were moody, overtly strict, inconsiderate,
unhelpful, not understanding and used disparaging comments regarding students’
performance damaged the lecturer-students relationship. A large number of students
(n = 10) recalled their demotivating experiences when learning with these lecturers.
A student expressed how scared and bored she felt when being taught by ‘moody’
lecturers:

*One of my lecturers is moody. Her moods change very quickly in just one lecture from very easy going to very hard to please. [...] Once we had a chat, just a little chat, however, she punished us... asked us to go out for the rest of the lecture. [...] When we gave the wrong answers, she became very angry. Such things disengage us from the lecturers. How will we dare to volunteer to answer the questions?*. (Female 1, Group 1, FG)
Others recalled the traumatising experiences when they were made fun of, teased or ridiculed by their lecturers for their weakness such as having a ‘soft voice’ and/or making mistakes during the course of study such as not spending enough time to learn English and chatting with others during class hours. For them, such disparaging comments really threatened their concepts of self, discouraging their future English learning and depriving them of hope for any improvement in their future learning.

*I felt most unmotivated last year... My voice is normally soft. Once in an English listening and speaking lecture, the lecturer told publicly that it [soft voice] was very terrible ... I felt hurt. I just wanted to quit learning her lecturers. (Male 2, Group 2, FG)*

*I have a sad memory. It was in the first year. I did not spend much time learning English. Instead, I often took part in other extra curriculum activities organised by some students... In one lecture, my lecturer told me something which I will never forget in my life. She said that learning English was not suitable for me, and I was not capable of learning it. She even asked me to quit my current degree and study another different major such as accounting. At that time I totally felt hopeless about myself. (Female 2, Group 2, FG)*

Others (n = 5) highlighted that although the learning environment in the university seemed to be more democratic than that at school, they still felt that it was not democratic enough. In particular, they felt reluctant to voice negative feedback about the lessons due to their lecturers’ propensity to suppress such feedback. By disregarding or suppressing students’ feedback and comments about the lesson, lecturers did not seem to respect their students and/or consider them as an integral part of the learning process.

*In this culture [Vietnamese culture], there is still a distance between teachers and students in whatever education levels... in junior school or even in higher education levels. We still feel that we are afraid of our lecturers. Sometimes we do not dare to give feedback to them. Even when we do not understand the lecture, we just keep silent. (Female 2, Group 1, FG)*

*For quite a few times, I did not feel satisfied with the answers that my lecturers tell us. However, I did not dare to tell our lecturers what I was actually thinking. If I asked them for clarification for the answers, they might
not give any explanation. Well, actually I did ask them once or twice. They
told me that I was badly behaved when opposing their ideas. (Female 1,
Group 3, WR)

Pedagogical approaches
Almost all of English major students (n = 16) indicated that their motivation was
influenced by the ways their lecturers taught them English. In particular, teaching
approaches commonly mentioned by students related to instructional focus, use of
teaching materials such as the curriculum, teaching schedules and coursebooks and
use of feedback, testing and assessment. These areas are explored in the following
sections.

Teaching focus
The majority of English major students (n = 16) expressed a strong desire to learn
English in a practical way. In other words, they felt motivated to learn English when
lecturers used communicative language teaching approaches. As discussed in
Chapter 2, communicative teaching approaches put a strong emphasis on the
teaching and learning of language functions (i.e., how words, phrases, or sentences
are used) rather than language forms (i.e., sentence structures); and highlight the
central role of learners in the process of teaching and learning the second language.
Central to these approaches is teachers/instructors’ prioritising communication
activities (i.e., exchanging information either in written or spoken forms) and fun
elements in language teaching (i.e., using language games, pictures, cartoons) and
making use of group work/pair works.

Nearly half English major students (n = 8) commented that they felt deeply and
joyfully engaged in a number of communication language activities (e.g., how to
start a conversation with a foreigner in English) since these activities were relevant to
their goals of learning English. Taking part in such activities, the students had the opportunity to practise the language and use the language in real life situations. They also noted that despite the fact that they were required to do the above activities, they did not feel obligated to do it. Rather, they felt a sense of ownership over their learning as they loved to communicate in English, and these communicative activities were relevant to their goals of learning English for communication.

_It was very stimulating when I was learning the subject English listening and speaking. Our lecturer asked us to do an assignment. Every week, we had to hand in a recording or video recording of the conversations between us and foreigners on a particular topic. Therefore, at the weekends, we went to the Guom Lake to practise English speaking with foreigners. At first, we felt afraid because we did not know how to start a conversation with a strange foreigner. However, after several times, we felt much better. Most of people we met were pretty friendly. (Male 3, Group 2, FG)_

_Most of us found this assignment [recording a conversation with a foreigner] very interesting. Despite the fact that we were forced to do it by the teacher, we still had many lovely experiences with it. (Male 1, Group 3, FG)_

_Learning English pronunciation was really fun last time. All of my class was very excited. Our lecturer just made us to practice the thing we learnt right way. She often asked us to make funny sentences with the words we had just learnt, which made us remember for so long. (Female 3, Group 3, WR)_

Other students (n = 4) valued group/pair work and reported a positive experience when participating in such activities. For these students, group/pair work helped distinguish learning English in the university from learning English in high school or lower educational levels. While their learning of English at school was equated merely with remaining in their seats, whole class learning, teachers’ lecturing and students’ taking notes, their present learning of English was more innovative. That is, they were now able to move in the class to work with favourite peers on an assigned task. According to the students, working in groups benefited them in several ways. First, they felt it gave them more freedom in their learning as long as they were able to make decisions about how they would like to complete the task. Second, they felt
group work offered them greater opportunity to practise the language, which they valued. Furthermore, working in groups enabled them to work collaboratively with other peers, creating the possibility of building meaningful relationship with other peers.

*My lecturers are making use of group work. We are really enjoying it. Working in groups has a lot of advantages ... When working in groups, we can practice our spoken English very much. Group work facilitates real communication between lecturers and students and amongst students.* (Male 2, Group 1, FG)

*When we are assigned a task to work together, each of us will be responsible for one aspect of the task. We work on our own first and as a group later. [...]. We have more chance to really think about what we are doing. I also feel more responsible for my work when working in group.* (Male 4, Group 1, FG)

By contrast, one third of students (n = 6) expressed their dissatisfaction when lecturers focused too much on theory, and the language form (e.g., grammar structures). As they indicated, learning a foreign language was more than ‘rote learning’, with tasks requiring them to learn by heart all vocabulary and model conversations and imitate native accents. Instead, learning English should enable them to use the language effectively and appropriately. The students refused to rote learn English conversations from the course book, reasoning that they preferred to practise English with their peers in communicative ways. Moreover, they felt obligated to learn the knowledge, which they thought too academic and neither practical nor relevant for their future professions or their interest.

*It is funny and frustrating to learn by heart never ending conversations in English, however, Lecturer 1 has been asking us to do so. She even asks us to go to the board and read the conversations from our memories. And then she gives us marks. I am always afraid of getting bad marks; however, I got two marks ‘0’ for not learning by heart. Why do we need to learn them and forget them?* (Male 2, Group 3, FG)
In Lecturer 2’s lecturers, we only learn theories of language and then do some exercises... We all felt very bored of learning and sleepy. (Male 1, Group 3, FG)

I find some English subjects too academic and difficult, such as Lexi [lexicology]. It is all about the origin, part of a word and the art of using language such as a ‘metaphor’ and a ‘metonym’... very ‘hard-to-remember’ technical terms. These English subjects sound interesting. However, the lecturers haven’t been very successful in making them easier to understand. (Male 2, Group 1, FG)

**Approach to teaching guide/materials**

According to a majority of English major students (n = 12), their motivation was greatly determined by whether their lecturers were flexible or rigid in their teaching methods. For these students, flexible teachers did not strictly follow fixed teaching schedules and coursebooks, but were able to adapt their teaching schedules with particular learning situations and learners. However, to be flexible, lecturers did not have to completely ignore the coursebook. Rather, they needed to selectively use readily-made materials to meet the students’ learning needs and levels of understandings. These views are echoed in the following excerpts:

*I like the lecturer who taught us the subject called presentation skills in my second year...well and those who have taught us English listening and speaking skills. I think they are very flexible. When we are sleepy, they change the activities, chatting with us in English about movies, parties. These things have really worked.* (Male 2, Group 1, FG)

*Mrs 8 used the coursebook, however, she hasn’t followed everything in the coursebook. Let me take an example. One task in the coursebook asked us to read the whole long text and translate to Vietnamese. For me it would take me ages to do so and would be very boring, too. She only asked us to choose any part that we liked most and translated it to Vietnamese.* (Male 1, Group 1, FG)

As evidenced in the above excerpts, lecturers’ flexibility in their teaching positively influenced students’ emotions (i.e., feeling happy, relaxed, refreshed and interested in the lesson), which helped result in positive learning behaviours (i.e., more engaged in the learning activities).
Furthermore, flexible lecturers willingly incorporated out-of-course book activities and knowledge to better address their students’ needs. Interestingly, a majority of English major students (n = 12) felt interested in learning English when their lecturers made use of fun elements, particularly English language games (games used in teaching English), English funny stories, and songs in teaching English. For them, these elements made the English lessons enjoyable and relaxed and motivating for them to learn.

*Lecturer 3 followed the course book. However, she was not rigid. Sometimes she changed the activities in the course book a little bit. She also embedded games, cartoons, and music in to the lessons, which made us so interested in learning. Her lectures were so relaxed. We played and learned at the same time. (Female 3, Group 3, FG)*

*We often feel comfortable and motivated when lecturers ask us to play language games. When we play games, we freely communicate in English. I often feel shy when my lecturer asks me to tell something in English. However, when I participate in games, I do not feel shy anymore. (Female 3, Group 1, WR)*

By contrast, nearly half of English major students (n = 8) noted that their lecturers’ rigidity, following every step in the English course book and schedule, negatively influenced their motivation to learn. To be specific, the students lost curiosity about future lectures since the possible details of them could be found in the course book. As a result, they no longer found the lessons interesting or engaging.

*I personally find quite a few lectures ineffective. My classmates seemed tired of learning in these lectures. The main thing was the lecturers. They did not make their lectures interesting. What they taught was there in the course book. They did not try anything to raise our curiosity about her lectures. So for me, going to class was just for checking my attendance. For the last semester, I got nothing from those lectures, absolutely nothing. (Female 1, Group 1, FG)*

*In this semester, one of my lecturers always follows exactly everything in the course book. What she is delivering is not new at all. I think, if she keeps teaching us in such a way, I do not need to come to her lectures. I feel really bored and sleepy in her lectures. (Male 4, Group 1, FG)*
Others (n = 5) mentioned a range of negative emotions when they had to do boring and meaningless activities prescribed in the course book.

_We have learnt the steps to read a reading passage for three semesters. However, in this semester, our lecturer has been teaching the same thing: finding the main ideas and the topic sentence of a paragraph every day. It is not necessary to teach us these things. They need to adapt the knowledge and teach us something new. (Female 2, Group 2, FG)_

_They have asked us to learn everything in the course book. Some knowledge is not only too hard for us to understand, but they are useless. (Male 3, Group 2, WR)_

_Feedback/assessment_

A large number of English major students (n = 13) stated that lecturers’ practices of giving feedback and assessment about their students’ learning and performance, determined how effectively they influenced students’ motivation. These students highly appreciated when their lecturers provided structured and informative feedback about their learning. By structured and informative, they referred to lecturers clearly outlined teaching objectives and learning requirements, and addressed all students’ academic inquiries and concerns prior to assigning them a learning task. During the task, these lecturers continued to provide on-going assistance and directed students’ performance toward attaining desired learning outcomes. On task completion, they offered students informative/constructive feedback to evaluate their task performance and recommended ways for students to improve their learning outcomes. Reflecting on their own experiences, two students indicated that they felt satisfied with their lecturers’ practices of giving feedback. Evidenced from their excerpts, the students felt self-confident and competent thanks to the clarity as well as constructive information of their lecturers’ feedback.
I like the way Lecturer 4 is teaching us. She often makes us think that everyone can learn English. Before asking us to do something, she often explains clearly what and how she wants us to do. The requirements she sets for us are clear and reachable. She is also there to provide us help when we need her. Her feedback is very detailed and encouraging, which I like to listen to very much. (Male 1, Group 1, E)

I found Mrs 6 (lecturer)’s feedback on my writing effective. Her feedback focused on my particular writing task not on my ability to write. She never told me ‘You are bad at writing’ [...]. She showed my mistakes and ways to improve my mistake at the same time. (Male 1, Group 3, FG)

However, two thirds of English major students (n = 12) expressed their dissatisfaction with their lecturers’ current practices of feedback and assessments. For example, two students stated that the feedback that their lecturers gave them was inadequate or inappropriate.

In the previous terms, we had a number of difficult subjects. They were difficult and boring. However, we were asked to self-study new knowledge in the course book and present our understandings in front of the class. Since it was not easy to understand, we had to ask our lecturers for help. We sent our presentation slides to them for feedback and comments. However, the feedback did not help us much... too general. (Male 1, Group 2, FG)

Asking students to do presentations of the new lesson is good. [...] However, I am not very pleased with the way my lecturer has given feedback on our presentations...Her feedback and comments were just superficial and little. She often agreed with everything in our presentations, and praised the presenters... She has never contributed to our presentations. I think she should highlight something for us to notice. Otherwise, she should extend the new knowledge. She should not end the lesson by saying ‘Ok, it is an excellent presentation’. That is all. The lessons ended and she completed her task. (Female 1, Group 2, FG)

For others (n = 8), their dissatisfaction resided not only in the quantity of feedback such as times of feedback, but also the quality of it. The students revealed that some lecturers preferred to provide answers for an exercise instead of a thorough explanation or extension of the knowledge. The insufficiency and lack of clarity in lecturers’ feedback was, according to the students, equated with lecturers’ laziness and deficits in sound and appropriate pedagogical skills. Consequently, the students would rather not attend the lesson, given the absence of constructive feedback.
Some lecturers explained thoroughly the easy knowledge, which we could study by ourselves at home. However, for the difficult things, which we expected them to teach us slowly, carefully and thoroughly, they just rushed into it. They normally asked us to self-study at home... and the end...the class is over. (Female 2, Group2, FG)

It is frustrating when they [lecturers] did not provide us with appropriate feedback for our exercises. Some lecturers asked us to do the IELTS [International English language testing system]. And then they just gave us the answers for the questions and did not provide any explanation for why these answers were chosen. (Female 1, Group 3, FG)

According to five students, some teachers overemphasised marks and scores at the expense of students’ interest in learning for knowledge. For them, learning to get marks was stressful and undermined their inherent interest in learning a foreign language. For example:

I think people in other countries are flexible about marks and marking. However, in Vietnam, learning for exams and marks is stressful. I did not feel comfortable when the lecturers asked me to answer the questions and mark me. I felt scared. (Female 2, Group 1, FG)

It is like learning to pass the exam, not learning to acquire the knowledge ... There should be marks and exams. However, these things should not to be too important. We need to think that we come to lecturers to get knowledge for ourselves, but not for coming tests. (Male 1, Group 1, FG)

Linguistic competence and knowledge of English subject matters

A considerable number of students (n = 9) highlighted that it is important for lecturers to have a good command of English as well as profound understanding of the English subjects that they were teaching. Six students recalled from their own experiences how stimulated and encouraged they felt about their learning when learning English from competent lecturers, particularly those who were fluent in English speaking and speak with native-like accents. They perceived these lecturers as role models to follow.

I think that most of my lecturers speak English very well. I am really motivated when hearing them speaking English. When they speak English, I
get absorbed in their talks. I just want to learn English to speak as well as them in the future. (Male 1, Group 2, FG)

Some lecturers are a great source of motivation for me. I must try my best to speak English as fluently as them. I really admire Lecturer 1 and Lecturer 2 for their knowledge of English. I wish that someday, I will be able to speak English as well as them... speak English confidently with beautiful accent and intonation. (Female 3, Group 2, FG)

One student even emphasised that the lecturers’ English language proficiency is the single most important motivating factor for their students.

I will be more motivated to learn with a well-qualified teacher. I think if she can speak English well, I will admire her right at the beginning when she appears in my class. When her knowledge of English is good, other things such as strictness do not matter at all. (Male 1, Group 3, FG)

In contrast, the remaining students shared their demotivating experiences when learning English from those who were, according to them, not qualified enough to teach in the English major program. The lecturers’ poor pronunciation of English words, particularly unfamiliar words, and their uncertainty of the teaching content were claimed to characterise ‘unqualified lecturers’ and were perceived as a hindrance to engagement of students.

Lecturer 6 does not have good English pronunciation. She is teaching English major students. She needs to learn to improve her pronunciation. She needs to show that she is confident when pronouncing a hard word. (Female 2, Group 1, WR)

Some lecturers are not quite sure about what they are teaching us. As such, how can they make us interested in learning? Just give an example; Mrs 3 is teaching us Lexi [Lexicology], she often spends much time explaining the simple knowledge. Last week, we learnt about ‘homonymy’, which all of us found challenging. She just rushed into it and asked us to read more at home. When we asked her to explain something, she refused to answer and just said you would answer it yourselves after you read it at home. How come? She did not know the answers, either. (Female 2, Group 3, WR)

Impact of Peers on Students’ Motivation

English major students (n = 15) considered their peers were a great source of motivation for them to learn English. Four students even perceived motivational
influences from peers as the strongest among environmental factors. “In learning English, of all external motivational sources, my friends stand out as the greatest sources of motivation for me as I spend time most of my time with them” (Male 2, Group 2, FG). The influences that peers exerted on students’ motivation stemmed from how their peers developed and sustained relationships with them, as well as peers’ attitudes and knowledge of English, which are presented in Table 6.2 and explored in detail in the following sections.

Table 6.2

**Peers’ Motivational Influences – Findings from English Major Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Students’ feelings and motivation</th>
<th>Students’ cognition and classroom behaviours/performance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship with peers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Positive relationship</em></td>
<td>• Understand learning difficulties</td>
<td>• Find learning secure when having trustful companions in the learning journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support emotionally and academically</td>
<td>• Want to engage in learning activities with friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sympathise with friends’ learning failure and celebrate their moments of successes</td>
<td>• Willing to engage in exploratory knowledge construction with friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Willingly cooperate with friends to build a cohesive language learning community</td>
<td>• Find learning exciting and stimulating</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Create a fair competitive learning environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Eager to practise the language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative relationship</strong></td>
<td>• Feel close and related to peers</td>
<td>• Find learning threatening and risky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feel more competent in learning</td>
<td>• Demonstrate disengaged and disruptive learning behaviours (e.g., refuse to engage in interactive/collaborative learning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feel lonely and isolated</td>
<td>• Play truant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feel embarrassed about selves and own abilities to learn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peers’ linguistic competence and attitudes towards learning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Be the role model in learning</em></td>
<td>• Feel supported</td>
<td>• Admire friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Learning hard and effectively</em></td>
<td>• Feel motivated when seeing a vivid role model</td>
<td>• Want to learn from friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Demonstrate strategic learning</em></td>
<td>• Feel more responsible for own learning</td>
<td>• Develop critical thinking (i.e., reflections, reasoning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Eager and motivated to learn</em></td>
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Relationships with peers

Positive relationship

The majority of English major students (13 out of 18) valued positive relationships with peers. They commented that peers were great companions in their challenging journey of learning a second language as they were standing in a similar position as language learners, shared similar psychological characteristics of people at same ages, and may be the ones they were spending most time with in the course of learning the language.

A positive relationship with peers fostered their interest in and motivation for their learning of English. More specifically, students reported positive experiences when peers understood their learning difficulties, willingly supported them emotionally and academically and celebrated with them the moments of academic achievements or successes. These views are illustrated in the participants’ words, as below.

When I have problems in learning English, for example, I feel sad about my exam results, or have difficulties in something in English. I can’t tell my parents as they don’t know about English. I can’t tell my lecturers as I know they are busy and a bit distant. I just come to my friends. We talk, [...], I felt good and regained my self-control. You know it is enough to feel hopeful again about a better future. (Male 3, Group 3, FG)

I used to feel very scared when being asked to practice English speaking [...], sometimes had disruptive behaviours [...]. One day, H asked me to pair with her to practise an assigned task. She really cared for me, very patient and encouraging, always said that she was very bad at speaking skills before. She made me believe that I can do it as long as I try my best. I feel supported and safe and am becoming interested in this practice time. (Female 1, Group 1, FG)

My classmates often tell me ‘Excellent! You are admirable’ when I got high marks for tests of listening skills. I often just smile and tell them that I just practice listening a lot and to different listening sources. But actually, I feel proud of myself. My efforts have been recognised and acknowledged. (Male 2, Group 2, FG)
Evidenced in these excerpts, being given timely support, and encouragement, the students felt that they were not alone in the journey. They felt that they were valuable members of the community who deserved to be cared for, acknowledged and recognised by other members. When these psychological needs were met, they felt safe, hopeful, and became more competent in learning and tended to have positive learning behaviours such as actively engaging in class activities.

Others (n = 7) insisted that peers’ willingness to build a cohesive learner community conducive for language learning (i.e., eager to practise English with others and fair learning competition) was an effective way to motivate them to learn English. The students reasoned that learning English, while sharing similarities with other non-language academic subjects such as Maths, in that it was taught in the formal classroom setting for certain numbers of hours, explicitly distinguished itself from these subjects in a number of ways. Most obviously, learning English was coupled with learning about a different culture. As the participants were learning English in a context where they had little chance to practise the learnt language with foreigners speaking English, let alone English native speakers, they relied on practising the target language with their friends. As such, their motivation to practise English was determined to a large extent by how willingly and passionately the people with whom they were working, cooperated with them. For example:

Learning English is different from learning other subjects such as Maths. You need someone to practise English conversations with. Normally, I will choose to work with someone I know well. It is great if the people you work with know you well and are willing to cooperate with you in a learning task. (Male 3, Group 3, WR)

My class was very wonderful in the previous semester. Almost everyone was eager to learn English, volunteer to speak English, which resulted in a very exciting learning atmosphere. Personally, I was attracted by that atmosphere, always felt really passionate about learning English. (Female 1, Group 3, FG)
Two students enjoyed fair competition in learning, reasoning that a fair competition among learners also helped promote their work ethics. They tended to expend more effort in learning in order to be as good in learning English as their peers.

*It is motivating if your friend is also your competitor in learning. It is like you are racing with them. You always think that you have to speed up or otherwise you will be left behind. However, the most important of all is everyone must be fair, encouraging each other.* (Male 2, Group 2, WR)

*In my groups, I think I am more confident in listening skills than the remainders. Meanwhile I am not very good at English-Vietnamese translations. We often help each other and see if we can catch up with each other for these subjects. It is fun to compete with each other in that way* (Male 1, Group 3, WR)

**Negative relationship**

In contrast, a negative relationship with peers negatively influenced motivation to learn, and at worst, thwarted the students’ motivation to learn English. A third of the English major students (6 out of 18) shared their own demotivating experiences in this regard. One student expressed how lonely and isolated and demotivated he felt when being ignored by his classmates during his English lectures.

*When I first studied in the university, I was scared of the English conversation time. I just seemed like deaf and dumb. It was even worse when no one wanted to work with me when our lecturers asked us to work in groups and practise speaking English. They wanted to talk to someone good. Well, at that time, I just felt I was hopeless and lonely... just wanted to disappear from the lecture.* (Male 2, Group 3, E)

While students welcomed their friends’ criticisms and negative feedback as long as these were constructive and aimed to improve their weaknesses, they felt really demotivated when they became the focus of public criticism. In one student’s words:

*People in my hometown often pronounce /n/ instead of /l/. I am not an exception. Because of my dialect, I could not pronounce the sound ‘l’ correctly. Whenever I speak the words starting in this sound, they [classmates] laughed at me. Some giggled, some whispered, some looked confused and some repeated my words many times. Well, I just feel really
embarrassed. Why did they like making fun of me? To protect myself, I avoid speaking anything in public. (Male 4, Group 1, WR)

Clearly, classmates’ unthoughtful behaviour resulted in detrimental effects on the students’ emotions, motivation and learning performance. Specifically, these students felt that they were excluded from the community which they should belong or expected to belong to, as they were made aware that they were different from and inferior to their peers. As a result, the entire surrounding environment became threatening, making them hesitant and scared to be involved.

**Peers’ attitudes towards English and their levels of English proficiency**

A number of participants (n = 7) stated that they liked to learn with friends who were more competent in English and had positive attitudes towards learning. These peers portrayed a vivid picture of what a good second language learner should be like. Once working with these significant friends, they were able to reflect on their own learning and set clearer learning goals for future. For example, a female student learnt from her classmate that a good English learner had to be very diligent. As such, she started to think critically about her present learning and was eager to set a number of goals in an attempt to get closer to her desired image.

*Through group work, I had the opportunity to work closely with some good students. I have learnt that good students are those who are very hard working. I am not and that is why I am not a good student. [...] I have started to set up some small goals for myself such as listening to at least a piece of CNN news a day, trying to understand the content. I am trying to work hard.* (Female 3, Group 3, FG)

Thanks to his competent friend, a male student concluded that a good language learner was the one who preferred strategic learning.

*I am the most impressed by a male student in my class. He is the best student in my class although he does not seem to be diligent. Maybe, all boys are relatively lazy. He always gets good marks for almost all subjects... He is very good at speaking and listening skills. I think he has very effective*
learning strategies that enable him to learn well while still able to play hard. I need to think seriously about this as my present study does not seem to be very effective. (Male 1, Group 2, FG)

Furthermore, two students added that more competent friends were able to challenge their knowledge and create a competitive learning environment, which was conducive for their learning.

More competent friends are able to give you feedback and support you academically. I think I am sitting next to H, very good at speaking skills. She often corrects my pronunciation. Sometimes, friends are better at giving feedback than lecturers. (Female 1, Group 1, FG)

I really like to work with him [a classmate]. We often read English passages or articles together and translate them to Vietnamese. He is very good at reading comprehensions and very keen on finding good texts to read. He always shows me the good texts to read. To tell the truth, I am very interested in reading the texts that he shows me. I often try my best to read, understand so that I could discuss with him about new words and ideas in the texts. I learn from him a lot. He has good critical thinking; his points of views are normally very sharp. (Male 3, Group 2, FG)

Impact of Parents on Students’ Motivation

English major students had a number of contradictory views on the amount of and ways in which their parents influenced their motivation to learn English. For instance, some students (n = 5), noticeably all females, emphasised that their motivation was most significantly impacted by their parents. One student stated that “My mum is the greatest source of motivation for me to learn. She has devoted all her life to me, hoping me to become successful in the future. My motivation is mostly influenced by her” (Female 2, Group 2, FG). Meanwhile other students, the majority of whom were males, advocated the idea that parent/s are a potential source of motivation for them to learn English. However, the influences that they exerted on their motivation were perceived as moderate, and less significant and obvious than those of lecturers and peers. One male student commented, “For me, my motivation to learn English at the present time has been influenced more by the lecturers and
peers than my parents, which is probably due to the fact that I am currently living far away from my home, thus spending most of my time with these people than with my parents” (Male 2, Group 3, WR). Despite the contradiction, the majority of the participants indicated that parents are unarguably a motivation/demotivation source, with their influences being exerted via their relationship with their children and their attitudes and knowledge of the language.

Table 6.3

Parents’ Motivational Influences – Findings from English Major Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental motivational influences</th>
<th>Students’ feelings and motivation</th>
<th>Students’ cognition and classroom behaviours/performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship with their children</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Love and care for and devote for their children</td>
<td>• Feel cared for by and connected to parents</td>
<td>• Believe in own ability to success in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trust their children</td>
<td>• Feel respected and valued by parents</td>
<td>• Willingly demonstrate the ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Give their children freedom of choice for their learning</td>
<td>• Feel competent in learning</td>
<td>• Voluntarily engage in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand their children’s learning difficulties</td>
<td>• Become more responsible for their learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support emotionally and financially</td>
<td>• Feel lonely, ignored and isolated</td>
<td>• Speculate about one’s ability and choice have been made for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use positive comments and show sympathy</td>
<td>• Feel lack of self-confidence</td>
<td>• Want to quit the degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do not care for their children</td>
<td>• Feel controlled and insecure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indifferent to their children’s learning</td>
<td>• Feel hopeless about future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Controlling</td>
<td>• Feel like learning English</td>
<td>• Want to expend effort and time in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lose faith in their children’s ability to learn</td>
<td>• Value the learning of English</td>
<td>• Demonstrate persistence in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feel supported emotionally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feel confident in making choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feel regret for their choice of learning major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Want to stop study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parents’ attitudes towards English and English major program

Positive attitudes towards English as a language and as a study major

• Aware of and value the important roles of English
• Value the study major
• Keep up to date with the language

Negative attitudes towards the learning of English as a major

• Skeptical about the usefulness of learning of English as a major


**Relationships between parents and their children**

**Positive relationship**

Talking about the motivational influences that their parents exerted on them, a large number of English major students (n = 10) once again mentioned the relationship between them and their parents, associating a close relationship with their parents with higher levels of motivation to learn English. According to these students, their parents’ decision to allow them to make the choice for themselves (i.e., to choose to learn English as a major, and to take extra classes) indicated the parents’ belief and trust in their ability, enabling them to think seriously and critically about their personal responsibility for their own present learning. Such feelings of responsibility could explain why they tended to develop more self-confidence and endeavoured to persist. For example:

*When I left high school, my parents hoped that I would go to a university to learn management of tourism and hospitality or business. They did not want me to learn English as a major. However, I still wanted to learn more about English. Although they were not very happy, they respected my decision. They believed me and always do believe me, I cannot give up trying hard. I can’t blame on anything since it is my choice. (Female 1, Group 2, FG)*

*They [parents] always say that they have faith in me. They believe that I had made the right decision to learn English as a major. As such, I am more aware of my responsibility to learn. (Female 2, Group 2, FG)*

Furthermore, always showing love and care for children was among the most effective ways parents could foster their children’s motivation to learning English. One student shared that despite the fact that her parents could not speak English, they often showed their eagerness and enthusiasm to listen to her talking in or about English. Such caring behaviours motivated her to expend further effort in learning.

*I think I am not very good at English in comparison with my classmates. However, my parents just say how great it is when they listen to me singing English songs. They listened to them attentively. They seemed to enjoy the time very much. This is great encouragement for me. (Female 1, Group 2, FG)*
Others noted that her parents’ relentless effort and devotion to pursue a better future for their children taught her a valuable lesson about the value of persistence and resilience, and most importantly of all, about the meaning of responsibility, love and devotion.

*My parents are farmers. They have to work very hard to bring us up. They devote their life for me. They are actually a great source of motivation to learn better. I should learn English well to make them happy. I have to learn very hard and become successful to pay duty to them. They often support me emotionally.* (Female 1, Group 1, FG)

**Negative relationship**

By contrast, the students associated a negative relationship with their parents with low levels of motivation to learn English. One student felt lonely, isolated and undirected while her parent did not care for her.

*My dad died and my mum has a new family. I live with my grandparents. My mum does not pay much attention to my study… I often feel pity for myself… I feel inferior to other friends, often lonely, there is no one for me to share my learning difficulties. I just wish if only she asked me a bit about my study. Money is not enough.* (Female 3, Group 3, FG)

Meanwhile, other students (n = 3) claimed that too much care from parents was likely to negatively influence their motivation. As they explained, parents’ care was normally coupled with expectations for their children and too much care meant too much expectation. As a result, they felt highly obligated and less autonomous. One student remarked:

*My parents often pay too much attention to my study. As they have invested a lot for me, they expect too much from me. That makes me really stressed. Sometimes, I think that it is impossible to meet their expectation even how hard I need to try. It is just like I am not learning for myself but learning for my parents. Some people say it is good when your parents know about your study, however for me, it is quite demotivating.* (Female 2, Group 2, FG)
Parents’ attitudes towards English and English learning

Positive attitudes
A number of English major students (n = 6) believed that their motivation to learn English as a major was also influenced by their parents’ attitudes towards English. One student reported positive emotions when her parents were aware of the importance of the English language. For another student, her parents’ favourable attitudes toward English made her become more motivated to learn English.

My parents often tell me about the importance of learning English. They always said that they have faith in me. They believe in my decision to learn English as a major. As such, I am more aware of my responsibility to learn. (Female 3, Group 2, FG)

My dad often tells me that English is now very important and learning English as a major is the right decision for me. He also tells me about some successful people in my area to encourage me to study. Although he does not know how to speak English, it is not boring to talk with him about English. (Female 2, Group 3, WR)

Negative attitudes
However, a small number of students (n = 4) felt sad when their parents did not value the learning of English as major. Parents’ unfavourable attitudes toward learning English obviously negatively impacted these students’ motivation to learn English. That is, they became uncertain if they had made the right decision to learn English and hesitant to expend optimal effort in their learning.

When I chose to study English as a major, my dad was not pleased. Now he keeps saying that learning English only is not enough to get a good job in the future and that English should be a medium of communication only. Sometimes, I think he is also right and wonder if this major is good for me. Maybe, I will study another major after I graduate this. (Male 4, Group 1, WR)

My parents wanted me to become a doctor. They said that doctors are the best jobs. He always tells me that I will have to look for a job by myself after I graduate and he will not be able to help me find a job in my study area, which is discouraging. (Male 3, Group 3, WR)
Findings from Non-English Major Students

Impact of Lecturers on Students’ Motivation

Based on the data with non-English students, a majority of participants (12/18) indicated that their motivation to learn English was influenced most significantly by their lecturers. The following section outlines three main categories describing how lecturers may influence their students’ motivation, namely lecturer-student relationships, lecturers’ pedagogical approaches and knowledge of English (see Table 6.4).

Table 6.4

Lecturers’ Motivation Influences – Non-English Major Students’ Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer-related factors</th>
<th>Students’ feelings and motivation</th>
<th>Students’ cognition and classroom behaviours/performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The relationship between lecturers and students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Care for students, follow them closely, and have friendly manners</td>
<td>• Feel connected to lecturers</td>
<td>• Able to recognise the importance of the learning task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be humorous and not too easy going</td>
<td>• Feel learning environment secure</td>
<td>• Develop exploratory and creative learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have rules and use rules appropriately</td>
<td>• Feel competent and autonomous in their learning</td>
<td>• Show responsibility for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand and sympathise with students; be supportive and responsive</td>
<td>• Feel interested and find the learning enjoyable</td>
<td>• Persist for longer time in learning to pursue success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide students with choices of learning content and chances to contribute to knowledge, and opportunities to voice their opinions about their learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be moody, overtly strict, inconsiderate and distant</td>
<td>• Feel isolated from lecturers</td>
<td>• Do not value learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use disparaging comment</td>
<td>• Feel learning irrelevant to personal goals</td>
<td>• Demotivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ridicule and tease students when they mistakes</td>
<td>• Feel obligated to learn</td>
<td>• Refuse to engage in activities for deeper learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Suppress students’ autonomy by not providing choice, and imposing thoughts on students</td>
<td>• Find learning risky</td>
<td>• Quit learning mentally or physically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Suppress students’ comment and feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pedagogical approaches

Focus on practice

- Focus more on language functions
- Optimise the chance to practise English communications
- Promote use of the language in real-life communications
- Emphasise learner-centeredness
- Make use of group work and pair work

Focus on theory

- Focus on the teaching of language forms (i.e., theory-driven teaching, grammar rules and sentence structures)
- Emphasise ‘rote-learning’

Approach to teaching guideline or materials

Flexible teaching approach

- Use course books selectively
- Adjust the teaching schedule
- Incorporate language games when appropriate

Rigid teaching approach

- Strictly follow the course book and teaching schedule
- Unwilling to incorporate out of course book activities

Feedback/assessment

Structure and informative feedback

- Provide explicit and structured directions about learning tasks
- Offer on-going academic support and leadership to direct students to desired outcomes
- Provide constructive feedback about students’ performance and progress

Chaotic and ambiguous feedback

- Provide no or inadequate and confusing directions and orientation about ‘what to do’
- Offer inadequate or inappropriate feedback on students’ academic performance and progress
- Provide no or a minimum of support on task performance

- Find learning, meaningful and relevant to their goals
- Become interested in learning
- Feel responsible for own learning
- Feel more autonomous

- Find learning irrelevant to their personal goals of learning English for communication purposes
- Feel bored with and tired of learning

- Feel cared for by lecturers as learning needs are addressed
- Feel interested to learning something new
- Feel curious to discover new knowledge

- Feel bored and tired of learning
- Lose curiosity in learning
- Feel obligated
- Felt amotivated to learn

- Engage voluntarily and confidently in the learning task
- Spend more effort to achieve success in tasks
- Stay longer in the task

- Engage in learning
- Refuse to participate in learning activities

- Become disengaged in learning
- Refuse to participate in learning activities

- Unwillingly engage in learning
- Refuse to spend more effort

- Feel more competent about learning
- Feel more self-confident about possibility to complete the learning task successfully
- Feel more related to the learning environment

- Feel confused about what to do
- Feel incompetent in learning
- Feel fearful about participating in learning tasks

- Hesitantly and unwillingly participate in learning tasks
- Stop the task in midway
**Relationships between students and teachers**

*Positive relationship*

A large number of non-English major students (15 out of 18) felt motivated to learn provided that their lecturers were willing to maintain a good lecturer-student relationship. To build a positive relationship with students, it was critical that lecturers were close to them, had a friendly manner, understood, encouraged them and demonstrated a good sense of humour. For example:

> She [lecturer] was so close to us, so caring and ..., which made us confident to talk to her. I did not feel afraid of her and of learning English. [...], going to the English lesson was like going to meet and have a chat with someone I liked. It [Learning English] was enjoying. (Male1, Group 4, FG)

> The relationship between teachers and students in the university is closer than that in the high school. Now if I am not sure about anything, I will ask my teacher. I was afraid of doing so with my teacher in the high school. (Female3, Group 4, FG)

Clearly in both excerpts, the students expressed positive feelings and emotions about their teachers as well as their English classes. For example, they felt happy, pleased, satisfied, inspired, competent and motivated. The students even compared their learning as an informal talk between people close to each other, which was pleasant, stimulating and enjoyable. The students noted that they felt secure when being cared for by their teachers. This feeling prompted them to engage in an active learning process in which they volunteered to contribute their opinions to the lesson. The secure feeling also encouraged the student to initiate dialogues with their lecturers.

Some students (n = 4) even considered ‘caring for students’ the most essential quality of a good English lecturer. For example, “*The most important thing is lecturers’ care for their students. When they care for them, they will know what to do to motivate them to learn English*” (Male 2, Group 5, FG).
Others (n = 4) highlighted that close relationships with students did not necessarily mean that the lecturers were too easy going. Rather, it was important that they were flexible. At one time, they might play a role of the students’ friend, sharing life and English learning experiences. However, at other times, they were expected to exercise the power of a master of knowledge, and were relatively strict to ensure that their students completed all assigned learning tasks. The following statements show these beliefs:

In this semester, my lecturer is too easy going. Some students in my class are lazy, and often ask her to play. She always says ‘yes’ to them. I don’t like it, I want to practise speaking. She fails to connect with us, she fails to get me engaged in her lectures. I do not feel inspired. (Male1, Group 6, FG)

I think lecturers need to follow students closely. Sometimes, they need to be strict, especially when they assign homework and check homework to motivate us to do all the homework. (Male1, Group 6, FG)

Furthermore, to build a good rapport with students, lecturers also needed to respect students’ need for autonomy in learning. According to some students (n = 5), autonomous learning was characterised as having freedom to choose learning content and activities, to contribute to lessons, and to freely exchange personal ideas with lecturers and other peers. These students highlighted that when their need for autonomy in learning was nurtured, they would voluntarily contribute to the lesson. For example, students felt free to exchange their ideas with friends and lecturers.

It would be very inspiring if lecturers allow students to freely exchange opinions in the class. As such, I would feel confident to tell what I know to everyone. I also feel free to ask for help for what I do not know. (Female 2, Group 6, FG)

What I like most about learning English in the university is my teachers let me voice my own opinion about the lesson. They respected my opinions. (Female 3, Group 4, FG)
Negative relationship

By contrast, a negative lecturer-student relationship was perceived by the students to have detrimental impacts on students’ motivation to learn English. Seven out of 18 students reported that there were actually times when they felt that they were ignored or left behind by their lecturers in their English learning. These students felt isolated and alienated from their lecturers and her/his lessons.

*It is demotivating to learn with an inconsiderate lecturer. In this semester, as my class is a large-sized one, my teacher often pays attention to few of us. She just calls outstanding students and ignores poor students... It was just like we were not her class members.* (Female 2, Group 5, FG)

*My lecturer is not very attentive. She is not teaching us much as many of our classmates do not want to study, they want to play. I am so bored... I want to learn. Many times I have volunteered to speak English, she has never let me do so.* (Male1, Group 6, FG)

Lecturers’ overly strictness was also highlighted as detrimental to students’ English learning, as evidenced by the responses from 10 out of 18 non-English major students. The following excerpts exemplified their belief.

*She [lecturer] is very strict. She has a lot of rules such as no chatting in class, no eating... If we break a rule, we will suffer...The learning atmosphere is often stuffy. Although I attended every lecture in the previous term, I have been off some of her lessons in this semester.* (Female 3, Group 4, FG)

*My teacher is so strict. In her previous lesson, as I was discussing the lesson with my friends, she thought we were chatting and asked me to go out. She did not let me do a 15 minute test. She often thinks that we are making noise... It seems that her every lesson passes at a snail’s speed. A three-period [two hours] English lesson is as long as a century. I am desperate for it to finish. It is so boring and exhausting.* (Female 2, Group 6, FG)

As shown in the statements above, lecturers were portrayed to be fearful figures that set many rules, and applied strict punishment, making learning an unpleasant experience. Students often felt insecure, incompetent and controlled, and perceived
the lessons as boring, stuffy, exhausting and everlasting. Gradually, the students lost interest in learning English, wanting to quit it.

Furthermore, one third of non-English major students also expressed their discontent when their lecturers were dominating. According to the students, they felt controlled when their lecturers imposed their thoughts on them (i.e., not respecting students’ opinions). For example:

“She [lecturer] really imposed her thoughts on us. She asked us to read a passage and then find the answers for the questions in the reading passages. If my answers were not exactly the same as those in the answer keys, she did not accept mine. I felt I was being controlled to follow her. I was not happy at all. (Female 4, Group 4, FG)

According to students, when they perceived their teachers as dominating, they tended to learn English as a means to an end (i.e., to please their teachers) and because attendance was required. For example, instead of voicing her own idea about the answers to the questions, one student relied on the answer key, believing that it was the only way to get her lecturer’s approval.

"...to make sure that she [lecturer] would accept my answer, I always had to read the answer keys before answering the questions. (Female 4, Group 4, FG)

Other students (n = 5) did not want to engage in the study when perceiving lecturers as controlling. For these students, studying English did not seem to be a rewarding experience for them. In a student’s words,

"She [lecturer] was very controlling. The learning atmosphere was very stuffy. I was sitting in the class and longing for the lesson to end. If I was allowed to not to turn up in English lessons, I would stay home and learn independently. (Female2, Group4, FG)"
**Pedagogical approaches**

**Teaching focus**

As noted by a majority of non-English major students (n = 12), they had fun and a sense of achievement in learning English when they were able to use the language in real-life and practical situations. These situations comprised, for example, communicating with friends, lecturers and foreigners in English, listening to English songs and watching movies in English.

*At first, I could not speak anything and could not even understand what they [foreigners] were saying. Then I managed to understand a bit and spoke a few sentences with them. Being able to communicate with them was fun. I felt really motivated to learn more after that. (Male 1, Group 5, FG)*

*I like watching movies. I feel really excited when I can translate some phrases in the conversation [in the movie] I hear. I have a good feeling when I understand what they [actors] are saying. (Female 1, Group 6, FG)*

Due to their interest in learning English to use the language, learning was stimulating for non-English major students when lecturers focused on practice of English. Once given the chance to practise English communications, they expressed pleasure in engaging deeply in the learning.

*I like practising English speaking skills in the class. I love it when lecturers ask us to discuss a topic in English. [...] my speaking skills are not very good, so I need to focus more on these skills. I know that I am not good at these skills, I am still eager to participate in the activities. (Female 2, Group 4, FG)*

*When I was in the first year, I learned English from Mr 1...He designed very interesting tasks for us to practise English. For example, he let us go outside and asked us to describe the surrounding sceneries such as the hills and the roads in English. We used English communicatively in a real situation. It was so exciting. (Male 1, Group 6, FG)*

While showing appreciation for the chance to practise the language, 10 out of 18 students noted that they had not been given a sufficient period of time to practise English in the class during the last two years in higher education. They added that teaching and learning in the university were still theory-driven or form-focused.
Lecturers were prioritising ‘English theory’ such as English grammar and ‘rote learning’ for vocabulary.

My lecturer often asks us to learn by heart all English structures and vocabulary that she gives us. However, we hardly have chance to use these [structures and vocabulary] in communications. I think they may be for exams only. Without practising these, I just remember these for short time. (Female 2, Group 4, FG)

For the last two years, I have gained almost nothing from English learning... I do not want to study grammar anymore because I did learn a lot for the English exam in the university entrance exam. I want to study English listening and speaking skills. However, we rarely have chance to do it. Now I just go to the class to check for attendance. (Male 3, Group 5, FG)

Evidenced in these excerpts, non-English major students had negative evaluations of their learning, characterised by the imbalance of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’, such as a waste of time, and meaningless experiences. These learning experiences inadequately and barely equipped them with sufficient and necessary skills to become independent communicators in English. Since the learning was perceived as disengaging, they felt demotivated to participate interactively and critically in it.

Use of teaching materials

Teaching materials such as teaching guidelines, schedules and English course books were of major importance for both lecturers and students since these materials outlined the teaching and learning objectives and teaching and learning procedure and tasks, as stated by a student:

Teaching materials such as readily-made course book are great and save a lot of time for lecturers as everything they need are there. (Female 4, Group 4, FG)

However, a majority of students (13 out of 18) revealed that they would like their lecturers to use their teaching materials flexibly. For some students, flexibility referred to lecturers’ careful selection and adaptation of knowledge and activities
outlined in the coursebook to suit students with diverse levels of knowledge and understanding. For example:

*I like my first lecturer the best. He used the English course book but in a very flexible way. While he spent more time on this part of the book if we did not understand, he might leave the other part if he thought it was not necessary for us. Sometimes he did not follow the step in the course book, which is interesting. He knew what we really needed.* (Male 1, Group 4, FG and WR)

*The English course book is not tailored to meet the expectations of everyone. Lecturers need to consider adapting it to suit individual students to engage them in the lesson. However, these are not tailored for every student.* (Female 4, Group 4, FG)

Noticeably, 12 out of 18 students noted that flexible lecturers were able to adopt a range of out-of-coursebook activities such as small chats in English, language games, listening to English songs and watching a video clip in English to change the learning atmosphere and to bring in fun-elements.

*English course books are just one of the learning materials. Lecturers can use the course book to teach us in the class, however, they should not follow everything. They should ask us to do some part at home. In the class, we like to take part in extra activities which are more interesting and motivating. For example, after the first two hours, when students are tired of learning, they should organise some English games or even small chats in English. We would feel something different; therefore, we may get motivated to learn for the rest of the lesson.* (Female 3, Group 4, FG)

*Sometimes he [lecturer] spent some of the class time just to tell us funny stories and chat with us in English. As a result, he was unable to finish his lesson as planned. However, having a change is interesting and motivating some time.* (Male 1, Group 4, FG)

As aforementioned, the teaching materials such as teaching schedules, lesson plans and coursebooks were helpful for both students and teachers. However 13 out of 18 students noted that the lecturers’ over-dependence on these materials had a number of negative influences on students’ English learning. First, students reported that they felt less curious thus less interested in the lesson if their teachers strictly followed
every step in the coursebook, extending nothing new beyond the prescribed knowledge and activities.

She [lecturer] is not conducting many activities for us to practise our English speaking and listening. She just focuses on the course book. I don’t need to ask myself what activity she is going to teach us. I know them already by looking at the course book [...]. Learning is kind of repetition, not something to explore... I don’t want to learn such stuff. I just wait for the lesson to end. (Female3, Group 4, WR)

We are bored of doing online exercises. Those exercises are long and boring, and last for ages. We all complained with her [lecturer] many times. However, she said no just because online exercises are part of our program. My friends and I just copy each other’s answers. (Female 1, Group 5, FG)

Secondly, students argued that their ability to think ‘out of the box’ or think critically might be reduced due to their teachers’ rigidity in using the teaching material.

She teaches me every part of it [coursebook]... not more and not less. We do not have to think further... differently, I meant. (Female2, Group 5, FG)

The students reasoned that if the lecturers were too dependent on the coursebook, learning would not be interactive. Therefore, they had little chance to exchange the knowledge with the teacher and to construct the new knowledge. As a result, their learning was like passive knowledge reception.

My teacher often follows what is prescribed in the program and in the course book. We do not have chance to contribute new things to the lesson... Moreover, she does not appreciate our contribution to the lesson if our opinions are different from what is written or planned in the course book. (Female 1, Group 4, WR)

Instruction, feedback and assessment

According to a considerable number of participants (n = 8), their motivation was also influenced by the way that their lecturers provided instructions and feedback and assessment about their academic performance. Based on the data, two students shared positive learning experiences, associating high motivation with clear,
structured instructions and learning feedback. Specifically, lecturers’ clear instructions helped build up their confidence in learning the language.

*I must say that some of my lecturers are wonderful. Their instructions in the class are clear, which provides us with scaffolding knowledge, enabled us to understand the lesson easily. Before, I thought that I was hopeless about English and did not have any abilities to learn a foreign language. However, when I started to study in the university, I could understand almost everything and feel more confident. They [lecturers] are much better than those in my high school in giving instructions.* (Male 1, Group 6, WR)

*When I was in the first semester, I had chance to learn English from Mrs G. Her teaching method was excellent and very structured. She presented everything in a clear and organised way. She always made sure that we understood everything before asking us to practise the new knowledge. We felt really confident to learn when you know something for sure.* (Female 2, Group 5, FG)

Meanwhile other students (*n* = 6) were not satisfied with the lecturers’ current practices of feedback and assessment. They explained that their lecturers provided them with insufficient and confusing feedback. Such feedback was not aimed improving their future learning.

*It happens quite some time that she [lecturer] asked me to read a reading text and answer the questions. If my answers were not the same as those in the answer keys, she did not accept, just said ‘wrong’ and gave no explanation why they [answers] were wrong. I thought that my answers were correct despite they were not the same. […] I felt really confused.* (Female 4, Group 4, FG)

*When she [lecturer] corrected the test, it was really confusing. First, she said the answer was A. For a while, she said B and last turned to C, without any reason why A, B or C is the answer.* (Female 2, Group 6, FG)

For others, lecturers’ overt emphasis on the practical gains of learning English would reduce their inherent interest in it. A student indicated her dissatisfaction when her lecturer frequently used marks and scores as a measurement to evaluate the students’ academic performance and behaviours. For her, in such a situation, the learning of English happened only to obtain pragmatic benefits such as good marks or the lecturer’s approval. Another student stated that pressure to learn English for marks
was so scary, making the learning a threatening experience for her. This student refused to willingly participate in it. These views are reflected below.

Mrs 5 used marks to judge our performance. She checked our homework and gave marks. I got mark ‘0’ for not finishing homework. I did not do because I found online exercises a waste of time. [...] And she used marks to threaten us to study. She often said “if you don’t do this, you will get mark 0” or “Now who wants to volunteer to get high marks” It was scary. It was learning for marks and for lecturers, which is boring. (Female 4, Group 4, FG and WR)

Whenever she checked someone’s homework, she gave marks. Everyone is scared to death. I am too scared that I did not turn up for some of her lectures despite the fact that I never played truant before. (Female 3, Group 6, FG)

Notably, two students stated that the teaching content did not match with testing, with the tested items (i.e., grammar and vocabulary questions) being different from and/or more difficult than what was taught in class. Since they could not earn good results, they felt disappointed about their current learning.

What I haven’t felt satisfied with learning in the university so far is that my teacher is just teaching me simple grammar, which is completely different from my English tests. (Female 1, Group 4, FG)

The knowledge is so pervasive that we do not know what to learn to prepare for the test. We are so scared and felt so stupid. (Female 4, Group 4, FG)

Impact of Peers on Students’ Motivation

Besides lecturers, for a large number of non-English major students (14/18), peers significantly influenced their motivation to learn English. Interestingly, four participants considered their peers the most important motivational source when they were learning English. Table 6.5 outlines aspects of this influence: relationships with peers and peers’ knowledge of and attitudes towards English.
Table 6.5

Peers’ Motivational Influences – Findings from non-English Major Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer-related factors</th>
<th>Students’ feelings and motivation</th>
<th>Students’ cognition and classroom behaviours/performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship with peers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive relationship</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Willing to support students emotionally and academically</td>
<td>• Feel close and related to other peers</td>
<td>• Voluntarily engage in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Listen empathetically to students’ problems</td>
<td>• Feel learning environment familiar and secure</td>
<td>• Want to engage in learning activities with other peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sympathise with students’ learning failure and celebrate with them the moments of successes</td>
<td>• Feel more competent in learning</td>
<td>• Willingly engage in exploratory knowledge construction with peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Willingly cooperate with students to build a cohesive language learning community</td>
<td>• Feel responsible for learning</td>
<td>• Find learning exciting and stimulating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create a fair competitive learning environment</td>
<td>• Find learning meaningful and useful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Eager to practise the language with students</td>
<td>• Enjoy learning with supportive peers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative relationship</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inconsiderate and ignore the students</td>
<td>• Feeling lonely and isolated</td>
<td>• Find learning threatening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Criticise and ridicule the students publicly</td>
<td>• Feeling embarrassed and incompetent</td>
<td>• Demonstrate disengaged or disruptive learning behaviours (e.g., refuse to engage in interactive and collaborative learning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do not respect the students</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Play truant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peers’ linguistic competence and attitudes towards learning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive attitudes and good linguistic competence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Model in learning</td>
<td>• Feel supported</td>
<td>• Admire peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learning hard and effectively</td>
<td>• Feel motivated when seeing a vivid role model</td>
<td>• Want to learn from and compete with other peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Eager and motivated to learn</td>
<td>• Feel more responsible for own learning</td>
<td>• Develop critical thinking (i.e., reflections, reasoning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative attitudes and poor levels of English proficiency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do not value the learning of English</td>
<td>• Feel discouraged, confused</td>
<td>• Less engaged in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prioritise the learning of their specialised major at the expense of English</td>
<td>• Feel incompetent to obtain success</td>
<td>• Refused to expend further effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attribute L2 success to luck rather than effort and persistence</td>
<td>• Become sceptical about chance to success</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Relationships with peers**

**Positive relationship**

As the journey of a foreign language learner from the starting point to becoming competent in the use of it, according to a majority of non-English major students (n = 13), was a challenging and lifelong journey, it was essential for them to have trusting
and supportive friends. Students (n = 4) emphasised that in a particular situation, only friends were able to listen empathetically to their learning difficulties. For example,

As I live far away from my family, I spend most of my time with my friends. I often share with them my problems. There is actually a time when I feel that I am hopeless and will never be able to learn English well and mastering English would take me ages... My close friend is the only person I could think of. She often listens to my problem very patiently...She makes me believe that I can learn English well as long as I try my best. (Female 2, Group 5, FG)

I find it easy to open my heart to my close friends to tell them about my difficulties in learning English. They know English and may have experienced the same problems. Sharing my problems is the best way for me to overcome them. (Male 2, Group 6, FG)

Besides emotional support, students (n = 7) would feel motivated to learn English if other peers were collaborative to build a supportive learning community. According to the students, a good language learning community was characterised as “everyone is interested in learning and willing to speak English” (Male 2, Group 4, FG); “everyone is ready to practise English communication” (Female 1, Group 6, FG); “friends encourage each other to speak the language” (Male 1, Group 6, FG). The students stated that such a community would promote interdependent learning, ceasing the feeling of being alone in the learning journey. As such, it would provide them with an opportunity to exchange learning experiences and knowledge, give and receive peer feedback and encourage each other to learn. For example,

My class is wonderful this year. We are like a family as everyone is willing to help each other, making learning a nice and relaxed experience. Asking peers for help is probably easier than asking lecturers, who are often busy and need to care for many people. (Female 1, Group 4, FG)

I will be motivated to learn English if my classmates are ready to practise English speaking and listening with me. (Male 2, Group 4, WR)
Furthermore, other students (n = 5) remarked that being a member of the learning community required them to contribute to the shared benefits of that community, which, in this case, were its members’ knowledge advancement and skill improvement. As such, this promoted the students’ self-responsibility for their learning. As noted by one student, she started to spend more time practising this skill just because the person next to her liked speaking English.

In the first semester, I sat next to a male student. He liked speaking English in the class. This prompted me to practise English language speaking skills more so that I could talk to him in English, which made him interested in learning with me. (Female 4, Group 4, FG)

Another student noted that since he belonged to a group, he felt more committed to learning English.

A group of us are very close to each other. We often do things together. Once they asked me if I was interested to learn English in the foreign language centre with them. I said yes and thinking that I would join them for fun only. However, the more I learn English with them, the more I like it. (Male 2, Group 4, FG)

Negative relationship

However, some students (n = 6) shared that in their journey of learning English, they also had unhappy experiences with other English learner peers, which negatively affected their motivation to learn English. A male student in Group 3 described his negative feeling when ridiculed by his peers for not being good at English. This unhappy moment threatened his sense of self-confidence and competence. As a result, learning English became a threatening experience in which he showed unwillingness to pursue any exploratory or critical learning opportunity. As this student reflected:

In this semester, I have a problem with the person sitting next to me. I think he is very good at English. He looks down on me. He often ridicules me, saying that I am stupid. […]. I always have the feeling that I am inferior to
him, and hopeless in learning English. [...] I did not dare to volunteer to say anything in the lesson. I was afraid that he would make fun of me. I feel annoyed and depressed. (Male 2, Group 6, WR)

With a similar view, a female student in Group 3 stated in the focus group that not being respected by other peers was perceived as an inhibiting factor, preventing her from joyful engagement in learning:

_I am sitting next to a good student. However, he is very arrogant and big-headed. He never listens to me. He is very conservative, thinking that he learns English better than me, which upsets me very much. I feel very depressed when I have to work with him. He really makes me bored of learning English._ (Female 4, Group 4, FG)

Other students (n = 4) added that despite the reality that they were learning with other peers and surrounded by other peers, there were moments they felt isolated and lonely. Not being cared for by peers hindered their intention and motivation to seek for peer learning and support. For example:

_I am not very good at English. For quite some time I did not understand the lesson, and don’t know who I should ask for help. There are some good students in my class, however, they are not very close, and not very enthusiastic. They are not willing to help and I don’t feel comfortable to ask them, either. Maybe they are busy or just don’t want to be bothered by me._ (Female 2, Group 4, FG)

**Peers’ knowledge of and attitudes towards English**

Non-English major students stated that learning from peers, in some situations could be easier and more motivating than learning from other significant people, as peers normally share a similar social status. Some students (n = 6) felt motivated to learn with and from peers, particularly those with a sound knowledge of English.

According to the students, such competent peers might represent a future image of an ideal language learner that they would like to become. When working closely with these peers, the students were able to reflect on their own learning, and explore possible new learning styles. As one student stated:
L and M are better at learning English than me. I think they are good examples for me to follow. They are my idols. I want to speak English as fluently as they do in the future. [...] I am really interested in knowing why they are good when studying English with me in the same situation. I think it is more effective to learn from your friends than from your lecturer. (Female 1, Group 3, WR)

The above evidence shows that more competent peers could positively influence their motivation by assisting students in setting more vivid and attainable learning goals in an attempt to realise their dream of being a good language learner. However, others (n = 7) indicated, in a number of situations, friends negatively impacted on their motivation. Specifically, those who were lazy and tended to attribute English learning success to luck or inborn abilities discouraged students from expending their effort in learning English. Furthermore, those who demonstrated negative attitudes toward learning English exerted a negative influence on students’ attitudes towards the learning of English.

My friends are very lazy. They often laugh at me whenever they see me learning English at home. They told me that “Man proposes but God disposes” [Fate and luck are more important than an individual’s effort and determination]. They discouraged me. (Female 2, Group 1, FG)

My friends think that it is not necessary to learn English hard. They always tell me that people need to have aptitude for learning foreign languages, and we don’t. Therefore it is better that we focus on our specialised major. All of us do not often do homework that our lecturers assign us and many time we got mark ‘0’ for not doing homework. We rarely study English outside the class. We don’t feel ashamed very much, because we are all the same, all lazy and hopeless about English. (Female 2, Group 6, FG)

Impact of Parents on Students’ Motivation

The majority of non-English major students (n = 15) acknowledged parental roles in influencing their motivation to learn English. Four female students even considered their parents the strongest motivational sources. However, a majority of these students (n = 7) noted that impacts from parents on their motivation were not as significant as the influences from lecturers and peers. Based on the data of the non-
English major students, parents may influence students’ motivation through parent-child relationships and their attitudes to English as a language and the learning of this language, which are summarised in Table 6.6 and presented in the following section.

Table 6.6
Parents’ Motivational Influences – Findings from non-English Major Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental motivational influences</th>
<th>Students’ feelings and motivation</th>
<th>Students’ cognition and classroom behaviours/performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship with their children</strong></td>
<td><strong>Positive relationship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Negative relationship</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Show love and care for children and their learning of English</td>
<td>• Feel cared by and connected to parents</td>
<td>• Feel lonely, ignored and isolated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Devote their life to children</td>
<td>• Feel respected and valued by parents</td>
<td>• Feel lack of self-confidence in learning English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trust their children</td>
<td>• Feel competent in learning</td>
<td>• Feel controlled and insecure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support emotionally and financially</td>
<td>• Become more responsible for their learning</td>
<td>• Feel hopeless about future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use positive comment</td>
<td>• Believe in own ability to succeed in learning</td>
<td>• Not enjoy learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand their children’s learning difficulties and show sympathy for their failure</td>
<td>• Feel cared by and connected to parents</td>
<td>• Refused to engage in learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Parents’ attitudes towards and understand of the learning of English</strong></th>
<th><strong>Positive attitudes towards English as a language and the learning of English</strong></th>
<th><strong>Negative attitudes towards L2 learning</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Be aware of and value the important roles of English</td>
<td>• Feel like learning English</td>
<td>• Emphasise the learning of other subjects over that of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Keep up to date with the language</td>
<td>• Value the learning of English</td>
<td>• Feel less interested in learning English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feeling supported emotionally</td>
<td>• Do not value the learning of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Feel obligated to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Not eager to participate in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Display disruptive learning behaviors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent-children relationships

Positive relationship

According to a majority of non-English major students (n = 13), a positive parent-children relationship increased students’ motivation to learn English. Some students (n = 7) stated that despite the fact that their parents did not speak English and were unable to help with their English learning difficulties, they supported and cared about their children’s learning of English in their own ways. That is, they bought their children extra English learning materials or provided timely and continual emotional and financial support. Parents’ care and support for their learning were perceived as encouraging, reminding them of their responsibilities to learn well. For example,

*My dad sometimes buys me little things such as a CD to practise English pronunciation. He told me that these things may be helpful for me. [...] I am very happy to receive his presents, little things with great love.* (Female 3, Group 4, FG)

*Although my parents do not know my study as well as the importance of English, they are willing to pay fees of extra courses that I would like to do. [...] It is fine that they believe in me. They encourage me to find extra English courses to study.* (Female 3, Group 5, FG)

One student highly appreciated the endless love and devotion that she received from her parents. Parents’ love and support was perceived as the greatest motivator for her to overcome difficulties in her life.

*I think my parents are a great source of motivation to overcome any difficulty. They have lived a very hard life, trying to give us a better life. I want to get a good job later on to fulfil my filial duty to my parents. To get a job, I need to learn English well. My parents believe in me. I don’t to make them sad and when I feel unmotivated to learn, I often think about my parents and my future.* (Female 2, Group 4, FG)

Negative relationship

However, a small number of non-English major students (n = 3) also indicated that lack of thorough care and understanding from parents could negatively influence
their motivation to learn. One student felt upset since his parents were not close to him, unable to understand him, and therefore, could not share his problems. Furthermore, disparaging comments from his parents had a negative effect on him, thwarting his sense of competence for learning.

*My parents do not often care for me. They do not know about my study, either. They rarely ask me about my study, and do not care if I have any difficulty in my learning of my specialised subjects, let alone English. However, sometimes they say that I am lazy and do not have a sense of responsibility in anything. It is so discouraging.* (Male 2, Group 4, WR)

For another student, being compared with other people in terms of her ability to learn English was stressful. As she stated,

*My dad always said that his friends’ daughter speaks English ‘as fast as wind’ [very fluently], whereas I do not. […] One day while he was watching TV, he saw an English sentence on the screen and asked me to translate it to Vietnamese… and I couldn’t. He said that he lost hope for me and he wasted money for me and would not give me money to learn English in the language centre anymore. He refused to understand me. To tell the truth, I felt embarrassed for not being as good as that friend, and do not know what to do to please my dad.* (Female 2, Group 6, FG)

Parents’ attitudes towards English and the learning of English

Parents also influenced students’ motivation to learn English through their attitude toward the language and the learning of this language. A considerable number of non-English major students (n = 7) felt more motivated to learn if their parents had positive attitudes toward English and valued their learning of English. According to these students, parents with such positive attitudes were more likely to provide their children with better support, both emotionally and financially. For example:

*My parents understand the importance of English. They often encourage me to learn English. They keep telling me that I should do extra English courses in the language centre. They will pay fees for me regardless of how much the course will cost.* (Female 1, Group 6, FG)
My parents always told me that English is now an international language and learning English is beneficial for my future job. [...] As such, I am more aware of the important role of English for me. (Male 2, Group 1, FG)

Although a majority of non-English major students revealed that their parents had positive attitudes towards English and valued the learning of it, it was noted that two students shared a different view. The first student stated that her parents did not know about the role of English, while the second one’s parents valued learning another foreign language but not English. In both cases, these parents were unable to motivate their children to learn English better.

My parents live in the countryside and they do not know the importance of English. When I was in high school, they always asked me to study Maths and said that Maths was important for me to pass the university entrance exam. As such, I did not expend my effort in learning English... My English now is very poor. (Female 1, Group 6, FG)

In my hometown, Chinese is more popular than English so my dad told me to learn Chinese. I also think if I return to my hometown to work as a tour guide, it is better if I can use Chinese. I started to learn Chinese for five months. (Female 2, Group 6, FG)

Conclusion

The objective of collecting the qualitative data through the focus groups and students’ written responses was to understand what types of motivation English major and non-English students reported when learning English, and whether English major and non-English major students differed in their motivation, which addressed Research Questions 1 and 2.

RQ1. What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?
The findings indicated that both English major and non-English major students indicated a range of reasons/motivation for learning English. Most of the English major students wanted to learn English to pursue a prestigious job, and personal development. A great number of them were learning English to satisfy their interest and passion to learn English to communicate in English with other non-Vietnamese people in the global era; and or to know more about English speaking countries, cultures and people. Some of them were forced to learn English to pursue a university pathway. A small number of the English major students were not able to see the importance of learning English.

Non-English major students reported a similar set of reasons for learning English. In particular, the majority were learning English as it would assist them to enhance good future prospects and personal development. Many of them were learning English because of their interests in learning English communication. Some of the non-English major students felt obligated to learn English for exams and scores and some even did not express a reason why they were learning English in the university.

RQ2. What are the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students?

There were a number of similarities and differences in motivation to learn English between English major and non-English major students. Regarding the similarities, both groups shared the same set of reasons for learning English and were most motivated to learn English to gain a prestigious job. For both groups, when learning English was attributed to interest and passion, it was perceived as engaging and enjoyable. In contrast, learning English became a demotivating and threatening
experience when they felt obligated to learn English for exams, scores and to please others.

More English major students were learning English because of their interest than their non-English major peers. Moreover, fewer English major students felt obligated to learn English than their non-English major peers. In addition, while for English major students, the external pressure that forced them to learn English was from parents (i.e., to learn English to please their parents), English major students’ pressure was mainly from exams and lecturers.

Another objective of Study 2 was to examine students’ perceptions of how lecturers, parents and peers may influence their motivation to learn English, which aimed to explore ways to improve students’ motivation to learn English. This objective addressed the following research question:

RQ5. In what ways do lecturers, peers and parents influence Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English?

Regarding the influences of lecturers on their motivation to learn English, both English major and non-English major students perceived that their motivation to learn English was most influenced by their lecturers of English through the relationships with lecturers, and lecturers’ pedagogical approaches. To motivate students to learn English, it was important that lecturers connected with students, focusing on practice of English, making use of fun elements, and using constructive feedback.

Interestingly, for English major students only, lecturers’ levels of English proficiency greatly influenced their motivation to learn English. Those with higher levels of
English proficiency and demonstrated sound knowledge of English language were considered role models that encouraged them to learn English better. However, this theme was not evident from the findings from non-English major students as they reported that their motivation was not influenced by lecturers’ levels of English proficiency.

In respect of the influences that peers had on students’ motivation to learn English, both English major and non-English major believed peers exerted both positive and negative influences on students’ motivation to learn through their relationships, their knowledge of English and their attitudes to the learning of English. As one of the most significant companions in the students’ journey of learning English, peers promoted students’ interest and motivation to learn English by building a good rapport with them and creating a cohesive learning environment. Furthermore, peers modelled positive attitudes towards learning thereby setting a good example of how good language learners should behave.

Finally, for both groups of English learners, parents had an important influence on their motivation to learn English. When cared for, trusted and supported by their parents, students became more responsible of their own learning and more confident in their abilities to learn English. Both groups reported to have higher levels of intrinsic motivation when feeling connected to their parents. Furthermore, parents’ positive attitudes to English made English major students believe that they had made the right decision to learn English as a major. For non-English major students, when parents valued the learning of English, they became more interested in learning and tended to expend more effort in learning English.
In summary, Study 2’s findings revealed that there were both similarities and differences between English major and non-English major students regarding their motivation to learn English and their perceptions of the influences that lecturers, peers and parents had on their motivation. The meanings of these findings are discussed within the theoretical framework and the context of the present research in Chapter 7.
Chapter 7: Discussion

Overview

This chapter discusses key findings of the present research in relation to the theoretical framework, relevant literature, and the Vietnamese higher education context. The quantitative study (Study 1) aimed to identify the types of motivation exhibited by English major and non-English major students when learning English and to determine whether English major students and non-English major students differed in their English learning motivation. Study 1 also sought to ascertain whether the two groups differed in their levels of a number of important motivational variables (motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness), and examined the correlation patterns of motivation and these variables for English major and non-English major students. The qualitative study’s aims (Study 2) were two-fold. First, it explored in greater depth what motivated English major and non-English major students to study English, and whether the two groups differed in their motivation to learn English. Second, Study 2 investigated how lecturers, peers and parents influence students’ motivation to learn English.

Research Question 1

A key objective of the present research was to understand the types of motivation that were exhibited by English major and non-English major students when they learn English in Vietnamese higher education. Thus the first research question asked “What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?” This question was addressed in both Studies 1 and 2.
As previously mentioned, English major students are those who chose to study English as their main focus in their degree. The quantitative study (Study 1) found that English major students reported to have low levels of amotivation (no motivation), moderate levels of obligation/avoidance motivation, high level of personal/professional development motivation and moderately high level of intrinsic motivation. When further unpacked in the focus groups (Study 2), these findings were general supported. Specifically, Study 2 revealed that a small number of English students (3 out of 18; 16.67%) did not see the importance of learning English, while a majority of them (12 out of 18; 66.67%) believed that preparing for their future professions was the most important reason for them to learn English. In addition, a large number of English major students (10 out of 18; 55.56%) were learning English to satisfy their interest and passion in the language, and a number of them (6 out of 18; 33.33%) were learning English to respond the external pressure from their parents and lecturers. Taking the findings from both studies, it can be concluded that the majority of English major students exhibited three types of motivation for learning English: obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation.

The influences of globalisation and new social and political context on English major students’ motivation to learn English

Of the above findings, the finding that English major students were strongly motivated to learn English to prepare for their future profession and to develop themselves is expected. It is understandable when this finding was explicated in the focus groups (Study 2) in which English major students expressed positive attitudes toward the jobs that English major graduates can apply for such as interpreters, translators and teachers of English. In their beliefs, these jobs were prestigious and...
well-paid. As learning English is associated with important instrumental benefits (i.e., money, and position), it was perceived by English major students as an attractive and important study major. This situation may be due to the role of English as an international language in Vietnam as a result of globalisation (Dang et al., 2013). Different from the Vietnamese society before 1986 which tightly closed its door to the world, the contemporary Vietnam is now more open and in the process of globalisation. Globalisation has connected Vietnam with other communities who consider English the common language. Globalisation has created a number of jobs which requires people’s good English proficiency such as interpreters and translators, and offer them good pay (Phan, 2010). As such, it can be inferred that globalisation has constructed Vietnamese people’s beliefs of the instrumental benefits of learning English (Ngan, 2011). Therefore many students have been motivated to learn English (as a major) to pursue good jobs (Lam, 2011).

**The connection between English major students’ intrinsic motivation and their choice to study English**

The finding that English major students endorsed moderately high levels of intrinsic motivation, the second highest level (compared with the levels of other types of motivation identified for English major students the present research) is understandable given English is their major and they chose to study English possibly because they liked it. This finding support Phan’s (2010) research study as in her research the English major student participants enjoyed themselves when learning more about the English language and English speaking cultures. When further exploring this in the focus groups, English major students indicated that it was important for them to have intrinsic motivation when learning English. When intrinsically motivated, they enjoyed the learning, perceiving English learning as a pleasurable experience. Furthermore, intrinsically motivated students persisted for a
longer time. This finding supports self-determination theory in that intrinsic motivation is beneficial for second language acquisition (Deci & Ryan, 2012). This finding indicates that English major students expressed a strong desire to feel intrinsically motivated in learning English (Tran, 2007).

The influences of Vietnamese culture on English major students’ motivation to learn English

However, unexpectedly, English major students who chose to study English demonstrated moderate levels of obligation/avoidance motivation (i.e., feeling obligated to learn English and learning English just to avoid negative feelings and bad consequences such as bad marks). Explanation for this was found in the qualitative study (Study 2). A number of students stated that even though they were not interested in learning English, they had to choose this major to please their parents. Others mentioned the pressure to learn English to please their lecturers despite the fact that they did not feel engaged in the lesson which they perceived as uninteresting. This finding and students’ further explanation in the qualitative study reflect Vietnamese collectivist culture which emphases the sense of belonging to a community (i.e., family, class), the hierarchical power in the Vietnamese society and the importance of being harmonious with significant people in their community (i.e., parents and lecturers) (Hofstede, 1980). As collectivists, Vietnamese people do not “claim rights which would affirm individual interests in opposition to those of the in-group” (Williams & Burden, 1999, p. 5). In the situation where their rights and personal goals (i.e., study a major rather than English) are different from other ingroups’ members, they tend to accept the advice or decision of the significant other who has the higher power (i.e., parents and lecturers). Conforming to the groups’ norms and obeying significant people’s orders are believed to be their duties and the best way to maintain good relationships with these people (Tran, 2006; Triandis,
1995). This cultural value may explain why some English major students engaged in learning English despite the fact learning English is not their passion. This finding also reflects another important cultural value that most Vietnamese people have adhered to is to pay filial/duty to their ancestors and parents. Obeying orders and striving for academic success (i.e., getting high exam scores, going to university) are expected for students to pay duty to their parents (McLeod & Nguyen, 2001).

It should be noted that according to self-determination theory, obligation/avoidance motivation and personal/professional development motivation characterise extrinsic motivation since both types of motivation are not “regulated by the pleasure of engaging in the challenging and competence-building activity per se, but rather by factors apart from the activity” (Noels, 2001a, p. 101). Furthermore, based on the size and magnitude of correlations between four factors (amotivation, obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development and intrinsic motivation, see more in Chapter 5), along with the qualitative finding (Study 2), it can be inferred that for English major students in this research obligation/avoidance motivation referred to the less self-determined type of extrinsic motivation. Previous studies (for example Comanaru & Noels, 2009; Noels, 2005; Noels et al., 2001) reported that less self-determined types of motivation do not predict high levels of long-term effort and achievement. As such, it is argued that the students who have high levels of obligation/avoidance motivation are less likely to expend high levels of long term effort in the English learning.

The findings suggest that English major students were mostly extrinsically motivated when learning English in higher education in Vietnam, which lends support to Phan’s (2010) qualitative case study, which examined why technical English major students (n = 12 female students) studied English. Her study’s findings revealed that although
the participant students demonstrated intrinsic motivation to learn English, the majority were mostly motivated to learn English to get good marks and prepare for future career prospects.

However, the findings appear to contradict Tran and Baldauf Jr’s (2007) claim that Vietnamese English major students are more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated to learn English. The findings also conflict with Tran’s (2007) argument that English major students learn English primarily because they love to be immersed in the language and want to discover the beauty of the language itself. While these findings are somewhat unexpected, as English major students had proactively chosen to learn English as the focus of their degree, they could be explained, considering the context of where these English major students are learning English. As previously mentioned, learning English in Vietnam has been associated with instrumental benefits (i.e., good exam scores, pathways to international education degree programs, good jobs and career promotion). It is argued that the university, lecturers and parents may focus too much on the instrumental gains, and this may be undermining the English major students’ intrinsic motivation to learn English (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000, 2012). Another possibility is that, as the status of English has been improved in Vietnam, English language is becoming a popular and desirable study major at university. Recently, besides a number of prestigious and longstanding foreign language specialising universities (e.g., the University of Foreign Language and International Studies and Hanoi University), an increasing number of universities have started to provide training in English language majors. To attract students, some universities have even chosen and admitted students, including those who received very low university entrance exam scores (e.g., English exam scores) (MoET, 2012). As a result, many students who do not have an adequate
knowledge of English may be accepted to study in an English major program. These students may feel incompetent when learning English, and according to self-determination theory, this lack of competence may lead them to feel less intrinsically motivated to learn English (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2002).

Types of Motivation Reported by Non-English Major Students

While Vietnamese non-English major students have enrolled in a degree with a major other than English (such as Engineering, and Accounting), they are required to learn English as a compulsory subject in their degree. In the present study, non-English major students’ motivational patterns were similar to those for English major students. In particular, Study 1 indicated that non-English major students had high levels of personal/professional development motivation and moderate levels of intrinsic motivation, moderate levels of obligation/avoidance motivation, and low levels of amotivation. These findings were generally supported by Study 2 as the majority of non-English major students (12 out of 18; 66.67 %) believed that the most important reason for learning English was to prepare for their future prospects. Only a small number of students (3 out of 18; 16, 66 %) did not perceive the importance of learning English. Furthermore, learning English for personal development (4 out of 18; 22.22%), for interest and passion (6 out of 18; 33.33 %), and learning English as a way to respond to external pressure (8 students) were mentioned by non-English major students in the qualitative study. Based on both studies’ findings, it can be concluded that non-English major students exhibited three major types of motivation: personal/professional development motivation, intrinsic motivation and obligation/avoidance motivation.
The influences of globalisation and new social and political contexts on non-English major students’ motivation

The findings that non-English major students who are required to learn English endorsed low levels of amotivation and moderate levels of obligation/avoidance motivation seem to portray somewhat unexpected findings, and are not in line with self-determination theory. That is, according to self-determination theory, when being forced to engage in a task, an individual may feel highly obligated or even have no motivation to perform the task (Ryan & Deci, 2002). The findings also do not support Warden and Lin’s (2000) study, which found that Taiwanese non-English major students who were required to learn English demonstrated strong levels of obligation and pressure termed as ‘required motivation’. The present study’s findings are also not in line with Warden and Lin’s (2000) and McClelland’s (2000) argument that many Asian non-English major learners are studying English simply because English is mandatory.

The fact that non-English major students reported to have low levels of amotivation and moderate levels of obligation/avoidance motivation may be due to two possibilities. First, given the international status of English, along with opportunities as well as challenges for non-English major students to learn English well to get access to the latest development in their study majors (Wang, 2008) and to prepare for future professions (To, 2010), it could be inferred that the participating students understood that what they were required to learn was aligned to their personal goals (i.e., jobs and advances in learning) (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Second, according to self-determination theory, an individual’s motivation may change as a result of internal factors (individuals’ growth and development) and external factors (influences from teachers/lecturers and peer). It is possible that on the one hand, students feel obligated to learn English, as they are required to learn a foreign language on top of
their specialised academic subjects, and on the other hand they may be interested in exploring interesting aspects of English, including communication and English speaking cultures and countries (i.e., being able to communicate in English) (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

The present research’s finding, that non-English major students were mostly motivated to learn English for personal/professional development, aligns with Tran and Baldauf Jr’s (2007) argument that Vietnamese non-English major students are highly extrinsically motivated to learn English (Deci & Ryan, 2012). The study also lends support to other studies (e.g., Bradford, 2007; Hayes, 2014; Köseoğlu, 2013; Warden & Lin, 2000), conducted in non-English countries both regionally and globally where findings revealed that non-English major students were strongly driven to learn English for instrumental benefits. Specifically, studies undertaken in three of Vietnam’s neighbouring countries of Taiwan (2000), Thailand (2014) and Indonesia (2007) demonstrated a strong instrumental motivation among higher education students to learn English to prepare for their participation in the international job market. In Turkey, a country geographically distant from Vietnam, Köseoğlu (2013) also found that Turkish university students’ main motivation to learn English was to find a well-paid job. This situation is understandable considering the important status of English in non-English speaking countries like Vietnam, Turkey and Taiwan in the global era. In Vietnam, English is identified the most important foreign language. As highlighted in a number of legal documents, the Vietnamese government, the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training require students (i.e., non-English major students) to acquire a certain level of English proficiency sufficient enough to communicate effectively in an international working environment (see more in, for example MoET, 2003, 2004; MoET, 2008b).
Furthermore, having good English proficiency is the first requirement that employers seek in a job candidate (Phan, 2010). Globalisation, the international status of English, and employers’ requirements have exerted strong influences on students’ beliefs and motivation to learn English (Ngan, 2011). As such, it is not surprising when some non-English major students clarified this finding in the qualitative study (Study 2) that learning English (but not their study majors such as Engineering) is one of their first priorities to prepare for their future jobs.

**The influences of learning contexts on non-English major students’ intrinsic motivation to learn English**

One of the most interesting findings relating to the types of motivation reported by non-English major students is that non-English major students in this research also indicated moderate levels of intrinsic motivation to learn English. It appears that to some extent, non-English major students felt curious and excited to learn more about English as well as about English-speaking countries and cultures (Deci & Ryan, 2000). However, this finding seems to contrast with Tran and Baldauf Jr’s (2007) claim that many non-English major students in Vietnam do not demonstrate any interest in learning English. It is intriguing to consider why participants in the present study endorsed a moderate level of intrinsic motivation, ranked only second after an extrinsic motivation for personal and professional development. Self-determination theory proposes that an individual’s intrinsic motivation may be nurtured or deprived by social and contextual factors. The findings may be due to the fact that in the global era, English is seen as important in Vietnam that the Vietnamese government is investing both money and effort in improving the quality of the teaching and learning of English in higher education. Specifically, the university where the participants were learning has invested in English learning and teaching for the past few years. In particular, the university has equipped each English classroom with
English-learning aided equipment such as computers and projectors. In addition, the 
lecturers of English in this university have been sent to staff development to improve 
their English teaching skills. As such, it could be inferred that the participants may 
feel intrinsically motivated to learn English given the above development in teaching 
and learning of English (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

It should be highlighted that of three major types of motivation exhibited by non-
English major students (obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional 
development motivation and intrinsic motivation), obligation/avoidance motivation 
and personal/professional development motivation can be considered two subtypes of 
extrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 1991). Similarly to their English major peers, when 
further discussing about their motivation in the focus groups, non-English major 
students perceived obligation/avoidance motivation as being detrimental to their 
learning of English. Based on the qualitative findings, along with the size and 
magnitudes of correlations between four factors (four types of motivation, see more 
in Chapter 5), it is argued in this present research that for non-English major 
students, obligation/avoidance motivation refers to a less self-determined type of 
motivation or controlled motivation, outlined in self-determination theory (Deci & 
Ryan, 1985).

**Research Question 2**

Another objective of the present study was to examine whether English major 
students and non-English major students differed in levels of four types of 
motivation outlined earlier, which addressed RQ2 “What are the similarities and 
differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students?”. 
This question was addressed in both Study 1 and Study 2.
The findings from both Study 1 and Study 2 revealed that the English major and non-English major students were similar in the sense that they both valued learning English in order to get some instrumental benefits, including getting good English exam results or preparing for future professions as these benefits were perceived to be of critical importance for them (Noels et al., 2001). However, the quantitative analysis in Study 1 indicated that English major and non-English major students differed in their levels of some types of motivation endorsed in their English learning. In particular, English major students reported significantly lower levels of obligation/avoidance motivation and significantly higher levels of intrinsic motivation than non-English major students. These findings reflect the differences between English major and non-English major students in their learning.

As English major students have made the choice to learn English as their major, they may have prepared themselves both psychologically and cognitively for their future learning. The qualitative findings also indicated that a great number of English major students \((n = 10)\) chose to learn English as they were genuinely interested in it, and felt competent when learning English. On the other hand, non-English major students have not chosen to learn English. Once starting their degree in the university, they are required to learn English. Therefore, Le and Barnard (2009) and Nguyen (2011) claimed that many non-English major students lack adequate preparedness for their learning. The qualitative study supported this claim as some English major students \((n = 8)\) felt incompetent learning English. Some non-English major students considered learning English a hassle that got in the way of them studying what they really liked to study (i.e., their study major). Such students were unable to set any goals for their future English learning. Self-determination theory highlights that when people are able to have a choice of what they want to do and feel able to
complete the task, they voluntarily and enjoyably engage in the task. By contrast, when required to engage in a task, they may feel obligated to complete the task. (Deci & Ryan, 2012). As such, it is possible to conclude that being able to make a choice to learn what they intended to learn, along with a sense of competence in learning English might explain why English major students felt less obligatory and more interested in their present English study than their non-English major peers (Deci & Ryan, 2012; Tran & Baldauf Jr., 2007).

Research Question 3

An additional objective of the present research program was to understand whether English major and non-English major students differed in their levels of effort (motivational intensity), autonomy, competence and relatedness. Research question 3 asked: ‘What are the similarities and differences in the levels of effort, autonomy, competence and relatedness between English major and non-English major students?’ This research question was addressed in Study 1. However, Study 2 also provided some clarification for the findings.

Motivational Intensity

The English major students in the present study scored significantly higher on motivational intensity. As motivational intensity refers to the levels of effort individuals expend in their learning, this finding suggests that the English major students expend more effort in their English learning than their non-English major peers. This finding is as expected considering the learning context of the two groups. For English major students, English is the main focus and as they stated in the focus groups, they had approximately 16 class hours per week to learn English. Meanwhile, for non-English major students, English is just a minor subject in their wider degree and they only spent a few hours (i.e., approximately four hours a week)
to learn it. As such, it is not surprising why English major students scored higher on motivational intensity.

According to self-determination theory, individuals who have lower levels of controlled motivation (amotivation and obligatory/avoidance motivation) and higher levels of intrinsic motivation tend to spend more effort on the task and persist in the task for a longer period of time than their counter-parts (Noels, 2009). Given the fact that English major students had significantly lower levels of obligation/avoidance motivation and higher levels of intrinsic motivation than non-English major students, as discussed above, the findings were consistent with self-determination theory.

However, it should be noted that both English major students and non-English major students’ levels of effort were only at the moderate levels. When further discussed this finding in the qualitative study, the considerable number of English major students believed that they had not spent enough time and effort learning English. These students also stated that many times they lost motivation and did not want to spend further effort in learning English. Similarly, a great number of non-English major students admitted that they rarely studied English at home. Yet, Gardner (2010) claimed that effort is one of the most important factors in learning a second/foreign language, and putting in little or no effort is synonymous with little learning and minimal success. A number of empirical studies (for example, Comanaru & Noels, 2009; Gardner et al., 1997; Noels et al., 2001) have confirmed that effort is one of the most essential factors contributing to success in second language learning. As such, it can be inferred that both English major and non-English major students may need to spend more effort in their learning of English in order to achieve high levels of English proficiency (Comanaru & Noels, 2009).
Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness

The findings revealed that both English major and non-English major students demonstrated moderate levels of autonomy, competence and relatedness. Although English major students scored higher on all three psychological factors than their non-English major peers, they only scored significantly higher on competence.

According to self-determination theory, people feel autonomous when having freedom of choices (Deci & Ryan, 1985). As such, these findings are interesting, as one might expect that English major students, who choose to study English and have been given chances to make choices during their learning (i.e., choosing their learning topics to present in the English communications lessons), would score significantly higher on autonomy than their non-English major peers.

According to Littlewood (1999), the concept of autonomy needs to be interpreted with care in Asian cultures, particularly those influenced by Confucian philosophies and ideologies like Vietnam. In collectivist cultures, autonomy does not necessarily imply independence. Rather, as Chirkov and colleagues (2003) posit, interdependence may enhance autonomy. They argued that for Asian students making a choice for learning is important, however, making a meaningful and relevant choice entails something much more important. Individuals may need to seek guidance and support from their reference groups to make such a choice. The fact that English major students have the freedom to choose what to learn may not necessarily predict high levels of autonomy as reflected by the study’s findings. Rather, the findings suggest that given the fact that starting to learn a foreign language and being competent in its use may be a long and challenging journey, English major students may need more guidance and support from significant others.
(e.g., lecturers, friends and parents) so that they will be able to make choices in their learning, perform tasks that they have chosen, and attain desired learning outcomes.

The finding that English major students felt significantly more competent than non-English major students was expected. In the qualitative study, some English major students shared that they chose to study English as a major as they felt competent when learning English. As such, there is a strong likelihood that English major students who choose to study English as their major no doubt start their degree more competent than non-English major students. Furthermore, since English major students are more preparedness for their learning of English than non-English major peers (Tran & Baldauf Jr., 2007), they may feel more self-confident as well as self-efficacious about their present learning. Moreover, English major students may invest more time and effort in their present learning as the task is the major focus of their degree. This was confirmed in Study 1 in which it was found that English major students reported to have higher levels of motivational intensity than their non-English major peers. However, for non-English major students, English is a minor component in their wider degrees. They have to share time in learning English with their specialised subjects. The present study argues that adequate preparedness for learning as well as more adequate investment in learning English may be able to explain why the English major participants felt significantly more competent than their non-English major peers.

As construed by self-determination theory, competence refers to the feeling of being able to complete a task successfully. Being competent in doing a task encourages individuals to initiate the task, expend effort and persist with it (Vallerand, 1997). Furthermore, competence is connected with two other psychological constructs, autonomy and relatedness. The more individuals feel competent in engaging in a
task, the more autonomous they tend to be in participating in it and the more they feel related to significant others involved in the task. As such, it is possible to argue that the feeling of competence may contribute to autonomous motivation (e.g., intrinsic motivation) (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

**Research Question 4**

Another objective of the present study was to explore the relationships between different types of motivation with other important factors in second/foreign language learning, including motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness. The objective addressed RQ4: “What are the relationships between motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for English major and non-English major students?” This question was answered using the quantitative data in Study 1.

**Correlations between Motivation and Motivational Intensity**

Pearson’s product-moment correlations revealed a number of similarities for both English major and non-English major students. Specifically, for both English major and non-English major students, amotivation was significant and negatively correlated with motivational intensity, suggesting that individuals who have little or no motivation in learning English are likely to spend less effort on an English learning task. Furthermore, intrinsic motivation was positively and most strongly correlated with motivational intensity, meaning that the more the students find English learning tasks enjoyable, challenging and meaningful, the more effort they put into performing the task. These findings are expected and lend support to the previous studies that have drawn on self-determination theory (Noels, 2001a, 2005; Noels et al., 2001; Noels et al., 1999; Noels et al., 2000; Vandergrift, 2005; Wang, 2008) in that intrinsic motivation is most consistently associated with positive
learning outcomes (higher levels of effort and better engagement). As empirical research evidence (for example, Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) has shown that motivational intensity, which measures levels of effort, is the best predictor of achievement and success in second language acquisition, the present study argues that intrinsic motivation indirectly predicts achievement and success in learning English (Noels, 2009). The present study also provides strong evidence to confirm that even in a English learning context where attaining instrumental benefits is strongly highlighted as it is in Vietnam, individuals still feel a strong desire to learn English out of their intrinsic motivation in order to sustain the learning task and to gain desired outcomes.

However, some differences were identified regarding the correlations between the remaining types of extrinsic motivation (obligation/avoidance motivation and personal/professional motivation) and motivational intensity for English major and non-English major students. Most interestingly, for English major students, both types of extrinsic motivation were positively but not significantly correlated with motivational intensity. As such, it can be inferred that for English major students, these types of motivation may not significantly result in long term effort. Meanwhile, for non-English major students, both types of extrinsic motivation were significantly and positively correlated with motivational intensity. The finding that higher levels of obligation/avoidance motivation was associated with higher levels of motivational intensity appears to contradict self-determination theory, which construes that only more self-determined types of motivation predict motivation intensity (Comanaru & Noels, 2009). However, this finding may indicate that as learning English is mandatory for non-English major students, they may demonstrate strong controlled motivation (motivation resulting from pressure) to spend time and effort to learn and
pass the exam. However, as the students explained in the focus groups (Study 2) when they felt obligated to learn English, for example to pass the exam, they tended to finish the task as a means to an end. Once the task was completed, they might not want to spend any further effort in learning English.

The study further explored the relationships between different types of motivation and motivational intensity at multivariate levels by conducting two multiple regressions separately for English major and non-English major students. The results were consistent for both groups of English learners in that only amotivation and intrinsic motivation significantly predicted motivational intensity. Specifically, high levels of amotivation predicted lower levels of motivational intensity. By contrast, higher levels of intrinsic motivation predicted higher levels of motivational intensity. As such, the findings suggest that although at univariate levels (pair wise correlations) there existed some differences in the correlations between motivation and motivational intensity as outlined earlier, at multivariate levels, for both English major students and non-English major students only amotivation and intrinsic motivation were significant predictors of motivational intensity.

**Correlations between Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness and Motivation**

One of the most interesting findings for both English major and non-English major students was that relatedness was significantly and positively correlated with personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation. Noticeably, for English major students relatedness was the only psychological need variable that significantly and positively correlated with personal/professional development and intrinsic motivation. This finding indicates that when students felt connected to significant people in their reference groups (e.g., lecturers, peers), they became more
aware of the importance of learning English to pursue their future profession and to
develop personally and to become more interested in learning English. It seems that
relatedness is an important psychological need for both English major and non-
English major students. Relatedness was even perceived as the most important
psychological need by English major students. This finding can be explained
considering Vietnamese culture. As mentioned earlier, due to collectivism,
Vietnamese people tend to connect to others in the community or group to seek for
support and guidance in order to survive, develop and grow. It is a common belief
that in their life, Vietnamese people spend a lot of time building good relationships
with significant people in their community (i.e., class, work place). (Tran, 2008) For
them, the feeling of being cared for and approved by the in-group members is
essential, which greatly contributes to their self-confidence and performance later on
(i.e., academic performance, work performance). Based on this cultural value, it is
argued that Vietnamese students regardless of their study majors (i.e., English major
or non-English major) value a sense of being cared for and supported by significant
others (i.e., lecturers). In the environment where this need is satisfied, students may
feel secure and become self-confident and competent learning English. As such, they
may want to challenge their ability and satisfy their curiosity and enjoy the learning
of English, which, according to self-determination theory, characterises intrinsic
motivation to learn English (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2012).

Another interesting and unexpected finding was that while autonomy and
competence were both significantly and positively correlated with
personal/professional development motivation and intrinsic motivation for non-
English major, the similar finding was not found for English major students. This
finding suggests that for non-English major students only, autonomy and competence
were important factors, contributing to students’ intrinsic motivation (and personal/professional development motivation).

According to self-determination theory, autonomy and competence are inherent components of intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Research conducted in different second language learning context has lent support to this claim. For example Noels et al.’s (2001) study in Canada, Kim’s (2007) in Korea and He’s (2009) study about Chinese learners learning English as a second language in the USA. All these studies emphasised the important roles of autonomy and competence in supporting intrinsic motivation. As such, the finding for non-English major students is in line with self-determination theory and lends support to the research framed within self-determination theory while that for English major students seems to be at odds with self-determination theory. Considering the above finding regarding the role of autonomy and competence for English major and non-English major, it is necessary to understand the reasons why the two groups had such different perceptions about the roles of autonomy and competence.

The differences in the finding for two groups may be due to two possibilities. First, English major students might have perceived that they had autonomy as they chose to study English as a major. In the focus groups, English major students also indicated that they were given the chance by lecturers to choose certain learning tasks (i.e., choose a speaking task to present in the class). However, non-English major students did not make an autonomous choice to study English, and were instead instructed to study the language as part of their wider degree. When further discussing in focus groups, non-English major students claimed that lecturers rarely provided them with a chance to choose their favourite learning tasks. As mentioned in Study 6, non-English major students emphasised that making choices in learning
motivated them to learn English. As such, this research argues that autonomy
(making choices in learning) is more important for non-English major students than
for English major students.

Secondly, English major students might have assumed that they had the ability to
learn English, which may be one reason why they chose that major. This belief in
one’s ability equates to a sense of competence when studying the language.
However, non-English major students, who have chosen to study an entirely different
major (such as accounting or engineering), may have limited ability in English, and
as such feel a lack of competence. For non-English major students therefore, their
perceived levels of competence were very important. If they felt they were good at
learning English (increased sense of competence), they would feel more motivated in
this learning. However if they struggled with learning English (low levels of
competence), this would reduce their motivation, and even result in their
demotivation (Tran & Baldauf Jr., 2007).

Research Question 5

The final objective of the present research program was to understand English major
and non-English major students’ perceptions of how lecturers, peers and parents
influence their motivation to learn English, which assisted in identifying the ways
that these significant people may enhance the students’ motivation to learn English.
The final research question asked: RQ5: ‘In what ways do lecturers, peers and
parents influence Vietnamese students’ motivation to learn English?’
Impact of Lecturers on Students’ Motivation

Building a positive lecturer-student relationship to support intrinsic motivation

The findings from both English major and non-English major students revealed that their motivation to learn English was strongly influenced by the lecturer-student relationship. Noticeably, almost all students noted that when this relationship was positive (i.e., when lecturers cared for the students), they felt more connected to the lecturers, enjoyed the lessons, and were deeply and willingly engaged in the lessons. According to self-determination theory, when people participate in the task willingly and joyfully, they demonstrate intrinsic and/or self-determined extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that lecturers supporting students’ need for relatedness (i.e., showing care for students) may foster intrinsic motivation and self-determined extrinsic motivation to learn English (Deci & Ryan, 2012).

The finding provides more evidence to support Phan’s (2010) contention that lecturers’ closeness and care for students significantly motivated students to learn English. Whilst Phan only focused on English major students who spent long class hours with their lecturers, the present research program included non-English major students. As such, the present research program added to Phan’s (2010) finding to argue that Vietnamese higher education students, regardless of their majors, expressed a desire to be close to and cared for by their lecturers as they strove to learn English.

This finding also lends support to a number of studies (not necessarily framed within self-determination theory) which aimed to identify the most effective motivational strategies for teaching a second language. For example, in Astuti’s (2013) study in
the Indonesian foreign language learning context, teachers believed that they would motivate school students to learn English with their encouragement and respect for their students. In their study in Taiwan, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) found that teachers (both at primary schools to universities) believed that they could motivate students to learn English as long as they cared for students. As such, it appears that across majors and countries, positive teacher-student relationship significantly fosters students’ motivation learn a second language.

The finding that students considered positive lecturer-student relationship the most important source of motivation does not seem to support self-determination theory which emphasises supporting autonomy to foster intrinsic motivation. Self-determination theory posits that “the need for self-determination is basic to intrinsic motivation…[the] opportunity to be self-determined enhances intrinsic motivation, and that denial of the opportunity to be self-determined undermines it” (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 31). However, this finding could be explained by considering the Vietnamese collectivist culture which values community building, and good relationships with reference groups and significant people (Tuong, 2002). Being students in a foreign language university classroom, students may expect to be related to this academic community, and most importantly to their lecturer (Thijs, 1996). When cared for by lecturers, students may feel secure and willingly participate in the learning. In this case, a sense of relatedness to lecturers may promote students’ need for autonomy and intrinsic motivation to learn English (Ryan, Stiller, & Lynch, 1994).

**Promoting autonomy**

While it appeared clear that lecturers supporting students’ need for relatedness was strongly related to their intrinsic motivation to learn English, it would be misleading
to conclude that autonomy did not play a role in supporting Vietnamese higher education students’ motivation. The findings from both English major and non-English major students did indicate a need to feel autonomous in order to be motivated to learn English (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which support a number of studies’ finding about the positive link between motivation and autonomy (e.g., Noels, 2001a; Wu, 2003). Interestingly, it was felt that the English major students and non-English major students in the present research program demonstrated both similarities and differences regarding their conceptualisation of autonomy and autonomy satisfaction. That is, both groups felt autonomous and motivated to learn when lecturers provided them with a chance to co-construct knowledge and freedom to voice their opinions about the lessons and lecturers. This finding suggests despite preconceptions that Asian students, particularly East Asian students are normally passive language learners who only want to listen and obey (Littlewood, 2000), Vietnamese students were able to take responsibility for their own learning and ability to engage in active and dialogic learning. However, it should be noted that for their abilities to learn English autonomously to flourish, it was essential that lecturers were close to, and cared for them (Ryan, 1991).

Regarding the differences, while non-English major students noted that they felt motivated to learn as long as they were given a chance to choose learning content and teaching/learning methods, this theme was not evident for English major students. Based on Littlewood’s (1999) conceptualisation of autonomy, non-English major students demonstrated proactive autonomy, which refers to abilities to initiate their own learning and is more prevalent in Western students. Based only on this study’s finding, it would be premature to infer that non-English major students have more proactive autonomy than English major students. More research in this area is
required. In the present research, this finding may be due to the differences in their English learning contexts. As outlined earlier, English major students decided to choose to learn English. Moreover, they were also given a number of chances to make choices during their learning (i.e., select the learning content for a number of English subjects). As such, having choice was not an issue for English major students. However, as non-English major students are required to learn English, they may demonstrate a need to feel freedom in learning English (i.e., making choices of learning content).

**Pedagogical approaches**

*Teaching communicatively and relevantly*

The findings indicated that students’ motivation was strongly influenced by the ways their lecturers were teaching. Most significantly, both English major and non-English major students felt motivated when lecturers focused more on practice than on theory. As evidenced in the qualitative data, since they were interested in the use of English rather than forms of English (grammar structures), and they would be more interested and deeply engaged in communication activities involving, for example, discussions, and conversations in or about real-life situations. This finding indicated that the students highly valued communicative teaching approaches (i.e., teaching the language for communication purposes) (Lam, 2011).

This finding also meant that ‘relevance’ in teaching, which pertains to lecturers’ instructional focus meeting students’ desires, goal and interests (Kember, Ho, & Hong, 2008) was important for students’ motivation. In Vietnamese culture, making a choice for oneself is sometimes not as important as having a meaningful and relevant choice made by a significant other, provided that this individual is more knowledgeable and experienced (Littlewood, 1999). As such, it is argued that to
make a meaningful choice of teaching content, in other words, to teach relevantly, lecturers need to stand in ‘the students’ shoes’ to understand students’ motivation for learning. Once perceiving teaching as relevant to their goals and interests, the students would be able to translate the importance of learning English, thus engaging willingly and joyfully in learning English (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

*Use of fun-elements and games and humour-based teaching*

Evidenced in the findings of both groups of English learners is that both English major and non-English major students felt motivated to learn when fun-elements (i.e., language games, funny stories, cartoons which may bring in the relaxed learning atmosphere and engage students in learning English) were incorporated flexibly and appropriately with those in the coursebook in the classroom. This finding suggested both groups emphasised the importance of a relaxed and pleasant learning environment, whereby learning and playing were interwoven and distance between lecturers and students was eradicated. This finding supports the claim that fun-elements were beneficial in helping students to cope with their anxiety in a second language classroom, thus supporting their communications in the second language (MacIntyre, 1999; Young, 1991). This finding also supports a number of studies, for example, those by Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) in Hungary; Ruesch, Bown and Dewey (2012) in North America and Moskovsky and colleagues (2013) in Saudi Arabia. In all these studies, teachers and students ranked ‘using games and/or humour’ in the top five most important motivational strategies for teaching a second language.

However, this finding contradicts a number of studies conducted in East Asia (e.g., Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Sugita McEown et al., 2014). In Cheng and Dörnyei’s (2007) study, Taiwanese teachers did not value games and fun-elements in their
English teaching practices. Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) attributed this finding to cultural factors, saying that with Confucian ideology, these teachers might equate games or fun-elements with just “light-hearted entertainment that yield little pedagogical merit” (p. 171). They went further to discuss that in the Chinese culture, ‘fun’ is a word with bad connotations, therefore any attempt to bring ‘fun-elements’ in learning would result in detrimental effects to ‘serious’ learning. In line with Cheng and Dörnyei’s (2007) study, Sugita McEown et.al’s (2012) study revealed that Japanese undergraduate students and teachers did not believe that using humours/games could motivate students to learn English and this strategy (using games) did not correlate with Japanese students’ motivation to learn English.

The present research’s finding raise the question of why Vietnamese students’ perceptions of the roles of ‘fun-elements’ in language teaching were similar to those of Western teachers and students but not East Asian ones, with whom they share similar cultural values. The answer might be due to two possibilities. First, in the context of globalisation in Vietnam, the Vietnamese people are becoming more aware of and open to Western values (Phan, 2010). As such, a range of innovative language teaching approaches have made their way into the Vietnamese English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom (Le & Barnard, 2009). Thus, students might be curious about ‘games-based teaching/learning’ which have been introduced in their English program. Second, the finding may well reflect the participants’ previous positive experiences with games/fun-based learning with lecturers who made use of fun-elements to motivate them to learn English (Dörnyei, 2001a).

Providing structured and informative feedback and assessment

The findings from both English major and non-English major students showed that their motivation was significantly influenced by lecturers’ practices of instructions,
feedback, and assessment. Significantly lecturers’ abilities to provide structured and informative feedback to students fostered students’ sense of confidence in their own ability to complete the task successfully, and thus fostered their need for competence and their intrinsic motivation and self-determined types of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2002). By contrast, if the students perceived lecturers’ feedback and instructions as confusing and unstructured, they felt undirected in their future actions and became sceptical about their abilities to complete the task successfully. In self-determination theory, competence is one of three important psychological needs. Supporting this need is essential to ensure an individual’s well-being and growth and development (Deci & Ryan, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2002).

This finding lends support to a number of studies framed within self-determination theory (see for example, Noels et al., 1999; Wu, 2003). In Noels et al.’s (1999) study, teachers’ informative feedback, which was termed ‘informational feedback’ was positively correlated with competence and self-determined types of motivation (intrinsic motivation and identified motivation) and negatively correlated with amotivation. Similarly to Noels and colleagues’ (1999) findings, Wu (2003) found that supporting young learners’ (aged 4-6 years) need for competence would foster their intrinsic motivation to learn English.

**Lecturers’ linguistic competence/proficiency and students’ motivation**

A number of English major students believed that their motivation was significantly influenced by the lecturers’ linguistic competence. In particular, these students noted that they admired those lecturers who demonstrated high levels of English proficiency and were motivated to learn English so that they would become as proficient at English as their lecturers. According to Dörnyei (2009a), an individual’s personality is comprised of ‘actual self’ and ‘ideal self’. While the former is who this
individual actually is, the later pertains to who this individual would like to become. An individual’s ideal self is an idealised image formulated out of what she/he has learned through his/her own experiences, the social demands and what she/he admires in a role model. Dorney (2009) also claims that there exists a gap or discrepancy between ‘actual self’ and ‘ideal self’, and a desire to reduce the gap acts as a strong motivator for an individual to invest effort in a task. As such, this research’s finding suggested that lecturers who were competent at English represented the ideal self for English major students, which was a strong motivator for these students to learn English.

In addition to serving as a positive role model, it was important that lecturers connected to students and shared their own learning experiences. Lecturers’ connectedness and sharing may assist students in setting vivid and obtainable goals for own their future (Dörnyei, 2009a).

While English major students’ motivation was greatly influenced by lecturers’ levels of English proficiency, the similar finding from non-English major students did not emerge. Dorney (2009) argues that individuals are motivated to become similar to the ‘ideal-self’ only when the gap between the ‘actual self’ and ‘ideal self’ is not too big and these individuals feel competent to reduce such a gap. As mentioned earlier, many of non-English major students felt incompetent in learning English. These students might believe that it was too challenging for them to be as good as their lecturers (Dörnyei, 2009a). The other possibility is that, as in the focus groups, many of the non-English major students stated that the relationship with them and their lecturers was not close as they expected. Tran (2003) argues that people tend to learn and admire significant others only when they are close to these significant people.
Impact of Peers on Students’ Motivation

Relationship with peers: Sense of community

Both English major and non-English major students indicated that their motivation was significantly influenced by whether they had a positive relationship with their peers. Specifically, peers’ closeness, support, approval and collaboration, which helped create a cohesive language community, were found to be strong motivators for participants to learn English. In contrast, they felt demotivated and even unable to articulate any reason to learn English when being ignored or isolated by their peers. These findings suggested that students were aware of the importance of peers supporting their need for relatedness and sense of belonging to a reference group (e.g., an English class, a group of language learners). In a collectivist culture, being a member of a group means being able to seek support and encouragement from other group members in the case of need (Tuong, 2002). Furthermore, group collaboration and cooperation are believed to significantly empower each individual and a group as a whole, encouraging each individual to willingly engage in a task (To, 2010). As such, it could be argued that being approved of and connected to an English group helped build up students’ competence and reduce their anxiety in being involved in the risky business of learning English (Deci et al., 1994)

Furthermore, both groups in this research revealed that the feeling of belonging to a language learning group enabled them to take responsibility for themselves and for the group in order to adhere to group norms and maintain a positive relationship with other peers. For example, they started to become interested in a task that they were not interested in before, and willingly engaged in challenging tasks because these were valued by other group members. While Littlewood (1999) defines autonomy as the ability to take responsibility for one’s tasks, these findings suggested that the
students’ autonomy developed and was nurtured out of the context whereby the students were interdependent. As such interdependence with other members was not a hindrance to the participants’ ability to act autonomously (Littlewood, 1999, 2000). These findings also support self-determination theory in that ‘relatedness’ is a valid and important motivational construct and that satisfaction of this need is essential for an individual to deeply and joyfully engage in a task (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2012; Deci et al., 1991; Ryan et al., 1994).

**Peers’ attitudes to and knowledge of English**
The findings from English major students align with those from non-English major students in that peers’ attitudes and knowledge of English can influence the students’ motivation to learn English. In particular, both groups believed that more competent peers with positive attitudes towards English and the learning of English were a great source of motivation for them to learn. In contrast, peers with poor levels of English proficiency and/or lack of interest in learning English could negatively impact their motivation to learn English. These findings reflect the Vietnamese people’s perceived influence of peers, the closest companions, in their well-being, growth and development. It seems to be a common belief for Vietnamese people that those who are close to each other often resemble each other in both thinking and behaviours, which could be seen in many Vietnamese idioms such as “Gần mực thi đen, gần đen thì rằng” (Make friends with good friends to be good people) (Nguyen, Nguyen, & Phan, 2009). As such, these findings suggested that peers influenced both English major and non-English major students’ attitudes towards English and learning English. According to Gardner (1985a, 2010), individuals’ attitudes towards a second language, second language speakers and second language learning situations may greatly determine if these individuals are motivated to learn that language. Therefore,
it is argued that peers are important sources of intrinsic motivation, provided that these significant people value the learning of English, the role of effort and persistence in learning a second language and most importantly are willing to support and connect with other peers. Having a chance to learn English with such peers, students may be able to understand the importance of learning English and regulate their actions to get desired outcomes (Dörnyei, 2001c; Ryan & Deci, 2006).

These findings also lend support to Dörnyei’s (2009a) conceptualisation of the ‘ideal L2 self’ construct which refers to the idealistic imagined image of a good language learner that a person wants to become in the future. As evidenced from the qualitative analysis in Chapter 6, both English major and non-English major students expressed their admiration for competent peers who had positive attitudes towards English as a language and the learning of English. Participants showed a desire to learn English in order to be similar to these significant others. In Vietnamese culture, learning from friends/peers is one of the most effective ways of learning, which is reflected in a common proverb ‘Học thầy không tày học bạn’ (In some situations, learning from friends is the best way of learning). These findings suggested that peers could stand out as role models whose attitudes and academic behaviours were considered standards/norms for others to follow (Dörnyei, 2009a).

Impact of Parents on Students’ Motivation

*Parents-children relationship: Parents’ love, affection, respect and connectedness*

Another similarity in findings from both English major and non-English major students was that their relationship with parents could influence students’ motivation to learn English. Specifically, when parents maintained a good relationship with students by showing love, care and respect, there was a strong likelihood that these
parents were able to connect with students and their learning. This finding supports self-determination theory in that students’ academic motivation can be facilitated by the sense and experience of relatedness to parents (Connell & Wellborn, 1991).

However, this finding was not in line with Kyriacou and Zhu’s (2008) findings as in their study, Chinese senior high school students (aged 17-18 years) viewed parental influences on their motivation to learn English as small. In addition, parents with limited English proficiency were perceived to have a negative impact on students’ motivation to learn English. The present research program’s finding could be explained by considering how Vietnamese people perceive parental roles in their life. For Vietnamese people, ‘home’ is considered to be the safest place and parents are the roof of that ‘home’ (Tran, 2008). Vietnamese people at whatever age and social status are often considered ‘small children’ in the eyes of their parents, and therefore, need to be cared for and connected with (Tran, 2006). Parents’ love and approval help build Vietnamese students’ self-confidence in their abilities, a key to academic success. As such, despite the fact that parents demonstrated no or limited English proficiency and only had indirect roles in their learning English, they were able to assist students in recognising their responsibility to learn to pay filial/duty to their parents and to respond to the love and care that they receive from their parents (Phan, 2010).

Interestingly, the finding also revealed that parents’ care for and expectations of children success in learning English should be separated from parents that use a controlling parenting style. Students expressed a strong sense of obligation when being required to learn English at the expense of their interest. That is, English major students needed to have freedom in choosing their favourite study major and for non-English major students, it was essential that they were trusted by their parents that
they were able to learn English well. While parents’ care and expectations were linked with positive emotions, motivation and learning engagement, parents’ use of control and pressure were believed to have a negative impact on students’ desire to learn. The finding does indicate that the learning of English which resulted from external parental pressure and controlling behaviours, rather than encouragement and support lowered students’ motivation. These findings support a number of studies conducted within self-determination theory, which emphasises the role of autonomy-supportive behaviour to support intrinsic motivation (e.g., Noels, 2001a, 2001b, 2005; Noels, 2009; Noels et al., 2001; Noels et al., 1999; Noels et al., 2000).

**Parents’ attitudes towards English and the learning of English**

Both English major and non-English major students’ motivation was influenced by their parents’ attitudes towards English and learning English. For English major students, their motivation was heightened when their parents valued their chosen area of study. For non-English major students, they became more interested in learning English if their parents were aware of the importance of studying English compared with other academic subjects such as Maths. This finding suggested that parents’ attitudes helped motivate their children’s desire to learn English. As such, students could articulate the reasons for their present learning and had motivation to learn, or lack thereof. This finding supports a number of studies which investigated the association between parents’ attitudes and their children’s motivation to learn a second language. For example, in Bartram’s (2006) study conducted in the Netherlands, Germany and England, young learners’ (aged 15-16 years) motivation to learn a second language (e.g., French, German, and English) was positively associated with parents’ positive attitudes towards the second language. In de Serres et al.’s (2013) study, Korean high school students (aged between 16-18 years)
believed that lack of parental interest in English and the learning of English significantly and negatively correlated with students’ motivation to learn English.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed that motivation was of major importance for both English major and non-English major students when learning English higher education in Vietnam. In the global era, both groups were strongly motivated to learn English to enhance their professional prospects. They also indicated to have intrinsic motivation in learning English. However, due to a number of differences in their study majors, English major and non-English major exhibited differences in their motivation, which were discussed in reference to self-determination theory and the historical, socio-cultural context of Vietnam. This chapter also suggested that self-determination theory provided a useful framework to investigate students’ motivation and to explain the similarities and differences in motivation between the two groups of English learners in Vietnamese higher education. However, it appeared that due to Vietnamese historical, socio-economic situations and learning and teaching contexts in Vietnamese higher education in Vietnam, the students in the present research had different perceptions of some constructs outlined in self-determination theory.

In the present research, both English major and non-English major students were able to discriminate motivation into different types, which can be arranged along on a continuum of self-determination. At two poles of the self-determination continuum lay amotivation (non self-determination) and intrinsic motivation (the most self-determined types of motivation), which are similar as those in self-determination theory. However, they did not distinguish extrinsic motivation into external
regulation, introjected regulation and identified regulation as outlined in self-
determination theory. Instead, they perceived that they were learning English in order
to respond to external pressures and/or to avoid negative feelings caused by not
learning English well (termed as obligation/avoidance motivation in this research)
and/or to prepare for future professions and to develop personally
(personal/professional development motivation). Obligation/avoidance motivation
refers to less self-determined types of motivation while personal/professional
development motivation pertains to internalised types of motivation. More self-
determined types of motivation (i.e., intrinsic motivation) are associated with higher
levels of effort, positive emotion and behaviours, which may predict higher levels of
English language proficiency and English achievement.

This research suggests that motivation to learn English is influenced by a range of
social factors. Specifically, in a collectivist culture like Vietnam, regarding the
proximal social factors, students’ motivation in the present research was strongly
influenced by lecturers, peers and parents. In the present research, these factors
influenced students’ motivation through the mediation of students’ basic
psychological needs (relatedness, autonomy and competence). Of the three needs,
relatedness is indicated to be the strongest predictor of intrinsic motivation for both
English major and non-English major students. Autonomy and competence are better
indicators of intrinsic motivation for non-English major students than their English
major peers.
Chapter 8: Conclusions

Overview
This chapter begins with a summary of the present research program. Following this section is the discussion of how the findings of the present research can be translated into meaningful implications in the context of teaching and learning English in Vietnam, and how the findings could contribute to the scholarly knowledge and to the research methodology. The chapter ends with the limitations of the present research and some recommendations for further research.

A Summary of the Research Program
The overarching objective of the present research program was to investigate students’ motivation to learn English in Vietnamese higher education. This research was undertaken due to the great potential of motivation to contribute to English language proficiency which has been identified to be among the first priorities in Vietnamese higher education. In addition, this research was conducted to address the gaps in the literature regarding students’ motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam, along with motivation to learn English in a collectivist culture despite the fact that motivation is considered to be a significant factor contributing to success in learning a second language (Dörnyei, 2009b). This research drew on the theoretical framework of self-determination theory, a macro theory about human motivation, and was situated within the context of Vietnamese higher education. Using a mixed methods research design, this program of research collected both quantitative data (questionnaire - Study 1) and qualitative data (focus groups and students’ written responses - Study 2) and involved both English major and non-English major students (422 students in Study 1 and 36 students in Study 2), who
represent English learners in the Vietnamese higher education context. This program of research aimed to answer five research questions.

RQ1. What types of motivation do English major and non-English major students report when they are learning English in higher education in Vietnam?

RQ2. What are the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students?

RQ3. What are the similarities and differences in their levels of motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness between English major and non-English major students?

RQ4. What are the relationships between motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence and relatedness for English major and non-English major students?

RQ5. In what ways do lecturers, peers and parents influence Vietnamese students' motivation to learn English?

Research question 1 (RQ1) was answered using both qualitative and quantitative data. The results indicated that Vietnamese students, regardless of their study majors (English majors or non-English majors), reported the following types of motivation: personal/professional development motivation (to learn English to pursue a prestigious profession and develop personally), intrinsic motivation (to learn English because of interest and passion), obligation/avoidance motivation (to learn English due to being required to do so or to learn English to avoid negative feelings such as guilt). Both groups of English learners were mostly extrinsically motivated (i.e., to pursue a prestigious job) and only a small number of them (3 English major students and 3 non-English major students) felt amotivated when learning English.
As for RQ2, which was answered by both Studies 1 and 2, there were some differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students. English major students exhibited higher levels of intrinsic motivation than non-English major students. Furthermore, English major students reported lower levels of obligation/avoidance motivation. These findings may suggest that English major students might have a strong desire to learn English for intrinsic purposes and, therefore feel more prepared for learning than their non-English major peers.

For RQ3, the findings from the Study 1 indicated that English major and non-English major students differed in their levels of a number of motivational variables identified to be important for second language learning. In particular, English major students had higher levels of motivational intensity, suggesting that English major students invested more effort in learning English than their non-English major peers. Furthermore, English major students felt more competent than non-English major peers when learning English.

Regarding the relationship between motivation and motivational intensity (RQ4), Study 1 found that for both English major and non-English major students, higher levels of intrinsic motivation were associated with higher levels of motivational intensity and lower levels of amotivation. For non-English major students only, both obligation/avoidance motivation and personal/professional development motivation was positive and significantly correlated with motivational intensity. Study 2 provided additional explanation for these findings in that when learning English happened as a result of external control or coercion such as being required to learn English for exams, English major students tended to complete the task as a means to an end (i.e., to pass the exam). Once the task was finished, they expended no further effort in learning English.
Regarding the relationships between the three needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness, the findings from Study 1 indicated that for both English major and non-English major students, higher levels of relatedness were associated with higher levels of intrinsic motivation and personal/professional development motivation. This suggests that the more students felt connected with significant others, the higher levels of intrinsic motivation and personal/professional development motivation they demonstrated. For non-English major students only, higher levels of autonomy and competence were associated with higher levels of intrinsic motivation and personal/professional development motivation. These findings suggested that the more non-English major students felt autonomous and competent in learning English, the higher their levels of intrinsic motivation and personal/professional development motivation.

RQ5 was answered by the qualitative data collected through the focus groups and students’ written responses to a number of questions. The content analysis of the qualitative data revealed that lecturers, peers and parents greatly influenced students’ motivation to learn English in various ways. Most significantly, both English major and non-English major students believed that feeling connected to these significant others was a major advantage for them to feel intrinsically motivated to learn English. This finding suggested that significant people need to care for them and connect to them to understand their needs and expectations. As such, they may assist students to understand the importance of learning English and become interested in their learning. In addition, for both groups, lecturers influenced students’ motivation through their pedagogical approaches, their approaches to the teaching material. Interestingly, while English major students felt that they were motivated to learn English from competent lecturers as the role model, this was not evident from the
findings from non-English major students. This finding may be due to the fact that two groups may have different perceptions of their role model and the future image of a good English learner. Furthermore, students’ motivation to learn English was influenced by the attitudes towards English and knowledge of English demonstrated by peers and parents.

Contributions

Contributions to the Practice

This research program is significant for the teaching and learning of English in Vietnamese higher education as it offers important implications and recommendations which may help improve the quality of the teaching and learning of English in Vietnamese higher education. As both English major and non-English major students are mostly extrinsically motivated to learn English (i.e., to prepare for future professions and to respond to external pressure from universities, lecturers and parents), the first implication pertains to the need for assisting students to internalise these extrinsic behaviours/values into the self-system (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Informed by this research’s findings, only when students understand the importance of learning English, may they become responsible for and deeply engaged in the learning. In addition, both groups expressed a strong desire to feel intrinsically motivated when learning English. As long as they felt interested in and enjoyed the task, they persisted and invested higher levels of effort in learning English. As such, another implication is that students’ inherent interest in learning English needs to be nurtured.

In order to enhance students’ intrinsic motivation, to assist them to internalise extrinsic motivation, and to reduce the external pressure on students’ learning, this
research program proposes a number of recommendations based on the students’ perspectives:

For both English major and non-English major students, it is necessary that significant people such as lecturers, peers and parents are close to, care for and support students. A caring and supportive relationship with students may enhance students’ responsibility for and self-efficacy in learning English, fostering their intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, connecting to students also gives significant people a chance to listen to students’ voice about their desires and motivation for learning to better address these. Specifically, due to this research’s results, lecturers should teach English practically, focusing on real-life English communication. For English major students, significant people should assist them to build more confidence in making choices for their learning and benefit from choice making. Specifically, lecturers should encourage them to explore the knowledge independently. In addition, English major students need to be prepared better in terms of both knowledge and skills prior to a new learning task. For example, lecturers need to model a new learning task, to provide leadership on students’ ongoing task and to give constructive feedback on students’ task performance.

For non-English major students, to engage them in learning willingly, lecturers need to foster their competence in learning English by providing constructive and positive feedback focusing on their performance of the English task. Furthermore, significant people, particularly lecturers need to provide them with a chance to make choices in their learning (i.e., choose their favourite learning task to develop their English communication skills) to make them feel autonomous and responsible for their own learning.
Contributions to the Literature

Due to a lack of empirical research in motivation to learn English in Vietnam, little is known about the types and levels of motivation reported by Vietnamese students in learning English, as well as the similarities and differences in motivation between English major and non-English major students. Furthermore, there is little information regarding how to motivate these two groups to learn English in higher education in Vietnam. As such, this research program has made a significant contribution to the literature in this area. This information will inform lecturers, policy makers and English curriculum designers about Vietnamese students’ desires, goals, and expectations in learning English. It is imperative for these people to listen to and understand students’ needs, goals and expectations to better address these matters in their future practices (i.e., lecturers may need to consider what teaching approaches may better cater to students’ needs and motivation).

Furthermore, based on both groups’ perceptions of how significant others may influence their motivation, it is obvious that although students were able to set their own goals for learning English and regulate their actions, their motivation was influenced by an intricate layers of social and contextual factors, particularly from lecturers, peers and parents. As such, the present research will inform these significant people of ways to facilitate students’ motivation to learn English (i.e., supporting students’ feeling of connectedness to significant people to enhance their intrinsic motivation).

To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, this research is one of the few empirical studies which have used self-determination theory to investigate students’ motivation to learn English in Vietnamese higher education. The research provided evidence to
confirm that self-determination theory is a useful framework to investigate motivation to learn a second language (L2) in Vietnam.

However, the research yielded a number of findings which appeared to be at odds with self-determination theory. First, although Vietnamese students were able to discriminate motivation into two broad types: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, they were unable to distinguish different kinds of extrinsic motivation as outlined in self-determination theory (external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation). Instead, Vietnamese students in this research (both English major and non-English major students) demonstrated two types of extrinsic motivation (obligation/avoidance motivation, personal/professional development motivation). This study has argued that the students’ conceptualisation of these types of extrinsic motivation may be due to the impact of globalisation (i.e., students are urged to learn English to pursue a good job in the global work place), and Vietnamese culture (i.e., students felt obligated to learn English to please their parents and lecturers).

Furthermore, while autonomy is considered the most important need in self-determination theory as satisfying this need contributes to intrinsic motivation and other self-determined motivation, the present research yielded a slightly different finding. Specifically, for both English major and non-English major students, supporting students’ relatedness to significant others was more consistently associated with intrinsic motivation. This finding is a result of the fact that in the Vietnamese collectivist culture, feeling close to significant others may enable them to feel safe, autonomous and competent in learning English, and thus become more intrinsically motivated to learn English.
This research also contributes to the existing L2 literature about the role of autonomy in learning English in a collectivist learning context (e.g., learning English in Vietnam, China and Korea). The findings of this research confirmed that Vietnamese students need to feel autonomous in learning to feel intrinsically motivated. However, in their perception, autonomy does not necessarily mean independence from other people and/or the freedom to make choices. Rather, Vietnamese students may accept the choice made by significant others who have more experience and are close to them.

Contributions to the Methodology

The present research made a number of contributions to the methodology. First, this research utilised a mixed methods design to investigate students’ motivation to learn English. It should be noted that the present research is the first type of research in this area in Vietnam to use mixed methods and stands as a strong evidence for the utility of using mixed method research. Both methods allowed the researcher to understand this multi-faceted construct in both breadth and depth. In the present research, the research clearly discussed the aims of using a mixed method design (i.e., collecting both quantitative and qualitative data was determined by the research objectives and research). Furthermore, the issues relating to data collection, ‘mixing’ or integrating two different data sets were clearly presented and discussed. This information may be useful for those who replicate this research.

Moreover, this research also contributed to the literature of instrument translation. In the present research, a detailed process and steps used in translating instruments (measures) were depicted. The issues relating to the validation of translated measures were discussed. The present research has indicated that following the rigorous steps when translating measures helps ensure the validity and reliability of the translated
measures and the research findings. This information will be useful for researchers who are interested in conducting cross-cultural research and/or using translated measures/instruments.

**Limitations**

There a number of limitations in this research. The first limitation pertains to the use of the self-report questionnaire in Study 1. Self-report questionnaires are based on respondents’ perceptions of the phenomenon under research (i.e., motivation to learn English). As such, the students in this research might not respond honestly, simply due to the fact that they might not remember the past experiences of learning English. Furthermore, they might have responded to the question in a way that they believed was socially and culturally acceptable (i.e., students must be hard working) rather than what was true to them. The second limitation may be due to the nature of Study 1, which aimed to examine the correlational relationships between motivation and a number of variables (e.g., relationship between motivation and motivational intensity, autonomy, competence, relatedness). Due to the correlational nature of this study, causal relationships cannot be inferred. Furthermore, Study 2, which explored the reasons why students were learning English and their perceptions of how lecturers, peers and parents influenced their motivation, involved only a small number of second year students (18 English major and 18 non-English major students) in one university. As such, their results of Study 2 may not be generalisable to other populations (i.e., first year students; students in other universities in Vietnam and students in other countries). The third limitation relates to the use of translated measures (Study 1), and translation of the qualitative data from Vietnamese (the original version) to English for analysis (Study 2). Although the researcher followed the rigorous steps suggested in the translation process and there was evidence for the
equivalence between the two versions, it is likely that due to cultural differences the translated versions may not have fully captured the abstract meanings in the original versions. As such, it may influence the interpretation of the data.

Further Research

As research on motivation in Vietnam is scant, future research needs to be conducted considering the following directions. First, future research which replicates this research and uses a longitudinal design is imperative. Such research may enable researchers to trace the development in students’ motivation to learn English, seek thorough explanations for changes in their motivation to learn English and suggest ways to improve their motivation. Second, future research may extend this research by investigating the relationship between motivation and other L2 variables identified to be important in learning a second language such as language anxiety, self-efficacy, L2 learning strategies, L2 proficiency and achievement. In addition, it is necessary to investigate the causal relationships between motivation and these variables by conducting more sophisticated techniques such as structural equation modelling (SEM). Incorporating more L2 variables in the motivational model, along with utilising more advanced research techniques may assist researchers to examine extensively the role of motivation for learning a second language.

Furthermore, as the present research asked second year English major and non-English major students to take part in the questionnaire (Study 1), and the focus groups (Study 2), future research could administer the questionnaire and conduct focus groups to additional groups of English learners (first or third year students and school students). Furthermore, future research may conduct focus groups with parents and lecturers and peers in order to further our understanding of the influences
of significant people on students’ motivation from the perspectives of these significant people.

As cross-cultural research is gaining growing interest, another possible direction for future research could be comparing motivation to learn English in Vietnam (a collectivist culture) and motivation to learn English in an individualist culture. Such research may inform educators of the differences or similarities in motivation to learn a second language between two cultures.
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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Questionnaire in English

Thank you for agreeing to complete this 30-minute questionnaire. The questionnaire comprises two sections. Section one asks for your demographic information. Section two, which includes three parts, examines different aspects of your English learning experiences in higher education in Vietnam. As responses will be treated confidentially, no names of individuals or the university will be used in reporting the results of this questionnaire.

Section 1: Demographic information

Read the following questions and answer them either by ticking the appropriate box or write your name in the space:

1. Are you an English major or non-English major student?
   ☐ English major student ☐ non-English major student

2. If you are a non-English major student, what major are you currently studying?
   Please write your answer

3. What is your gender?
   ☐ Male ☐ Female

4. What is your age?
   Write your answer

5. Where were you born?
   Please name the district/city/province

6. What is your ethnicity?
   Please write your answer here:

7. How long have you been learning English (in years)?
   Please write your answer here.

8. How many hours do you spend learning English besides class hours?

9. What is your average point for English subject/s in the previous semester?

10. How do you think your English proficiency is?
   ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Very good

11. Do your parents speak English?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

Section 2: English learning experience and motivation

The following statements represent different reasons why an individual is learning English. Please read each item carefully and circle the appropriate number to show the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1 strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 disagree</th>
<th>3 disagree</th>
<th>4 not decided</th>
<th>5 agree</th>
<th>6 agree</th>
<th>7 strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. I don’t know why I am studying English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. I am studying English to show myself that I am a good</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. I am studying English for the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult exercises in English</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. I am studying English because I think it is good for my personal development</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
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<td>16. Because I have to meet the requirements/expectations of my university/lecturers/parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. I am studying English for the good feeling that I experience while speaking English</td>
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<td>6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. I am studying English for the satisfied feeling I get in learning new things</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. I can’t understand what I am doing studying English</td>
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<td>6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. I am studying English because I would feel guilty if I don’t know English</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. I am studying English because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak English</td>
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<td>6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. I am studying English for the good feeling when hearing English spoken</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. I am studying English in order to get more academic success later on</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. I am studying English for the pleasure that I experience in knowing more about the literature of the English speaking group</td>
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<td>6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. I am studying English because I enjoy the feeling of acquiring knowledge about the English speaking community and their way of life</td>
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<td>6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. I am studying English in order to get a good job later on</td>
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<td>6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. I am studying English for the pleasure I experience by improving my English</td>
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<td>6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>28. I am studying English for the pleasure I get from hearing English spoken by English native speakers</td>
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<tr>
<td>29. I don’t know why I am studying English. I truly have the impression of wasting my time in studying English</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>30. I am studying English for the enjoyment I experience when I grasp a difficult construct in English</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>31. I am studying English because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>32. I am studying English because I would feel ashamed if I could not speak English when I communicate with my friends from English speaking countries</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

The following statements are about the different levels of effort an individual may expend in learning English. Please read each item carefully and circle the appropriate number to show the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33. I made a point of trying to understand all the English I see and hear</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>34. I tend to give up and not pay attention when I don’t understand my English teacher’s explanation of something</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>35. I really work hard to learn English</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>36. I put off my English homework as much as possible</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>37. When I am studying English, I ignore distractions and pay attentions to my task</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>38. I don’t pay much attention to the feedback I receive in my English class</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>39. When I have a problem understanding something in my English class, I always ask my teacher for help</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>40. I don’t bother checking my assignments when I get them back from my English teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. I keep up to date with English by working on it almost everyday</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
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</table>
42. I can’t be bothered trying to understand the more aspects of English

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</tbody>
</table>

The following statements are about the self-perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness an individual may have when learning English. Please read each item carefully and the appropriate number to show the degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43. I am willing to participate in English lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>44. I consider myself good at English</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Everyone in my class enjoys English lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. I often consider myself bad at English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. I learn cooperatively with classmates during English lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. I voluntarily speak English during English lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. I enjoy studying with teachers and classmates during English lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. I am capable of performing well if I studying English hard</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. I don’t voluntarily participate in English lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. I think the English lessons are well-organised and structured</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. I am not willing to speak English in English lesson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. I fully understand what I have been taught in English lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questionnaire in Vietnamese

Cảm ơn bạn đã đồng ý tham gia trả lời các câu hỏi điều tra của chúng tôi. Phieu điều tra này nhằm mục đích tìm hiểu kinh nghiệm học tiếng Anh ở bậc đại học của bạn. Tất cả các thông tin cá nhân như tên, lớp, hay trường của bạn sẽ được bảo mật trong phần trình bày kết quả của nghiên cứu.

Phần 1: Thông tin nhân khẩu học

Hãy đọc kỹ các câu hỏi dưới đây và chọn đáp án đúng nhất với bạn:

1. Bạn là sinh viên chuyên tiếng Anh hay sinh viên không chuyên tiếng Anh?
   - ☐ Chuyên tiếng Anh
   - ☐ Không chuyên tiếng Anh

2. Nếu bạn là sinh viên không chuyên tiếng Anh, chuyên ngành bạn đang học là gì?
   (Hãy viết chuyên ngành bạn đang học):

3. Giới tính của bạn?
   - ☐ Nam
   - ☐ Nữ

4. Bạn bao nhiêu tuổi?
   Hãy viết vào phần trống:

5. Bạn đã sống ở đâu trước khi học đại học?
   Hãy viết câu trả lời vào phần trống:

6. Bạn là người dân tộc nào?
   Hãy viết câu trả lời vào phần trống:

7. Tính tới thời điểm hiện tại, bạn đã học tiếng Anh được bao lâu rồi?
   - ☐ Nhiều hơn 12 năm
   - ☐ 12 năm (từ lớp 3)
   - ☐ 9 năm (từ lớp 6)
   - ☐ 5 năm (từ lớp 10)
   - ☐ 2 năm (từ năm thứ nhất đại học)
   - ☐ Lựa chọn khác:

8. Hiện tại một tuấn bạn dành bao nhiêu thời gian để học tiếng Anh ngoại giờ học trên lớp?
   Hãy viết câu trả lời vào đây:

9. Điểm trung bình môn tiếng Anh (bảng số) của kỳ trước của bạn là bao nhiêu?
   Hãy viết câu trả lời vào phần trống:

10. Bạn tự đánh giá năng lực sử dụng tiếng Anh của mình ở mức độ nào trong thang đánh giá dưới đây?
    - ☐ Rất kém
    - ☐ Kém
    - ☐ Trung bình
    - ☐ Khá
    - ☐ Giỏi

11. Thành viên nào trong gia đình bạn sử dụng được tiếng Anh (ngoài bạn)?
    - ☐ Bố/ Mẹ
    - ☐ Anh/ Chị/ Em ruột
    - ☐ Tất cả mọi người trong gia đình
    - ☐ Không ai sử dụng được tiếng Anh

Phần 2: Kinh nghiệm học tiếng Anh

Có nhiều lý do tại sao một cá nhân học tiếng Anh. Bạn hãy đọc các lý do sau đây và cho biết mức độ bạn đồng ý hay không đồng ý với các lý do này:

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<tr>
<th>Số</th>
<th>1. hoàn toàn không đồng ý</th>
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<th>Điểm số</th>
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<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh để chứng tỏ rằng tôi là sinh viên giỏi vì tôi có thể nói được tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh bởi vì tôi rất thích chính phục những bài tập tiếng Anh khó</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh vì tiếng Anh cần thiết cho sự phát triển của cá nhân tôi</td>
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<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh vì tôi bị bắt buộc phải học</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh vì tôi rất thích giao tiếp bằng tiếng Anh. Cảm giác đó thật thú vị</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh bởi vì tôi rất thích tìm hiểu những điều mới lạ trong quá trình học. Điều đó thật tuyệt vời</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Tôi không hiểu tại sao tôi học tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Tôi sẽ cảm thấy rất xấu hổ nếu không học tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh bởi vì tôi muốn trở thành người có thể nói được tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh bởi vì tôi thích nghe tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh để đạt được thành công trên con đường học vấn sau này</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh vì tôi muốn tìm hiểu thêm nền văn học và văn hóa của các nước nói tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh do tôi thích tìm hiểu về cộng đồng người nói tiếng Anh và lời sống của họ</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh để có cơ hội tìm được một công việc tốt trong tương lai</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh bởi vì tôi muốn nâng cao trình độ tiếng Anh của tôi</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Tôi học tiếng Anh bởi vì tôi thích nghe người bản ngữ nói tiếng Anh. Cảm giác đó thật thú vị</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Tôi không hiểu tại sao tôi học tiếng Anh; Tôi thực sự có cảm giác là tôi đang lãng phí thời gian khi học tiếng Anh</td>
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30. Tôi học tiếng Anh bởi vì tôi rất thích tìm hiểu ý nghĩa của những cụm từ tiếng Anh khó. Cảm giác hiểu được ý nghĩa của các từ một thật thú vị

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31. Tôi học tiếng Anh vì tôi muốn trở thành người có thể nói được nhiều hơn một ngôn ngữ

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32. Tôi học tiếng Anh vì tôi sẽ cảm thấy xấu hổ nếu tôi không thể giao tiếp bằng tiếng Anh với những người bạn từ các nước nói tiếng Anh

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Những câu dưới đây miêu tả các mức độ khác nhau về sự nỗ lực của cá nhân khi học tiếng Anh. Bạn hãy đọc kỹ từng câu và cho biết ý kiến của bạn.

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33. Tôi có gắng tìm mọi cách để hiểu ý nghĩa của tất cả những từ tiếng Anh mà tôi gặp

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34. Khi không hiểu bài giảng của giảng viên, tôi thường không hỏi giảng viên giải thích lại

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35. Tôi học tiếng Anh rất chăm chỉ

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36. Tôi rất lure làm bài tập về nhà

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37. Khi học tiếng Anh tôi luôn tập trung cao độ

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38. Tôi không để ý nhiều đến nhận xét của người khác về mình trong giờ học tiếng Anh

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39. Trong giờ học tiếng Anh, nếu tôi không hiểu điều gì đó, tôi luôn hỏi giảng viên

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40. Tôi thường không xem lại bài kiểm tra của mình khi giảng viên trả bài

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41. Tôi nâng cao vốn tiếng Anh của mình bằng cách học tiếng Anh hầu như mọi ngày trong tuần

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42. Tôi không cố gắng hết sức mình mỗi khi gặp khó khăn trong việc học tiếng Anh

|   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
Các câu dưới đây mô tả các cảm nhận khác nhau của một cá nhân trong quá trình học tiếng Anh. Các câu này có phản ánh đúng về bạn không?

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<td>43. Tôi tự giác tham gia đóng góp ý kiến khi học tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>44. Tôi thấy mình học giỏi tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>46. Tôi tự nhận thấy mình học tiếng Anh kém</td>
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<td>47. Tôi luôn hợp tác cùng các bạn trong giờ học tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>48. Tôi chủ động nói tiếng Anh trong suốt giờ học tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>49. Trong giờ học tiếng Anh, tôi luôn cảm thấy hứng thú khi được hợp tác với thầy cô và bạn bè</td>
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<td>50. Tôi có thể học giờ tiếng Anh nếu tôi học tiếng Anh chăm chỉ</td>
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<td>52. Tôi nhận thấy các bài giảng tiếng Anh có bố cục và cấu trúc hợp lý</td>
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<td>53. Tôi không tự giác nói tiếng Anh trong giờ học</td>
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<td>54. Tôi nắm vững những điều được dạy trong giờ học tiếng Anh</td>
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Appendix B: Focus Group Questions

1. Why are you studying English? Tai sao ban hoc tieng Anh?

2. What do you like most when you learn English in the university? Ban thay thich nhat dieu gi voi viiec hoc tieng Anh hen tai o bac dai hoc?

3. What don’t you like about learning English in the university? Ban chua thay hai long voi diem nao voi viiec hoc tieng Anh o bac dai hoc?

4. What is different from learning English in the higher education level and other education levels? Dieu gi khac biêt voi viiec hoc tieng Anh o bac dai hoc va hoc tieng Anh o cac cap hoc khac (vi du nhu cap 2 va cap 3)?

5. Think about a time when you have felt really motivated to learn English?
   Describe that experience for me? Ban cam thay co dong luc hoc tieng Anh nhat la khi nao? Hay moh ta trai nghiem do?

6. Think about a time when you have felt really unmotivated to learn English?
   Describe that experience for me? Co khi nao ban cam thay khong con hinh thu voi viiec hoc tieng Anh chua? Do la khi nao? Ban hay chia xet trai nghiem do duoc khong?

7. How do you think your teacher might influence your motivation to learn English? Theo ban gioi vien co anh huong nhu nao toi dong co hoc tieng Anh cua ban?

8. Tell me about how your teacher teaches you English? Do you find that this inspires you to want to learn English? Ban hay chia xet cach gioi vien cua ban giang day tieng Anh. Ban co thich cach giang day do khong? Tai sao?

9. How do your friends feel about you learning English? Are they supportive?
   Ban be ban nhan xet khach nang hoc tieng Anh cua ban nhu the nao? Cac ban cua ban co tuong tro ban trong quat trinh hoc tieng Anh khong?
10. How do your parents feel about you learning English? Are they supportive?

What do they do to show their support or lack of support?

Bố mẹ bạn có nhận xét gì về khả năng học tiếng Anh của bạn? Họ có hỗ trợ bạn trong việc học tiếng Anh hay không? Nếu có bằng cách nào?
Appendix C: Questions for Students’ Written Responses

1) Please list the main reasons for you to learn English; how have these reasons directed your present study regarding your persistence and resilience to learn English? Bạn hãy liệt kê những lý do chính khiến bạn học tiếng Anh; Những lý do này đã ảnh hưởng tới việc học tiếng Anh hiện tại của bạn như thế nào?

2) From your own English learning experiences in the university, can you please tell how your lecturers of English have influenced your motivation to learn? Từ trải nghiệm về việc học tiếng Anh của bạn ở bậc đại học, bạn cho biết giáo viên của bạn đã ảnh hưởng đến việc học tiếng Anh của bạn như thế nào?

3) Reflect from your own experiences of how your friends have influenced your motivation to learn English? Bạn có nghĩ bạn bè của bạn ảnh hưởng nhiều đến động cơ học tiếng Anh của bạn không? Nếu có bằng cách nào?

4) Are your parents a source of motivation for you to learn English? How do you think your parents may have influenced your motivation to learn English in higher education? Bố mẹ của bạn có là nguồn động lực cho bạn học tiếng Anh không? Nếu có hãy chia sẻ xem họ có ảnh hưởng như thế nào?
Appendix D: Participant Information for Questionnaire

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FOR QUT RESEARCH PROJECT**

---Questionnaire---

An investigation into students’ motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam

QUT Ethics Approval Number 1300000290

**RESEARCH TEAM**

Principal Researcher: Thu Huong Ngo, PhD student, QUT
Associate Researchers: Dr Rebecca Spooner- Lane, Principal Supervisor
Dr Amanda Mergler, Associate Supervisor
A Prof Lisa Ehrich, Associate Supervisor

**DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of this PhD project is to investigate motivation of Vietnamese students when they learn English in higher education in Vietnam, consider Vietnamese students’ level of effort and perceived autonomy, competence and relatedness in their English learning and explore students’ perceptions of how parents, teachers and peers influence their motivation.

**PARTICIPANTS**

You are invited to participate in this project because you are currently learning English in the higher education in Vietnam. You will be asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire which consists of two sections. Section one has 8 questions which ask about your demographic information such as your major, gender and age. Section two consists of three parts which examine different aspects of your motivation to learn English in higher education.

Part 1. The first scale in Part 1 consists of 21 statements, which represent different reasons for an individual to learn a second language. Part 2. The second scale in Part 2 comprises 10 statements which are about the different levels of effort an individual may expend in learning a second language. Part 3. The third scale in Part 3 consists of 12 statements, which represent self-perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness. For each part in section two, you will be asked to rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement on a 7-point scale by circling the appropriate number. The questionnaire will take about 30 minutes to complete, although you may finish earlier or take longer. There is no right or wrong answer, so please take time to read each question carefully and answer them honestly and openly.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time until you click the “submit” button at the end of the survey. As the questionnaire is anonymous once it has been submitted it will not be possible to withdraw. Your decision to participate or not participate will in no way impact upon your current or future relationship with your university (for example your grades) or with QUT.

**EXPECTED BENEFITS**

It is expected that this project will not directly benefit you. However, it may benefit the teachers and students in your university or other universities as it will inform their understanding of what motivates Vietnamese higher education students to learn English. This knowledge may help to improve the quality of the teaching and learning of English in higher education in Vietnam.

**RISKS**
There is a minimal risk associated with your participation in this project. A possible risk is some inconvenience for you in terms of time to complete survey questionnaire. In order to minimise inconvenience caused by the time it takes you to complete the survey questionnaire, you can complete the questionnaire at your convenient time within two weeks.

**PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

All comments and responses are anonymous and will be treated confidentially unless required by law. The names of individual persons are not required in any of the responses. Any data collected as part of this project will be stored securely as per QUT’s Management of research data policy.

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE**

The submission of the completed survey is considered an indication of your consent.

**QUESTIONS/FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT**

If you have any questions or require further information please contact one of the research team members below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thu Huong Ngo, PhD student, QUT</th>
<th>Dr Rebecca Spooner- Lane, Principal Supervisor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONCERNS/COMPLAINTS REGARDING THE CONDUCT OF THE PROJECT**

QUT is committed to research integrity and the ethical conduct of research projects. However, if you do have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the project you may contact the QUT Research Ethics Unit on +61 7 31385123 or email ethicscontact@qut.edu.au. The QUT Research Ethics Unit is not connected with the research project and can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an impartial manner.

Thank you for helping with this research project. Please keep this sheet for your information.
Appendix E: Participant Information and Consent Form for Focus Group

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FOR QUT RESEARCH PROJECT

An investigation into students’ motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam

QUT Ethics Approval Number 130000290

RESEARCH TEAM

Principal Researcher: Thu Huong Ngo, PhD student, QUT
Associate Researchers: Dr Rebecca Spooner-Lane, Principal Supervisor
Dr Amanda Mergler, Associate Supervisor
A Prof Lisa Ehrich, Associate Supervisor

DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this PhD project is to investigate motivation of Vietnamese students when they learn English in higher education in Vietnam, consider Vietnamese students’ level of effort and perceived autonomy, competence and relatedness in their English learning and explore students’ perceptions of how parents, teachers and peers influence their motivation.

PARTICIPANTS

You are invited to participate in this project because you are a second year English/non-English major student. Your participation will involve an audio recorded focus group at the researcher’s office that will take approximately one hour of your time. The focus group discussion will explore your experience of learning English in higher education in Vietnam, and discuss the role that you feel your parents, teachers and peers may play in your English learning experience. Before the focus group starts, you will be given a sheet of paper with seven key questions that will be discussed during the focus group. Questions will include ‘Why are you studying English?’ and ‘How do you think your parents influence your English learning? You will be asked to read over these questions and may write any information you wish to share privately on this sheet of paper, and place it in a box before you leave the room.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you do agree to participate you can withdraw from the project without comment or penalty. If you withdraw, on request any identifiable information already obtained from you will be destroyed. Your decision to participate or not participate will in no way impact upon your current or future relationship with the Hanoi University of Industry (for example your grades) or with QUT.

EXPECTED BENEFITS

This project may benefit teachers, students and policy makers in higher education in Vietnam in ways that the findings of this project will inform their understanding of what motivates Vietnamese higher education students to learn English. This understanding may help to improve the teaching and learning of English in higher education.

It is expected that this project will not benefit you directly. However, participating in the focus group will provide you with an opportunity to reflect upon your experience of learning English in higher education.

RISKS

There are minimal risks associated with your participation in this project. First, there may be inconvenience for you in terms of time to participate in focus groups. Second, there may be a low risk.
of discomfort as the discussion about how important people influence your motivation may bring up sensitive areas.

In order to minimise inconvenience caused by the time to participate in the focus group, the focus group will be scheduled according to your convenience. To minimise discomfort which may cause you in focus groups, you are advised that you should share only the information which you feel comfortable to share with other people. You will be provided with counselling services in case you are upset by the focus group.

**PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

All comments and responses will be treated confidentially unless required by law. The names of individual persons are not required in any of the responses.

The focus groups will be audio recorded. The recording will be destroyed at the end of the project and will not be used for any other purposes. The recording will be assessable only to the researcher.

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE**

We would like to ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate.

**QUESTIONS/FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT**

If you have any questions or require further information please contact one of the research team members below.

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Thank you for helping with this research project. Please keep this sheet for your information.
Appendix F: Consent form for QUT research project (Focus group)

CONSENT FORM FOR QUT RESEARCH PROJECT
– Focus group –
An investigation into students’ motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam
QUT Ethics Approval Number 1300000290

RESEARCH TEAM CONTACTS

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STATEMENT OF CONSENT

By signing below, you are indicating that you:

• Have read and understood the information document regarding this project.
• Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction.
• Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team.
• Understand that you are free to withdraw at any time, without comment or penalty.
• Understand that you can contact the Research Ethics Unit on +61 7 3138 5123 or email ethicscontact@qut.edu.au if you have concerns about the ethical conduct of the project.
• Understand that the project will include an audio recording.
• Agree to participate in the project.

Name ________________________________________________

Signature ________________________________________________

Date ________________________________________________

Please return this sheet to the investigator.