

# A Study of Motivation of University Students in Learning English at Private Schools in Yangon, Myanmar

Thu Mana

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand  
Corresponding Author, Email: popococo987@gmail.com

**Retrieved:** January 7, 2025; **Revised:** September 4, 2025; **Accepted:** October 6, 2025

## Abstract

The objectives of this research were 1) to study the situation of university students learning English at private schools in Yangon, Myanmar, 2) to find out problems of university students at private schools in Yangon, Myanmar, and 3) to analyse the motivation patterns of university students who are studying English at private schools in Yangon, Myanmar. The research method for the study was both qualitative and quantitative research. The population of the study was ninety University students who are studying English at private schools, Royal Rose English Learning Centre, All in One English class and U Myat Kyaing English Learning Centre, in Yangon Myanmar. Sixty University students are selected as the samples for this research. Research tools for this study are the questionnaires and open-ended interview. Frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation and content analysis writing method are used for evaluation for the findings of the results.

**Keywords:** Motivation, Learning English, University Students, Private School, Yangon, Myanmar

## Introduction

Burmese students have to study English as a compulsory subject in government schools. But, although students studied English from primary school to the University for Many Years, their English proficiency are not very well. Even some graduated students face with difficulties in communication when they apply scholarship, job interview and so on. Therefore, many university students attend English private schools to improve their English proficiency. But English private schools are not everywhere in Myanmar. Most of English private schools are in capital cities such as Yangon, Taunggyi and Mandalay. Many students from the remote area have to move to capital city for attending English private schools. They spend much time and their money for studying English. As a result, their families have to support their cost of living while they are studying English private schools. Some private schools take long time to complete their courses. In fact, they had already studied English language since they were primary students.

The reason why university students learning English in the private schools is related to the motivation. Motivation plays an important role in acquisitions of the Second language. Without motivation, a student will not develop in his learning. It can be known that student in



the class who has much motivation improve faster than a less motivation learner in learning the second language. “Learners’ motivation plays a crucial part in learning English. Indeed, the role of learners’ motivation in learning has been examined by many researchers who are interested in this subject area. Gardner seems to support this idea and point out that motivation in language learning is of particular importance. He indicates that the motivation of foreign language learning contains four aspects: a goal, effortful behaviour, a desire to attain the goal and attitude. Students who have strong learning motivation take a correct and positive attitude towards study and make great efforts to master English with clear goal and desire and consequently gain better grade. It is true that motivation is such a basic factor in language learning that no teacher could avoid being concerned with students’ motivation. Therefore, teachers and students also pay more attention to motivation, which can drive students to learn English actively.”

As mentioned above, motivation and learning are inter-connected each other and it is also an essential factor in terms of education. Some of university students in Yangon, Myanmar study English in private schools. Actually, they also have studied English in their Universities. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research because they are enrolling in English private schools. What is their main motivation of enrolling in English private schools? What do they want from private schools? The results of the problems will be known why university students have to study in the private tutoring schools by doing this research. Finally, after conducting this research, it will be beneficial for both government schools and English private schools in planning the new course after understanding of the needs of university students who are attending in English private schools in Yangon, Myanmar.

## Objectives

1. To study the situation of university students learning English at private schools in Yangon, Myanmar.
2. To find out problems of university students at private schools in Yangon, Myanmar.
3. To analyse the motivation patterns of university students who are studying English at private schools in Yangon, Myanmar.

## Methodology

This Research design was stated the research plan in investigation of the motivation of the University students who are studying English in private schools. In addition, it was described what method researcher uses in this study, how, where and whom researcher collects the data to find the results for this study. Both Qualitative and quantitative method was used for this study. Furthermore, opened-ended interview also included to investigate the opinions, feeling, and beliefs of the learners as regard to motivation for learning English in private schools. The sixty of the samples participated in this research study. And then, questionnaires and interview were applied as research tools. Finally, all collected data were analyzed with SPSS version. Frequency, percentage, means, and standard deviation was used to analyze the quantitative collected data.

Overall collected data of open-ended questions and additional comments was summarized similar view and analyzed in terms of motivation with the method of content analysis.

### **Population and sample**

The populations for this study were ninety University students who are attending in three English private schools in Yangon, Myanmar. Three English private schools are Royal Rose English Center, All in One English Class and U Mya Kyaing English Learning Center, situated in Yangon, Myanmar. The numbers of samples for this research were 60 students and 20 of the students from each class were selected as participants for filling the questionnaire forms and the open-ended questions.

### **Research Tools**

The questionnaire, open-ended interview sections and additional comments were the main research instrument for this study. The aims of questionnaires, interview and additional comments are to find out the situation of university students learning English and motivation patterns of university students who are learning English at private schools. The questionnaires were designed by the researcher. Questionnaire's materials used for this study consists of three parts:

Part 1: General Information of the participants

Part 2: Students' Motivation Patterns in Learning English at Private Schools

Part 3: Additional comments from the respondents

### **Data Collection**

The data collection procedure took about 5 days. The data collection was divided into two parts: The questionnaires and open-ended questions. Firstly, the researcher wrote the questionnaire and open-ended questions for the data collection and then it was sent to the supervisor for correction of some mistake. After completion of the correction from the supervisor, the questionnaires were distributed to the 60 university students who were attending the English private schools in the class rooms. Then the researcher explained how to filling out the questionnaires both Burmese and English language. The questionnaires were collected after completion. Second, 5 of the students from each of three English class totally 15 students were interviewed by the researcher. This interview section was open-ended questions concerning the opinions, feeling, and beliefs of the learners as regard to learning English at private schools. The researcher took a record during the interview. Each of the students was interviewed by the researcher 10 minutes. English and Burmese language were used during the interview time.

### **Data Analysis**

This research used both qualitative and quantitative method in data collection. Frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used for analysing the findings of the research. The results of open-ended questions section were summary similar view and was analysed by the researcher in terms of motivation.



**1. Quantitative method:** After collecting the questionnaires data from the 60 university students, the questionnaires were analysed with SPSS version. Frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used for analysing the overall collected data.

**2. Qualitative method:** The results of interview and additional comments were summarized in terms of motivation which is integrative and instrumental motivation by applying the contents analysis method.

## Results

Objective 1. After analysing the data collections, the results appeared that forty of the respondents are female students while the rest of twenty are male students. Most of them are attending the Government University and private schools. Majority of the respondents are 21 to 24 years old age. Levels of their study are intermediate classes in private schools. Eighty six percent of the respondents enrolled English private school with their own decision.

**Table 1:** Main decision for learning English at private schools

Main decision	Frequency	Percent
my own	52	86.7
parent	6	10.0
friend	2	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The above table 1 states the main decision of university students learning English in private school. Majority of 52 (86.7%) university students are enrolling the English private school with their own decision. There are 6 university students who are enrolling English private school due to their parent's determination. Two others joined the private schools because of their friend's advice. Totally numbers of the respondents are 60 university students from the private school.

Research objective 2 After conducting this research, the researcher has found in the section of interview and additional comment results that there are many reasons why university students come to study English in private schools after interview and reading the additional comments of the respondents. Most of them have inconvenience of learning English in their Universities. They are not satisfied with learning English in their Universities. They face many problems in learning English in their Universities such as large students in one class room, classroom atmosphere, inefficient teaching methods, unqualified lecturers and wrong educational policy and so forth. Finally, they made up their mind to join English private schools for their English proficiency because they have more opportunity to practice their English in the private schools. In addition, pairs talking, round table discussion, presentation, game and other effective teaching methods are applied in the private schools.

Research objective 3. After analysing the collected data from the tow motivation patterns which are instrumental and integrative motivational questionnaire from the university students, the finding results show that level of instrumental motivation is higher than integrative motivation.

Since, the highest Mean of instrumental motivation is 2.00= (S.D.1.074.), the Mean score of integrative motivation is only 1.70= (S.D.889). Therefore, it can be concluded that the motivation of the university students learning English in private school is instrumental motivation. In other words, the sources of their desire to learn English in private school is “to get a good job, for further study, for a convenient communication in travelling abroad and useful for finding information in the internet. In addition, interview and additional comments results also reveal that most respondents keen on instrumental motivation that enables their future career.

Result responding to research objective 1: There are very different teaching tactic between university and private schools. For, while private schools provide good teaching method, qualified teachers and critical thinking skills in the class room, state universities cannot supply relevant teaching material, qualified lecturers and effective teaching method in the class room.

Result responding to research objective 2: Most of them are not satisfied with learning English in their Universities. It means they have problems concerning English language instruction in their universities. These problems are related to educational policy, traditional teaching methods, unqualified lecturers, overload students in the class rooms, multimedia aid, class room atmosphere and lack of practice and so forth. On the other hand, the University students are motivated to learn English at private schools because they have more opportunity to practice their English with their class-mates. Furthermore, they have more freedom to discuss in pairs talking, group discussion and presentation in the class room. Combination teaching methods which are teacher-centered and students-centered methods also motivated the University students to learning English at private schools.

Result responding to research objective 3: Methods of English language instruction in private schools are more pragmatic than government Universities. However, when analysing the patterns of their motivation in learning English at private schools, most of them have two types of motivation which are instrumental and integrative motivation. Some University students are motivated to learning English for studying other cultures, tradition and knowledge. But most of them are keen on learning English for job hunting, good salary, communication for business and high position for a career. In terms of motivational patterns, their instrumental motivation is higher than integrative motivation in learning English at private schools in Yangon, Myanmar. It means the reason they are studying English at private schools to get a good job, high salary, convenient communication for their business and high position for a career in the future.

## **New Body of Knowledge**

The purpose of this study is 1) to study the situation of university students learning English at private schools and government University in Yangon, Myanmar, 2) to investigate the university students' motivation for learning English at private schools in Yangon, Myanmar. Sixty of the university students attending in three English private schools were selected as the respondents. Research method for this study is both qualitative and quantitative. Questionnaires, open-ended interview and additional comments are used for the research tools for exploring the university



students' motivation for learning English at private schools. The tools of data analysis using in this research is SPSS software which calculates and mentions Mean, Percentage, and Standard Deviation of the results. However, the results of openended interview and additional comments are not use with SPSS program and its results stated directly in the chapter four by applying the content analysis method.

## Suggestions

From research results the researcher has the following suggestions:

### 1. Suggestion for an Applications

in this current research, when the researcher interviewed with the respondents concerning the learning English in private schools one by one, many of them are not satisfy with their universities teaching methods and policy of the University. They opened their heart to the researcher with regard to English language instruction in their universities. They said that they are boring with teacher-entered method using in their universities, and the large number of students in one room, unqualified teachers and inadequacy educational system had also made them disappointment for their study.

### 2. Suggestions for further researchs

This current research is only small research about motivation of the University students for learning English at private schools in Yangon, Myanmar. So, it will not complete all. Further research is necessary to investigate the situation of English language teaching and motivation of the students for learning English in Myanmar. Therefore, the following titles should be studied.

1. "Different reading teaching methods between private schools and government universities"
2. "A comparative study the different advantages of between teacher centered and students centered approached in the class rooms"
3. "The need and problems of university students learning English in Government University in Myanmar and its solution"

## References

- Crystal, D. (2013). *English as a global language*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2009). Motivation in second and foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, 31(3), 117.
- Fadel, H. M. A., & Shuqair, K. M. (2013). The impact of motivation on English language learning in the Gulf States. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 2(4), 1–7.
- Johansson, A. (2010). *What influences students' motivation for learning English grammar?* Växjö, Sweden: Linnaeus University, Institution of Human Sciences. Retrieved May 12, 2010, from <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2.../FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Kitjaroochai, N., & Kitaroochai, T. (2012). Motivation toward English language learning of Thai students majoring in English at Asia-Pacific International University. *Institute Press*, 7(1), 1–10.

- Long, C., Ming, Z., & Chen, L. (2013). The study of student motivation on English learning in junior middle school: A case study of No. 5 Middle School in Gejiu. *Canadian Center of Science and Education*, 6(9), 136–137.
- Mahadi, T. S., & Sepora, T. T. (2012). Motivation, its types, and its impacts in language learning. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(24), 230–235.
- Rehman, A. (2014). The role of motivation in learning English language for Pakistani learners. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 4(1), 254–258.
- Zohrabi, M., Torabi, M. A., & Baybourdiani, P. (2012). Teacher-centered and/or student-centered learning: English language in Iran. *Canadian Center of Science and Education*, 2(3), 18–27.
-