

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHOD

This is a survey study on Myanmar EFL learners' motivation and orientation with five steps of procedure: selecting samples, choosing research instruments, conducting a pilot study, collecting the data and analyzing the data.

Setting

During the academic year 2009-2010, the total number of students in the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies program (BARS) at Myanmar Institute of Theology was 516. The program is well-known in Myanmar. As the education offered in the state institutions rarely did not meet standards of academic excellence, MIT's Board of Trustees voted to offer a liberative education program leading to the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies, in 2000. The objective of the program is to offer a Bachelor-level education to students in Myanmar with a broad-based liberal arts curriculum that includes English language, computer science, mathematics, philosophy, the humanities, social science, business and religion. Although it is run under Myanmar Institute of Theology, a Christian school, students are from all religious backgrounds and ethnicities. They are from various socioeconomic backgrounds, but are mostly from the middle class.

Every year, thousands of students apply for this program. However, only 150 students are selected to enter the program. Therefore, students who are studying there

are supposed to have high academic proficiency. In this program, there are various major fields of studies, for instance, English, Computer Science, Business, Social Studies, Religious, Fine Art, Music and Political Science.

Participants

Albeit there were students from various majors, only English major students were selected to participate in the present study in order to focus on an English-immersion environment. Therefore the participants were all English major students from first year to fourth year (N= 134). However, some students were absent on the day the survey was distributed. They are not included in the study.

Twenty students were also selected for interviews: 10 were selected from the first year students and 10 from the fourth year students to investigate the difference in motivational orientation between the students who had just started the program and those who were about to finish the program. The students were selected by the classroom teacher based on their ability to reveal themselves, their expression ability.

Table 3.1 shows that the participants ages ranged from 17 to 30 years with 64.9% aged between 17 and 20, and 35% between 21 and 30. The participants who started learning English from kindergarten were 64.9%; those who started from primary school were 35%; and those who started from high school were 1.4%. Therefore, most participants had had more than 13-years experience in learning English. Only two students started learning English in high school and those two students were from an undeveloped rural area. No student had been to any native English speaking country. However, a few of them had been to Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines or India.

Table 3.1

Demographic data of the participants (N= 134)

	Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	46	34.3%
	Female	88	65.6%
	Total	134	100%
Age	17- 20 years	87	64.9%
	21- 30 years	47	35.0%
	Total	134	100%
Years spent learning English	13+	85	63.4%
	13	47	35.0%
	<13	2	1.4 %
	Total	134	100%

Research Instruments

The present study used two instruments, a five-point Likert scale questionnaire (see Appendix A) and an interview.

Questionnaire

The five-point Likert scale questionnaire was created by Noels, Pelletier, Clement, and Vallerand (2000). The questionnaire was used in many motivation studies. It was recently adapted by Surachet Taejaroenkul (2006) in his study that was conducted in Thailand. The original questionnaire consisted 21 items. In

Taejaroenkul's study, there were 26 items, and finally the current study had 28 items. The questionnaires in this study are categorized into three main groups. The first group assesses students' motivation. The second group assesses three types of motivational regulation: external regulation, introjected regulation, and identified regulation. The third group assesses the students' intrinsic motivation and is divided into three sub-groups: knowledge, accomplishment, and stimulation.

The questionnaire was originally designed for Anglophone students studying French as a second language in Canada. In Taejaroenkul's study (2006), the study deleted one item, "to show myself that I am a good citizen because I can speak a second language" (Noels, Pelletier, Clement, & Vallerand, 2001, p. 62). The current study omitted it because it was not suitable in the Myanmar context. The students did not need to be able to speak English to be regarded as good citizens.

Similar to Taejaroenkul's study, the current study added five items. The first one is "Because it (English) is a compulsory course". The second item is "In order to study abroad after I graduate from the college". The third item is "In order to travel abroad". The fourth item is "Because I like my English teacher". The fifth item is "In order to gain acceptance from teachers and friends". The last one is "In order to live in an English speaking country". These are developed by Taejaroenkul and the current study used it because they were perfectly suitable for Myanmar setting.

The first item, "In order to study abroad after I graduate from college" was admitted to the questionnaire because people in Myanmar have a high impression of foreign universities. Most of the students have goals to study in overseas university after being graduated from local schools or universities. Parents also try hard to be able to send and support their children overseas for further studies. Since it was factual for Myanmar students, this item was added. The questionnaire's second item,

“In order to travel abroad” was included because many people in Myanmar want to travel abroad for numerous reasons. As English is an international language, knowing English is truly helpful in traveling abroad. The third item, “Because I like my English teacher” was added as well since there were some students learning English because of inspiration from their teachers. Students’ motivation could also be affected by their teachers (Gardner, 1985). The fourth item is “In order to gain acceptance from teachers and friends”. As English is a prestigious language for many people, students believe that knowing English well would help them to gain acceptance from people, especially their teachers and friends.

The last one is “In order to live in an English speaking country”. Many Myanmar people have a great impression of English speaking countries. Living and working in one of those more developed countries could change their lives and give them a better future. Therefore, many people study English to fulfill such aspirations. As the five items mentioned above were absolutely appropriate for a Myanmar setting, they were included in the questionnaire.

There were three more questions formulated by the researcher of the present study. The first one is “To be able to use the Internet and access updated information from the World Wide Web with no language barrier” (No.4). With the overwhelming use of the Internet nowadays, accessing the web for information would be a problem due to lack of knowledge of English. The second one was “Because my parents force me to study” (No.18). This was true for some students. They did not study the course or subject they wanted to but what their parents wanted them to. The last one was “In order to make foreign friends” (No.28). There are some people who love to make friends with people from other countries. Some people learn a language because they want to make friends with native speakers of the target language. Since English is an

international language, studying English could be beneficial for learners who want international friends. Therefore, the final version of the questionnaire comprised 28 items after addition of the above mentioned three items.

All question items are categorized into their factor groups and presents in Table 3.2. In total, there are nine motivational orientation factor groups; Amotivation, External Regulation (Career), External Regulation (Travel), Introjected Regulation (Acceptance), Introjected Regulation (Guilt), Identified Regulation, Intrinsic Motivation – Knowledge, Intrinsic Motivation – Accomplishment, and Intrinsic Motivation – Stimulation.

The first group is Amotivation. As defined by Noels, Pelletier, Clement, and allerand (2000), amotivation is the situation where people are not sure about what they are doing and about the consequences of their action. The questions in this group inquire whether the participants lacked motivation to learn English. It consisted of three question items: (1) "I don't know; I can't come to see what I am doing studying English.", (2) "I cannot come to see why I study English, and frankly, I don't really care.", and (3) "Honestly, I don't know, I truly have the impression of wasting my time in studying English." If any participant agreed or strongly agreed with these three items, it would show that they lacked motivation to learn English.

The next group has three question items. They are (1) "because I have the impression that it is expected of me", (2) in order to get a more prestigious job later on and (3) in order to have a better salary later on". These questions elicited whether the participants were motivated by such external sources as tangible benefits or costs. For this reason, this group is categorized as an external regulation factor. However, in this particular group, the questions intended to measure whether the participant were

motivated by their future goals, to increase their opportunity to get good jobs, better salary and such. Therefore, this is named as external regulation (career).

Table 3.2
Language Learning Orientation Factors

Factor	Question items
1. Amotivation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I don't know; I can't come to see what I am doing studying English. 2. I cannot come to see why I study English, and frankly, I don't really care. 3. Honestly, I don't know, I truly have the impression of wasting my time in studying English.
2. External Regulation (Career)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Because I have the impression that it is expected of me. 5. In order to get a more prestigious job later on. 6. In order to have a better salary later on.
3. External Regulation (Travel)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. In order to study abroad after I graduate from this university. 8. In order to travel abroad. 9. In order to live in English speaking countries.
4. Introjected Regulation (Acceptance)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Because I like my English teacher. 11. In order to gain acceptance from teachers and friends 12. In order to make foreign friends.
5. Introjected Regulation (Guilt)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Because my parents force me to study English. 14. Because I would feel ashamed if I couldn't speak to my friends from English community in their native tongue. 15. Because I would feel guilty if I didn't know English.

6. Identified Regulation

16. Because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language.
 17. Because I think it is good for my personal development.
 18. Because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak English.
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7. Intrinsic Motivation – Knowledge

19. To be able to use internet and access information from world wide webs.
 20. To listen to English songs, to watch English movies, and to read English newspapers.
 21. For the satisfied feeling I get in finding out new things.
 22. Because I enjoy the feeling of acquiring knowledge about the English community and their way of life.
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8. Intrinsic Motivation – Accomplishment

23. For the pleasure I experience when surpassing myself in my English studies.
 24. For the enjoyment I experience when I grasp a difficult construct in English.
 25. For the satisfaction I feel when I am in process of accomplishing difficult exercises in English.
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9. Intrinsic Motivation – Stimulation

26. For the “high” I feel when hearing foreign languages spoken.
 27. For the “high” feeling that I experience while speaking in English.
 28. For the pleasure I get from hearing English spoken by native English speakers.
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The third group also belonged to the external regulation factor because the questions measured whether the participants were motivated by external sources. The items are (1) “in order to study abroad after I graduate from this university”, (2) in order to travel abroad”, and (3) “in order to live in English speaking countries”.

However, as they show that the participants studied English for other reasons than career, to visit or study or live in a foreign country, they were categorized as “external regulation (travel)”.

The fourth and fifth groups belonged to “introjected regulation” because they examined whether the participants were compelled themselves studying English for the pressures they encountered. However, there was a slight difference between the two groups. In the fifth group, participants studied English to gain acceptance from teachers, friends, and other people around them. Therefore, the items were categorized as “introjected regulation (acceptance)”. The questions are (1) “because I like my English teacher”, (2) “in order to gain acceptance from teachers and friends”, and (3) “in order to make foreign friends”.

On the other hand, in the fifth group, participants studied English in order to avoid guilty feelings. The items in this category include (1) “because my parents force me to study English”, (2) “because I would feel ashamed if I couldn’t speak to my friends from English community in their native tongue”, and (3) “because I would feel guilty if I didn’t know English. This group is labeled as introjected regulation (guilt)”.

The sixth group was “identified regulation”. According to Noels, Pelletier, Clement, and Vallerand (2000), it is the most self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. In this group, the questionnaire looked for the participants’ reasons for studying English. If the participants agreed with the items in this group, it was apparent that they knew they would be beneficial for knowing English. They studied English for their personal development. The question items were (1) “because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language”. (2)

“because I think it is good for my personal development”, and (3) “because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak English”.

The last three groups are lying under “intrinsic motivation (IM)”. It is generally refers to students’ motivation as they are engaging in an activity because their activity is enjoyable and satisfying all by itself (Noels, Pelletier, Clement, & Vallerand 2000). Intrinsic motivation is divided into three types: IM-Knowledge, IM- Accomplishment, and IM- Stimulation.

IM-Knowledge relates to motivation that doing the activities on exploring new ideas and developing knowledge. As the seventh group was looking for the participants’ motivation in exploring new things and knowledge, it was labeled under IM- Knowledge. There were four question-items (1) “to be able to use internet and access information from world wide webs”, (2) “to listen to English songs, to watch English movies, and to read English newspapers”, (3) “for the satisfied feeling I get in finding out new things”, and (4) “because I enjoy the feeling of acquiring knowledge about the English community and their way of life”.

IM- Accomplishment associates with motivation that students’ trying to master a task or achieves the goal. The eighth group was IM- Accomplishment because they examined whether students’ motivation in learning English is for achieving tasks. The eighth group questions were (1) “for the pleasure I experience when surpassing myself in my English studies”, (2) “for the enjoyment I experience when I grasp a difficult construct in English”, and (3) “for the satisfaction I feel when I am in process of accomplishing difficult exercises in English”.

The last group is labeled as IM- Stimulation because it is about motivation that is stimulated by performing interesting, fun and exciting tasks. The question items were (1) “for the ‘high’ I feel when hearing foreign languages spoken”, (2) “for

the 'high' feeling that I experience while speaking in English”, and (3) “for the pleasure I get from hearing English spoken by native English speakers”.

The Interview

For the confirmation on the understanding of what motivated students to learn English and what did not, the study also included an interview as an instrument. The interview was conducted with a total number of 20 students. They are randomly chosen by their class teachers.

The interview in this study was a semi-structured interview (see Appendix B). It basically asked the direct questions such as: what motivate them to learn English? Why do they want to study English? and what demotivate them in learning English, in other words, the obstacles they encounter in their study. The other interview questions were based on what they had answered in the questionnaire. For example, when a student strongly agreed with No 16. “Because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak English”, the student is asked. “Why do you want to be that kind of person? What would you get for being that kind of person? What do you think that kind of person would be able to do?” Other questions were derived from their answers during the interview to confirm the compared results of two groups. They were also asked the improvements they want in their studying English to be more interesting and fun.

Each interview was conducted in the Burmese language and it was tape recorded.

A Pilot Study

The pilot study was given to ten students from the first year non-English major students in order to ascertain whether there were any problems or difficulties in the questionnaire. Those students were chosen randomly by the assistant dean of the BARS program. They were chosen because, among the whole population, they would be the most likely to experience language problems with the questionnaire.

The purpose of having them answering the questionnaire was explained to the students and they were welcomed to ask any questions. Although it was assumed that the questionnaire was simple and they would not have any problems, there were some problems with the vocabulary and confusion about a couple of questions. Thus, the researcher explained to them all 28 items slowly, item by item, and let them do the questionnaire at the same time. The total time taken was about 30 minutes, including the time spent explaining.

From the result of the pilot study, it was acknowledged that students had vocabulary problems and were confused by some items in the questionnaire. For those reasons, the questionnaire was translated to the Myanmar language. To make sure the questionnaire was translated accurately, four teachers read the translated questionnaire. One of the teachers had a degree in Linguistics, two had master degrees in TESOL and TEFL as well as one teacher who had a master degree in English were asked to read the translated questionnaire, discuss and make changes as appropriate. Each translated item was added to the original items in the questionnaire.

Data Collection Procedure

According to the flow chart (see Figure 3.1), firstly, a letter was written to the dean of BARS program that asked for permission to collect the data. As the program

approved the permission, next, the researcher met with all six classroom teachers, explained the study and got an overview of the class schedule. Then, appointments were made with all the instructors for collecting data during their class time. Ten students of non-English major studies were chosen randomly by the assistant dean for the pilot study. From the result of the pilot study, due to the students' incomplete comprehension of the original questionnaire, it was translated and clarified by discussing with English teachers there.

Research Procedure and Data collection

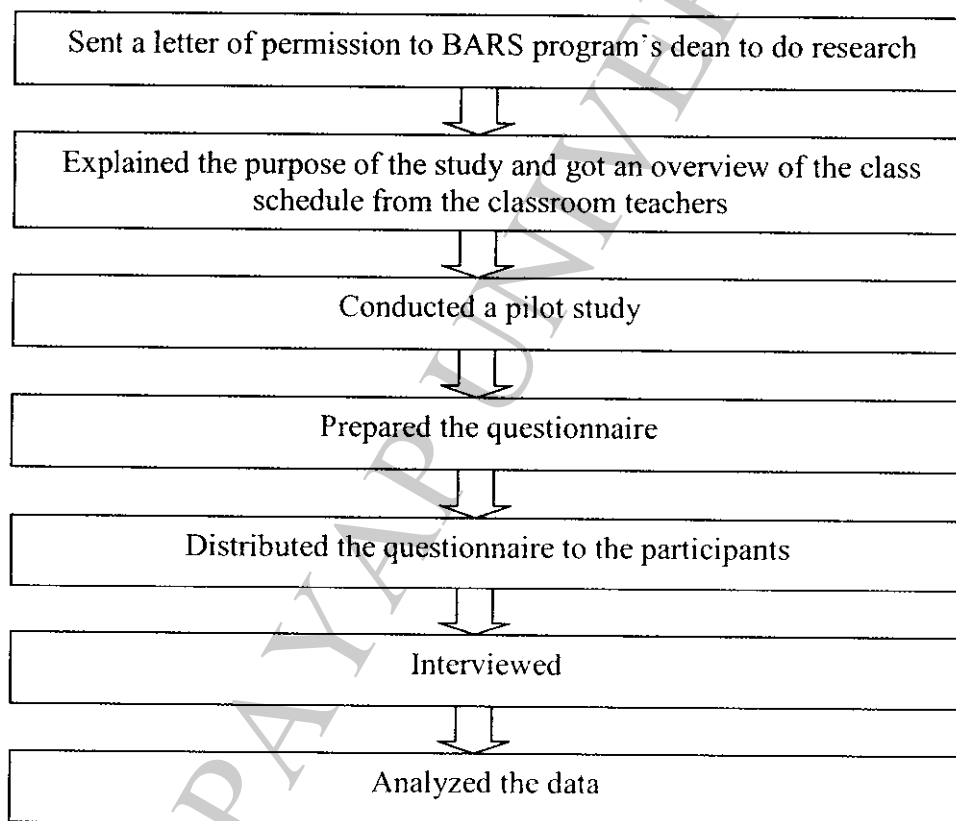


Figure 3.1. Overview of research procedure and data collection

After that, each class was informed about the reasons for collecting the data and that their answers would remain confidential and would not affect their grades.

Then, the questionnaires were given to the students during their regular class time, allowing them to answer without time limit. Distributing the questionnaire during class time was to include a large number of participation. Each class was given the questionnaire on two different days because their English classes were on different days. The questionnaires were collected after they had been completed. On average, the whole procedure took about fifteen minutes. Students who were absent on the day of collection were not counted for the study.

Data Analysis

After collecting the questionnaire, the data were analyzed by using SPSS computer software. First of all, the participants' demographic data were collected and the percentage calculated. Next, the participants' responses were coded and fed into the computer. The key coding for the participants' responses were as follow: 1 for Strongly Disagree, 2 for Disagree, 3 for Uncertain, 4 for Agree and 5 for Strongly Agree (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3

Participants' responses

Scale	Participant's response
1	Strongly disagree
2	Disagree
3	Uncertain
4	Agree
5	Strongly agree

The participants' reasons for studying English were analyzed according to the self-determination theory. The items were categorized into factor groups and the percentage and mean scores were calculated. The mean scores were interpreted as follows: 0.0 – 0.99 as the lowest; 1.0 – 1.99 as low; 2.0 – 2.99 as moderate; 3.0 – 3.99 as high; and 4.0 – 5.0 as the highest (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4

An Interpretation of the Mean Scores

Range of Mean Score	Degree of Motivation
4.00 - 5.00	Highest
3.00 - 3.99	High
2.00 - 2.99	Moderate
1.00 - 1.99	Low
0.00 - 0.99	Lowest

The chapter explained the methodology of the study. The detailed results of the data analysis will be revealed and discussed in the next chapter.