

## AN INVESTIGATION INTO FACTORS AFFECTING ENGLISH LINGUISTICS LEARNING AMONG ENGLISH-MAJORED STUDENTS AT NGUYEN TAT THANH UNIVERSITY

Nguyen Minh Thien<sup>1\*</sup>

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<sup>1\*</sup>Faculty of Foreign Languages, Nguyen Tat Thanh University, Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam.

\* **Correspondence:** Nguyen Minh Thien

**ABSTRACT:** This study examines the factors impacting English linguistics learning by English majors at Nguyen Tat Thanh University, and it seeks to understand students' perceptions regarding the impact of such factors on their learning processes. In this study, the quantitative research methodology was applied to gather data from 135 English majors. The data collection process involved the use of a questionnaire that was subjected to descriptive analysis. It was found that learning motivation, teaching approach, class interaction, self-regulation, and use of technology had significant impacts on English linguistics learning. Among these factors, learning motivation and interactive teaching approach were established as the most important factors influencing learners' learning processes. Furthermore, it was found that learners prefer student-centered classes, group work, and practical teaching techniques.

**Keywords:** *English linguistics learning, English-majored students, learning motivation, self-regulated learning, teaching methodology, EFL learning.*

### 1. Introduction

English linguistics is considered a basic subject in English language study as it equips students with vital knowledge about phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics

which are required to communicate, translate, interpret, and become an English teacher. Under the influence of global and technological shifts, English-major students are more and more expected to acquire linguistic skills and analysis abilities to cope with academic and occupational requirements. Nevertheless, numerous Vietnamese students encounter obstacles in comprehending linguistic theories and implementing them into practice owing to the abstraction of linguistics, lack of academic vocabulary, and inappropriate studying techniques (Ngo & Tran, 2023; Tran–Thanh, 2025). Besides, the fast advancement of technology-assisted education has brought great changes to students' learning process and expectation in higher educational establishments, including English language courses (Bang, 2024; Le et al., 2025).

Research findings show that many factors affect English language acquisition, including learning motivation, learning approaches, interactional skills, self-regulated learning, technology usage, and the level of English proficiency of the learner. Motivation and self-regulated learning are regarded as critical predictors of academic performance as they stimulate students to engage in the learning process and cope with academic difficulties (Zimmerman, 2002; Teo, 2019). Besides, digital learning environments and intelligent educational systems help promote independent learning and motivate students to learn; however, inefficient use of technology and poor interaction can adversely influence learning outcomes (Holmes et al., 2019; Romero & Ventura, 2024). It should be noted that there are few studies on English linguistic learning among English majors in Vietnam.

Nguyen Tat Thanh University has introduced modern learning approaches and advanced technologies to enhance English language acquisition among its students. However, there is still no study that examines factors influencing English linguistic learning among English majors at the university. Therefore, this study is conducted to identify the factors influencing students' English linguistics learning and explore students' perceptions toward these factors in the context of higher education and digital transformation (Ngo & Tran, 2023; Le et al., 2025).

The objective of this study is to investigate the factors affecting English linguistics learning among English-majored students at Nguyen Tat Thanh University.

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What factors affect English linguistics learning among English-majored students at Nguyen Tat Thanh University?
2. How do English-majored students perceive the influence of these factors on their English linguistics learning?

## **2. Literature Review**

### ***2.1. Theoretical Framework of English Linguistics Learning***

The field of English linguistics involves many crucial learning theories that offer insights into the ways learners acquire linguistic knowledge. Constructivist Learning Theory is one of the most significant theories regarding English linguistics education, which highlights the role of interactive learning and suggests that learners construct knowledge via experiences and interactions, not merely through the transfer of knowledge by instructors (Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978). Linguistics education requires students to analyze linguistic data, comprehend linguistic phenomena, and use linguistic theory in practice. Hence, it is necessary for learners to be actively involved in the process of learning and engage in interactions during the course (Holmes et al., 2019; Tran–Thanh, 2025).

Another theoretical framework that can be used is the Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) Theory put forward by Zimmerman (2002) as it focuses on learners' ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate learning independently. Students who self-regulate themselves usually have higher levels of engagement and academic motivation than passive learners as well as high academic achievement (Zimmerman, 2002; Teo, 2019). In case of linguistics classes, SRL theory becomes crucial as students need to be able to study on their own and understand theoretical material independently (Nguyen, 2016; Oxford, 1990). In addition to that, Technology Acceptance Model Theory (TAM) developed by Davis (1989) can be helpful as well since in today's world of digital learning students' attitudes towards technology play an essential role (Teo, 2019; Holmes et al., 2019).

## ***2.2. English Linguistics Learning in Vietnamese Higher Education***

English linguistics is regarded as one of the main subjects within the English language curriculum due to the fact that this subject equips learners with crucial information concerning languages and communication. Linguistics courses often comprise phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and discourse analysis, contributing to learners' linguistic competence, critical thinking, and professional development (Ngo & Tran, 2023; Bang, 2024). For Vietnamese learners studying in higher educational institutions, English linguistics facilitates their career prospects as teachers, translators, interpreters, and intercultural communicators (Tran–Thanh, 2025; Le & Nguyen, 2017).

However, despite the relevance of this subject, English linguistics may be seen by Vietnamese English as a Foreign Language learners as a challenging and purely theoretical subject. Indeed, learners often face issues related to linguistic terminology, linguistic structures, and the application of theoretical knowledge in practice (Nguyen, 2016; Bang, 2024). Furthermore, in general, courses in linguistics involve high levels of critical thinking and academic reading abilities required from students, making it difficult for Vietnamese students with limited language skills to understand and engage with the materials taught (Ngo & Tran, 2023; Tran & Nguyen, 2022). Finally, lectures may limit interactions between learners and lecturers in class (Le & Le, 2022; Tran–Thanh, 2025).

## ***2.3. Learning Motivation and Attitudes toward Linguistics Learning***

Students' motivation in learning has long been established as one of the most significant influencing factors on students' academic success. Indeed, motivation motivates learners to actively engage in classroom activities, persist and develop positive attitudes toward academic tasks (Luong-Phan & Effeney, 2015; Loc, 2022). Based on Self-Determination Theory, students who are motivated by an intrinsic motivational orientation can easily show high involvement and better academic results as they find studying interesting and relevant (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Zimmerman, 2002).

However, motivation becomes even more relevant when it comes to learning English linguistics, as learners have to learn some complex theoretical concepts and deal with cognitive tasks, for example, language analysis, reading academic texts, etc. (Ngo & Tran, 2023; Nguyen, 2025). Prior research indicated that students who were positively motivated to study English demonstrated a much higher level of confidence, lower levels of anxiety, and classroom engagement than their counterparts with negative motivation (Le & Le, 2022; Loc, 2022). Besides, Vietnamese students' beliefs about the relevance and usefulness of taking linguistic courses can substantially affect their motivation and engagement in learning activities (Bang, 2024; Tran–Thanh, 2025).

#### ***2.4. Teaching Methodology and Classroom Interaction***

The choice of teaching methodology also makes a great difference concerning how well and effectively students learn English linguistics as a subject in the context of EFL education. In particular, methods like collaborative learning, student-centered education, and communicative language teaching have been praised since these approaches make students participate actively, engage in interactions during the class, and develop critical thinking skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Holmes et al., 2019). For instance, interactive teaching activities such as discussion, solving problems, and language analysis allow students to better understand the content and develop analytical skills (Le & Nguyen, 2017; Tran & Nguyen, 2022).

At the same time, a traditional approach to education with an emphasis on lecturing may be ineffective because it restricts interaction and limits student involvement in educational activities (Le & Le, 2022; Bang, 2024). Moreover, previous studies have shown that too much attention paid to theoretical lectures without concrete examples or tasks may be detrimental to students' comprehension and understanding of linguistic phenomena (Ngo & Tran, 2023; Nguyen, 2016). Another aspect is teacher support because it is crucial for explaining complex concepts related to linguistics including syntax, semantics, and phonology (Tran–Thanh, 2025; Holmes et al., 2019).

## ***2.5. Self-Regulated Learning and Learning Strategies***

Self-regulated learning is described as learners' capacity to regulate their own learning process by planning, monitoring, and evaluating themselves (Zimmerman, 2002; Oxford, 1990). Learners who are self-regulated tend to be more autonomous, motivated, and successful than those that need more support from teachers (Teo, 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2020). For example, in EFL environments, self-regulated learning has been proven to positively affect English learners' proficiency, engagement in class, and academic performance (Nguyen, 2016; Zimmerman, 2002).

Students majoring in English use various learning techniques to enhance their knowledge about linguistic theories and structures. Such learning techniques are divided into metacognitive, cognitive, memory, and social strategies (Oxford, 1990; Nguyen, 2016). Learning strategies such as taking notes, independent reading, engaging in discussions with peers, and self-reflection will help students understand difficult linguistic concepts and theories (Loc, 2022; Nguyen, 2025). Nevertheless, students with poor self-regulation skills may have difficulties with managing workloads, maintaining motivation in learning, and performing linguistic tasks (Teo, 2019; Ngo & Tran, 2023).

## ***2.6. Technology Integration and Digital Learning Environment***

With the introduction of technology in the education process, students' learning experience in English education has been greatly influenced in recent times. Various educational technologies such as LMS, online platforms, digital resources, and technology-based AI learning tools are capable of promoting learners' autonomy, engaging classroom environment, and flexible learning process (Holmes et al., 2019; Romero & Ventura, 2024). Digital transformation policies for Vietnamese higher education institutions have led to the implementation of blended learning approaches and application of technology in the classroom to foster educational quality and develop digital skills among students (Le et al., 2025; Bang, 2024).

A number of recent studies indicate that technology integration into the learning process might have a positive impact on students' academic performance due to better access to learning resources, enhanced independent learning and immediate feedback opportunities (Teo, 2019; Holmes et al., 2019). Conversely, inappropriate

use of technology, lack of digital competence, and reduced opportunities for face-to-face interactions may adversely influence students' learning experience and motivation (Woo et al., 2023; Susanto et al., 2026). In addition, environmental factors including inadequate learning materials, poor classroom communication, and less opportunity for English practice might prevent linguistic success among university students (Tran & Nguyen, 2022; Truong & Dang, 2017)

### **2.7. Related Studies**

Many studies have examined factors impacting English language learning within EFL contexts, both internationally and in Vietnam. Globally, for example, Holmes et al. (2019) have stressed that a technology-mediated learning environment could foster learner autonomy, engagement, and critical thinking. Similarly, Romero and Ventura (2024) discovered that digital learning analytics and AI-driven education systems could positively affect learning behaviors and academic success. Moreover, Ryan and Deci (2020) maintained that intrinsic motivation and self-determination made crucial contributions to learners' academic persistence and engagement in tertiary education.

In Vietnam, a number of studies have been conducted to examine factors contributing to English learning motivation, attitudes, and classroom interaction. For instance, Nguyen (2025) demonstrated the impact of learning motivation and classroom environment on Vietnamese university students' English learning achievement. Similarly, Le and Nguyen (2017) highlighted that collaborative learning and classroom interaction had a positive effect on learners' participation and communication skills in EFL classes. Additionally, Nguyen (2016) indicated that learners majoring in English applied metacognitive and cognitive learning strategies in English language learning. Nonetheless, previous studies mostly examined general English learning, speaking skills, writing skills, or technology use rather than English linguistics learning per se (Ngo & Tran, 2023; Tran–Thanh, 2025).

### **2.8. Research Gap**

While previous researchers have looked into factors that affect English language learning within EFL settings, there have been insufficient studies that directly address the English linguistics learning of English majors in Vietnamese universities

(Ngo & Tran, 2023; Bang, 2024). The majority of current literature focuses on general English proficiency, speaking skills, writing ability, or technology-assisted learning instead of students' experience with linguistics subjects (Nguyen, 2025; Le & Le, 2022).

In the case of Nguyen Tat Thanh University, there have been notable developments in pedagogic innovation and technology usage in teaching the English language. Nonetheless, empirical research that investigates factors that affect the English linguistics learning of English majors remains rare. In addition, no prior study has looked into the combined effect of motivation, teaching method, self-regulation, classroom interaction, and technology use on students' linguistics learning experience. This study attempts to fill this gap through investigating the factors that affect English linguistics learning and examining students' perceptions of these factors.

### **3. Research Methodology**

In this case, the research is designed using the quantitative research approach to explore the factors influencing English linguistics learning among students enrolled in English at Nguyen Tat Thanh University. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018) and Ary et al. (2019), the quantitative research approach can be deemed suitable since it helps the researcher to collect data in numeric form and analyze variables statistically. Therefore, this research will examine the factors that affect the process of English linguistics learning of the target population.

The participants involved in this research are English majors who are attending classes at Nguyen Tat Thanh University. Convenience sampling will be utilized to select a sample of 135 participants across various years. Data will be gathered using a questionnaire that has been modified based on prior research on the motivation of language learning, self-regulated learning, and technology-mediated language learning (Teo, 2019; Zimmerman, 2002). Likert-type items will be included in the questionnaire to assess the impact of different variables on English linguistics learning.

Upon gathering data, statistical tools like SPSS will be used to analyze the obtained information. This analysis will employ descriptive statistics, including mean scores, frequencies, and standard deviations, to determine significant variables that affect English linguistics learning. Besides, the reliability test will also be carried out using Cronbach's Alpha to ascertain the internal consistency of the variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Ary et al., 2019). This study's results are anticipated to have pedagogical implications regarding English linguistics instruction in Vietnam's higher education institutions.

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

It presents the results of this study using data gathered through questionnaires distributed among 135 English majors studying at Nguyen Tat Thanh University. The results of this study will be presented according to the two research questions posed by the researcher. A descriptive statistical analysis will be used in identifying the factors that influence the English linguistic learning process and the perception of the students regarding these factors.

##### 4.1. Findings for Research Question 1

Several factors were found to influence students' English linguistics learning significantly according to the findings of the questionnaire, such as learning motivation, teaching methods, interaction in class, self-regulation learning, and technology integration. Table 4.1 shows the descriptive statistical findings on factors influencing students' English linguistics learning.

**Table 4.1.** Factors Affecting English Linguistics Learning

Factors	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Learning motivation	4.21	0.63	High influence
Teaching methodology	4.15	0.58	High influence
Classroom interaction	4.08	0.66	High influence
Self-regulated learning	4.02	0.71	High influence
Technology integration	3.95	0.69	Moderate influence

From the results, it is clear that among all factors, learning motivation has the highest average score (M=4.21) implying that motivation was the most effective one affecting the students' process of English linguistics learning. It is worth noting that a great number of learners admitted that personal interest, academic objectives, and future career goals motivated them to take part in linguistics classes. As for the previous literature review on the issue, it should be mentioned that earlier research has confirmed the assumption about the crucial role played by motivation in successful language learning and active involvement in learning process (Luong-Phan & Effeney, 2015; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

The teaching methodology used by instructors in linguistics courses also emerged as a key determinant of students' learning experience (M = 4.15). In particular, participants preferred interactive teaching techniques, practical examples, and cooperation with other classmates rather than conventional lectures. The respondents explained that through group discussions, classroom interaction, and teacher's feedback, they found it easier to comprehend complicated topics like syntax and semantics. This result is in line with the findings by Richards and Rodgers (2014) and Holmes et al. (2019), who suggested that student-centered instructional techniques could promote greater learner engagement and analysis in language education. Furthermore, Le and Nguyen (2017) found out that collaborative learning facilitated students' communication skills and classroom involvement in Vietnamese EFL classrooms.

Another interesting result was related to the influence of self-regulated learning and classroom interaction on participants' experience. Namely, students who proactively revisited class materials, searched for supplementary sources, and arranged their studying schedule achieved better academic results when taking linguistics courses. This finding corroborates the views presented by Zimmerman (2002) and Oxford (1990), according to whom self-regulated learners are more autonomous and successful compared to passive learners. Furthermore, classroom interaction was found to increase students' confidence and willingness to participate in learning activities, which is consistent with previous studies on communicative and collaborative learning environments (Tran & Nguyen, 2022; Teo, 2019).

The integration of technology got the lowest mean score of all the examined variables (M=3.95), yet was deemed influential. While some students stated that technology was used in a way that helped them learn independently, some faced problems due to insufficient interaction and the improper utilization of technology in an educational context. The result found in this study is consistent with prior evidence stating that technology can promote learner autonomy and flexibility, but poses some challenges to those who lack digital literacy and effective means of learning (Holmes et al., 2019; Romero & Ventura, 2024).

#### 4.2. Findings for Research Question 2

Research question two involved the investigation of how learners perceived the effect of the mentioned factors on their acquisition of English linguistics knowledge. The results indicated that most of the learners had positive perceptions concerning the significance of motivation, teaching practices, interactions in class, and self-regulated learning on understanding linguistics issues.

**Table 4.2.** Students' Perceptions toward Factors Affecting English Linguistics Learning

Statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Motivation improves my learning engagement	4.32	0.61	Strongly agree
Interactive teaching methods help me understand linguistics better	4.28	0.57	Strongly agree
Classroom discussion increases my confidence	4.16	0.68	Agree
Self-study habits improve my academic performance	4.11	0.72	Agree
Technology helps me access learning materials effectively	3.97	0.74	Agree

Results reveal that students were strongly positive about the role of motivation in enhancing their level of engagement and performance in linguistics learning (M = 4.32). In most cases, it was assumed that individual interests and future career aspirations helped students invest their energy in learning complex ideas of linguistics. This is in accordance with Self-Determination Theory, where it is stated that intrinsically motivated learners engage and persist in academic actions (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Zimmerman, 2002). Moreover, some previous Vietnamese researches

showed that motivated students achieve higher success in learning English (Loc, 2022; Nguyen, 2025).

Moreover, students had very positive attitudes towards interactive teaching approaches ( $M = 4.28$ ). Students reported that teachers' explanation, concrete examples, and collaboration were extremely helpful for comprehending linguistic theories. The above-mentioned conclusion is supported by communicative and constructivist approaches to learning that state that interaction and engagement of students result in enhanced learning and critical thinking development (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Vygotsky, 1978). Besides, Holmes et al. (2019) and Tran–Thanh (2025) point out the effectiveness of student-centered learning settings in higher education environments.

A further noteworthy perception revealed in this study concerns self-regulated learning. The majority of respondents believed that studying on their own, reading independently, and reviewing lectures aided them in comprehending linguistics disciplines and enhancing their academic outcomes. This conclusion is consistent with prior research that shows positive relationships between self-regulated learning and language learning achievements and learner autonomy (Zimmerman, 2002; Oxford, 1990). Learners engaged in self-learning practices felt more comfortable when completing linguistics assignments and language structure analysis.

As regards technology integration, the majority of students believed that technology-assisted learning was helpful in accessing learning materials and promoting flexible learning practices. However, some respondents reported that online learning platforms sometimes interfered with communication in class and learners' concentration. This finding is congruent with previous research demonstrating that technology-enhanced learning brings educational advantages but creates difficulties concerning learner involvement and digital literacy (Woo et al., 2023; Susanto et al., 2026).

In conclusion, the results suggest that learning English linguistics among English majors is determined by many interacting aspects. Motivation, teaching approaches, interaction in class, and self-regulated learning were recognized as the most crucial

factors influencing successful linguistics learning. These conclusions have significant implications for linguistics pedagogy in Vietnamese higher education institutions.

## **5. Conclusion**

The present research examined the influencing factors on English linguistics learning among English majors of Nguyen Tat Thanh University and analyzed the perception of the students toward the effects of these factors on their learning process. According to the results, learning motivation, teaching methods, classroom interaction, self-regulation in learning, and incorporation of technology had substantial impacts on the English linguistics learning process of the participants. Among those factors, learning motivation is the most influential factor since motivated students showed increased engagement in the classroom, greater perseverance in learning, and better learning outcomes. This finding corroborates with prior studies highlighting the critical nature of motivation and learner autonomy in EFL learning.

Furthermore, the study found that the students prefer interactive and learner-centered teaching methods over traditional didactic lectures. Discussion in the classroom, collaboration in groups, teacher's guidance, and application of linguistic theories to real-life situations proved to be effective techniques that enhance the comprehension of complex theoretical ideas by the students. Moreover, self-regulation through self-study, taking notes, and reviewing lessons improved the academic performance of the participants in linguistics.

In addition, technology integration was perceived positively regarding access to learning resources and self-study. On the other hand, some students encountered problems concerning interaction insufficiency and inappropriate use of technology. Consequently, technology integration needs to be balanced along with adequate pedagogical interventions in order to enhance English linguistics instruction in higher education.

In conclusion, this research sheds light on English linguistics learning in Vietnamese higher education, which can help improve teaching and learning process at Nguyen Tat Thanh University.

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