

NHÂN TỐ ẢNH HƯỞNG ĐẾN NĂNG LỰC TIẾNG ANH CỦA SINH VIÊN KHỐI NGÀNH KINH TẾ TẠI TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC HỒNG ĐỨC

Lê Thị Thanh Thủy^{1*}

¹*Trường Đại học Hồng Đức*

* *Email: lthanhthuy@hdu.edu.vn*

Ngày nhận bài: 17/11/2023

Ngày nhận bài sửa sau phản biện: 16/02/2024

Ngày chấp nhận đăng: 04/03/2024

TÓM TẮT

Mục đích của bài viết là tìm hiểu sự ảnh hưởng của các yếu tố đến năng lực tiếng Anh của sinh viên khối ngành kinh tế tại Trường Đại học Hồng Đức. Nghiên cứu sử dụng dữ liệu sơ cấp thông qua khảo sát 200 sinh viên khối ngành kinh tế tại Trường Đại học Hồng Đức bao gồm ngành Kế toán, Quản trị kinh doanh, Tài chính – Ngân hàng, Kinh tế, Kiểm toán để kiểm định các yếu tố ảnh hưởng đến năng lực tiếng Anh được đề xuất theo mô hình nghiên cứu. Qua 188 bảng câu hỏi hợp lệ từ sinh viên, sử dụng công cụ phân tích dữ liệu SPSS 22 với kỹ thuật phân tích độ tin cậy, phân tích nhân tố khám phá (EFA), phân tích tương quan và hồi quy, các yếu tố Động lực, Giảng viên, Phương pháp học tập và Môi trường đều được khẳng định có tác động tích cực tới năng lực tiếng Anh của sinh viên khối ngành kinh tế. Kết quả nghiên cứu có ý nghĩa quan trọng trong việc góp phần đề xuất các giải pháp nhằm nâng cao động lực và hiệu quả học ngoại ngữ cho sinh viên khối ngành kinh tế tại Trường Đại học Hồng Đức trong giai đoạn tới.

Từ khóa: kinh tế, năng lực, tiếng Anh, Trường Đại học Hồng Đức.

FACTORS AFFECTING ENGLISH COMPETENCE OF STUDENTS MAJORING IN ECONOMICS AT HONG DUC UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the article is to gain an understanding of the influence of factors on the English competence of economics students at Hong Duc University. The study uses primary data through a survey of 200 students majoring in economics at Hong Duc University including Accounting, Business Administration, Finance – Banking, Economics, and Audit to test the influencing factors to English proficiency proposed according to the research model. Using 188 valid questionnaires from students and the SPSS 22 data analysis tool with reliability analysis techniques, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), Pearson correlation analysis, and analysis Linear regression revealed that the factors Motivation, Lecturers, Method, and Environment all have a positive relationship with economics students' English proficiency. The research results are important in contributing to proposing suggestions to improve the motivation and effectiveness of foreign language learning for economics students at Hong Duc University in the future period.

Keywords: competence, economics, English, Hong Duc University.

1. INTRODUCTION

During the integration with nations worldwide across economic, political, and cultural realms, having proficiency in English becomes exceedingly vital, particularly for students embarking on their careers in Vietnam's labor market. Economics students will be financiers, businessmen, administrators, and economic experts of the country in the future. Proficiency in English helps students after graduation have more confidence in communicating and collaborating with foreign friends and partners. At work, in addition to professional capacity in the economics major, being fluent in English also helps economics students easily apply for jobs or get promoted and have job opportunities with much higher salaries. Becoming proficient in the English language will help to communicate business ideas effectively with clients and business partners.

In Vietnam, learning English not only takes place at all levels of education but is also required as a mandatory subject at the university level in many majors. For Hong Duc University, students majoring in economics are also required to learn English from the basic level to specialized English modules according to the design of the training program to achieve language output standards and meet practical work requirements. Based on practical experience, the author found that many students in non-language majors, especially economics students still have some limitations in English competence and lack motivation to learn English. Therefore, their English learning effectiveness is not high. How is the students' English competence and do they meet the requirements for future jobs when many recruiting companies require economics graduates to demonstrate their English skills? This is a question that requires an answer to find and solve existing problems in the motivation and effectiveness of studying English among economics students. Starting from the above problem, the topic "Factors affecting English competence of students majoring in economics at Hong Duc

University" was conducted to clarify the causes and motivations of studying English for economics students at Hong Duc University. This implies suggestions that contribute to improving the effectiveness of learning and improving English proficiency for students in general, especially for students majoring in economics at Hong Duc University in particular in the coming time.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Credit system training has been applied at many universities based on the educational effectiveness that this system can bring such as developing students' ability to self-study explore and develop knowledge; emphasizing the diversity of knowledge, and promoting methods of understanding the world rather than knowledge. With flexibility, it allows students to choose subjects that suit their abilities and resources, proactively plan their studies, and implement that plan to complete the requirements for a degree and to serve their future careers (Nguyen Kim Dung, 2005). However, this model requires students to be highly proactive. They should have the habit of self-study, self-research, and appropriate learning methods without being affected by the habit of learning by rote or depending a lot on the lectures of teachers. For learning English, there is no exception. The learner's motivation and ability to take responsibility for his or her learning will determine success in learning that foreign language (Little, 2007). Regarding motivation and attitude to learn English, regression analysis shows that learners' awareness of the need to learn English and the role of English in the future has an impact on their success (Gradman & Hanania, 1991). Author Chou (2007) also found that the factor of learning method has the strongest impact on learners' English competencies. Meanwhile, according to the dictionary of the University of Southern Queensland (Penn-Edwards, 2010), English competency is defined as "the ability of learners to use English to convey information through speaking or writing during their

studies . It is known that English competency is a very important skill for one's survival and development in today's world.

The Eccles' Expectancy-Value Model is used to understand how individuals' achievement-related choices are linked to their motivational beliefs, values, and goals (Eccles et al. 1983). According to the Expectancy-Value Theory, students' beliefs about their ability to successfully learn a subject will become the driving force motivating them to improve their learning ability in that subject (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995). For learning the English language, value according to this model includes components: enjoyment when learning English; the benefits of learning English for students in the future; the importance of learning English well. Those motivations require students to work hard and make efforts to complete this English subject well (Truong Cong Bang, 2017). On the contrary, when students do not realize the belief and value of learning English, it becomes a barrier to their ability to successfully learn a foreign language today.

Besides lack of confidence and motivation, there are many different explanations for the poor performance of English students in general and Economics students in particular. Several studies have been conducted and confirmed that appropriate learning methods are also the cause that affects students' English proficiency (Nguyen Van Loi & Franken, 2010). Learning methods include arranging time, and methods and using reasonable learning support tools to achieve high efficiency in foreign language learning. Besides, the teaching staff is both the driving force and the cause of success or failure in this subject for students (Vo Thanh Long & Nguyen Thi Mai Hoa, 2010). However, these research results are still fragmentary from many different perspectives at different times, places, and research conditions. This study was conducted to examine the impact of factors on the suitability of English teaching and learning conditions for Economics students at Hong Duc University

today. From there, the research model and hypothesis are proposed as Figure 1.

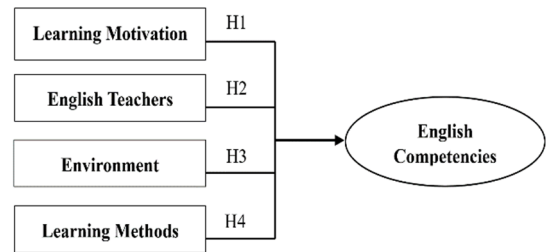


Figure 1. Research Model

The research model is based on the theoretical research model on the dynamics of Eccles with the Expectancy-Value Theory, inheriting the results of research models related to the topic and adjusting the impact factors to suit the current actual situation of teaching and learning at Hong Duc University as well as the characteristics of economics students studying at the University.

(1) Learning motivation: The learner's motivation will determine the learner's perseverance when facing challenges or difficulties in learning. This factor affects the learner's level of language proficiency and leads to success or failure in language development. Therefore, motivation is also considered one of the important factors in the process of second language acquisition (Ellis, 1994).

H1: Learning motivation positively affects the English competencies of students majoring in economics at Hong Duc University.

(2) English teachers: Teachers teaching specialized English need to be thoroughly prepared in teaching theories and methods, understand learners' expectations, and grasp the continuous changes in technology (Madhavantha, 2014).

H2: English teachers positively affect the English competencies of students majoring in economics at Hong Duc University.

(3) Environment: Learning environments are factors inside and outside the classroom that can affect learners' acquisition of knowledge. The learning environment is therefore extremely important for teachers

and students. Because the learning environment affects how teachers convey knowledge and how learners receive knowledge (Tomlinson, 2011). Therefore, the H3 hypothesis is:

H3: Environment positively affects the English competencies of students majoring in economics at Hong Duc University.

(4) Learning methods: According to Hedge (2000), learners clearly understand their needs and goals, strive to find ways to achieve set goals, know how to exploit learning resources, and are always active in learning, thinking, knowing how to adjust learning methods to improve results and knowing how to manage study time appropriately. Therefore:

H4: Learning methods positively affect the English competencies of students majoring in economics at Hong Duc University.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The research uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research is mainly used to analyze the theoretical basis and research situation from related works through documents, reports, articles, books, and textbooks. Qualitative research was also conducted through in-depth interviews with a number of training managers, educational experts, foreign language teachers, and group discussions with economics students to build a research model, construct a measurement scale, and check the suitability of the preliminary questionnaire before official research. The study's scale includes 24 observed variables measuring 4 independent factors and 1 dependent factor of the model on a 5-level Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. For EFA analysis, based on the study of Hair et al. (1998) on expected sample size, the minimum sample size must be 5 times the total number of observed variables. Thus, the minimum sample size for this study needs to be $24 \times 5 = 120$. Research

sample information was collected using the quota technique of student ratio of majors: Business Administration, Finance-Banking, Accounting, and Audit with 200 randomly selected non-probability and numerical ballots. Valid receipts included in the analysis were 188. After being collected, data was coded and processed with the support of SPSS 22 software to analyze the impact of the factors proposed in the model.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive analysis

The number of questionnaires issued was 200, and the number of received ones was 193. After checking, there were 5 invalid answers. Therefore, the number of valid responses used in data analysis was 188. The number of responses ensured the minimum sample size for analysis (Table 1).

Table 1. Information of Respondents

	Respondents	No	%
Gender	Male	77	41%
	Female	111	59%
	Total	188	100%
Major	Accounting and Audit	99	52.6%
	Finance-Banking	24	12.8%
	Business Administration	65	34.6%
	Total	188	100%
Student Year	First	45	24.0%
	Second	46	24.5%
	Third	56	29.7%
	Fourth	41	21.8%
	Total	188	100%
Finish English modules or not?	Yes	56	29.8%
	No	132	70.2%
	Total	188	100%

Table 2. Results of testing the reliability of the scale

Observed Variables	Corrected Item - Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted
Motivation		
Cronbach's Alpha = 0.916		
Learning English is necessary to pass the subject in the training program	.742	.842
Learning English is necessary for future careers	.753	.830
I want a high salary so I realize the importance of learning English	.758	.825
Learning English to have more job opportunities after graduation	.735	.890
Learning English gives me new cultural experiences and brings joy, opportunities to communicate with foreigners and travel	.789	.900
English Teachers		
Cronbach's Alpha = 0.814		
Lecturers are enthusiastic about teaching	.637	.784
Highly qualified lecturers	.667	.778
Lecturers have diverse and attractive teaching methods	.657	.747
Lecturers motivate and encourage students in their studies	.543	.723
Instructors provide useful support during and after class for studying English	.612	.631
Environment		
Cronbach's Alpha = 0.880		
Many of my friends are also interested in English	.651	.777
There are many people who know how to use English around me	.678	.803
The University and Faculty have many activities related to using and learning English such as competitions, clubs,...	.668	.754
Learning software or work support tools are both in English	.653	.766
The environment around me is one that is gradually becoming internationalized	.648	.773
Learning Methods		
Cronbach's Alpha = 0.821		
I have good self-study ability in English	.628	.779
I arrange a regular and continuous English learning schedule	.649	.742
I proactively and enthusiastically participate in activities that use English such as clubs, competitions, etc. to receive support in my studies.	.660	.748
I often refer to different resources to learn English	.642	.789
I often use support tools and software to learn English	.619	.739
English Competances		
Cronbach's Alpha = 0.854		
I am confident when learning and using English	.631	.768
Everyone rates my English ability highly	.676	.709
I am satisfied that my English ability can meet the job requirements after graduation.	.663	.724
I look forward to having more opportunities to demonstrate my English skills.	.687	.772

(Source: Processing collected data using SPSS, 2023)

The results of descriptive statistical analysis show that: (1) the number of female students is more than the number of male students in the survey, consistent with the ratio of male and female students majoring in economics at Hong Duc University. (2) The number of accounting – audit students participating in the survey accounts for the largest proportion; (3) The number of first-year, second-year, third-year, and fourth-year students participating in the survey is equal; (4) The number of students who have not completed all English courses is 132, accounting for more than 70% of the students participating in answering the questions.

4.2. Reliability of the scale

After testing the reliability of the scales, all have Cronbach Alpha coefficient > 0.8; All observed variables have a satisfactory total variable correlation > 0.3, showing that the measurement scales meet the standards of being good, highly reliable scales to include in measurement in the next step (Table 2).

4.3. Exploratory factor analysis – EFA

Table 3. Results of EFA for the independent factor

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.827
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3810.678
	df	230
	Sig.	.000

The results of KMO and Bartlett's tests for 20 independent observed variables after reliability testing show a high KMO index (0.805) with Sig value = 0. Thus, a large KMO index shows the suitable application of analysis. The exploratory factor for the scale set in this study is appropriate. The result of the total variance extracted in the EFA analysis for the independent factor is 66.183, showing that the use of factors can explain 66.18% of the explanatory power of all influencing factors (Table 3).

The Rotated Component Matrix shows observations grouped together with the originally proposed factors, with no new groupings of factors proposed. The study continued to test EFA for 4 dependent factors, with the result KMO = 0.818 at the level of statistical significance. The four dependent factor observations are also included in one group, no factor is removed from the model.

4.4. Correlation and regression analysis

The study tested the correlation of the independent and dependent variables of the research model.

According to the results of correlation analysis (Table 4), the independent factors are correlated with the dependent factor and have statistical significance. The strongest correlation with the dependent factor is MOTIVE (0.510, with $p < 0.05$) and the weakest correlation is the ENVIRO factor (0.379, with $p < 0.05$). The results show that the proposed independent factors have a significant impact on the English competencies of economics students at Hong Duc University. The study continues to conduct regression analysis for the independent and dependent variables of the model.

According to Table 5 summarizes the results of the regression model, adjusted $R^2 = 0.691$, meaning the regression model explains 69.1% of the dependent factors. The regression model fits the data set at a 95% confidence level (F statistic result in the model has Sig. = 0.000).

Results Table 6 continues to show the results of assessing the impact of independent factors on dependent factors. The relationships between independent variables and Competencies are all accepted ($p < 0.05$). Thus, the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable in the model according to the 4 research hypotheses from H1 to H4 are positive. Any factor with a larger standardized Beta coefficient has a stronger impact on English competencies.

Table 4. Correlations Table

		MOTIV	LECTURE	ENVIRO	METHOD	COMPE
MOTIV	Pearson Correlation	1	.145*	.250**	.202	.510**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.042	.004	.006	.000
	N	188	188	188	188	188
LECTURE	Pearson Correlation	.145*	1	.119	.101	.420**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.042		.095	.156	.000
	N	188	188	188	188	188
ENVIRO	Pearson Correlation	.250*	.119	1	.147*	.379**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.095		.039	.000
	N	188	188	188	188	188
METHOD	Pearson Correlation	.202	.101	.147*	1	.507**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.156	.039		.000
	N	188	188	188	188	188
COMPE	Pearson Correlation	.510**	.420**	.379**	.507**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	188	188	188	188	188

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

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

Table 5. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.835 ^a	.697	.691	.43494	.698	110.687	4	192	.000	1.771

a. Predictors: (Constant), MOTIVE, LECTURE, ENVIRO, METHOD

b. Dependent Variable: COMPE

Table 6. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	-.854	.217		-3.933	.000
	MOTIVE	.222	.041	.225	8.276	.000
	LECTURE	.184	.039	.197	7.190	.000
	ENVIRO	.161	.038	.172	8.511	.000
	METHOD	.201	.034	.204	9.208	.000

a. Dependent Variable: COMPE

Table 7. The results of hypothesis testing

No	Hypothesis	Proposed relationships	Standardized Beta	Hypothesis testing
1	H1	Positive	0.225	Accepted
2	H2	Positive	0.197	Accepted
3	H3	Positive	0.172	Accepted
4	H4	Positive	0.204	Accepted

The results of hypothesis testing also show that the order of independent variable impact on the dependent variable is: Learning motivation, Learning method, Lecturers, and finally Environment. The results of multiple regression analysis show the importance of each factor, depending on the standardized Beta as follows:

$$\text{COMPE} = 0.225 \times \text{MOTIVE} + 0.204 \times \text{METHOD} + 0.197 \times \text{LECTURE} + 0.172 \times \text{ENVIRO}$$

The results of hypothesis testing confirm that the independent factors have a positive impact on the independent factors of the model (Table 7).

4.5. Discussion

According to statistical results, the English competencies of students studying the economics program at Hong Duc University are more influenced by personal factors because the two most influential factors are motivation and learning method. Students' ability to learn English is also influenced by the teacher as the third factor and the last factor is the environment.

Motivation has impacted the most on students' English competencies. The positive correlation index of motivation with English competencies shows that the more motivated a student is, the higher the English competencies result. Although the results may not seem unusual, this result is completely consistent with students' characteristics, especially at Hong Duc University. Motivation is an inherent factor

of each person. When motivation is low, even with the active support of teachers and advanced learning methods, foreign language development ability is difficult to improve. Students at a local university only improve their learning efficiency when they truly understand the role of English in their future work and are highly motivated to study.

Learning method has the second largest influence on the English ability of economics students. In general, students' participation in learning English is a mandatory requirement of the training program, so students here still approach it with a lack of initiative and do not diversify their learning methods. The result may be that students spend very little time studying on their own, do not have a clear direction and learning methods, do not actively seek learning methods, and rarely participate in learning activities outside of class time. This may explain why a large number of students have made little progress after going through a number of English courses and are slow to reach the output English standards at the University.

Statistical results also confirm previous research results on the impact of teacher factors (Ross, 1993). In the context of Hong Duc University, some lecturers have not yet encouraged students' motivation and foreign language learning environment. At the university, only foreign English specialized economic textbooks are applied, but it does not pay attention to connecting with local practical knowledge and real work. In addition, many lecturers have not received in-

depth training in economics major, so the combination of theory and practice has limitations, which can affect students' English competencies.

However, to sum up, the research results are consistent with the Motivation perspective and continue to confirm the role of the factors of Learning Motivation, Learning Method, Lecturers, and Environment on students' English Competence according to the research model (Truong Cong Bang, 2017; Little, 2007; Chou, 2007). The research results are important in contributing to proposing suggestions to improve the motivation and effectiveness of foreign language teaching and learning for economics students at Hong Duc University in the future period.

5. CONCLUSION

The research has solved the main goal of understanding the factors and levels of impact on the English competencies of students majoring in Economics at Hong Duc University in the context of integration and difficulties. Hong Duc University needs to make more efforts to increase the motivation to learn English for students majoring in Economics so that they understand the importance of English and thereby form appropriate and motivating learning motivation, pushing students to increase their learning efficiency in this subject because motivation is the most powerful factor. In addition, the University needs to guide students in appropriate learning methods as well as create a suitable environment to stimulate their interest in learning English. Lecturers also have a great role in guiding methods, creating motivation as well as useful support to enhance English learning ability for economics students in particular, and non-business students. Although achieving the set goals, the research is still limited in researching and surveying the case of Hong Duc University students majoring in

economics, so applying it to others will have difficulties. The sample size is still limited and has not evaluated the impact of other factors on students' English competencies such as ability, financial situation, or training program... Therefore, future research should expand the scope and scale of research to ensure a better explanation of the research results, thereby implying a more effective solution for Hong Duc University in particular and for other universities in Vietnam in general in the near future.

REFERENCES

- Chou, C., E. (2007). *Factors affecting language proficiency of English language learners at language institutes in the United States* (Doctoral Thesis, Texas Woman's University). Retrieved from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304740127?accountid=14782>
- Eccles, J., S., Adler, T., F., Futterman, R., Goff, S., B., Kaczala, C., M., Meece, J., L., & Midgley, C. (1983). Expectancies, values, and academic behaviors. In Spence, J., T. (Ed.), *Achievement and achievement motivation* (pp.75-146). San Francisco, CA: W. H. Freeman and Company.
- Eccles, J., S., & Wigfield, A. (1995). In the mind of the actor: The structure of adolescents' achievement task values and expectancy-related beliefs. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, Vol 21*(3), 215-225.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: OUP.
- Gradman, H., L., & Hanania, E. (1991). Language learning background factors and ESL proficiency. *The Modern Language Journal, 75*(1), 39-52.
- Hair, J., Anderson, R., Tatham, R., & Black, W. (1998). *Multivariate data analysis, 5th Edition*. Prentice Hall, New Jersey.
- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in*

- the language classroom*. Oxford: OUP.
- Little, D. (2007). Language learner autonomy: Some fundamental considerations revisited. *Innovation in language learning and teaching*, 1(1), 14-29.
- Madhavantha, B. (2014). Teacher Education and ESP. *International Journal of Research, Humanities, Arts, and Literature*, 2(4), 73-82.
- Nguyen Kim Dung. (2005). *Training under the credit system: World experience and reality in Vietnam*. Retrieved 08/07/2023 from: [http://www.ier.edu.vn/content/view/110/161/March 24, 2012](http://www.ier.edu.vn/content/view/110/161/March%2024,%202012).
- Nguyen Van Loi & Franken, M. (2010). Conceptions of language input in second language acquisition: A case of Vietnamese EFL teachers. *Language Education in Asia, Vol 1*(1), 62-76.
- Penn-Edwards, S. (2010). The Competencies of an English Teacher: Beginning Student Teachers' Perceptions, Australian. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(2), Article 4.
- Ross, H., A. (1993). *China Learns English*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Tomlinson, B. (2011). *Materials Development in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Truong Cong Bang. (2017). Factors affecting Vietnamese students' English learning. *Journal of Language and Cultural Sciences*, 1(2), 1-9.
- Vo Thanh Long & Nguyen Thi Mai Hoa. (2010). Critical friends group for EFL teacher professional development. *ELT Journal*, 64(2), 205-213.