

VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, HANOI
University of Languages and international Studies
The faculty of English language teacher education

CHU THỊ NGỌC

**FEATURES OF CLASSROOM
ENVIRONMENT in FIRST YEAR
MAINSTREAM STUDENTS' ENGLISH
SPEAKING Classes – A multiple case
study**

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of bachelor of arts (TEFL)

Supervisor: Nguyễn Thanh Hà

Hanoi, 5/ 2011

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on finding out the classroom environment in two English speaking classes with different levels of motivation in the Faculty of English Language Teacher Education, University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University, Hanoi. Eleven classes in this faculty took part in the first round by answering questionnaires to sort out which class was the most highly motivated and which one was the least motivated. After that, these two classes continued with the second step to investigate their classroom environment features. The question framework was based on the instrument Classroom Environment Scales (CES) of Moos and Trickett (1973) with nine factors. They are teacher, rule clarity, order and organization, innovation, student involvement, competition, affiliation, and task orientation. By using a forty-two item questionnaire, the researcher found out the features which were quite relevant to what was written in the literature. Teacher was very friendly, approachable, and humorous. Besides, the teacher held many activities as well as spent time answering their questions carefully. Moreover, there must be a set of rules which was discussed and decided by both teacher and students in speaking class for students to follow. Especially, these rules must be informed to students at the very beginning of semester. For the factor 'organization', teacher should change students' positions to avoid boredom. Lighting and sanitation condition and noise level outside the classroom in classroom were also important. Another factor, innovation, in both teaching content and method, should be encouraged in class. Competitive activities were good choices to motivate students to speak in class. The tasks should be designed and adapted to make them suit with students' level. Apart from this, speaking tasks should be well-organized and clearly instructed. Finally, to involve

students in learning, activities in class were common strategies in accordance with the above factors.

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LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES, ABBREVIATIONS

FELTE: Faculty of English Language Teacher Education

ULIS: University of Languages and International Study

VNU: Vietnam National University, Hanoi

CES: Classroom Environment Scale

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to provide with the most general information about what is included in the study and how it is carried out.

1.1 Research problem and rationale

Motivation is a broad topic that has received much concern from researchers as well as educators. There exist numerous definitions of motivation in recent years; may be in psychology, may be in language learning. However, the majority of the researchers have come to an agreement that motivation keeps a significant role in encouraging learners to learn, especially in learning a second language: “Without activate motivation, even the brightest learners are unlikely to persist long enough to attain any really useful language” (Dörnyei, 2001: 25). Motivation could encourage and help learners maintain their efforts invested in learning.

Due to the importance of motivation, a great number of researchers have investigated different aspects of this topic such as the factors affecting motivation under the linguistic approach, the strategies to increase motivation, or the relationship between factors of classroom environment and motivation. All of them pointed out the influence of learner motivation on language classroom. In particular, this kind of motivation can lead to more extensive use of the language as well as the development of greater language proficiency.

Dealing with one aspect relating to students motivation, in attempt to find out what factors of classroom environment influence on student learning motivation, Moos and Trickett conducted a research in 1973 and came up

with a conclusion with a nine-factor solution which later was used in a variety of studies. This solution was called Classroom Environment Scales (CES) comprising of three dimensions with nine sub-scales: *rule clarity, order and organization, teacher control, affiliation, teacher support, innovation, involvement, student competition and task orientation*.. However, later studies did not always find out the same factors as CES. For example, when they were working with strategies to increase student's motivation, S.A.M Said and M. Al-Hamoud (2005) found such factors as teacher, students, students' beliefs about whether they were under control (equal to factors *order and regulation*). From those aforementioned studies, it can be inferred that factors of classroom environment are not always found the same.

Besides, for the freshmen who have to work with new teaching method, new teachers, and new friends and in a new environment, motivation and classroom environment is important. Especially, these factors are more important in their learning English speaking skills to which most of them do not pay much attention in high school.

From those above mentioned reasons, the study is conducted under the name ***“Features of classroom environment in first year mainstream students’ English speaking classes – A multiple case-study”*** with the hope to find out what factors in highly motivated and low motivated classes are; consequently, teachers can take it for reference to help their students learn English better.

1.2 Aims

This study was conducted with the hope to find out the current features of classroom environment in first year students’ English speaking classes.

From that, lessons may be drawn out and some suggestions may be made for other classes with students of low motivation in speaking in English. The results may be useful to teachers and students in finding ways to help students learn English better.

To implement these aims, these two following questions will be used:

- 1. What are the features of classroom environment in the highly motivated class?*
- 2. What are the features of classroom environment in the low motivated class?*

1.3 Scope

The study is going to involve eleven classes of first year mainstream students in Faculty of English Teacher Education (FELTE), ULIS, VNU, school-year 2010-2011.

There are different instruments mentioning factors of classroom environment; however, this study will be based on the instrument “CES” Class Environment Scale of Moos and Trickett (1973) to build a framework.

1.4 Significance

This study, firstly, hopes to provide the researcher a deeper look at the features of classroom environment in highly motivated English classes as it is very useful for any English teacher in the future.

Besides, as there has not been any research in our university investigating this issue yet, teachers can take this study’s results as reference in order to have better ways to help their students, not only in English speaking class but also in other classes.

1.5 Organization

This study included five main parts. In particular, after the introduction, the chapter 2 would provide with some definitions of basic concepts as well as the framework about factors used in this study. Next, chapter 3 would give a more detailed description of methodology used. Who took part in, which method was used to collect data and analyze them. Then the next chapter, chapter 4 would demonstrate the results and give some discussions. Finally was the conclusion of the study as a whole.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter has the role to introduce the frameworks related to learning motivation as well as classroom environment. Moreover, insights into relationship between classroom environment and learning motivation will be provided.

2.1. Learning motivation

When one student gets high learning results, it is usually thought that he or she is motivated. In another case, some people may think that motivation is something coming from outside. However, motivation contains fairly complex components. As a result, many researchers have invested their time and efforts on investigating aspects of motivation, especially motivation in second language learning. One consensus is that motivation plays a significant role in the success of a learner's language learning process.

2.1.1 Definition of learning motivation

There have been a number of different ways to define the term "motivation" under different approaches. In this study, motivation is chosen to be defined as a concept in psychology and the second language acquisition.

2.1.1.1. Definition of motivation in psychology

Dörnyei (2005) defined motivation as "an abstract, hypothetical concept that we use to explain why people think and behave as they do" (p.1). This may be the simplest way to understand what the motivation is in general.

One powerful and popular conception about motivation developed by Maslow (1970, cited in “Motivational strategies in the language classroom” by Dörnyei) was the “Hierarchy of Needs” theory in which human’s needs was categorized into five classes. They were physiological needs (hunger, thirst, sexual frustration), safety needs (needs for security, order, protection from pain and fear), love needs (needs for love, affection, and social acceptance), esteem needs (needs to gain competence, approval and recognition) and self-actualization needs (needs to realize one’s potential and capabilities and gain understanding and insight). These five classes of needs are organized from the most basic to the most complex ones. According to this theory, one person will not care about his safety or his esteem, but the food when he is hungry.



Figure 1: The Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

In the cognitive approach which appeared later, it was concerned about how mental processes are transformed into action. In this approach, “the individual is a goal-directed actor who organizes his/her desires and goals

in the light of his/her perceived possibilities” (Dörnyei, 2005:8). From that concept, it is obvious that what motivates students depends much on the value of carrying out that action, on the support of surrounding people and environment, and the challenge of the action itself.

Another well-known theory is “Goal-setting theory” presented by Latham and Locke through their research in 1979. The goal must be clear, specific, short term, challenging with feedback on performance and without punishment for failure. Kelly (2000) defined ‘goals’ as something that could fit the cognitive and social orientations towards behavior better than ‘needs’.

Therefore, through some theories mentioned above, it can be concluded that there are numerous different definitions about the umbrella term, motivation, in psychology field. That is the reason why motivation has taken a large amount of time and efforts of psychologists.

On the other hand, from the definitions which concerned only basic physical needs of human, gradually there were more and more definitions of motivation which emphasized complex needs of human. From needs for food, for clothes, these definitions continued with needs for study, entertainment, and so on. Researchers aimed at investigating what these needs were, what their characteristics were, their roles in human life and even strategies to increase these kinds of motivation.

2.1.1.2. Definition of motivation in second language learning

In second language acquisition, the most popular definition of motivation is that provided by Gardner (1985). His theory has been used as a foundation in many studies as he was the first man to conduct research on learning motivation.

Gardner's theory of second language learning motivation is based on the definition of motivation as "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (Gardner, 1985, p.8). In this definition, motivation is described as goal-directed; the learners' goal is to learn the language.

On the other hand, Gardner said that a specific second language motivation was "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language" (1994: 361). This means that to learn a language, a person need to have the interest in learning and invest efforts in doing that to reach an achievement.

In short, it can be inferred that motivation to achieve something comprises of attitudes – one person shows that he/ she likes doing that and efforts – that person makes to achieve a goal through various actions.

Compared with definitions in psychology, this definition dealt with not only human psychology but also human behaviors. A truly motivated learner would not stop at saying 'I am interested in this subject'. He would made efforts to achieve the goals he had set.

2.1.2 Classification of learning motivation

In fact, there are multiple ways to classify learning motivations. This research bases on two criteria which are the sources and the orientation of motivation.

2.1.2.1 Based on which orientation the motivation devotes to

The distinction between these two kinds of motivation is based on the purposes of the learners toward the target language

According to Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972), there are two types of motivation if it is categorized according to the orientation. (Narayanan, 2006, cited in “Motivation Variables and Second Language”)

a. Instrumental motivation

Instrumental motivation is related to human’s attitudes. It is considered the learner’s desire to learn a language for his own sakes such as passing an exam to getting a job.

b. Integrative motivation

Different from the first type, integrative motivation focuses on the learner’s desire to learn a language but for communicative purposes. The final objective is not only having an insightful understand of the language, but have to use it to communicate in target language. In some other sources, this kind of motivation is also defined as “the desire to become a member of the communication in which the target language is used”. However, the thing that these theories share is that what encourages learners here is to communicate well in the target language.

For these two kinds, Gardner also came to a conclusion that integrative motivation was worth encourage as at that time, a learner was making efforts to gain linguistic as well as non-linguistic knowledge in order to communicate in the target language.

2.1.2.2 Based on where the motivation comes from

If dividing motivation according to its sources, there are two types of motivation which are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Juith & Mc.Wendy, 1997).

a. Intrinsic motivation

Students have intrinsic motivation are those who “work to gain mastery or understanding and feel good about accomplishing challenging tasks”.

In other words, they learn to gain not only knowledge but also socio-linguistic knowledge to use what they learn in reality. These people belong to this kind of motivation even make greater efforts to overcome and finish the tasks when having difficulties.

b. Extrinsic motivation

Narayanan (2006) defined extrinsic motivation as the motivation was derived from external incentives like grades, prizes or punishment. Furthermore, extrinsically motivated students are those who, in contrast to the intrinsically motivated students, are willing to invest more efforts when having difficulties.

2.1.3 Roles of motivation in student's learning

Motivation is especially important in education as it affects the later process. "There are three things to remember about education. The first one is motivation. The second one is motivation. The third one is motivation" (Terrell H., cited by Linda, 1999). When a student is not motivated, he might not want to learn and will easily withdraw when encountering difficulties.

Motivation plays a significant role in determining the achievement of learning, especially learning a language. Motivation is one of elements that affect language learning apart from anxiety, inhibition, self-esteem, learner's styles, and so on (Jane, 1999). This means that motivation is not the only element that influences on student's learning, either positively or negatively.

The importance of motivation toward language learning is firstly proved by Gardner R.C from Canada, the first person to investigate motivation and its relationships with learning. (Dörnyei, 2001, p.5). From this

foundation, many researchers have conducted numerous studies in this field and their findings have been useful so far.

Dörnyei especially emphasized the role of motivation, in particular, sufficient motivation without which “even the brightest learners are unlikely to persist long enough to attain any really useful language” (2001: 5). This shows that motivation is often considered the most important factor among the factors deciding the success of language learning. In short, motivation encourages learners and helps learners to maintain their efforts during the learning process.

Furthermore, motivation can drive one’s attention, attitudes as well as behaviors in learning. Consequently, it can have positive or negative effects on language learning.

Due to its necessity, motivation has become the main issue in many studies among which some motivation researchers focused on the strategies to improve learners’ motivation while others were interested in investigating factors affecting motivation. They all share the desire to provide readers with a range of knowledge about motivation; as a result, their findings can be applied in reality of teaching and learning to gain the highest results.

2.1.4 Characteristics of a highly motivated learner

Brophy (1987a) found out the characteristics of motivated students through observing not only students’ behaviors but also their performance. The result was reported in ‘Improving student motivation – A guide for teachers and school improvement teams’ (Judith and Mc Wendy, 1997) Those indicators mostly comprise of behavioral signals as discussed below.

- *Attendance and discipline*: At the most basic level, students who are motivated attend classes, pay attention and are not disruptive.
- *Participation and completion of work*: Students begin the assignment with little prompting, follow directions, participate in class discussions and complete tasks on time.
- *Task persistence and acceptance of errors*: It is measured based on how long a student stays with a task, especially a difficult one. According to what have been found, highly motivated students often persist and try different solutions before seeking help when they have difficulty with a task.
- *Quality of task involvement*: Students can either invest effort in language or find shortcuts to get the task done without expending a great deal of effort. The amount and quality of effort students expend on learning tasks is an important indicator of motivation as highly motivated students are willing to invest effort and not use the skills they have learnt.
- *Independent learning*: Students who are willing to learn more than being required are reluctant to stop working on a task, even when it is time to move on to something new. They also may bring in materials from home, complete work that is not required, or ask questions to learn more about a topic.
- *Interest and liking*: Highly motivated students enjoy learning, show enthusiasm, and take pride in their work.

Apart from these, indicators related to attitudes of motivated students are also studied, Neiman et al, (1978) pointed out the most common ones including

- *Positive task orientation*: The learner is willing to do tasks offering challenges and confident in his success.

- *Ego-involvement*: The learner is aware of the importance of success in learning to maintain and promote his self-image.
- *Need for achievement*: The learner has a need to achieve, to overcome difficulties and achieve the goals set out.
- *High aspiration*: The learner is ambitious and needs to achieve the highest grades.
- *Goal orientation*: The learner is aware of the goals of learning activities and devotes his/her efforts towards achieving those goals.
- *Tolerance of ambiguity*: The learner is not disturbed by situations involving temporal lack of understanding or confusion. He/she has confidence that understanding will come later.

2.1.5 Factors that affect motivation

Like any other elements in the learning process, motivation is affected by different factors, both internal and external ones. However, quite different factors have been proved by theorists.

In her work, Veronica (2008) concluded that motivation was mainly affected by personality variables, students' attitudes, teacher's roles, students' learning styles and the power relationship between languages when she aimed to do a research paper in order to provide a theoretical approach to the concept of motivation and the factors influencing it.

As she pointed out, it was not too difficult to recognize the relationship between learners' personalities such as extrovert, self-confident, active, passive, independent, introvert or shy and the success of second language learning.

Besides, she mentioned the factor "attitudes" which determined the students' performance in class. When they thought that they were forced

to learn, students might not be very attentive in class, or not willing to strive for anything. These learners were in contrast to those who had favorable attitudes towards the target language, the culture as well as the native speakers of that language.

Another important factor was teacher's role in all stages of the motivational process. Motivation, in this case, was no longer considered integrative or instrumental, but the interaction between teachers and students in class. Many things expected from the teacher were mentioned in this study such as enthusiasm, acknowledgement and stimulation of students' ideas, the creation of a relaxing and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom, the encouragement of classroom and so on.

The forth factor was the learning styles. Since there were different students in a class, their learning styles were not the same. As the result, when they had the opportunity to choose the way of learning, they might feel more interested and attentive.

The last factor was the power relationships between languages, which can be seen clearly through the example of learners from a majority group learning the language of the minority group, and vice versa.

However, according to Kelly (2000), current theories consider the effects of such factors as self-efficacy, attributions, social conditions, classroom factors, and provide a better understanding of the role of goals. This finding seemed to cover much more affecting factors.

Self-efficacy was the perception of one's own competence; it also included the construct 'outcome expectation' which meant the expected rewards or punishment for performance in class.

Attribution consisted of three components: stability, locus and control. Stability referred to how stable an attribution can last; locus implemented whether the cause of the action was internal or external; whereas; control released that the reason was perceived as controllable or uncontrollable. According to the viewpoint of Pintrich and Schunk (1996), attributions themselves did not explain motivation, but provided us with an insight into the key factor of motivation, expectancy beliefs. If a student thought he or she was not good at a subject, in spite of getting high marks, he or she was likely to have low expectation to success.

Social affects here were considered as comprising of guilt or shame, being related to the control dimension.

This means that not only students' personality factors but also other outside factors are also taken into consideration and all of them determine students' motivation in learning process.

2.2. Classroom environment

2.2.1 Definition of classroom environment

Classroom environment has been a topic attracting a great deal of researchers. They accessed this topic under different approaches. For instance, White (1972) assessed physical environment, Hiemstra and Sisco (1990), Tagiuri (1968), Galbraith (1989, 1990) treated the classroom environment as consisting of both the physical environment and the psychological or emotional climate, Pappas (1990), David (1979), Fraser and Treagust have developed the College and University Classroom Environment Inventory (CUCEI) (Fraser and Treagust, 1986; Fraser, Williamson, and Tobin, 1987) studied it as a psychological environment.

In the Arend's definition (1991) (Giang, 2001), classroom environment was considered as a special environment which is characterized by four major components: Classroom climate, classroom properties, classroom processes and classroom structures.

However, in this research, I chose to adopt the way Moos and Trickett (1973) defined the factors "classroom environment". Many researchers have used it as a useful instrument to investigate learners' motivation in classroom. After conducting a research to find out what factors of classroom environment have influence on student language learning motivation, they came up with a conclusion with a nine-factor solution that later was used in a variety of studies. Originally, those nine variables were teacher control, rule clarity, order and organization, teacher support, innovation, student involvement, student affiliation, student competition and task orientation.

2.2.2 The relationship between classroom environment and learning motivation

In the field of psychology, environment is said to have a great influence on human's working aspiration. The influence may or may not be great, direct or indirect depending on each person. This is true in the case of learning because of the variety of students' learning styles.

Classroom environment has been proved to be very important as many scholars have pointed out that if students could learn in a supportive and cooperative place and experience the feeling of being valued, they would have the intention of participating more enthusiastically in learning. Students may be affected or get shocked if the space of classroom and the design of the task change. However, this does not mean that the

classroom is like an island but it still needs adaptation. Depend on each particular classroom goals or school-wide goals; what happens in each class is variable. This diversity aims to make the learning environment suitable and attractive to students.

In particular, in another work, a motivating classroom environment was considered as a safe and orderly learning-centered place. Moreover, students learning in that environment are well aware of the learning-goal as well as what they are being taught. To reach the above result, there needs a combination of many factors of classroom environment.

In short, motivation and classroom environment has an interrelated relationship. Each of them is necessary for the other's development.

2.2.3 Factors of classroom environment affecting motivation in language learning

Classroom environment has become the topic of many language learning studies for years. Originally, *90 items* were found to belong to classroom environment; however, when Moos and Trickett (1973) made a research on this area, those items were put into *nine dimensions* belonging to *three domains*. These three domains, which were named 'system maintenance and system change dimension', 'relationship dimensions' and 'personal development dimensions' (Trickett, 1979).

System maintenance and system change dimension refer to rules and regulations and the degree to which change in the environment is encouraged with such factors as order and organization, rule clarity, teacher control. Innovation was counted in this domain as well.

Relationship dimension refers to students' attentiveness, their interests, and participation in classroom activities; it also reflects the friendship students feel for one another, and friendship that teacher shows for them. In other words, this dimension relates to affective qualities of interpersonal relationships in an environment with such factors as involvement, affiliation and teacher support;

The last domain, *personal development dimension*, comprises of those two above dimensions of the environment which turned into *personal development dimension* salient as a function of the individual development goals. There are two factors counted in this research task orientation and competition. They aim to measure how students complete planned activities and stay on the subject matter as well as how hard they try to achieve good grades.

From what have been mentioned above, this research focused on eight factors as teacher support and teacher control was counted as one main factor. System maintenance and system change dimension (teacher, rule clarity, order and organization, and innovation), Relationship dimension (student involvement and affiliation), and personal development dimension (competition and task orientation)

2.2.3.1 Teacher

This may be considered as one of the most significant factors that decide the success of students' learning. There were many roles mentioned in different studies around this topic. Typically, Abdulla (2011) explained teachers' roles in communicative learning and teaching approach (CLT), a new teaching approach.

Firstly, according to him, a teacher should be a “facilitator” of the communication process among all the participants in the classroom and their activities and a “guide in the context of classroom activities” (p.5). This means that a teacher should only guide or instruct students on what they have to do instead of doing everything for them. The teacher is also responsible for dealing with interaction activities happening in the class so long as to create a harmonious and united atmosphere.

Secondly, a teacher was claimed to be an “independent participant within the learning-teaching group” (p.6). The teacher needs to join class activities along with the students, go around to see whether his or her students need help. By doing this, not only can the students finish their tasks more easily but the teacher-student relationship is also tightened.

Moreover, in this study, the teacher was considered an “organizer of resources and a resource him/herself”, a researcher and learner. To prepare for a lesson in class, a teacher must read and select information from a large number of documents; therefore, the lessons can avoid boredom and become really informative.

Trickett’s findings (1979) showed that the students participating in his research hoped that their teacher were friendly, supportive. Moreover, a teacher should give clear instructions and prepare activities to engage the students. In accordance with those teacher’s mentioned roles, these characteristics should be considered by teachers to create a supportive environment which may increase student motivation. This is due to the fact that in a class, the students have different needs, desires, and wants; therefore, teacher and his abilities was the key factor who decided the success of the teaching process.

In this research, teacher is assessed in terms of both his/her supports for students and his/her way of controlling the class. These two factors are adapted from the original factors in CES: teacher support and teacher control.

2.2.3.2 Rule Clarity

When mentioning classroom learning, it was necessary to mention the classroom rules. Each classroom has its own rules. Those rules can be either very simple or rather complex, such as raising hands, movement in classroom, cooperating with other students and so on. However, rules and expectation expressed in positive language are considered the first step to create a positive environment for learning. According to CES, rule clarity reflects how much emphasis is put on establishing clear rules, consequences of misbehaving and the extent to which the teacher is consistent in dealing with rule breakers.

Edmund (1981) defined rules in classroom as “specific expectations about appropriate student behaviors” (p.24) and these rules must be explained to students from the first day of the school year. From this point of view, it can be clearly seen that classroom rules is also one of significant parts which help to bring about the success of classroom learning. It is one part that can not be absent as both effective and ineffective teachers have their own rules to keep their classes well-working as without good rules and regulations, a classroom may be chaotic (Kirl, 1987).

Apart from emphasizing the importance of rules, scholars are concerned about the necessity of letting students have a clear understanding of rules. For instance, Donald (1990) argued that without having a deep understanding of rules and regulations, students could not follow them.

Moreover, he paid special attention on reminding students of the dos and dons. Once involved in rule development and given ideas about what was necessary in rules, students would have more encouragement to learn as they had a feeling of owning them. Hence, it can be inferred that helping students knowing clearly about the rules and regulations in the classroom is one way to give them more motivation to learn as well.

2.2.3.3. Order and organization

There exist many viewpoints of classroom organization. For instance, Kirl (1987) stated that organization referred to those things that a teacher did before students were present such as the planning of the curriculum to be covered, the activities and strategies to be employed, the rules and regulations that would be used by the teacher as well as the physical arrangement of the classroom.

Order and organization in CES instrument also focuses on students behaving in an orderly and polite manner and on the organization of assignment and activity.

Classroom organization in this study also refers to the physical arrangement in the class – the arrangement of desks and working space, the storage of materials and supplies. The way students are grouped to sit together also affects their learning. In effective schools, to help different ability students, educators - in this case referring to teachers - never put low achieving students near the back of the room (Kirl, 1987). Moreover, for frequent group discussions, U-shaped configuration can be a considerate choice. This can create more chances for those students to express their ideas and keep them catch up with the flow of the class; otherwise, they may be left behind. Apart from this, the positions of students in different class activities should be various as well. The way

arranging students in a class discussion or in an experiment class should not be the same as that in a normal instruction to call for student participation. However, too much freedom given to them, in contrast, may lead to off-task behaviors which show that they do not want to join and do the task.

Besides, one aspect of classroom organization that should be considered is classroom materials. They should be safe for class use and organized to ensure teacher and students access to what they need in a short time.

On the other hand, such features as temperature, lighting, and noise level are also considered decisive factors in organizing a favorable learning condition.

2.2.3.4 Innovation

In general, innovation is the application of a process or product in order to benefit a domain or field. In the case of teaching, “innovative teaching is the process leading to creative learning, the implementation of new methods, tools and contents which could benefit learners and their creative potential” (Anusca, Romina, and Yves, 2009).

Innovation in Moos and Trickett’s (1973) viewpoint was used to measure how much students contribute to planning classroom activities, and the extent to which the teacher used new techniques and encourages creative thinking.

A question may be raised about the relationship between innovation and creativity. “Creative learning is any learning which involves understanding and new awareness, which allows learners to go beyond notional acquisition, and focused on new thinking skills”. According to these three writers, both these two elements were significant in the

knowledge society, and had connection with knowledge and learning. Innovative learning was a necessary condition in creative learning; it was also in turn the place where creativity in learning was applied. Consequently, innovation and creation are inter-related, which leads to a conclusion that in teaching, these two factors need to be taken equal consideration.

Also in this research, one suggestion was mentioned about the true innovation in education, which required a change in both content and methodology (Simplicio, 2000). For instance, for the change of methodology, instead of applying teacher-centered approach, student-oriented approach was encouraged as the Trickett's findings (1979). In this new method, students would become the target of the learning process, which means that all activities are designed for them to understand the content and give them chance to apply what they are taught. On the other hand, instead of asking students to work individually, grouping them to finish their tasks can create both cooperation and competition. Certainly, the factor deciding the success of those shifts was the teacher, especially with such roles mentioned before (Redecker, 2008). Apart from this, technology was said to be an effective tools to implement changes in teaching. Appropriate and daily-familiar technology that students are able to use can attract students and give them useful lessons.

2.2.3.5. Student involvement

In CES instrument, involvement here refers to student attentiveness, interest and participation in classroom activities. In some cases, student involvement is quite similar to student engagement, both of which both aim to make students join classroom activities enthusiastically.

This is a big concern that many teachers and educators have to think of in their teaching process. In his research, Auroosa (2010) used Astin's theory of involvement as the theoretical background. Astin (1999) defined student involvement as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (p.518). In other words, student involvement puts emphasis on how much effort a student put in to complete the task. This concept is, to some extents, different from the definition of student engagement which "represents the time and effort student devotes to activities that are empirically linked to desired outcomes of college and what institutions do to induce students to participate in these activities" (Kuh, 2009, p.683). In other words, student engagement pays more attention to students' efforts while both students' efforts and attitudes are considered in student involvement.

On the other hand, Astin also stated that involvement was represented differently among students and also not the same among different subjects. This may be because students have their own learning styles, which forces the teacher to try various methods to involve them in learning.

Also about this topic, Krista (2009) provides some tips to help teachers involve students in the learning process. The very first thing that she mentions is making learning relevant to students, from the materials to the assignments; as a result, the students might find the learning process interesting. She advises teachers to discover what each student wants to learn along with informing what they will achieve and how they can do that. Moreover, the second tip is that teacher should provide positive feedback as it is considered a useful tool to encourage students' willingness. Feedback from teachers can be very short sentences such as thanking when students hand in assignments on time; or sometimes, a

simple reward is helpful. Especially, if teacher can recognize each student with their own identifications, they may have a sense of being special, which was proved to increase students' motivation.

Another important tip is encouraging class participation in class activities, discussion, or any group work. By letting students know what they are going to learn at the beginning of each lesson, teachers can involve them in the progression of the class. The tasks should be various from this day to another in order to make students curious and excited. Besides, group work is also a good solution.

Apart from this, students' enthusiasm needs to be taken into consideration. Teachers can try various ways to call for students' attention; for example, smiling when teaching, be helpful and thank them when they are present at the class.

2.2.3.6 Student affiliation

This is an interesting aspect around students' relationship in the classroom; but has not received much concern from researchers.

Klein (1997) viewed student affiliation in the context of cooperative learning during an instructional television lesson (ITV) and agreed with the idea that the need for affiliation was presented "by a desire to participate in cooperative, non-competitive activities and by a desire for close, friendly relationships with others" (McCelland, 1965, 1976). Students with a high need for affiliation were proved to be more friendly, sociable and cooperative than those with a low need for affiliation. Moreover, the writer showed the results of some previous studies that cooperative learning had the positive effect on student achievement, productivity, transfer of learning time on task and attitude (Johnson &

Johnson, 1989; Sharan, 1980, cited by Klein, 1997). The reason why the researcher put much emphasis on cooperative learning and need for affiliation was that these two factors had effect on each other, and on student performance and attitude. He also gave out the evidence stating that college students with high affiliation need but had to work alone did not work as well as those in other conditions. Consequently, the students should be put together to work with their classmates in order to help them work effectively.

Besides, some signals of strong affiliation are also necessary. Basing on these features, teachers can put forward ideas to improve or to maintain each particular situation. Santa (1998) introduced quite a great deal of signals that teachers can take into consideration as following:

Possible indicators of weak affiliation

- +has difficulty initiating and maintaining friendship
- +connects with objects rather than people
- +is easily influenced by others
- +isolates self from the group, appears to be lonely
- +is uncomfortable working in group settings, which may result in behaviors
- +ridicules or rejects others, being insensitive to their emotions and needs
- +feels that others don't value him/her
- +is seldom sought out by others

Possible indicators of strong affiliation

- +understands the concept of friendship and initiates new relationships
- +shows sensitivity and compassion toward others
- +demonstrates ability to cooperate and share

- +is comfortable in group settings
- +easily achieves peer acceptance and is sought by others
- +demonstrates appropriate social skills
- +feels valued by others

2.2.3.7. Student competition

It is normally thought that competition can help students learn better as they will try their best and do better to win their friends. However, depending on how this factor is used, it may bring good or bad effects to student learning motivation.

Some researchers proved that competition may cause bad impact on class learning as students considered their classmates as competitors rather than alliance. Sui-fong and his colleges accessed the classroom competition from different angles when they made efforts to find out what the effects of competition among students on achievement motivation were.

On one hand, competitive classroom environment was proved to cause performance goal instead of learning goal among students (Ames & Ames, 1984, cited by Sui-fong, 2001). This meant that intrinsic motivation was not created; students did not learn to improve, but to have an impressive performance only. On the other hand, beneficial influence of competition was much more valued. Ames (1984), on the contrary, showed that children made more ability distributions in the competitive than in the individual condition.

Apart from the aforementioned research, in his own work, Ben (2008) listed out three main advantages of competitive learning: building teamwork, being success, and improving ourselves.

The first advantage was that competition built teamwork. He argued that by working with other people for an achievement, competitions not only pushed members of that team to work effectively but also taught them communicative as well as social skills. The second benefit competition brought about was success. Everyone did not want to lose and had a strong desire to succeed; therefore, a “healthy competition” could push students to learn harder as well as invest more efforts. Finally, competition was claimed to make learners improve. That people had to try more when they lost was easily to understand; however, when they won and gained some reputations, greater efforts were made to keep that fame. From these findings, teachers can take them in account to help their students improve their learning through exploiting benefits of competition.

2.2.3.8. Task orientation

This factor belongs to the personal development dimension as the factor student competition.

In the original CES instrument by Moos & Trickett (1973), it means the extent to which it is important to complete activities planned and to stay on the subject matter. In another instrument adapted from CES, CUCEI written by Fraser (1986), and this factor is viewed in a different way. Fraser considered task orientation as “the extent to which students participate attentively and actively in class discussions and activities”; and “the extent to which how tasks are clear and well-organized”. From those above concepts, one thing can be drawn out is that this factor

requires much effort from students to fulfill the assignments. However, to do this, teacher's support is the key. Especially, lower ability students need more attention from teachers than higher ability in order to involve in a task.

On the other hand, task orientation refers to developing positive abilities of individuals and groups to teach them to focus on doing tasks and jobs and resolving problems in the best way. People who have task orientation abilities tend to understand goals and expected results which are set by teacher in order to fulfill tasks using minimum resources and in as short time as possible.

2.3 Summary

To sum up, this chapter has provided with many definitions of motivation according to different angles of accessions, psychology and language learning. Among those mentioned ones, the researcher chose to follow the definition of motivation in language learning, which investigated learner's attitudes and efforts invested in learning.

On the other hand, the second part of this chapter focused on clarifying the features of factors in classroom environment according to CES (Classroom Environment Scales by Moos and Trickett, 1973). They were: System maintenance and system change dimension (teacher, rule clarity, order and organization, innovation), relationship dimension (student involvement and affiliation), and personal development dimension (competition and task orientation).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter is written with the purpose of specifying how the research will be conducted. It consists of three four main parts: Research design, sampling and participations, data collection, and data analysis.

3.1 Research design

When doing a case-study research, the researcher had to collect and present the detailed information about a particular participant or a group of participants.

In this case, multi-case study was valuable for some following reasons. Firstly, it could help provide a profound insight into a novel phenomenon as it dealt with detailed data with specific learners instead of quantitative method which could only exploit the surface information of participants (Burn, 2000). Therefore, the results of this research would be more valuable. Besides, multi-case study could give the researcher the chances to work with different kinds of contexts which made the results of the research more objective. Finally, multi-case study could describe the researched phenomenon from the perspective of the insiders. This meant that the participants could say their own ideas, which enhanced the truth value of the research findings.

In short, quantitative approach was the most suitable for the present study because it was suitable with the likert-scale questionnaires for the phenomenon of first year mainstream students in FELTE, ULIS, VNU.

3.2 Sampling and participants

3.2.1 Respondents to questionnaire 1

In order to satisfy the aims of this research, the researcher recruited the participants from freshmen mainstream classes in Faculty of English Language Teacher Education, ULIS, VNU. In particular, there were only eleven classes in this faculty; therefore, all of these classes were chosen.

Half of each class, about eleven to fourteen students, was chosen randomly and given a chance to answer the questionnaire 1. The researcher entered the class and gave the questionnaires to planned number of students who sat at different sides of the class. Most of those students had quite many years of learning English.

To ensure the secret of participants, the first class to the last class in this faculty was marked with an alphabet letter. For instance, the first class was given the name class A...until the eleventh class was given the name class K.

In this case, any class who had the highest sum of mean of the answer would be considered highly motivated; on the contrary, which class had the lowest sum of mean would be viewed as the lowest motivated as what was shown in the following table:

Order	Number of students in class	Number of students responding to questionnaire 1	Sum of mean
A	26	14	39.77
F	24	12	39.67
E	25	12	39.46
K	25	13	38.21
H	24	11	37.47
G	25	12	37.15
B	26	14	36.84
D	25	12	36.09
J	24	13	35.93
I	25	12	35.89
C	25	13	35.32

Figure 2: Results of sampling stage

3.2.2 Respondents to questionnaire 2

After calculating the results of students' answers to the questionnaire 1, the second most highly motivated class and the second lowest motivated class was picked up to be participants for the next stage.

The reason why these two classes were chosen was that the highest and the lowest motivated classes were not willing to participate, which was one of the most necessary conditions of conducting a case-study research. Fortunately, the difference in term of mean between the most highly and second most highly motivated class and between the lowest and second lowest motivated classes was not very significant.

Firstly, for the second most highly motivated class, class F, the students in this class were mostly female. They seemed very excited and considerate when the researcher entered the class.

	Items	1	2	3	4	5		Mean
Interest and liking	1	1	0	6	2	3		3.5
Positive task orientation	2	0	0	3	5	4		4.08
Ego-involvement	3	0	0	3	5	4		4.08
Need for achievement	4	0	0	3	1	8		4.42
High aspiration	5	0	0	5	5	2		3.75
Attendance and discipline	6	0	0	2	2	8		4.5
Participation and completion of work	7	0	0	4	4	4	4	
	8	0	0	7	2	3	3.67	
								3.84
Task persistence and acceptance of errors	9	0	0	2	6	4		4.17
Quality of task involvement	10	0	0	7	4	1	3.5	
	11	0	0	4	4	4	4	
								3.75
Independent learning	12	0	0	7	3	2		3.58
Sum								39.67

Figure 3: Results of sampling stage in class F

For the second lowest motivation class, class I, they were almost female as well. The students in this class seemed to be rather silent than those in the highly motivated class.

Figure 4: Results of sampling stage in class I

	Items	1	2	3	4	5		Mean
Interest and liking	1	0	2	5	3	2		3.42
Positive task orientation	2	0	1	4	4	3		3.75
Ego-involvement	3	0	0	3	6	3		4
Need for achievement	4	0	0	0	4	8		4.67
High aspiration	5	0	0	0	10	2		4.17
Attendance and discipline	6	0	0	3	5	4		4.08
Participation and completion of work	7	0	0	9	3	0	3.25	
	8	0	5	6	1	0	2.67	
								2.96
Task persistence and acceptance of errors	9	0	3	5	3	1		3.17
Quality of task involvement	10	0	2	3	6	1	3.5	
	11	0	1	5	5	1	3.5	
								3.5
Independent learning	12	2	6	4	0	0		2.17
Sum								35.89

3.2.3 Participants in interview

Two teachers who were teaching those two classes English speaking skills this semester were invited to join an interview. They could provide the researcher with more specific information through their answers of interview questions. Both were female and they were young. However, they had appropriate three to five years of experiences.

3.3 Data collection

3.3.1 Data collection instrument

The main kinds of instruments used were questionnaires and interview.

Questionnaires were designed to find out samples for the study and gather information from first year mainstream students of Faculty of English Language Teacher Education. This instrument was chosen because “they are easy to construct, extremely versatile, and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a form that is readily process-able” and “can be used successfully with a variety of people in a variety of situations targeting a variety of topics” (Dörnyei, 2003, p.1, p.9-10). These features are suitable with this research. Besides, questionnaires bring “unprecedented efficiency in terms of researcher time, researcher effort and financial resources” (Dörnyei, 2003, p. 9-10). Therefore, in a short time, one researcher can gain information from many participants.

Aspects	Questions
Attitudes	
Interest & Liking	1. Speaking is the skill that I like most.
Positive task orientation	2. I like tasks that require creativity and wide range of knowledge.
Ego-involvement	3. I am well aware that learning to speak English well can help me learn other English skills better.
Need for achievement	4. I want to learn to speak English fluently to communicate with others.
High aspiration	5. Getting high marks in English speaking skills is important to me.
Efforts	
Attendance and discipline	6. I am never absent from speaking class.

Participation and completion of work	7. I enthusiastically participate in all activities in my speaking class. 8. I often volunteer to express my ideas or perform a task when the teacher gives the task.
Task persistence and acceptance of errors	9. When encountering a difficult task, I try to think of different ways to respond and suitable language to use
Quality of task involvement	10. I often try to use new language when I speak. 11. When having difficulties with a task, I often try to deal with it by myself before asking for help.
Independent learning	12. When the class finishes, I still want to continue to speak English.

Figure 5: Content of questionnaire 1

Apart from questionnaires, interview was another instrument used in this study. Interview is considered a appropriate method as “Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant’s experiences”. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires, e.g., to further investigate their responses” (McNamara, 1999, p98).

The interviews included ten general areas, and each area corresponds to an aspect of classroom environment according to Moos and Trickett (1973). Some questions were asked to discover teachers’ teaching beliefs and philosophy and methods in teaching English speaking skills.

Before asking for students' answers to the items following, some of their background information were taken into consideration such as age, gender, old experiences in learning English speaking skills, and so on.

These questions were presented in form of likert scales as well, which focused on different aspects of classroom environment according to the original model of CES. Those elements comprised of teacher, rule clarity, order and organization, innovation, competition, affiliation, involvement and task orientation. For each aspect, many likert questions were used to investigate how these features were presented in two classes.

After finding two samples which could meet the requirements of the research, questionnaires in form of likert scales were also used to collect the participants' answers. All the students in each of two classes would answer forty-two questions that belonged to seven factors of the classroom environment. For further reading, the content of questionnaire 2 was attached in the appendices page (p.71) at the end of this research, as it was too long to be presented all here.

3.3.1. Designing questionnaires and interview questions

3.3.1.1 Designing questionnaire 1

After the related literature had been surveyed, the questionnaire to discover students' motivation was designed.

3.3.1.2 Designing questionnaire 2

After reading the literature about features of each factor, questionnaire 2 was designed. There were 42 likert scale questions belonging to eight factors.

3.3.1.3 Designing interview questions

For interview questions, they were written at the moment questionnaires for students were produced; therefore, the content of these questions can be equivalent in terms of content. This can help the analyzing process easily. The content also emphasized the same aspects as that mentioned in questionnaire 2

3.3.2. Delivering questionnaires and interview

When the questionnaire 1 was completed, they would be delivered to participants in their break-time. For the first class, the researcher entered the class and gave a brief introduction about the questionnaires. Then, the participants listened to the instructions and each of half of them was given a questionnaire handout. They were supposed to do it honestly and were not allowed to copy the answers from others. After they finished, the researchers would collect all the answers. The same procedure was repeated for the rest. Basing on the number of students in each class and the requirements of the research, about eleven to thirteen questionnaires were given to every class, from class A to class K in this faculty.

For questionnaire 2, it would be piloted on five students of each class; and then delivered to all students in each class. The students would answer the questionnaires from one to forty-two to help researcher gain the most objective results.

Similarly, interviews were carried out in interviewees' break time. These teachers had received the invitation through email in advance in order to make sure that interviews could be made in arranged time. They had to answer ten questions and their answers were recorded in order to ensure

that the fullest utterances could be selected. The record then was transcribed; and the results would be used to provide data for analysis.

3.4 Data analysis

3.4.1 Data analysis instrument

Quantitative method was used to analyze the data collected from the questionnaires. Mean of each item in each block or each factor would be calculated to check whether each item existed in that class. If the mean was less than 3, that item might not exist in that class. On the contrary, if the mean was 3 or more than 3, that item existed in that class.

3.4.2 Data analysis procedure

3.4.2.1 Analysis of answers to questionnaire 1

With the data of each class, 'mean' of each item (there are twelve items in a questionnaire with ten subgroups) was counted according to the group they belonged to. Especially, the questions 7 and 8 were grouped; also, question 10 and 11 was processed in the same way; therefore, the average of these pairs was counted as one to make their results equal to other single items. The class whose total sum of mean of twelve items was the highest and the one whose total sum of mean was the lowest would be picked out to participate in the next step.

3.4.2.2 Analysis of answers to questionnaire 2

Similarly, the answers for the data-collecting step were analyzed with quantitative method. However, the means of each items in each block would not be grouped; otherwise, particular features of the classroom environment would not be presented clearly.

Then, the results from these two classes would be discussed separately according to each class. Next, these results would be compared with each other, factor by factor, to check whether the factors were the same. After that, those features would be compared with the finding of previous studies as well as the teachers' ideas to find if there were any new or distinguished features. Based on what had been discussed, some further suggestions would be drawn out.

3.4.2.3 Analysis of responses to interviews

Teachers' responses to the interview questions were transcribed to compare with the results released from students' answers to questionnaire 2, class by class. As a result, features of each class were demonstrated clearly as those features were accessed from both sides: teacher and students.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the statistical analysis method was used to analyze data from the questionnaire 1. The gained data was synthesized and changed into clearly numerical forms. The Likert-scale questionnaires were summarized into columns. The findings of the study were also provided in this chapter in accordance with the research questions.

4. Results of the questionnaire 2: features of classroom environment in two classes

4.1. Class F - the highly motivated class

4.1.1 Level of motivation and background information

There were twenty-five students in this class; however, only twenty of them responded the questionnaire 2.

In the sampling stage, their level of motivation was counted as the second highest.

	Items	1	2	3	4	5		Mean	SD
Interest and liking	1	1	0	6	2	3		3.5	1.25
Positive task orientation	2	0	0	3	5	4		4.08	1.18
Ego-involvement	3	0	0	3	5	4		4.08	1.12

Need for achievement	4	0	0	3	1	8		4.42	2.93
High aspiration	5	0	0	5	5	2		3.75	0.87
Attendance and discipline	6	0	0	2	2	8		4.5	2.73
Participation and completion of work	7	0	0	4	4	4	4		0.85
	8	0	0	7	2	3	3.67		0.89
								3.84	
Task persistence and acceptance of errors	9	0	0	2	6	4		4.17	0.76
Quality of task involvement	10	0	0	7	4	1	3.5		0.67
	11	0	0	4	4	4	4		0.85
								3.75	
Independent learning	12	0	0	7	3	2		3.58	1.31
Sum								39.67	

Figure 6: A brief summary of students' results in the sampling stage

80% of students in Class F responded to the questionnaire 2. By some short questions, the researcher gained some of their background information. That information has been summarized in the table below.

Items	Number of students
The number of students considering themselves introvert	7
The number of students considering themselves extrovert	13
The number of students whose major at high school was English	13
The number of students whose major at high school was grade A	7
The number of students coming from the same provinces	0
The number of students having many chances to practice speaking at high school	13
The number of students loving English speaking skills	5

most	
The number of students loving English reading skills	6
most	
The number of students getting mark above 7 for English speaking skills last semester	13

Figure 7: A brief summary of background information in class F

From this table, we can see that most of students in this class considered themselves extrovert; therefore, according to common thoughts, they seemed to be active, talkative, energetic, and easy to show their emotions to others. These features were quite different from that of introvert students, who might talk less, sometimes feel shy. This fact seemed to be relevant to what their teacher, interviewee A, said; these students seemed to have a passion in learning and always tried to improve themselves.

Besides, the fact that they did not have many chances to practice speaking skills in high school might inhibit them as they might find this skill rather difficult. This was perhaps partly the reason why among four skills, not many students liked speaking skill the most.

Last but not least, these students were from different provinces all over the country and they were all at the same age, nineteen or twenty years old.

4.1.2 Features of the classroom environment

4.1.2.1 Factor 1: Teacher

Scales\Items	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Friendly	0	0	0	8	12	4.6	0.5
Enthusiastic	0	0	2	9	9	4.35	0.67

Humorous	0	0	2	10	8	4.3	0.66
Talks to us much	0	0	4	8	8	4.2	0.77
Gives chance to each student	0	0	3	8	9	4.3	0.73
Gives positive comments on performance	0	1	11	6	2	3.45	0.76
Provides with advice to learn English	0	0	3	13	4	4.05	0.6
Holds many activities	0	0	1	8	11	4.5	0.61
Answers our questions carefully	0	0	0	9	11	4.55	0.51

Figure 8: Results of factor 'teacher' in class F

From the table, it was obvious that the number of students 'agreed' with the statements was high. Therefore, it is possible to infer that their teacher did have these features: being friendly, approachable, enthusiastic, humorous, and close to them through talking to them not only about study but also about other aspects of life (four first items). Among those, teacher's friendliness was most highly appreciated. Those personalities may help students feel comfortable during the learning process and encourage them to speak in front of the class.

On the other hand, the way teacher supported the students was important. As Moos and Trickett (1973) had pointed out, if teacher could create a warm and supportive learning environment, he/she could motivate his/her students.

In this class, the teacher used many strategies to encourage students to learn, which is demonstrated through the chart above (the last five items). However, there was one thing that needed to be considered. That was the

element: teacher gave positive comments on students' performance in class. Some students hesitated about this statement, which meant that teacher did not do this all the time. Whereas, teacher's feedbacks played a significant role in student learning as they may encourage or even discourage student motivation.

4.1.2.2 Factor 2: Rule clarity

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
A set of rule exists	0	1	5	13	1	3.7	0.66
My teacher and us discuss about the rules	0	2	12	6	0	3.2	0.62
The rules often change	0	2	9	9	0	3.35	0.67
The rules are expressed in positive language	0	7	3	4	6	3.45	1.28
There are punishments for rule-breakers	0	9	7	3	1	2.8	0.89

Figure 9: Results of factor 'rule clarity' in class F

From the table above, we can see that for the first item, some students were not sure about the existence of rules in their class. That may be the reason why some of them did not know whether those rules changed during the semester. This was shown through the mean of the third item in this block. Compared with the teacher's answer to the interview question, this fact was rather unreasonable, as the teacher had informed the rules to them at the very beginning of semester. In general, this feature was strange from what was mentioned in the literature which affirmed that by setting a set of rules and introduced to students as soon as possible, teacher could encourage students to learn.

For the rest, although we could decide that those features did exist in this class, many students did not agree with these statements. This meant that

these features might not suitable with language classes in Vietnam in general, and in ULIS in particular. In Vietnam, many rules still use the word 'NOT' or 'NO'. Sometimes, teacher only reminds students who are considered rule-breakers.

4.1.2.3 Factor 3: Order and organization

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Students' positions often change	0	5	2	7	8	4.2	1.31
Silent students often sit at the front of the room	0	14	5	1	0	2.35	0.59
Materials are organized according to topics	0	0	1	9	10	4.45	0.6
The lighting and sanitation conditions are good	0	0	7	8	5	3.9	0.79
The outside of the class is not noisy	0	1	9	8	2	3.55	0.76

Figure 10: Results of factor 'order and organization' in class F

In general, each factor had quite high mean, which proved that these features occurred in this class. In particular, the organization in this class was so flexible-the first item. Students could change their positions in different speaking activities. This feature was similar to teacher's response as she said that she did not assign the seats, but let students choose. For infrastructure, students felt quite satisfied with the current conditions of the classroom. In addition, teacher highly appreciated the

lighting condition, or the sanitation of their class. ‘They were considered not the best but the best we had’.

However, the rate of number of students answering the second item was the most remarkable. Many students did not agree with this statement. According to them, silent students were not always arranged to sit at the front side of the classroom although in different activities, they did not sit at the same positions. Whereas, Kirl (1987) suggested never putting such students near the back of the room; otherwise, they might be left behind. In this case, in speaking lessons, if students speak little, their speaking skills would not be improved.

4.1.2.4 Factor 4: Innovation

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Students speak much more than teacher	0	3	5	11	1	3.5	0.83
Teacher encourages students to speak their ideas	0	0	1	15	4	4.15	0.49

Activities in class require logical thinking skills	0	0	5	10	5	4	0.73
We use a lot of visual aids, even projector	0	1	7	7	5	3.8	0.89
Tasks in course books are sometimes adapted	0	0	7	11	2	3.75	0.64

Figure 11: Results of factor innovation in class F

Referring to what was new in the teaching and learning process, five issues were investigated. In general, motivation when there was innovation was quite high. Innovation was sometimes applied in teaching and learning process by means of encouraging students to say their own ideas (the second item), adapting available materials (the last item).

Apart from this, in class, in general students still had many chances to speak in class in English (Mean=3.5). What is more, the teacher and students did not often used technology in speaking lessons. That was also, what the teacher claimed when she was asked about the new teaching visual aids. She expressed her desire to have better ones, which seemed to be understandable, as innovation in teaching must include innovation in teaching method.

4.1.2.5 Student involvement

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Teacher instructs students before letting them do	0	0	1	12	7	4.3	0.57
I pay attention to what teacher and other students are	0	0	3	11	6	4.15	0.67

saying							
Teacher applies many activities to encourage students	0	0	2	10	8	4.3	0.66
I try to finish speaking tasks in class	0	0	5	5	10	4.25	0.85
I am looking forward to next speaking lesson	0	0	7	8	5	3.9	0.79

Figure 12: Results of factor 'student involvement' in class F

The mean of each item in this factor was high, which could help us to infer that students in this class were effectively involved in class activities. Although among the answers towards items in this factor there were, some students felt hesitated. As what was mentioned before, students' involvement in learning depended on many factors belonging to their personalities. If they were extrovert and attracted by other things, they may be distracted from what their teacher and friends were saying.

Although the means here were high, not all of them really waited for the next speaking lesson. This was because some of them had other favorite skills which were not speaking skills.

However, the overall situation was that teacher involved students by holding activities and informed students what was going to be learnt in order to make them involve at the very beginning. Students who were involved in the lesson would invest their efforts into learning and try to finish the assigned tasks in class immediately.

4.1.2.6 Factor 6: Affiliation

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I prefer working with my	0	2	4	11	3	3.75	0.85

friends rather than working alone							
I can work in groups with anyone in class	0	3	4	9	4	3.7	0.98
I always show my friendliness when working in groups	0	0	1	14	5	4.2	0.52
I am not easily influenced by other ideas	0	0	11	7	2	3.55	0.69
When I am speaking, other students listen attentively	0	0	2	15	3	4.05	0.51

Figure 13: Results of factor ‘student affiliation’ in class F

Among those elements with high level of student motivation, the last item (item 34) had the second highest mean; however, this features depended on each student’s perception, their personalities, introvert or extrovert, they would show their friendliness while working in groups. Moreover, there perhaps existed some barriers that inhibited them from social interaction, in this case the social interaction referred to the term ‘student affiliation’ or student relationship. For instance, the obstruction might come from the fact that these students came from many places in our country, they had different learning styles, they had different study results, and so on. If they can study in a friendly environment, they can learn from their classmates or compete with each other to learn better; otherwise, they might not participate in speaking activities because of the feeling of shocked or disappointed.

In a nutshell, from what teacher said and what students answered in the questionnaires, it can be concluded that students in this class had a trend to be cooperative, friendly and approachable with other students. However, sometimes they were not willing to follow the teacher’s pair arrangement.

4.1.2.7 Factor 7: Competition

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
My class is often divided into small groups to compete	0	0	1	7	12	4.55	0.6
I have to practice my English to win over other students	0	0	2	10	8	4.3	0.66
Through competitive activities, I could learn other group-working skills	0	0	1	8	11	4.5	0.61

Figure 14: Results of factor 'competition' in class F

In general, there were no significant differences among items. All of them had a quite high mean, which can somehow prove that they were highly motivated; and these features did exist in this class. Competition was said to encourage learners' motivation by Ben (1998). On the other hand, the teacher of this class also confirmed that she often held competitive activities (games, discussions) in class and she witnessed many of its advantages in her class, for instance: they felt less sleepy and had higher motivation into later activities.

4.1.2.8 Factor 8: Task orientation

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
The tasks are well-designed and clearly structured	0	0	3	14	3	4	0.56
The requirements of the	0	0	4	12	4	4	0.65

tasks are clear							
The speaking tasks require linguistic and socio-linguistic knowledge	0	1	2	10	7	4.15	0.81
I often volunteer to present my ideas	0	1	10	2	7	3.75	1.02
In class, I know what my class are working on	0	0	1	12	7	4.3	0.57

Figure 15: Results of factor ‘task orientation’ in class F

Similarly, mean of those items did not differ from each other much. In general, the level of task orientation demonstrated through this factor was quite high. Students paid attention in class. Additionally, the speaking tasks were claimed to well designed and clearly instructed. Especially, those tasks required students’ knowledge of many areas; therefore, they could help learners show what they got and learn what they had not known.

However, some introvert students who did not present their ideas even if they knew the answers; they might not raise their voice. That was the reason why mean of item 41 ‘I often volunteer to speak out my ideas’ was rather lower than the other was.

4.2. Class I – the low motivated class

4.2.1 Level of motivation and some background information

There were twenty-five students in this class, and most of them were female. Their results of sampling stage were not very high. They were considered the second lowest motivation.

	Items	1	2	3	4	5		Mean	SD
Interest and liking	1	0	2	5	3	2		3.42	1
Positive task orientation	2	0	1	4	4	3		3.75	0.97
Ego-involvement	3	0	0	3	6	3		4	0.74
Need for achievement	4	0	0	0	4	8		4.67	0.49
High aspiration	5	0	0	0	10	2		4.17	0.39
Attendance and discipline	6	0	0	3	5	4		4.08	0.79
Participation and completion of work	7	0	0	9	3	0	3.25		0.45
	8	0	5	6	1	0	2.67		0.65
								2.96	
Task persistence and acceptance of errors	9	0	3	5	3	1		3.17	0.94
Quality of task involvement	10	0	2	3	6	1	3.5		0.9
	11	0	1	5	5	1	3.5		0.8
								3.5	
Independent learning	12	2	6	4	0	0		2.17	0.72
Sum								35.89	

Figure 16: The results of sampling stage in class I

In this class, the number of introvert students was quite high; this meant that their class might be rather silent than the class with a small amount of introvert students. Furthermore, speaking was not the most favorite English skills of all students in class. This may cause some effects on their motivation during learning process.

Their ages were also nearly the same. Most of them were nineteen and they were from many places.

Items	Number of
-------	-----------

	students
The number of students considering themselves introvert	9
The number of students considering themselves extrovert	9
The number of students whose major at high school was English	10
The number of students whose major at high school was grade A	8
The number of students coming from the same provinces	0
The number of students having many chances to practice speaking at high school	8
The number of students loving English speaking skills most	5
The number of students loving English writing skills most	5
The number of students getting mark above 7 for English speaking skills last semester	12

Figure 17: A brief summary of background information of class I

4.2.2 Features of classroom environment

4.2.2.1 Factor 1: Teacher

Scales/ Items	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Friendly	0	0	1	6	11	4.1	0.73
Enthusiastic	0	0	0	8	10	4.1	0.66
Humorous	0	0	2	7	9	3.95	0.79
Talks to us much	0	1	2	10	5	3.65	0.86
Gives chance to each student	0	0	2	9	7	3.85	0.76
Gives positive comments on performance	0	1	9	4	4	3.25	0.94
Provides with advice to learn English	0	0	2	7	9	3.95	0.79
Holds many activities	0	0	4	7	7	3.75	0.85
Answer students'	0	0	4	8	6	3.7	0.82



Figure 18: Results of factor 'teacher' in class I

In this aspect of factor 1, obviously, the amount of students affirming the existence of these features was large. Those elements of teacher's personalities that the research focused on motivated students to learn. In spite of this, there were still some students did not share the same ideas with the rest. In other words, they confused and gave neutral answers.

Apart from teacher's personalities, how teacher supported students was necessary. Again, although not all of them received agreement, means of these items were high and above 3. This meant that the teacher often did these activities in class.

The element 'teacher gives positive comments on performance'-item 3, like the situation in the highly motivated one, was not often applied. It explained why the number of students circling 'neutral' as their answers was large

4.2.2.2 Factor 2: Rule clarity

Items/ scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
A set of rule exists	0	1	7	9	1	3.2	0.75
My teacher and us							
discuss about the rules	0	0	6	7	5	3.55	0.85
The rules often change	0	2	6	8	2	3.2	0.88
The rules are expressed							
in positive language	1	3	4	9	1	3	1.03
There are punishments							
for rule-breakers	0	2	6	8	2	3.2	0.88

Figure 19: Results of factor 'rule clarity' in class I

From the most general view, means of these items were quite high, about three or rather above three. The rules in speaking lessons were discussed by teachers and students. In addition, when there was any student breaking the rules, teacher would apply some punishment. For instance, teacher in this class often asked that students to stand in front of the class and speak continuously in three minutes in English.

However, the most striking feature in this factor was that mean of the fourth item was the lowest among five items. This meant that not all the rules in class were expressed in positive language.

4.2.2.3 Factor 3: Order and organization

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Students' positions often change	1	2	7	6	2	3	1.03
Silent students often sit at the front of the room	1	10	4	2	1	2.3	0.96
Materials are organized according to topics	0	0	0	14	4	3.8	0.58
The lighting and sanitation conditions are good	1	1	4	9	3	3.3	1.04
The outside of the class is not noisy	2	5	5	5	1	2.6	1.11

Figure 20: Results of factor 'order and organization' in class I

Looking at the table, we can see that the level of mean of this factor was quite high, except the second and the last item with lowest means. First of all, item with mean was 2.3 showed that silent students did not often sit at

the front side of the class. This was relevant to what teacher of this class shared. Moreover, the last item with the mean was 2.6 showed that the outside environment of this class was noisy.

This condition had a great influence on learning process, as learners might be distracted. According to what was written in literature review, this feature was, to some extent, suitable with a not very highly motivated class. On the contrary, the mean of the third item was the highest: speaking materials were arranged according to different topics.

Apart from this, the lighting condition as well as sanitation condition in class was quite good.

4.2.2.4 Factor 4: Innovation

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Students speak much more than teacher	0	2	5	5	6	3.45	1.05
Teacher encourages students to speak their ideas	0	0	5	10	3	3.5	0.74
Activities in class require logical thinking skills	0	0	7	10	1	3.3	0.67
We use a lot of visual aids, even projector	0	1	7	6	4	3.35	0.92
Tasks in course books are sometimes adapted	0	0	3	12	3	3.6	0.68

Figure 21: Results of factor ‘innovation’ in class I

In general, the means of these factors were neither too high nor too low.

In a new teaching method, communicative language teaching, students were given as many chances to speak English as possible. Their ideas were encouraged there. Moreover, as teacher responded, she sometimes had to adapt the available speaking materials to suit her students' levels.

Teacher and students in this class could sometimes use visual aids for presentations, teacher in this class complained about lack of equipments used in teaching and learning.

4.2.2.5 Factor 5: Student involvement

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Teacher instructs students before letting them do	0	0	1	12	5	3.8	0.66
I pay attention to what teacher and other students are saying	0	0	5	11	2	3.45	0.69
Teacher applies many activities to encourage students	0	0	2	11	5	3.75	0.71
I try to finish speaking tasks in class	0	0	4	9	5	3.65	0.79
I am looking forward to next speaking lesson	0	0	10	7	1	3.15	0.68

Figure 22: Results of factor 'student involvement' in class I

The number from 20 to 27, no dramatic fluctuation occurred among these items. Whereas, all values of mean were lower than values of mean in highly motivated class.

In general, teacher informed the students about what and how they were going to do before letting them do a task, which was confirmed through the first item by most of respondents.

The mean of the item, which demonstrated student's desire for the next speaking lesson, was the lowest. This feature was suitable with what was synthesized in background information part and similar to the situation in class F as well.

4.2.2.6 Factor 6: Student affiliation

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I prefer working with my friends rather than alone	0	0	3	8	7	3.8	0.81
I can work in groups with anyone in class	0	1	4	12	1	3.35	0.73
I always show my friendliness when working in groups	0	1	3	11	3	3.5	0.81
I am not easily influenced by other ideas	0	1	3	12	2	3.45	0.77
When I am speaking, other students listen attentively	0	1	1	15	1	3.5	0.67

Figure 23: Results of factor 'student affiliation' in class I

With quite many introvert people, those liked to talk less and did not like showing off, mean values in this class was therefore, lower than that in the class with larger number of extrovert, active students.

Besides, as they all came from different places, there may be some differences in terms of way of thinking, personalities, and many other distinguished features. This partly explained why some students in this class only worked with their preferred partners. On the contrary, the students in highly motivated level could overcome this barrier to work with each other to complete the speaking tasks with high level of affiliation.

However, in short, the mean of the first item, ‘students were willing to work in groups rather than to work alone’, was the highest. This proved that in general, the need for affiliation in this class was still high.

4.2.2.7 Factor 7: Competition

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
My class is often divided into small groups to compete	0	2	1	9	6	3.65	0.97
I have to practice my English to win over other students	0	2	4	8	4	3.4	0.96
Through competitive activities, I could learn other group-working skills	0	0	2	12	4	3.7	0.68

Figure 24: Results of factor ‘competition’ in class I

Also having the lower mean values, the statements in this block were not agreed by some students. The students in this class were more introverts; hence, they may not feel interested in taking part in activities requiring much movement. Some may be afraid of being losers due to their low

competence. Moreover, most of them found competitive activities useful in helping them developing other group-working skills.

To sum up, this may be the main reason why the motivation level of this class was a bit lower. They were aware of benefits of competitive activities; however, they were not interested in participating.

4.2.2.8 Factor 8: Task orientation

Items/ Scales	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
The tasks are well-designed and clearly structured	0	3	3	11	1	3.2	0.88
The requirements of the tasks are clear	0	1	3	13	1	3.4	0.71
The speaking tasks require linguistic and socio-linguistic knowledge	0	0	4	11	3	3.55	0.72
I often volunteer to present my ideas	0	4	7	4	3	3	1.03
In class, I know what my class are working on	0	1	4	10	3	3.45	0.83

Figure 25: Results of factor ‘task orientation’ in class I

In this factor, the results released were not new. The means were equally not too high, and lower than that in class F.

The cause of this situation may be level of students in this class. The number of students having the speaking grade last semester above 7 was

little. Therefore, although they were well-behaved (paid attention to the teacher and other students' speech – the last item), tasks requiring a bit high linguistic level or background knowledge of students may trouble them and made them worried.

On the other hand, the mean of item the forth item was the lowest. Not many students in class I volunteered to speak out their ideas in front of their teacher and classmates.

4.3 Summary

There were both similarities and differences between two classes in term of features of classroom environment.

4.3.1 Similarities

4.3.1.1 Teacher

Teachers in two classes were friendly, approachable, humorous and close to students. In addition, they held many activities to support students: provided them with advice to learn English, especially speaking skills, answered students' questions carefully ...

4.3.1.2 Rule clarity

There were a set of rules in each class. They were discussed by teacher and students, and informed to students from the beginning of semester. Most of the rules were expressed in positive languages. Especially, punishments may be applied when there was any student breaking the rules.

4.3.1.3 Order and organization

In speaking lessons, students could change their positions in different activities. The lighting and sanitation conditions were good. Less talkative students were not arranged to sit at the front side of the classroom.

4.3.1.4 Innovation

Teachers in two classes applied new teaching methods to attract and involve students. Sometimes, teacher had to adapt materials to suit students' levels. Especially, in new teaching approach, student-centered approach, each student was given chances to speak.

4.3.1.5 Student involvement

Students were instructed clearly about the rules before doing the tasks. Students paid attention to what was occurring in class and tried to complete tasks in class. However, many of them did not look forward to next speaking lessons.

4.3.1.6 Student affiliation

In general, students in two classes had quite high need for affiliation. Those students preferred working with their classmates to working alone. Besides, they showed friendliness and desire to cooperate when working in groups.

4.3.1.7 Competition

Both two classes were often divided into small groups to join competitive activities. They all agreed that they could improve their speaking skills and some group-working skills.

4.3.1.8 Task orientation

Speaking tasks in two classes were claimed to be well designed and clearly instructed. Apart from this, they required linguistic and socio-linguistic knowledge. As a result, students could not only practice speaking skills but also open their knowledge. However, there was a large number of students did not volunteer to express their ideas

4.3.2 Differences

For factor 'teacher', some students in class I said they disagreed with items about teacher personalities while all students in class F said 'agreed'. From that, we can make an inference that teacher in the highly motivated class showed her caring, her enthusiasm clearly and could make students trust her. Needless to say, these things were one of the most important keys deciding the success of teaching process.

Some rules in low motivated class were not expressed in positive languages.

In factor 'order and organization', the final item's results in this factor in class F and class I were not very different. This item reflected the noise level outside the classroom was high, which caused they not able to concentrate in learning. As Kirl (1987) had pointed out, classroom environment organization including noise level outside the classroom. Students would be distracted by anything more eye-catching, brighter or louder than the environment in classroom.

In results of factor 'innovation', through comparing between two classes, it can allow us to make inference that the teacher in this class may not apply the new teaching method very often. Apart from this, it was the

teacher who made some complaints of the certain facilities in classroom through her answered in interview. This meant that more equipment should be provided in classroom to make teaching and learning process vivid and realistic.

For 'student affiliation', almost students had the need for affiliation. However, not all of students in the low motivated class were willing in group forming, which may be due to their personalities. They only worked with their preferred classmates.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

On seeking the answer for the two research questions, this study has shown the features of classroom environment in highly and low motivated English speaking classes of first year mainstream students, FELTE, ULIS, VNU. In this chapter, major findings, pedagogical suggestions, limitations of the research and suggestions for further studies are going to be mentioned below.

5.1 Major findings of the study

Through forty-two items, the researcher has found out some important features motivating students to speak English in class. These features are relevant features mentioned in literature.

For factor teacher, the researcher discovered that a teacher who was friendly, approachable, enthusiastic, close to them and especially humorous had a great influence on student motivation. Besides, teacher who held many activities, gave each of them a chance to speak, and provided them with advices or tips to learn English well would make students more interested.

For second factor, in class, a set of rule which was informed at the very beginning of the semester also contributed to motivate students as they

could know what they had to do. These rules must be approved by both teacher and students and expressed in positive way would involve students in class activities.

Apart from these two factors, organization in a speaking class is also necessary. The lighting condition, sanitation condition or noise levels around the class must be paid much attention. They must be supports for learning process. More significant, students' seating must be changed according to different kinds of activities to avoid the feeling of boredom.

Besides, it was also discovered that new content and new teaching methods combining with various activities in class would also attract students in learning.

Furthermore, a class with friendly, cooperative members created a supportive environment to learn as well. They felt more interested in joining in-class speaking activities if there were familiar people in that class.

Last but not least, it was the task that contributed to motivating students. Those tasks must be clearly instructed, well organized and useful; therefore, students would truly invest their time and efforts on speaking tasks.

5.2 Limitations

Although all of researcher made great efforts to carry out this study, limitations can not be avoided. First, the number of participants involved in this study was half-equal to the large number of first year mainstream students in Faculty of English Language Teacher Education, ULIS, VNU.

These drawbacks may affect the results when the researcher wanted to find the most highly and the least motivated class.

Moreover, the students from two classes participating in data collecting stage was not enough as there are some students absent from class on the collecting day.

On the other hand, the research could not cover all the aspects of classroom environment as the framework used in this research was based on Moos and Trickett's viewpoint with some certain criteria.

Finally, the research could not conduct interviews on students of these two class and in-depth interviews with teachers, which could bring the researcher more detailed information related to the problem.

5.3 Suggestions in pedagogical field

Basing on some findings from the study, the researcher would prefer to provide some suggestions for students and teachers as well as education administrators to learn English effectively.

5.3.1 Suggestions for teachers

This study aimed at finding which factors of classroom environment motivated first year mainstream students in FELTE to learn English speaking skills. Hence, when the results are released, they can provide teachers with useful references in their teaching experiences. Through knowing what factors influence student motivation to speak in class, teacher can find ways to make use of them and limit their bad effects.

In particular, teacher should create a warm and open environment in class so as to make students feel comfort to speak their ideas. They can do this

not only through their speech or some gestures of consideration. Moreover, teacher should let students take part in many activities to make them involved.

What is more, there need to be a clear set of rules in class, comprising of both rewards and punishment, which was informed to students on the very first day of semester; therefore, they would be aware of what should or should not do in class. If they do not know their functions, they may not dare to speak because they are afraid of being punishment.

Apart from this, classroom needs to be provided with more equipment, in accordance with innovating teaching method and content, to avoid boredom in teaching and learning. Especially, students should be put in different positions in different activities, which ensure that silent students sit at the front side of the classroom; otherwise, these students might be left behind.

The tasks should be well designed, clearly instructed and ask for students' logical thinking and problem-solving skills so as to improve students' speaking skills and other skills.

Finally, teachers need to pay attention to student's personalities. In other words, teachers should treat introvert students differently from extrovert students to help them catch up with their friends.

5.3.2 Suggestions for students

Students in the first mainstream grade of FELTE are the targeted objects that the research investigates. When they know about the results, they could take those results as references. If they are introvert, they should be

more open to their friends. Also, they could take advantage of the certain features of classroom environment to learn better.

5.4 Suggestions for further research


As the researcher has found some features of classroom environment motivating students to learn English speaking skills, other researchers can use the results of this study as background for their research of this topic.

However, due to some limitation as listed, hopefully, other researchers can find out more factors of classroom environment that motivate students to learn English speaking skills.

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APPENDICES

1. Questionnaires for the first data collecting step to find out which class is the most highly motivated and which one is the lowest motivated

STUDENTS' MOTIVATIONS IN LEARNING SPEAKING ENGLISH

This survey questionnaire is designed for my graduation paper entitled *“Features of classroom environment in first year mainstream students’ English speaking classes – A multiple case study”*. You can be absolutely sure that you will not be identified in any discussion of this

study. Your assistance in answering the questions would be highly appreciated.

Thank you for your cooperation!

I. Please give some information about yourself

Gender:

Age:

Class:

Years of learning English:

II. Please put a tick on the answers that suit you most:

1. Strongly disagree

3. Neutral

4. Agree

2. Disagree

5. Strongly agree

Block 1: Attitude about learning English speaking skill

1. Speaking is the skill that I like most.

2. I like tasks that require creativity and wide

range of knowledge.

3. I am well aware that learning to speak English

well can help me learn other English skills better.

4. I want to learn to speak English fluently to

communicate with others.

5. Getting high marks in English speaking skills is

important to me.

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

Block 2: Efforts spent on learning English speaking skill

6. I am never absent from speaking class.

7. I enthusiastically participate in all activities in my speaking class.

8. I often volunteer to express my ideas or perform a task when the teacher gives the task.

9. When encountering a difficult task, I try to think of different ways to respond and suitable

language to use.

10. I often try to use new language when I speak.

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

11. When having difficulties with a task, I often try to deal with it by myself before asking for help.

12. When the class finishes, I still want to continue to speak English.

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

2. Questionnaires to find out features of classroom environment motivating students in English speaking class.

Questions about features of classroom environment in English speaking class of first year students, FELTE, ULIS, VNU

This survey questionnaire is designed for my graduation paper entitled *“Features of classroom environment motivating first year mainstream students in English speaking classes at the Faculty of English Language Teacher Education, ULIS, VNU”*. You can be absolutely sure that you will not be identified in any discussion of this study. Your assistance in answering the questions following would be highly appreciated.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Name:

Age:

Class:

Hometown:

How long is it from the place you rent now from your university?

Are you considered yourself introvert or extrovert?.....

How long have you learnt English?.....

Was English your major when you were learning at high school?.....

Did you have chances to practice to speak English at high school?.....

Among four English skills learning at university, what skills do you like to learn most?.....

What marks did you get for speaking skills last semester?.....

Circle on the answers that suit you most

- 1. Strongly disagree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Agree
- 2. Disagree
- 5. Strongly agree

Block 1: Teacher in English speaking class

- 1. My teacher is friendly and approachable.
- 2. My teacher is enthusiastic.
- 3. My teacher is humorous.
- 4. My teacher talks to us outside the class about speaking skills.
- 5. My teacher gives most of us chance to speak English in class.
- 6. My teacher gives positive comments on my performance.
- 7. My teacher gives me advice for studying English well.
- 8. My teacher organizes many speaking activities for us.
- 9. My teacher answers my questions carefully.

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

Block 2: Rule clarity in English speaking class

- 10. In my English speaking class, there is a clear set of rules for me to follow.
- 11. Both my teacher, my classmates and I discuss and decide what the rules should include.
- 12. The rules in my speaking class were introduced to

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

me from the very beginning of the semester.

13. The rules in my class are expressed in positive language (e.g.: the rule: “raise your hand if in need of assistance” instead of “do *not* call aloud for the answer”).

14. My teacher strictly deals with students who break the rules.

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

Block 3: Order and organization in English speaking class

15. In my English speaking lessons, I have different seating arrangements for different class activities.

16. In my English speaking lessons, students who seldom participate in class activities often sit at the front side of class.

17. All the materials for in-class use are organized into different topics, which is easy for me to find and use.

18. The lighting condition in my class is good, which helps me concentrate in learning.

19. The environment surrounding my class is quiet enough for me to concentrate on learning.

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

Block 4: Innovation in English speaking lesson

20. In my English speaking lessons, it is often the students who speak much more than the teacher.

21. I am encouraged to speak and express my own ideas in speaking class by my teacher.

22. There are sometimes problem-solving activities for me to practice English in class.

23. I can use different ways for presentation; for example, using projector, laptop/computer, visual aids, etc.

24. The tasks in the course books are sometimes

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

adapted.

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Block 5: Student involvement in English speaking lesson:

25. I am informed about what I am going to learn at the beginning of the lesson.

1	2	3	4	5
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26. I pay attention to what my teacher and other students are saying.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

27. My teacher uses different methods to encourage us to join in-class English speaking activities.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

28. I always try many ways to complete the speaking tasks in class.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

29. I am looking forward to coming to the speaking class.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Block 6: Affiliation (student relationship) in English speaking lesson

30. I prefer working with my friends to working alone in English speaking activities.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

31. I can work with anyone in my class to complete a speaking tasks.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

32. I always show my friendliness and desire to cooperate when working in a group to complete a task.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

33. I am not easily influenced by others' ideas when I have to express my opinions in a speaking task.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

34. I feel valued by other students in class when I speak out my ideas.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Block 7: Competition in English speaking lesson

35. My class is often divided into small groups to compete with each other.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

36. Competitive tasks in my English speaking class force me to practice speaking skills more to win over the others.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

37. Participating in competitive activities in my speaking lessons can help me improve team-work skills.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Block 8: Task orientation in English speaking lesson:

38. The speaking tasks are well designed.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

39. The requirements of the speaking tasks are expressed clearly.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

40. Besides linguistic knowledge, speaking tasks in my class require logical thinking.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

41. I often volunteer to express ideas for English speaking tasks.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

42. I know what task we are working on and how much we have worked with it.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Interviews with teachers

3.1 Interview with the teacher teaching the more highly motivated class

Interviewer: I

Teacher: T1

I: First of all, I'm so grateful for you to accept my invitation for the interview today. As I mentioned in the email I sent you two days ago, today I'd like to ask for your opinions of some aspects in my research.

So, to start our talk, can you share your teaching conception, especially in teaching English speaking skills?

I mean what are your objectives? What strategies do you think will be useful in speaking class?...

T1: The objective for the group I am in charge of at present is to speak English with clear pronunciation and comprehensible ideas. I apply a variety of activities in speaking class so that students are orally involved in a number of ways. I use games, presentations, conversations and discussions in all lessons. These are creatively combined together so as to avoid boredom from time to time. My chief aim is to equally engage students in speaking and provide them with the best conditions to develop their potentials.

I: So could you give a brief overlook on the features of the class you are teaching?

T1: In the class I'm teaching, their characteristics in general can be described as self-motivated yet inexperienced. They look like they have great passion for learning English and indeed are trying to perfect themselves in the language. However, their self-attempt has not seemingly made enough to meet the expected level of English specialized students.

I: If you can use a number, do you think how many percentages of them have high motivation in learning to speak English in class? Do they often volunteer to speak out their ideas?

T1: In my opinion, around 60-70% of students in this class overly express frequent enthusiasm in speaking lessons while the rest looks somehow less active and more reserved. In general, however, most of them are motivated in most speaking classes, which I think might possibly result from peer impact. In other words, many of them are instant volunteers when called.

I: When you and/or some other students are speaking, some of the rest do not pay attention and make noise, what are you going to do? I really want to know your method as I myself experienced it in my practicum course.

T1: I made it clear from the beginning of the semester that rules are there to be obeyed so they must be good listeners when someone is speaking. Of course, with their bubbling personality, they break this rule and talk shit at times, but immediately they realize this misbehavior and get back to attentive listening. They knew that I was being unpleased.

I: Yeah, and could you tell me in class you are teaching, are there any rules?

T1: Not really, except for the fact that I always keep reminding them to speak English in discussion, which they find way easy to forget. And as I said earlier, the rule of silent respect towards peers in the middle of speech has also been well-kept in my class.

I: It means that there is not really a set of rules for your students. What about students' position? Can the seating arrangement in class be changed?

T1: My speaking class involves a lot of movements so that each activity could be best facilitated. But most of the time we can't change anything for the room size is small and the furniture is huge. We can only "change" ourselves by thinking of ways to adapt to the fixed conditions.

I: With students considered more silent than others, where do they sit?

T1: Students are free in the choice of peers to team up with. Sometimes, they are grouped randomly. There are not many silent students to notice in this class so I don't think seating matters much if someone is just less talkative than others.

I: Apart from these things, what is your opinion of the infrastructures in the classroom? For example, lighting condition, and noise level around the classroom...

T1: It's not the best facility but the best facility we can get. Lighting, furniture or the likes in this case make not much difference to students' enjoyment of speaking. Surrounding noises can be sometimes distracting though, especially when there's in-progress construction of nearby buildings.

I: Do they have influence on students' motivation?

T1: Absolutely yes, but not much as they will show you they can be much noisier.

I: Yes, very interesting. Students can always do the incredible.

So in case there are some topics that are new or strange to students, what would you do to involve your students?

T1: I always try to provide the most authentic, adequately adapted materials, which I believe students will have proper understanding of, so I don't think this kind of problem appears in my class. However, if that situation happens, it's my responsibility to aid them in understanding.

I: Do your students often ask questions extra from those in course books?

T1: I have to say that rarely.

I: So what do you think of your students' questions in term of content?

T1: Questioning itself develops so I appreciate my students making questions when something inhibits understanding. I don't care much about what they ask, but how they ask it and what they think of it.

I: What about tasks in available materials for speaking, have you ever had to adapt them? Why?

T1: I do this all the time as there's no actual standard for speaking materials. The level must suit students' command first, and not the other way round. Therefore, it's a long preparation and hard selection of activities.

I: Another aspect, do your students often complete the tasks in class or lack of time to finish them?

T1: We have three periods allotted for speaking, which I think is sufficient for all the planned activities to be completed.

I: When you ask them to work in pairs or groups, are there any problems with group forming?

Are they willing to work with anyone in class? Or they only work with those they prefer?

T1: There was some at first due to students' understanding of the grouping rule. Later on, everything went smoother and problem no longer arises. Not all of them feel willing to work with everyone, though. But I encourage them to make new pairs and after a second or two, they change their mind and start seeking new mates. They understand that it's better for them.

I: Do you think that using competitive activities in speaking lesson can be helpful?

T1: Yes, most of the time

I: In reality, with the class you are teaching, what activities you often use?

T1: Some games in which students compete to give out the most possible answers.

I: This is my last question, could you say something about what advantages you can see in that class through applying competitive speaking activities on students?

T1: They feel less sleepy and better motivated into later activities. I often use competitive games as warm-up exercises.

I: Oh, I've learnt a lot from your experiences. Thank you for your cooperation. Hopefully, you can maintain student motivation to speak English in class as long as possible. Thank you again.

T1: You're welcome.

I: Goodbye.

T1: Goodbye.

3.2 Interview with the teacher teaching the more highly motivated class

Interviewer: I

Teacher: T2

I: Good morning. I'm so grateful to your presence here today.

T2: Good morning. Yes, I'm ready now.

I: First of all, can you share your teaching conception, especially in teaching English speaking skills?

I mean, what are your objectives? Or what strategies do you think will be useful in speaking class?...

T2: Well, my objectives are my students. So I find different ways to help them have good command of vocabulary to clearly and smoothly express themselves.

Besides, I want them to be able to make use of appropriate expressions in everyday situations.

Moreover, my objectives is also to help them function in social and personal interaction, and display suitable language and manners in such situations as: ordering, offering, apologizing, complaining, advising, and giving suggestions in public places.

And, have understandable pronunciation of English sounds.

Strategies:

I: So what are your strategies?

T2: Well, I often use warm-up activities to cheer the speaking lesson up.

Or I use different kinds of activities ranging from individual presentation to group discussion to promote students to participate.

Besides, I use different types of exercises such as vocabs, pronunciation, structures, etc.

In my opinion, games, competition can be very helpful. They can make the lesson more cheerful.

I: It seems that you have so rich experience. So from what you have done, could you give a brief overlook on the features of the class you are teaching?

Do they often volunteer to speak out their ideas?

T2: Yeath, I'm now teaching a first year mainstream class with twenty-five students. And there is high percentage of them actively joining in the lesson. However, some reluctant to talk when being called.

I: When you and/or some other students are speaking, some of the rest do not pay attention and make noise, what are you going to do? (I myself experienced it in my practicum course)

T2: When this situation happens to me, using different strategies to attract their attention such as: raise voice in a louder volume, or raise my hand and say: If you see me, raise your hand. (then the whole class will stop talking and raise their hand, looking at me attentively)

I: In class you are teaching, are there any rules?

T2: Yes, of course. For example, Stop talking or private chat when the T or others are speaking.

I: Are these rules are decided by only teacher or students also have chances to discuss what should be applied in class?

T2: Yes. My students and I all decide which rule can be applied in our speaking class.

I: Are those rules informed in front of the whole class?

T2: Yes

I: So what would you do if there were some rule breakers?

T2: Ask them to stand in front of the class and speaking continuously in 3 minutes in English.

I: What about students' positions. Can the seating arrangement in class be changed?

T2: Yes. I usually do this

I: With students considered more silent than others, where do they sit?

T2: At the corner and some tables in the back.

I: Apart from these things, what is your opinion of the infrastructures in the classroom?(Light condition, noise level around the classroom...)

T2: there are nearly no facilities for teaching in B2 Blog apart from board.

I: Do they have influence on students' motivation?

T2: Surely, a lot

I: Another question, in case there are some topics that are new or strange to students, what would you do to involve your students?

T2: Uhm... I'll give some kinds of games with structures and vocabularies about the topic first.

A clear instruction is extremely necessary. And I may give examples if necessary.

I: Do your students often ask questions extra from those in course books?

T2: Well, let me see. Yes, sometimes

I: What do you think of those questions in term of content?

T2: good in general

I: What about tasks in available materials for speaking, have you ever had to adapt them?

T2: Yes, I sometimes change the requirements to suit my students' level.

I: Do your students often complete the tasks in class or lack of time to finish them?

T2: Most of the time they finish on time. Sometimes they find it is lack of time to finish then I ask them to prepare at home and check it the following lesson.

I: When you ask them to work in pairs or groups, are there any problems with group forming?

T2: Yes, just small problem. Some are too talkative while some are too served to raise voice.

I: Are they willing to work with anyone in class? Or they only work with those they prefer?

T2: They are willing to work with anyone in the class.

I: Do you think that using competitive activities in speaking lesson can be helpful?

T2: Yes. In my opinion, competitive activities bring about a lot of advantages.

I: So could you say something about what advantages you can see in that class through applying competitive speaking activities on students?

T2: Some can be seen clearly like the environment is more cheerful. Or Students would think they are playing not learning, so it is easier for them to absorb the knowledge and join in the activities.

I: Well, thank you so much for your sincere sharing today. Hopefully, you could find other ways to help your students learn English better. Thank you again and goodbye.

T2: Thank you. You're welcome. Goodbye.