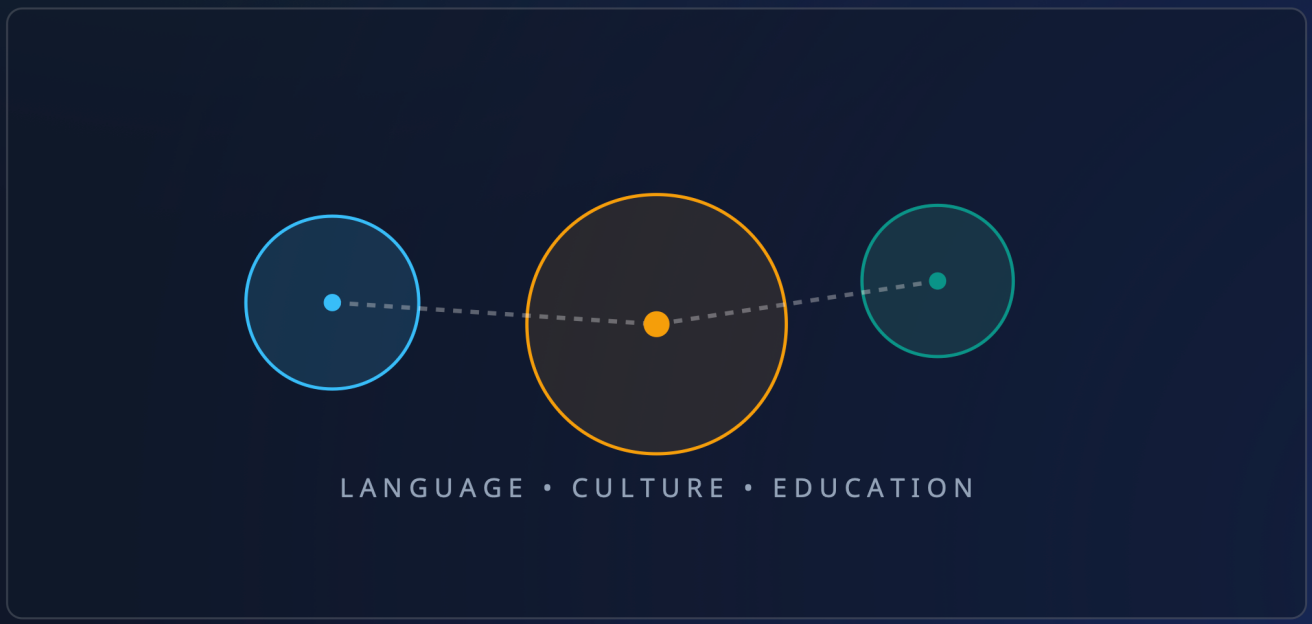
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LANGUAGE TEACHING

Innovations in pedagogical methods, second language acquisition, and applied linguistics.

CULTURAL STUDIES

Intercultural communication, identity, and integration of cultural context in education.

PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

Curriculum design, educational technology, and empirical classroom research.

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Objectives

The *Journal of Language and Culture Pedagogy* (JLCP) is dedicated to the dissemination of original, rigorous, and high-impact scholarly research that advances theoretical and practical knowledge at the intersection of language and cultural education. The journal serves as a premier international forum for academics, teacher educators, practicing pedagogues, curriculum developers, and postgraduate researchers engaged with the complex dynamics of linguistic transmission and cultural formation in diverse educational contexts.

JCLP is committed to publishing innovative contributions that critically examine foundational and emerging issues across its core disciplinary pillars: theoretical and applied linguistics, second-language acquisition and pedagogy, literary and cultural studies, and translation and interpreting studies. Furthermore, the journal actively encourages interdisciplinary inquiries that explore the symbiotic relationships between language, culture, identity, and power, particularly as they manifest within formal and informal learning environments. We welcome scholarship that bridges traditional philological approaches with contemporary sociocultural, cognitive, and postcolonial frameworks, thereby enriching the discourse on how languages and cultures are taught, learned, and experienced. In doing so, JCLP aims to foster a critical, reflective, and globally conscious community of practice, influencing both policy and praxis to meet the evolving challenges of multilingual and multicultural societies in the 21st century.

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Editor's Note

The Journal of Language and Culture Pedagogy (JLCP) is proud to present its second issue, Volume 1, Number 2 (May-August) 2026. This issue continues the journal's mission to promote high-quality research that explores the relationship between language and culture in educational settings. The articles collected here address important topics that fall within the journal's scope, including language education, linguistics, translation, and cultural studies.

The contributions in this issue examine a variety of perspectives on language teaching and learning. Several articles focus on practical strategies for developing listening, speaking, and communication skills in different educational contexts, ranging from village colleges to higher education institutions. Other contributions explore the role of cultural and religious texts in understanding social psychology and learning practices. Additionally, some studies investigate language learning strategies used by students in Myanmar and Thailand, offering useful insights for educators in the region. Together, these works demonstrate the diverse and interdisciplinary nature of research that JLCP aims to support.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the authors for their valuable contributions, to the reviewers for their careful and constructive feedback, and to the editorial team for their hard work in preparing this issue. As JLCP continues to grow, we remain committed to providing a platform for meaningful academic exchange and innovation in language and culture pedagogy. We hope this issue will offer new ideas and practical knowledge for researchers, teachers, and practitioners alike. We also look forward to receiving more submissions and engaging with our readers in future volumes.

The Editorial Team

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Development of Teaching Strategies on Listening and Speaking Skills for Lectures at Village Education College, Myanmar

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the development of effective teaching strategies on listening and speaking skills for lecture-based classes at Village Education College in Myanmar. English language proficiency is increasingly important for Myanmar's higher education students, yet rural education colleges face significant challenges in developing students' oral communication skills. This study examines the current state of English language teaching at Village Education College, identifying key obstacles including limited resources, large class sizes, teacher-centred pedagogy, and students' low English proficiency levels. The article proposes a comprehensive framework of teaching strategies designed specifically for the lecture context, drawing on communicative language teaching approaches, task-based learning, and technology-enhanced instruction. Key strategies include pre-lecture preparation activities, interactive listening tasks, structured speaking practice, group discussions, and authentic assessment methods. The proposed framework emphasises the integration of listening and speaking skills, active student participation, and the use of locally available resources. The article also addresses the importance of teacher professional development and institutional support for successful implementation. By adopting these strategies, Village Education College can better prepare its students for academic success and future employment opportunities. The findings have implications for other rural education institutions in Myanmar and similar contexts across Southeast Asia.

Introduction

Myanmar's higher education system has faced profound challenges in recent years. Political instability, economic contraction, and social disruption have severely eroded educational pathways for young people across the country (UNDP, 2025). According to the United Nations Development Programme, three out of four young people aged 18 to 24 are no longer in education or training, with the figure rising to four in five in rural areas (UNDP, 2025). This crisis has particular significance for rural education colleges, which serve as important institutions for teacher preparation and community development.

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Village Education College, like many rural higher education institutions in Myanmar, operates in a context of limited resources and significant challenges. The education system in Myanmar has long been characterised by centralised control and limited academic autonomy (Rahmat, Porta, & Phyo, 2025). The 2021 military coup exacerbated these issues, impacting educators' professional growth and creating additional obstacles for teaching and learning (Rahmat et al., 2025). For rural institutions, these challenges are compounded by geographic isolation, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to professional development opportunities.

English language teaching at Village Education College faces particular difficulties. English is taught as a compulsory subject in Myanmar's universities, yet traditional teaching methods often emphasise grammar and reading at the expense of listening and speaking skills (Gaynor & Hall, 2020). This approach leaves many students unable to communicate effectively in English, despite years of study. For students at rural education colleges, the situation is often worse due to limited exposure to English outside the classroom and fewer opportunities for practice.

The importance of developing listening and speaking skills cannot be overstated. In today's academic and professional world, oral communication skills are essential for success. Students need to understand lectures, participate in discussions, and present their ideas clearly. For future teachers, these skills are particularly critical, as they will need to communicate effectively with their own students. The National Education Strategic Plan (2021-2030) recognises the need to develop 21st century skills, including communication and collaboration, to prepare students for the modern world (Ministry of Education, 2021).

However, developing listening and speaking skills in a lecture-based context presents unique challenges. Traditional lectures are typically one-way communication from teacher to students, with limited opportunities for student interaction. This format does little to develop oral communication skills. Moreover, large class sizes, common in Myanmar's higher education institutions, make it difficult for all students to participate actively. Teachers often lack training in communicative teaching methods and may feel uncertain about how to incorporate speaking and listening activities into their lectures.

This article addresses these challenges by proposing a set of practical teaching strategies for developing listening and speaking skills in lecture-based classes at Village Education College. The strategies are designed to be feasible within the constraints of the rural education context, requiring minimal additional resources while maximising student engagement and learning. The article draws on established principles of communicative language teaching, task-based learning, and learner-centred pedagogy, adapting these approaches to the specific needs and circumstances of Village Education College.

The research questions guiding this study are: (1) What are the current challenges in teaching listening and speaking at Village Education College? (2) What teaching strategies can effectively develop listening and speaking skills in lecture-based classes? (3) How can these strategies be implemented given the

constraints of the rural education context? By answering these questions, the article aims to provide practical guidance for teachers and administrators at Village Education College and similar institutions.

The article is organised into five main sections. The first section examines the current context of English language teaching at Village Education College. The second section reviews relevant theoretical frameworks for teaching listening and speaking. The third section proposes specific teaching strategies for lecture-based classes. The fourth section discusses implementation considerations, including teacher training and resource requirements. The fifth section addresses assessment and evaluation of listening and speaking skills. The article concludes with recommendations for policy and practice.

Current Context of English Language Teaching at Village Education College

Village Education College serves a predominantly rural population in Myanmar. Students come from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, with many speaking languages other than Myanmar at home (Lall, 2021). This linguistic diversity presents both challenges and opportunities for English language teaching. While students may have limited exposure to English, they often bring rich linguistic resources that can support language learning.

The college operates with limited resources. Classrooms are often overcrowded, with 40 to 50 students in a single lecture session. Teaching materials are scarce, and many students cannot afford textbooks. Access to technology is limited, with few computers and unreliable internet connectivity. These constraints significantly impact teaching and learning, making it difficult to implement interactive and technology-enhanced activities (Lall, 2021).

English language teaching at the college follows a traditional curriculum focused on grammar and reading comprehension. The approach is teacher-centred, with lectures dominating classroom time. Students have few opportunities to practice speaking or listening in English. Assessment focuses on written examinations, which further reinforces the emphasis on reading and writing skills (Gaynor & Hall, 2020). This approach leaves many students with limited oral communication skills, unable to understand spoken English or express themselves verbally.

Students' English proficiency levels vary widely. Some students have had access to better English instruction in their previous education, while others have had minimal exposure to English. Many students struggle with basic vocabulary and grammar, making it difficult for them to understand lectures or participate in discussions. The B1 level, which represents an intermediate level of proficiency, remains an aspirational goal for many students (Council of Europe, 2020).

Teachers at Village Education College face their own challenges. Many have limited training in communicative teaching methods and may feel unprepared to teach listening and speaking skills. The teacher education system in Myanmar has historically emphasised content knowledge over pedagogical skills (Lwin & Saito, 2025). Professional development opportunities are limited, particularly in rural areas. Teachers may

also lack confidence in their own English speaking skills, which can affect their willingness to use English in the classroom.

The broader educational context in Myanmar adds to these challenges. Political instability and conflict have disrupted education across the country (Rahmat et al., 2025). Many students and teachers have been displaced, and educational institutions have struggled to maintain normal operations. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these difficulties, with schools closed for extended periods (Lwin & Saito, 2025). Despite these obstacles, teachers and students at Village Education College remain committed to education and are eager to improve their English skills.

Theoretical Frameworks for Teaching Listening and Speaking

Effective teaching of listening and speaking skills requires a solid theoretical foundation. Several frameworks are particularly relevant for the Village Education College context.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emphasises the importance of meaningful communication in language learning. According to CLT, language is best learned through authentic use, not through isolated grammar exercises (Richards, 2006). For listening and speaking, this means providing students with opportunities to use English for real communicative purposes. In the lecture context, CLT suggests that lectures should not be passive experiences but opportunities for active engagement with language.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) focuses on using tasks to promote language learning. Tasks are activities that require students to use language to achieve a specific outcome (Ellis, 2003). For listening, tasks might include understanding a lecture and answering questions. For speaking, tasks might include presenting information or participating in a discussion. TBLT is particularly relevant for Village Education College because tasks can be designed to be feasible within resource constraints.

The Input-Output Loop emphasises the relationship between listening (input) and speaking (output). According to this framework, students need to receive comprehensible input through listening before they can produce output through speaking (Krashen, 1985; Swain, 1995). In the lecture context, this means that listening activities should prepare students for speaking activities. For example, students might listen to a lecture segment and then discuss it in small groups.

Scaffolding refers to the support that teachers provide to help students complete tasks they could not do alone (Vygotsky, 1978). For listening and speaking, scaffolding might include pre-teaching vocabulary, providing listening guides, or offering sentence starters for speaking activities. Scaffolding is particularly important for students with lower proficiency levels, as it helps them engage with challenging material.

Oracy is the ability to express oneself effectively through spoken language. Mercer (2025) argues that oracy should be explicitly taught in educational settings, as it is essential for academic success and social participation. In the lecture context, developing oracy means teaching students not just to speak English but

to speak effectively for academic purposes, such as asking questions, presenting arguments, and participating in discussions (Goh, 2025).

These theoretical frameworks share common principles that are relevant for Village Education College. They emphasise active student participation, meaningful communication, and the integration of listening and speaking skills. They also recognise the importance of teacher support and appropriate task design. By applying these principles, teachers can develop effective strategies for teaching listening and speaking in lecture-based classes.

Proposed Teaching Strategies for Lecture-Based Classes

Based on the theoretical frameworks discussed above, this section proposes specific teaching strategies for developing listening and speaking skills in lecture-based classes at Village Education College. The strategies are organised into three phases: pre-lecture, during-lecture, and post-lecture.

Pre-Lecture Strategies

Pre-lecture activities prepare students for listening and create a foundation for speaking activities.

Vocabulary Preview: Before each lecture, teachers introduce key vocabulary that students will encounter. This can be done through simple activities such as matching words with definitions, completing sentences, or discussing the meaning of words in small groups. For B1-level students, limiting vocabulary to 10-15 new words per lecture is appropriate.

Listening Preparation: Teachers provide students with a brief overview of the lecture topic and its structure. This might include a short outline, guiding questions, or a prediction activity where students guess what the lecture will cover. Preparation reduces listening anxiety and helps students focus on key information (Field, 2008).

Activating Prior Knowledge: Students discuss what they already know about the lecture topic. This can be done in pairs or small groups, using their existing English skills. Activating prior knowledge helps students connect new information to what they already know, improving comprehension and retention.

Setting Listening Goals: Students identify specific listening goals for the lecture. For example, they might aim to understand the main idea, identify three key points, or note specific vocabulary. Setting goals gives students a clear purpose for listening and helps them focus their attention.

During-Lecture Strategies

During-lecture activities engage students actively with the lecture content while developing listening and speaking skills.

Interactive Listening: Rather than passive listening, students engage with the lecture through interactive activities. These might include:

- **Pause and Predict:** The teacher pauses the lecture at key points and asks students to predict what will come next. Students share their predictions with a partner before the teacher continues.
- **Think-Pair-Share:** The teacher poses a question, gives students time to think individually, then asks them to discuss their ideas with a partner before sharing with the class. This structure ensures all students have an opportunity to speak, even in large classes.
- **Listening for Specific Information:** Students listen for specific information, such as dates, names, or key facts. This develops strategic listening skills and helps students focus on important content.

Note-Taking Practice: Students practice taking notes during the lecture. Note-taking is an essential academic skill that also supports listening comprehension. For B1-level students, teachers can provide note-taking templates or guided notes to support the process.

Comprehension Checks: The teacher regularly checks student comprehension through questions and activities. This might include quick quizzes, show-of-hands responses, or pair discussions. Comprehension checks help teachers identify areas where students are struggling and provide immediate feedback.

Vocabulary in Context: When key vocabulary appears in the lecture, the teacher highlights it and provides brief explanations or examples. Seeing vocabulary in context helps students understand its meaning and use.

Post-Lecture Strategies

Post-lecture activities consolidate learning and provide opportunities for speaking practice.

Discussion Questions: Students discuss the lecture content in small groups. Questions might focus on the main ideas, personal opinions, or applications of the content. For B1-level students, providing sentence starters and discussion frames can support their speaking.

Summarising Activities: Students summarise the lecture content in their own words. This can be done individually in writing or orally in pairs. Summarising requires students to process and restructure information, deepening their understanding.

Presentation Tasks: Students prepare and deliver short presentations on topics related to the lecture. Presentations develop speaking skills and build confidence. For B1-level students, presentations can be short (2-3 minutes) and focus on familiar topics.

Reflection Activities: Students reflect on their learning, identifying what they understood and what they found challenging. Reflection helps students develop metacognitive awareness and take responsibility for their learning.

Extension Activities: Students extend their learning through additional activities such as reading related texts, watching videos, or conducting small research projects. Extension activities provide additional exposure to English and opportunities for practice.

Strategies for Large Classes

Large class sizes are a significant challenge at Village Education College. The following strategies are designed for large classes:

Pair Work: Pair work is the most practical way to provide speaking practice in large classes. Students can work in pairs for a few minutes at a time, discussing questions or completing tasks. The teacher circulates to monitor and provide support.

Group Work: Small group work (3-4 students) allows for more extended discussion and collaboration. Groups can be assigned specific tasks or roles, ensuring all students participate.

Structured Activities: Structured activities with clear instructions and time limits work well in large classes. Students know exactly what to do and how long they have, reducing confusion and maximising learning time.

Rotating Roles: Students take on different roles in activities, such as discussion leader, note-taker, or presenter. Rotating roles ensures all students have opportunities to practice different skills.

Peer Feedback: Students provide feedback to each other on their speaking. Peer feedback reduces the pressure on the teacher and gives students additional speaking practice.

Technology-Enhanced Strategies

While technology is limited at Village Education College, some strategies can be implemented with minimal resources.

Audio Recordings: Teachers can create audio recordings of lectures or other materials for students to listen to outside class. This provides additional listening practice and allows students to learn at their own pace.

Mobile Learning: Many students have mobile phones that can be used for learning. Teachers can share audio files, vocabulary lists, and other materials via messaging apps. Students can also use their phones to record themselves speaking and listen to their pronunciation.

Online Resources: Where internet access is available, students can access online resources such as language learning apps, podcasts, and videos. Teachers can recommend specific resources that are appropriate for B1-B2 level students.

Simple Presentation Tools: Students can use simple presentation tools such as posters or hand-drawn visuals to support their speaking. Visuals help students organise their ideas and reduce the cognitive load of speaking in a second language.

Implementation Considerations

Successful implementation of these strategies requires attention to several key factors.

Teacher Professional Development: Teachers need training in communicative teaching methods and the specific strategies proposed in this article. Professional development should be practical and ongoing, with opportunities for teachers to practice strategies and receive feedback. Given the constraints at Village Education College, professional development could be delivered through workshops, peer observation, and online courses (where available).

Institutional Support: The college administration needs to support the implementation of new teaching strategies. This might include providing resources, adjusting timetables to allow for interactive activities, and recognising teachers' efforts. Institutional support is essential for sustaining change over time.

Resource Management: While the proposed strategies require minimal resources, some materials are needed. Teachers can create their own materials, such as vocabulary lists, discussion questions, and listening guides. Simple resources like whiteboards, flip charts, and handouts can support interactive activities.

Student Orientation: Students need to understand the purpose and value of the new teaching strategies. Many students are accustomed to passive learning and may initially resist more interactive approaches. Teachers should explain the rationale for the strategies and help students develop the skills needed to participate effectively.

Gradual Implementation: Implementing all strategies at once would be overwhelming for both teachers and students. A gradual approach, introducing one or two strategies at a time, is more manageable. Teachers can start with simple strategies like Think-Pair-Share and gradually add more complex activities.

Cultural Sensitivity: Teaching strategies should be culturally appropriate for the Myanmar context. For example, while pair work and group work are effective, students may need time to adjust to these approaches. Teachers should be sensitive to students' comfort levels and provide support as needed.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Teachers should monitor the effectiveness of the strategies and make adjustments based on student feedback and learning outcomes. Simple evaluation methods, such as student surveys and classroom observations, can provide valuable information for improvement.

Assessment and Evaluation of Listening and Speaking Skills

Assessment is an essential component of teaching listening and speaking. Traditional written examinations do not adequately assess oral communication skills, so alternative assessment methods are needed.

Formative Assessment: Formative assessment provides ongoing feedback to support learning. For listening, formative assessment might include comprehension checks during lectures, listening quizzes, and observation of student participation. For speaking, formative assessment might include observation of pair and group work, informal presentations, and teacher-student conversations.

Summative Assessment: Summative assessment evaluates student achievement at the end of a learning period. For listening, summative assessment might include listening comprehension tests using audio recordings. For speaking, summative assessment might include individual presentations, role-plays, or oral interviews.

Self-Assessment and Peer Assessment: Students can assess their own and each other's listening and speaking skills using simple rubrics. Self-assessment and peer assessment develop metacognitive awareness and reduce the assessment burden on teachers.

Authentic Assessment: Authentic assessment tasks require students to use language in real-world contexts. For listening, this might include understanding announcements, following instructions, or comprehending news reports. For speaking, this might include making phone calls, giving directions, or participating in meetings.

Portfolio Assessment: Students can compile portfolios of their work, including recordings of their speaking, written reflections, and feedback from teachers and peers. Portfolios provide a comprehensive picture of student progress over time.

Table 1: Assessment Methods for Listening and Speaking Skills

Skill	Assessment Method	Description	Feasibility at VEC
Listening	Comprehension Quiz	Students answer questions after listening to a recording	High
Listening	Note-Taking Task	Students take notes during a short lecture and use them to answer questions	High
Listening	Dictation	Students write down what they hear	High
Speaking	Individual Presentation	Student presents on a topic for 2-3 minutes	Medium

Skill	Assessment Method	Description	Feasibility at VEC
Speaking	Pair Discussion	Students discuss a topic while teacher observes	High
Speaking	Role-Play	Students act out a real-world scenario	Medium
Speaking	Oral Interview	Teacher interviews student individually	Low (time-consuming)
Both	Portfolio	Collection of student work over time	Low (requires organisation)

Note: *VEC = Village Education College*

Assessment should be aligned with learning objectives and teaching strategies. If the goal is to develop students' ability to understand lectures and participate in discussions, assessment should measure these skills directly. Assessment should also be fair and transparent, with clear criteria that students understand.

Conclusion

This article has examined the development of listening and speaking teaching strategies for lecture-based classes at Village Education College in Myanmar. The challenges facing the college are significant: limited resources, large class sizes, traditional teaching methods, and students with varied English proficiency levels. However, these challenges are not insurmountable. By adopting appropriate teaching strategies, teachers can develop students' listening and speaking skills even within constraints.

The proposed strategies are grounded in established theoretical frameworks, including Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching, and the Input-Output Loop. They are designed to be practical and feasible within the Village Education College context, requiring minimal additional resources while maximising student engagement. The strategies are organised into pre-lecture, during-lecture, and post-lecture phases, providing a comprehensive framework for teaching listening and speaking in lecture-based classes.

Successful implementation requires attention to teacher professional development, institutional support, and cultural sensitivity. Teachers need training and ongoing support to adopt new approaches. The college administration needs to recognise and support these efforts. Students need to understand the value of the new strategies and develop the skills to participate effectively. Implementation should be gradual, with teachers starting with simple strategies and building on success.

Assessment of listening and speaking skills requires alternative methods beyond traditional written examinations. Formative assessment, self-assessment, peer assessment, and authentic assessment tasks provide more valid measures of oral communication skills. Assessment should be aligned with learning objectives and provide meaningful feedback to support student learning.

The development of listening and speaking skills is essential for students at Village Education College. These skills are necessary for academic success, future employment, and active participation in society. For students who will become teachers themselves, strong oral communication skills are particularly important. By investing in the development of listening and speaking skills, Village Education College can better prepare its students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

The findings of this article have implications beyond Village Education College. Other rural education institutions in Myanmar and similar contexts across Southeast Asia face comparable challenges. The strategies proposed here can be adapted to different settings, providing a framework for improving English language teaching in resource-constrained environments. Further research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies and to identify additional approaches that can support student learning.

In conclusion, while the challenges facing Village Education College are significant, they are not insurmountable. With commitment from teachers, administrators, and students, and with the adoption of appropriate teaching strategies, the college can develop students' listening and speaking skills and prepare them for success in their academic and professional lives.

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Enhancing English Communicative Competence: The Development and Implementation of Strategic Communication Skills

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ABSTRACT

This article examines how English language teachers can develop and implement strategic communication skills in their classrooms. Communicative competence has become the central goal of modern language teaching. It goes beyond grammar and vocabulary to include the ability to use language effectively in real social situations. However, many learners still struggle to communicate confidently even after years of study. This article presents a practical framework for helping learners develop strategic communication skills that can improve their overall communicative competence. The article discusses five key areas. First, it reviews the theoretical foundations of communicative competence, including models by Canale and Swain, and Bachman. Second, it explores communication strategies that learners use to overcome difficulties in interaction. Third, it examines methods for developing speaking and listening skills. Fourth, it presents task-based activities that promote strategic communication. Fifth, it discusses the importance of feedback and error correction in the learning process. The article argues that teachers who combine these approaches can help their learners become more confident and effective communicators in English.

The findings suggest that an integrated approach works best. Teachers should not focus on grammar alone or communication alone. Instead, they should combine language knowledge with practical communication skills. This balanced approach helps learners use English in meaningful ways. It also prepares them for the challenges of real-world communication, where they must adapt to different situations and interact with people from different backgrounds.

Introduction

The ability to communicate effectively in English has become one of the most important skills in the modern world. People use English to do business, study, travel, and connect with others across the globe. Because of this, English language teaching has shifted its focus from grammar rules and vocabulary lists to the development of communicative competence. This means helping learners use English in real situations, not just pass exams (Canale & Swain, 1980). The idea of communicative competence was first introduced by Hymes (1972). He argued that knowing a language means more than just knowing its grammar. It also means

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knowing how to use the language appropriately in different social situations. This idea changed the way people thought about language teaching. Before Hymes, language teaching focused mainly on grammar and translation. After Hymes, teachers began to pay more attention to communication and interaction. Canale and Swain (1980) built on Hymes' work and developed a well-known model of communicative competence. Their model includes four main parts: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Grammatical competence refers to knowledge of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar rules. Sociolinguistic competence involves using language appropriately in different social contexts. Discourse competence is the ability to create coherent and connected pieces of language. Strategic competence is the ability to use communication strategies when things go wrong (Canale & Swain, 1980). Bachman (1990) later expanded this model. He added more detail about how language ability works. His model includes language competence, strategic competence, and psychophysiological mechanisms. Language competence covers organisational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge. Strategic competence involves assessing the situation, planning a response, and executing that plan. Bachman's model has been very influential in language testing and teaching (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell (1995) also made an important contribution. They created a pedagogically motivated model that focuses on what teachers need to know. Their model includes linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. It also adds formulaic competence, which refers to the use of fixed expressions like “How are you?” and “Nice to meet you.” This model is especially useful for teachers because it connects theory to classroom practice.

Communicative Language Teaching, or CLT, is the approach that grew out of these ideas. CLT focuses on helping learners use language for real communication. It emphasises activities that require learners to interact with each other. Richards and Rodgers (2014) describe CLT as an approach that makes communicative competence the goal of language teaching. They note that CLT has been widely adopted around the world, although it has been implemented in different ways in different contexts. One important aspect of communicative competence is strategic competence. This refers to the strategies that people use when they have trouble communicating. For example, if a learner does not know a word, they might use a different word, describe the meaning, or ask for help. These strategies help learners keep communication going even when their language knowledge is limited. Tarone (1977) was one of the first researchers to study these strategies in detail. She found that learners use a variety of strategies to overcome communication problems. Faerch and Kasper (1983) developed a well-known classification of communication strategies. They divided strategies into two main types: reduction strategies and achievement strategies. Reduction strategies involve simplifying the message or avoiding difficult topics. Achievement strategies involve finding ways to express the intended meaning despite limited language knowledge. This classification has been widely used in research and teaching.

Despite the progress in understanding communicative competence, many learners still struggle to communicate effectively. They may know a lot of grammar and vocabulary, but they find it hard to use this knowledge in real conversations. This article addresses this problem by presenting a framework for developing strategic communication skills. The framework draws on current research and offers practical guidance for teachers. The article is organised as follows. The first section reviews the theoretical foundations of communicative competence. The second section discusses communication strategies in language learning. The third section examines methods for developing speaking and listening skills. The fourth section presents task-based activities for strategic communication. The fifth section discusses the role of feedback and error correction. The conclusion summarises the key points and offers recommendations for teachers. It is important to note that context plays a significant role in how these ideas are applied. Different teaching contexts have different resources, different learner populations, and different goals. What works well in one classroom may need to be adapted for another. Teachers should use the framework presented here as a guide, not as a rigid set of rules. They should adapt the ideas to fit their own teaching situation. By doing this, they can create lessons that are both effective and relevant for their learners.

Theoretical Foundations of Communicative Competence

Understanding communicative competence is essential for effective language teaching. The concept has evolved over several decades, and different researchers have proposed different models. This section reviews the key theoretical foundations that underpin modern approaches to communication skills development. Hymes (1972) introduced the term communicative competence to contrast with Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence. Chomsky focused on the mental knowledge that speakers have of their language. Hymes argued that this was not enough. He believed that speakers also need to know when and how to use language appropriately. This includes knowing what to say, to whom, and in what circumstances. Hymes' ideas laid the foundation for a new way of thinking about language teaching. Canale and Swain (1980) developed one of the most influential models of communicative competence. Their model includes four components. Grammatical competence involves knowledge of the language system, including vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Sociolinguistic competence involves using language appropriately in social contexts. Discourse competence involves connecting sentences and ideas to create meaningful text. Strategic competence involves using strategies to overcome communication difficulties.

Bachman (1990) proposed a more detailed model. His framework includes three main components: language competence, strategic competence, and psychophysiological mechanisms. Language competence is divided into organisational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge. Strategic competence involves the ability to assess a situation, plan a response, and execute that plan. This model has been particularly influential in language assessment and testing (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) created a model specifically designed for teachers. Their model includes five components: linguistic competence, actional competence, sociocultural competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. Actional

competence refers to the ability to perform communicative acts like requests, apologies, and invitations. This model is useful because it connects directly to classroom activities and lesson planning.

These models share some common features. They all recognise that communicative competence is complex and multi-dimensional. They all include some form of strategic competence. And they all emphasise the importance of context and appropriateness. For teachers, these models provide a useful framework for designing lessons and assessing learners. By understanding these theoretical foundations, teachers can make better decisions about what and how to teach (Littlewood, 1981).

In practical terms, this means that language lessons should address multiple aspects of competence. A lesson that focuses only on grammar will not fully develop communicative ability. Teachers need to include activities that develop sociolinguistic awareness, discourse skills, and strategic competence. An integrated approach ensures that learners develop all the skills they need for effective communication. This is the foundation upon which the rest of this article is built.

Communication Strategies in Language Learning

Communication strategies are techniques that learners use when they face difficulties in expressing their meaning. These strategies are an important part of strategic competence. They help learners keep communication going even when their language knowledge is incomplete. This section discusses the main types of communication strategies and their role in language learning.

Tarone (1977) was one of the first researchers to study communication strategies systematically. She defined them as the strategies that learners use to overcome gaps between their linguistic knowledge and their communicative intentions. For example, a learner who does not know the word for umbrella might describe it as the thing that keeps rain off your head. This is called a circumlocution strategy.

Faerch and Kasper (1983) developed an influential classification of communication strategies. They divided strategies into reduction strategies and achievement strategies. Reduction strategies involve changing the message to make it easier to express. This might include topic avoidance, message abandonment, or meaning replacement. Achievement strategies involve finding ways to express the original meaning despite limited language resources. This might include code-switching, word coinage, or appeals for assistance.

Dornyei and Scott (1997) expanded this classification. They identified three main types of strategies: avoidance strategies, compensatory strategies, and interactional strategies. Avoidance strategies involve avoiding difficult topics or structures. Compensatory strategies involve finding alternative ways to express meaning. Interactional strategies involve managing the conversation, such as asking for clarification or checking understanding.

Research has shown that communication strategies can be taught. Dornyei (1995) found that strategy training can help learners become more effective communicators. When learners are aware of the strategies

available to them, they can use these strategies more consciously and effectively. This has important implications for language teaching. Teachers can help learners develop their strategic competence by introducing them to different types of strategies and giving them opportunities to practise using them.

Oxford (1990) also contributed to our understanding of communication strategies. She classified strategies into direct strategies and indirect strategies. Direct strategies include memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies. Indirect strategies include metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. This comprehensive framework has been widely used in language teaching and research.

For classroom practice, teachers can introduce communication strategies explicitly. They can demonstrate how to use paraphrase, approximation, and circumlocution. They can create activities where learners must overcome communication gaps. They can also encourage learners to reflect on the strategies they use. This metacognitive approach helps learners become more aware of their own communication processes and more effective in their strategy use.

Developing Speaking and Listening Skills

Speaking and listening are the two main skills involved in oral communication. Developing these skills is essential for building communicative competence. This section examines effective methods for developing speaking and listening skills in the English language classroom.

Nation and Newton (2009) argue that fluency development should be a key goal of language teaching. Fluency involves the ability to speak smoothly and without too much hesitation. They recommend activities that push learners to process language quickly. These include timed speaking tasks, repeated reading, and information gap activities. The goal is to help learners use the language they already know more automatically.

Speaking skills can be developed through a variety of activities. Role-plays allow learners to practise language in simulated real-world situations. Pair work and group work encourage learners to interact with each other. Presentations help learners develop their ability to speak fluently and organise their ideas. Discussions and debates promote critical thinking and argumentation skills. Brown (2007) recommends using a mix of these activities to address different aspects of speaking competence.

Listening skills are equally important. Effective listeners need to understand both the content and the context of a message. They need to be able to identify key information, understand speaker attitudes, and follow the organisation of a talk. Nation and Newton (2009) recommend using a range of listening activities, including extensive listening, intensive listening, and listening for specific information.

Interactive listening is especially valuable for developing communication skills. In interactive listening, listeners are not just passive receivers of information. They actively participate in the conversation by asking questions, giving feedback, and showing interest. This type of listening is common in everyday

communication and should be practised in the classroom. Teachers can use activities like interviews, conversations, and collaborative tasks to develop interactive listening skills.

Larsen-Freeman (2000) emphasises the importance of creating a supportive classroom environment. When learners feel comfortable, they are more willing to take risks and try new ways of communicating. Teachers should encourage learners to speak without worrying too much about mistakes. The focus should be on getting the message across, not on perfect accuracy. This approach helps learners build confidence and develop their communicative abilities.

Teachers should also consider the balance between accuracy and fluency. Accuracy-focused activities help learners use correct grammar and pronunciation. Fluency-focused activities help learners speak more naturally and spontaneously. Both types of activities are important. Nation and Newton (2009) recommend dedicating about one quarter of class time to fluency development. This ensures that learners get enough practice in using language freely and automatically.

Task-Based Activities for Strategic Communication

Task-based language teaching is an approach that uses communicative tasks as the central unit of lesson planning. A task is an activity that requires learners to use language to achieve a specific goal. This section discusses how task-based activities can promote the development of strategic communication skills.

Littlewood (1981) identifies two main types of communicative activities: functional communication activities and social interaction activities. Functional communication activities focus on using language to convey information. Examples include information gap tasks, where one learner has information that another learner needs. Social interaction activities focus on using language to build and maintain relationships. Examples include role-plays, simulations, and discussions.

Information gap activities are particularly effective for developing communication strategies. In these activities, learners must share information to complete a task. Because each learner has different information, they are forced to communicate with each other. This creates natural opportunities for using communication strategies. For example, learners may need to clarify meaning, ask for repetition, or rephrase their message. These are all important strategic skills.

Role-plays and simulations are also valuable. They allow learners to practise language in realistic situations. For example, learners might role-play a job interview, a restaurant conversation, or a business meeting. These activities help learners develop both their language skills and their strategic competence. They learn how to adapt their language to different situations and how to deal with unexpected problems in communication.

Brown (2007) recommends designing tasks that require learners to work together to solve a problem. Collaborative tasks encourage learners to negotiate meaning, share ideas, and support each other. This type

of interaction promotes the development of communication strategies. Learners must use strategies to clarify meaning, express opinions, and reach agreement. Collaborative learning also helps learners develop social skills that are important for effective communication.

When implementing task-based activities, teachers should consider several factors. The tasks should be appropriate for the learners' proficiency level. They should be interesting and relevant to the learners' needs. And they should provide opportunities for using a range of communication strategies. Teachers should also provide clear instructions and adequate preparation time. After the task, teachers can use feedback sessions to discuss the language and strategies that learners used.

The role of the teacher in task-based activities is different from traditional teaching. The teacher is not the centre of attention. Instead, they act as a facilitator and observer. They set up the task, monitor the activity, and provide feedback afterwards. This shift in role can be challenging for some teachers. However, it creates more opportunities for learners to practise communication and develop their strategic skills.

The Role of Feedback and Error Correction

Feedback and error correction play an important role in language learning. They help learners notice gaps between their current performance and the target language. They also provide guidance for improvement. This section discusses the role of feedback in developing strategic communication skills.

Feedback is important because it draws learners' attention to their errors. When learners notice their mistakes, they are more likely to correct them and improve their performance. This principle applies to communication strategies as well as grammar and vocabulary. Teachers should design feedback that helps learners notice gaps in their communication and find ways to fill those gaps (Dornyei, 1995).

There are different types of feedback. Explicit feedback directly tells the learner that an error has been made. For example, a teacher might say, "You should say 'I went' not 'I goed.'" Implicit feedback is more indirect. It might involve recasting, where the teacher repeats the learner's utterance in a corrected form. For example, if a learner says "I goed to school," the teacher might say, "Oh, you went to school." Both types of feedback can be effective, depending on the context and the learner.

Brown (2007) recommends a balanced approach to error correction. He argues that teachers should not correct every error. Too much correction can make learners anxious and discouraged. Instead, teachers should focus on errors that interfere with communication. They should also consider the learner's level and the purpose of the activity. In fluency activities, the focus should be on communication, not accuracy. In accuracy activities, more detailed correction is appropriate.

Peer feedback can also be valuable. When learners give feedback to each other, they develop their ability to notice and analyse language. They also learn to communicate about language, which is an important

metacognitive skill. Teachers should train learners to give constructive feedback. This might involve providing feedback forms or teaching specific feedback phrases.

Self-assessment is another useful tool. When learners assess their own performance, they become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses. They also take more responsibility for their learning. Teachers can use self-assessment activities after communicative tasks. Learners can reflect on the strategies they used and identify areas for improvement. This type of reflection helps learners develop their metacognitive awareness and their strategic competence.

It is worth noting that feedback should be timely. Immediate feedback is often more effective than delayed feedback because learners can connect it directly to their performance. However, the timing depends on the type of activity. In fluency activities, it may be better to delay feedback so as not to interrupt the flow of communication. In accuracy activities, immediate feedback is usually more appropriate. Teachers should use their professional judgement to decide when and how to give feedback.

Conclusion

This article has presented a framework for developing and implementing strategic communication skills in English language teaching. The framework is based on current research and offers practical guidance for teachers. Several key points have emerged from the discussion. First, communicative competence is a complex and multi-dimensional ability. It includes grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Models by Canale and Swain (1980), Bachman (1990), and Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) provide useful frameworks for understanding these different components. Second, communication strategies are an essential part of strategic competence. Learners who can use these strategies effectively are better able to overcome communication difficulties. Research has shown that these strategies can be taught, and that strategy training improves communicative performance.

Third, speaking and listening skills should be developed through a variety of activities. Fluency practice, interactive tasks, and collaborative work all contribute to the development of communicative competence. Teachers should create a supportive environment where learners feel comfortable taking risks. Fourth, task-based activities provide excellent opportunities for developing strategic communication skills. Information gap tasks, role-plays, and problem-solving activities encourage learners to use a range of communication strategies. These activities mirror real-world communication and help learners develop practical skills.

Finally, feedback and error correction are essential for improvement. Teachers should use a balanced approach that focuses on errors that interfere with communication. Peer feedback and self-assessment can also help learners develop their metacognitive awareness. In conclusion, developing strategic communication skills should be a central goal of English language teaching. By following the framework presented in this

article, teachers can help their learners become more confident, more effective, and more strategic communicators.

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Development of Social Psychology through the Dhammapada

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ABSTRACT

The Dhammapada, one of the most revered texts in the Buddhist tradition, offers profound insights into the nature of human mind, social relationships, and collective well-being. This article examines the development of social psychology through the lens of the Dhammapada by exploring how its teachings address fundamental social psychological concepts such as social cognition, attitude formation, intergroup relations, prosocial behavior, and emotional regulation. The study argues that the Dhammapada provides an early framework for understanding social behavior that predates and complements modern social psychological theories. By analyzing selected verses with their Pāli references, this article demonstrates that the Dhammapada's teachings on mind, self, and social interaction offer valuable perspectives for contemporary social psychology. The findings suggest that integrating Buddhist psychological insights with modern social psychology can enrich both theoretical understanding and practical applications in promoting individual and social well-being.

Introduction

Social psychology, as a scientific discipline, emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with the goal of understanding how individuals think, feel, and behave in social contexts (Allport, 1954). The field has since developed numerous theories explaining phenomena such as social perception, attitude change, group dynamics, prejudice, and prosocial behavior. However, the fundamental questions that social psychology addresses—questions about human nature, social relationships, and the causes of suffering and happiness in social life—have been contemplated for millennia in various philosophical and religious traditions.

The Dhammapada, a collection of 423 verses organized into 26 chapters (vagga) within the Khuddaka Nikāya of the Pāli Canon, stands as one of the most significant early Buddhist texts. Traditionally dated to

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the third century BCE, the Dhammapada is revered as the "Handbook of Buddhists" and contains the essential teachings of the Buddha on ethical conduct, mental training, and wisdom. The text's verses address the nature of mind, the causes of suffering, the cultivation of wholesome qualities, and the path to liberation—topics that bear remarkable relevance to contemporary social psychology.

The opening verses of the Dhammapada establish the foundational principle that mind precedes all mental states and that thought shapes human experience: "Manopubbaṅgamā dhammā, manoseṭṭhā manomayā" (Dhammapada 1-2). This assertion that mental processes determine the quality of human experience resonates with modern social cognition research, which emphasizes the role of cognitive processes in shaping social perception and behavior (Fiske & Taylor, 2021).

Recent scholarship has begun to explore the intersections between Buddhist psychology and modern psychological science. Vithakshi (2024) investigated the nature of mind with special reference to the Citta Vagga of the Dhammapada, noting that the mind's functioning determines whether individuals pursue wholesome or unwholesome attainments in social life. Subedi (2025) examined the significance of mastering the mind in the Dhammapada Pāli, arguing that mind control enhances individual well-being and contributes to the construction of a harmonious society. Janinda (2019) conducted a Buddhist socio-psychological study of happiness as reflected in the Sukkavagga of the Dhammapada, exploring how Buddhist ideas may contribute to the fields of sociology and psychology.

Empirical research has also demonstrated the psychological impact of engaging with the Dhammapada. A study by Lê Khánh Hà (2025) found that exposure to selected verses from the Dhammapada activates cognitive processes including personal association, stereotype recognition, cognitive restructuring, and the development of self-awareness and metacognition. Similarly, research conducted at Dongguk University revealed that reading the Dhammapada helps students reflect on their desires, escape negative feelings of social comparison, and establish themselves as masters of their own minds.

This article aims to contribute to this emerging body of scholarship by systematically examining how the Dhammapada addresses key themes in social psychology. The article is organized into five sections, each focusing on a specific social psychological concept and its corresponding Dhammapada teachings with Pāli references. Through this analysis, the article demonstrates that the Dhammapada offers a comprehensive framework for understanding social behavior that complements and enriches modern social psychological theory.

Social Cognition: The Mind as the Forerunner of Social Experience

Social cognition refers to the processes by which individuals perceive, interpret, and respond to social information. The Dhammapada's opening verses establish a foundational principle that aligns remarkably with this concept. The text declares:

"Manopubbaṅgamā dhammā, manoseṭṭhā manomayā; manasā ce paduṭṭhena, bhāsati vā karoti vā; tato naṃ dukkhamanveti, cakkaṃva vahato padaṃ."

"Mind precedes all mental states. Mind is their chief; they are all mind-wrought. If with an impure mind a person speaks or acts, suffering follows him like the wheel that follows the foot of the ox." (Dhammapada 1)

"Manopubbaṅgamā dhammā, manoseṭṭhā manomayā; manasā ce pasannena, bhāsati vā karoti vā; tato naṃ sukhamanveti, chāyāva anapāyinī."

"Mind precedes all mental states. Mind is their chief; they are all mind-wrought. If with a pure mind a person speaks or acts, happiness follows him like his never-departing shadow."(Dhammapada 2)

These verses establish the centrality of mental processes in shaping human experience—a premise that underlies contemporary social cognition research. The Dhammapada suggests that social reality is constructed through mental processes, anticipating the social constructionist perspectives that emerged in twentieth-century psychology (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The text further emphasizes the importance of mental training:

"Phandanaṃ capalaṃ cittaṃ, dūrakkhaṃ dunnivārayaṃ; ujuṃ karoti medhāvī, usukārova tejanaṃ."

"The flickering, fickle mind, difficult to guard, difficult to control—the wise person straightens it as a fletcher straightens an arrow."(Dhammapada 33)

This verse highlights the malleability of cognitive processes and the possibility of training the mind—a concept that parallels modern cognitive behavioral approaches to modifying maladaptive thought patterns (Beck, 2011). The Dhammapada's emphasis on mindfulness and mental cultivation provides an early framework for understanding how cognitive processes shape social perception and behavior.

The Self and Social Identity: Understanding the Nature of Self

The concept of self is central to social psychology, encompassing self-concept, self-esteem, and social identity. The Dhammapada offers a distinctive perspective on the nature of self through the doctrine of anattā (non-self). The text challenges attachment to self-concept:

"Attā hi attano nātho, ko hi nātho paro siyā; attanā hi sudantena, nāthaṃ labhati dullabhaṃ."

"The self is the master of the self; for who else could be the master? With the self well-controlled, one finds a master that is hard to find." (Dhammapada 160)

"Attanāva kataṃ pāpaṃ, attanā saṃkilissati; attanā akataṃ pāpaṃ, attanāva visujjhati; suddhi asuddhi paccattaṃ, nāñño aññaṃ visodhaye."

"By oneself is evil done; by oneself is one defiled. By oneself is evil left undone; by oneself is one purified. Purity and impurity depend on oneself; no one can purify another." (Dhammapada 165)

These verses emphasize personal responsibility while simultaneously pointing toward the absence of a permanent, unchanging self. This paradoxical teaching—that the self is both the agent of action and ultimately empty of inherent existence—has profound implications for social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The Dhammapada warns against identification with social roles and status:

"Na jatāhi na gottena, na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo; yamhi saccañca dhammo ca, so sucī so ca brāhmaṇo."

"Not by matted hair, nor by family, nor by birth does one become a brahmin; but one in whom there is truth and righteousness—that one is pure, that one is a brahmin." (Dhammapada 393)

This verse challenges social identity based on birth or social category, advocating instead for identity based on ethical and mental qualities. The Dhammapada's critique of conventional social distinctions anticipates contemporary social psychological research on prejudice, stereotyping, and the social construction of identity (Fiske, 1998). Research has shown that engagement with the Dhammapada can help individuals move beyond negative social comparisons and establish more balanced relationships with others.

Intergroup Relations and Conflict Resolution

Intergroup relations and conflict resolution are major areas of social psychological inquiry. The Dhammapada provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and resolving social conflict. The text famously declares:

"Na hi verena verāni, sammantīdha kudācanaṃ; averena ca sammanti, esa dhammo sanantano."

"Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world; by non-hatred alone is hatred appeased. This is an eternal law." (Dhammapada 5)

This verse presents a fundamental principle of conflict resolution that resonates with modern theories of intergroup contact and reconciliation (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). The Dhammapada teaches that responding to hostility with hostility perpetuates conflict, while responding with non-hatred—understood as loving-kindness (mettā)—can transform relationships. As one scholar observed, "hatred does not stop because of more hatred. Instead, hatred only stops when it is displaced by love".

The text further elaborates on the causes of social conflict:

"Kodhaṃ jahe vippajaheyya mānaṃ, saṃyojanaṃ sabbamatikkameyya; taṃ nāmarūpasmiṃ asajjamānaṃ, akiñcanaṃ nānupatanti dukkhā."

"Let one give up anger, let one abandon pride, let one overcome all fetters. Sufferings do not befall one who is not attached to name-and-form, who is unattached to anything." (Dhammapada 221)

The Dhammapada identifies anger and pride as primary causes of social discord. Anger (dosa) is recognized as one of the causes of social conflict, while loving-kindness (adosa) is the way to prevent it. Similarly, ignorance (moha) causes social conflict, while wisdom (amoha) prevents it. This analysis of the psychological roots of social problems anticipates modern social psychological research on the causes of intergroup conflict (Dovidio et al., 2010).

The Dhammapada also offers practical guidance for social harmony:

"Sabbā disā anuparigamma cetasā, neva labbhaṃ piyataro attanā kvaci; evaṃ piyo puthu attā paresaṃ, yo attano piyo na so paraṃ hiṃse."

"Having traversed all quarters with the mind, one finds no one dearer than oneself. Likewise, others hold themselves dear; therefore, one who loves oneself should not harm others." (Dhammapada 157)

This verse provides a psychological basis for the ethic of non-harm, grounded in the recognition that all beings share the same desire for happiness and well-being—a principle that aligns with social psychological research on empathy and perspective-taking (Batson, 2011).

Prosocial Behavior and Compassion

Prosocial behavior—actions intended to benefit others—is a central concern of social psychology. The Dhammapada extensively addresses the cultivation of compassion, loving-kindness, and altruistic action. The text teaches:

"Sukhaṃ yāva jarā sīlaṃ, sukhaṃ saddhā patiṭṭhitā; sukhaṃ paññāya paṭilābho, pāpānaṃ akaraṇaṃ sukhaṃ."

"Virtue is pleasant until old age; faith is pleasant when established; the acquisition of wisdom is pleasant; the non-doing of evil is pleasant." (Dhammapada 333)

The Dhammapada emphasizes that ethical conduct and compassion are not merely social obligations but sources of personal happiness. This understanding of the mutual benefit of prosocial behavior aligns with social psychological research on the relationship between prosocial behavior and well-being (Post, 2005).

The text provides guidance on how to interact with others:

"Yathā pi bhamaro pupphaṃ, vaṇṇagandhaṃ aheṭhayaṃ; paṭiṇāti paleti ca, evaṃ gāme muni care."

"Just as a bee gathers nectar from a flower without harming its color or fragrance, so should the sage wander in the village." (Dhammapada 49)

This metaphor illustrates the principle of non-harming interaction—engaging with others in ways that do not exploit or damage them. The verse has been applied in sustainability education, where it demonstrates how emotions like empathy, compassion, and gratitude can shift learning from technical problem-solving toward deeper relational awareness.

The Dhammapada also addresses the relationship between self-care and care for others:

"Attānameva paṭhamaṃ, patirūpe nivesaye; athaññamanusāseyya, na kilisseyya paṇḍito."

"One should first establish oneself in what is proper; then one may teach others. The wise person should not be defiled." (Dhammapada 158)

This verse emphasizes that genuine prosocial behavior emerges from self-cultivation. The Dhammapada teaches that one cannot effectively help others without first developing one's own ethical and mental qualities—a principle that resonates with social psychological research on the conditions that promote authentic altruism (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989).

Emotional Regulation and Social Well-being

Emotional regulation—the ability to manage and respond to emotional experiences—is crucial for social functioning. The Dhammapada offers extensive guidance on regulating negative emotions and cultivating positive mental states. The text teaches:

"Akodhanaṃ ye damayanti, kodhaṃ ye na vijānanti; te vedaguno janā, kodhaṃ te na vijānanti."

"Those who subdue anger, who are free from anger—those are the knowers of the Vedas; they do not know anger." (Dhammapada 221)

The Dhammapada provides practical strategies for managing anger:

"Kodhaṃ jahe, vippajaheyya mānaṃ, saṃyojanaṃ sabbamatikkameyya; taṃ nāmarūpasmiṃ asajjamānaṃ, akiñcanaṃ nānupatanti dukkhā."

"Let one give up anger, let one abandon pride, let one overcome all fetters. Sufferings do not befall one who is not attached to name-and-form, who is unattached to anything." (Dhammapada 221)

The text further teaches the transformation of negative emotions:

"Akodhena jine kodhaṃ, asādhuṃ sādhunā jine; jine kadariyaṃ dānena, saccenālikavādinaṃ."

"Conquer anger by non-anger; conquer evil by good; conquer stinginess by generosity; conquer the liar by truth." (Dhammapada 223)

This verse presents a systematic approach to emotional transformation—replacing negative emotions with their positive counterparts. This approach anticipates modern cognitive-behavioral techniques for emotion regulation, which emphasize replacing maladaptive thoughts and emotions with adaptive alternatives (Gross, 2015).

The Dhammapada also emphasizes the social benefits of emotional regulation:

"Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ, kusalassa upasampadā; sacittapariyodapanaṃ, etaṃ buddhāna sāsanaṃ."

"The non-doing of all evil, the undertaking of what is good, the purification of one's mind—this is the teaching of the Buddhas." (Dhammapada 183)

This verse presents emotional and ethical purification as the foundation of both individual and social well-being. Research has confirmed that the Dhammapada's teachings on mind control can lead to tangible improvements in various aspects of life and contribute to the construction of a harmonious society.

Conclusion

This article has examined the development of social psychology through the lens of the Dhammapada, demonstrating that this ancient Buddhist text offers profound insights into fundamental social psychological phenomena. The analysis of selected verses with Pāli references has revealed that the Dhammapada addresses social cognition, self and identity, intergroup relations, prosocial behavior, and emotional regulation in ways that anticipate and complement modern social psychological theory.

The Dhammapada's foundational teaching that mind precedes all mental states provides an early framework for understanding how cognitive processes shape social experience—a perspective that aligns with contemporary social cognition research. Its teachings on the nature of self challenge conventional notions of social identity while emphasizing personal responsibility—insights that enrich social identity theory. The text's guidance on conflict resolution through non-hatred and compassion offers practical principles for addressing intergroup conflict that resonate with modern approaches to reconciliation.

The Dhammapada's emphasis on prosocial behavior and emotional regulation provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how individual mental cultivation contributes to social well-being. As Subedi (2025) observed, the cultivation of a controlled mind not only enhances individual well-being but also contributes to the construction of a harmonious society. The empirical research reviewed in this article confirms that engagement with the Dhammapada can activate cognitive processes conducive to psychological healing and social development.

In conclusion, the Dhammapada represents what Haidt described as one of the greatest psychological works ever written. Its integration of psychological insight with ethical and spiritual guidance offers a holistic approach to understanding and improving human social behavior. Future research should continue to explore the intersections between Buddhist psychology and modern social psychology, investigating how ancient wisdom can inform contemporary theory and practice in promoting individual and social well-being.

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Development of Pāli Language and Learning Strategies for Buddhist Studies in Myanmar

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A B S T R A C T

Pāli language is very important for Theravāda Buddhism. It is the language of the Tipiṭaka, which contains the Buddha's teachings. Myanmar has a long history of Pāli studies that goes back more than one thousand years. This article examines how Pāli developed in Myanmar from the Pyu period through the Bagan kingdom to the present day. The research uses historical and textual analysis to understand the role of Pāli in Buddhist education. The findings show that Pāli was not only a religious language but also a symbol of prestige and learning in Burmese society. The article also explores different learning strategies used in Myanmar for Pāli studies. These include traditional methods like nissaya (word-by-word translation), grammar study, memorization, and monastic examinations. The article also looks at modern approaches using digital tools and online resources. The study finds that Myanmar has a rich tradition of Pāli scholarship, with important works like the Kaccāyana grammar and Aggavaṃsa's Saddanīti. Monastic examinations, which began in 1648, have played a key role in promoting Pāli learning. However, challenges remain, including the need to update teaching methods and make Pāli learning more accessible to all people. This article suggests that combining traditional and modern learning strategies can help students study Pāli more effectively. The research contributes to understanding how language, religion, and education work together in Myanmar's Buddhist tradition.

Introduction

Pāli is the sacred language of Theravāda Buddhism. It is the language of the Tipiṭaka, which is the collection of the Buddha's teachings. For Buddhists in Myanmar, Pāli is not just a language for communication. It is a holy language that carries the words of the Buddha. The study of Pāli has been central to Myanmar's religious and educational life for many centuries (Phyu Mar Lwin, 2025). From the early Pyu civilization to the present day, Pāli has shaped how Myanmar people understand Buddhism and express their faith.

The history of Pāli in Myanmar goes back to very ancient times. Archaeological evidence shows that Pāli was used in the Pyu period, around the 1st to 3rd centuries CE (Phyu Mar Lwin, 2025). Gold plates found at Śrīkṣetra contain some of the earliest Pāli inscriptions from the Buddhist canon (Phyu Mar Lwin, 2025).

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These findings show that Pāli was already important in Myanmar long before the Bagan kingdom. The Pyu people learned Pāli texts that came from South India (Phyu Mar Lwin, 2025). This early contact with Pāli laid the foundation for later developments.

The Bagan period (11th to 13th century) is often called the golden age of Buddhist culture in Myanmar. King Anawrahta adopted Theravāda Buddhism as the state religion and brought many Pāli texts from Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) (Burmese literature, 2011). During this time, Pāli became the main language for religious and scholarly work. Stone inscriptions from Bagan show that Pāli was used not only for religious purposes but also as a mark of social status among the royal family and learned monks (Phyu Mar Lwin, 2025). The spread of Theravāda Buddhism in Bagan helped make Pāli the foundation of Myanmar's educational system.

Myanmar has produced many important Pāli scholars over the centuries. In the 12th century, Aggavaṃsa wrote the Saddanīti, a major work on Pāli grammar (Ruiz-Falqués, 2017). In the 18th century, Makāralopa created an encyclopedia of Pali grammar that is still used today (Ruiz-Falqués, 2024). These works show the deep tradition of Pāli scholarship in Myanmar.

The study of Pāli in Myanmar has traditionally taken place in monasteries. Monastic education has been the main way for people to learn Pāli and Buddhist teachings. Monks served as teachers, and students learned through memorization, recitation, and translation (Ven. Pannabhoga Herngseng, 2023). The nissaya method, where each Pāli word is followed by its Burmese translation, became a key teaching tool. This method helped students understand the meaning of Pāli texts while learning the language (Ven. Pannabhoga Herngseng, 2023).

In 1648, King Thalun introduced monastic examinations to encourage the study of Pāli (Monastic examinations, n.d.). These examinations, known as pathamabyan, became an important part of Myanmar's Buddhist education. Successful candidates received royal recognition and titles (Monastic examinations, n.d.). The examination system continues today under the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

However, Pāli education in Myanmar faces challenges in the modern world. The curriculum in many monastic schools includes only Pāli and Myanmar literature, which some see as limiting. There is a need to update teaching methods and make Pāli learning more relevant to contemporary students. At the same time, new opportunities are emerging. India's recognition of Pāli as a classical language in 2024 has renewed interest in Pāli studies (Buddhistdoor Global, 2025). International collaborations between Myanmar and other Buddhist countries are also helping to promote Pāli learning.

This article aims to explore the development of Pāli in Myanmar and examine the learning strategies used for Buddhist studies. It will look at both traditional and modern approaches to Pāli education. By understanding the history and current state of Pāli learning, we can find ways to support this important tradition for future generations.

Historical Development of Pāli in Myanmar

The history of Pāli in Myanmar can be divided into several important periods. Each period contributed to the growth and development of the language in different ways.

The Pyu Period (1st - 9th Century CE)

The earliest evidence of Pāli in Myanmar comes from the Pyu civilization. Archaeological sites like Beikthano and Śrīkṣetra have yielded Pāli inscriptions on gold plates and other materials (Phyu Mar Lwin, 2025). The Pāli word 'samghasiri' was found on a stamp dating to the 2nd century at the Beikthano site (Phyu Mar Lwin, 2025). Twenty gold plates discovered at Śrīkṣetra provide further evidence of the use of Pāli. These plates are recognized as the earliest Pāli inscriptions from the Buddhist canon during the Pyu era (Phyu Mar Lwin, 2025). This early contact with Pāli laid the foundation for later developments.

The Bagan Period (11th - 13th Century CE)

The Bagan period was a time of great growth for Pāli in Myanmar. King Anawrahta and his successors supported Theravāda Buddhism and the study of Pāli (Burmese literature, 2011). Many temples and monasteries were built, and Pāli became the language of religious and scholarly life (Phyu Mar Lwin, 2025).

The Myazedi inscription, inscribed in 1113, is one of the most important pieces of evidence from this period (Myazedi inscription, n.d.). It contains the same proclamation in four languages: Old Burmese, Pali, Old Mon, and Pyu (Myazedi inscription, n.d.). This shows that Pāli was an important language alongside the local languages.

During this time, important works on Pāli grammar were written. Aggavaṃsa's Saddanīti, completed in 1154 CE, is one of the best-known examples (Ruiz-Falqués, 2017). This work shows the high level of Pāli scholarship in Bagan. Pāli grammar was studied with great care, and this tradition continues in monastic education today.

The Ava and Konbaung Periods (14th - 19th Century)

After the fall of Bagan, Pāli scholarship continued to flourish. The Ava period saw the development of Burmese literature influenced by Pāli. Poets and scholars used Pāli motifs and ideas in their work (Burmese literature, 2011). The Konbaung period brought further developments, including the work of Makāralopa in the 18th century (Ruiz-Falqués, 2024).

The monastic examination system, introduced in 1648, became a key institution for Pāli learning (Monastic examinations, n.d.). King Bodawpaya later standardized these examinations and introduced new ones related to the Vinaya (Monastic examinations, n.d.). This system helped maintain high standards of Pāli scholarship throughout the country.

The Colonial Period (1886 - 1948)

British colonial rule brought changes to Myanmar's education system. The monastic examination system was revived by the colonial authorities to encourage education in monasteries (Monastic examinations, n.d.). However, there was also resistance from the Burmese sangha, and the first colonial-administered examinations were not held until 1895 (Monastic examinations, n.d.). During this period, Pāli education continued in monasteries alongside new forms of secular education.

The Modern Period (1948 - Present)

Since independence, Pāli has remained important in Myanmar's religious and educational life. The government continues to hold monastic examinations. Universities offer courses in Pāli and Buddhist studies. For example, the State Pariyatti Sasana University offers BA, MA, and postgraduate diploma programs in Pāli and Buddhist Studies (SSBU, 2025). International recognition of Pāli, such as India's 2024 declaration of Pāli as a classical language, has brought new attention to the language (Buddhistdoor Global, 2025).

The development of Pāli in Myanmar shows a continuous tradition of scholarship and learning. From the Pyu period to the present, Pāli has been central to Myanmar's Buddhist identity.

Pāli in Myanmar's Monastic Education System

The monastic education system has been the main institution for Pāli learning in Myanmar for centuries. Understanding this system helps us see how Pāli has been taught and learned.

Structure of Monastic Education

Monasteries have served as centers of education in Myanmar since ancient times. In the history of Myanmar, Buddhist monasteries were traditionally the learning centres, where students acquired the knowledge of Buddhist Texts in Pāli (Shodhganga, n.d.). Monks are the teachers, and students include both novice monks and laypeople. Education in monasteries has traditionally focused on religious and moral development. Pāli is a core subject because it is the language of the Buddhist scriptures.

When a new student came to a monastery to study, the abbot gave him instruction (Shodhganga, n.d.). The curriculum in monastic schools has traditionally included Pāli grammar, Buddhist texts, and sometimes other subjects like numerical, medical, psychological, and astrological knowledge (Shodhganga, n.d.). Students learn to read, write, and understand Pāli. They also study the Tipiṭaka and commentarial literature.

The Nissaya Method

One of the most important teaching methods in Myanmar's monastic education is the nissaya method. In this method, each Pāli word is followed by its Burmese translation and explanation (Ven. Pannabhoga Herngseng, 2023). The word "*nissaya*" comes from Pāli and means "support" or "foundation." This method provides students with a clear understanding of Pāli texts.

The nissaya method developed over many centuries. Early forms of nissaya can be found from the 7th century CE (Ven. Pannabhoga Herngseng, 2023). By the medieval period, nissaya had become a mainstream learning method. Teachers used nissaya to explain Pāli texts in detail to their students. In the traditional Burmese monastic learning method, the nissaya plays an important role on account of the different levels of meaning that it can extract from a text (Ven. Pannabhoga Herngseng, 2023).

The nissaya method has several advantages. It helps students understand the meaning of Pāli words in their own language. It also shows how grammar works in context. For beginners, nissaya provides a bridge between Burmese and Pāli. However, some scholars argue that nissaya can become a crutch, preventing students from developing independent reading skills.

Memorization and Recitation

Memorization has always been important in Pāli learning. Students memorize Pāli texts through repetition and recitation. The ancient monasteries' teaching methodology encompassed systematic lecturing of literature, attending lectures, repeating what one had learnt from memory, learning lessons by heart, and teaching how to write. This practice helps students internalize the language and its rhythms. Memorization also has a religious dimension, as reciting the Buddha's words is seen as a meritorious act.

Monastic Examinations

The monastic examination system has been central to Pāli education since 1648 (Monastic examinations, n.d.). These examinations test students' knowledge of Pāli and Buddhist texts. The pathamabyan examinations are held over nine days, including six days for base texts, one day for Burmese language texts, and two days for Pāli language texts.

Successful candidates receive titles and recognition (Monastic examinations, n.d.). This system has motivated many students to study Pāli seriously. At present, Myanmar Sangha Pali study consists of two different systems: traditional and modern Pali study with university system (Myanmar Sangha Administration, n.d.). Traditional Pali studies are divided into three systems of examinations: Pali Pathmapya examination, Dhammacariya examination, and Tipitaka selection examination (Myanmar Sangha Administration, n.d.).

Traditional Learning Strategies for Pāli

Myanmar has developed many effective strategies for learning Pāli over the centuries. These strategies combine language learning with religious practice.

Grammar-Based Learning

Learning Pāli grammar is the foundation of traditional Pāli education. The Kaccāyana grammar, dating from about the 6th century CE, has been a standard textbook. Students learn the rules of Pāli grammar through systematic study. This approach helps students understand the structure of the language (Shodhganga, n.d.).

Monks compulsively learn Pali for writing and composing stanzas. Grammar is also learned by monks to grasp the language. A linguistic text, Kaccayana is suggested for the exams (Shodhganga, n.d.).

Myanmar scholars have made important contributions to Pāli grammar. Makāralopa's Encyclopedia of Pali Grammar is a bilingual Pāli-Burmese exposition of the Kaccāyana grammar (Ruiz-Falqués, 2024). This work includes chapters on hermeneutics and scholastic exegesis, making it more than just a grammar book. It provides a complete method for textual analysis.

Text-Based Learning

Traditional Pāli learning is closely tied to reading Buddhist texts. Students read the Tipiṭaka and commentarial literature. This approach helps students learn Pāli in its natural context. Reading texts also deepens students' understanding of Buddhist teachings.

Teachers often start with simpler texts before moving to more difficult ones. The Jātaka tales, which tell stories of the Buddha's previous lives, are often used for beginners. These stories are engaging and relatively easy to understand. As students progress, they read more complex texts from the Sutta Piṭaka and Abhidhamma Piṭaka.

Translation Practice

Translation is a key learning strategy in traditional Pāli education. Students translate Pāli texts into Burmese. This practice helps students understand the meaning of the texts and develop their language skills. Teachers often provide nissaya translations to guide students.

Translation practice also helps students identify areas where they need more study. When students struggle to translate a passage, they know they need to review the grammar or vocabulary. Over time, translation becomes easier as students become more familiar with the language.

Study with Teachers

The teacher-student relationship is central to traditional Pāli learning. Students learn from monks who are themselves skilled in Pāli. Teachers explain difficult passages, answer questions, and provide guidance. This personal instruction helps students overcome challenges and deepen their understanding.

The teacher is called "*ācariya*" in Pāli. This word shows the respect given to teachers in the Buddhist tradition. Students are expected to be humble and attentive. This relationship creates a supportive learning environment.

Community Learning

Learning Pāli is often a community activity. Students study together in groups. They recite texts together and discuss their meanings. This collaborative learning helps students stay motivated and learn from each other.

Study groups also provide opportunities for practice. Students can test each other on vocabulary and grammar. They can also help each other understand difficult passages. This community approach to learning has been part of Myanmar's Buddhist tradition for centuries.

Modern Learning Strategies and Resources

While traditional methods remain important, modern learners of Pāli have access to many new resources and strategies. These tools can make Pāli learning more accessible and effective.

Digital Resources

The internet has opened up many new opportunities for Pāli learning. The Digital Pali Reader is a tool that facilitates study of the Pali language at an advanced level. It contains the entire Myanmar version of the Pali Canon (Digital Pali Reader, n.d.). Online courses are available from universities and Buddhist centers. These courses allow students to learn at their own pace. Digital dictionaries make it easy to look up Pāli words. Online texts of the Tipiṭaka are freely available.

Mobile apps also support Pāli learning. The Pali Nissaya app allows users to view the Pali canon easily (Google Play, 2025). The HTUT Dhamma app describes how to pronounce Pali language and provides authentic Burmese pronunciations with audio files (App Store, 2025). These tools make it possible to study Pāli anywhere, anytime. For students who cannot attend traditional monastic schools, digital resources provide an alternative path to learning.

Modern Textbooks and University Programs

Many modern textbooks are available for learning Pāli. Universities now offer formal degree programs. The State Pariyatti Sasana University offers a BA in Pāli and Buddhist Studies. This program trains students to acquire fundamental knowledge in the Tipiṭaka through original Pāli texts and also develop critical thinking skills (SSBU, 2025).

The MA program in Pāli and Buddhist Studies aims to provide students opportunities to learn the Pali language from a diverse approach and to study meditation from theoretical and practical perspectives (SSBU, 2025). These modern programs use a more communicative approach than traditional grammar books. They focus on reading comprehension and practical use of the language.

Self-Study Strategies

Self-study is possible for motivated learners. Many resources are available for self-study, including textbooks, online courses, and study guides. Self-study allows learners to focus on their own needs and interests.

Successful self-study requires discipline and good strategies. Learners should start with basic grammar and vocabulary. They should then move on to reading simple texts. Regular practice is essential. Many self-learners find it helpful to set specific goals and track their progress.

Combining Traditional and Modern Approaches

The most effective learning strategies often combine traditional and modern approaches. For example, students might use traditional nissaya translations alongside digital dictionaries. They might study grammar with a teacher and practice reading with online texts.

This combined approach has several advantages. Traditional methods provide depth and cultural context. Modern tools provide convenience and access to resources. Together, they can help students learn Pāli more effectively than either approach alone.

International Collaboration

International collaboration is opening new opportunities for Pāli learning. Myanmar has been strengthening ties with India and other Buddhist countries. India's recognition of Pāli as a classical language in 2024 has renewed academic and spiritual interest in Pāli (Buddhistdoor Global, 2025). The International Buddhist Confederation has signed MoUs with Myanmar institutions to promote and preserve Pāli (Buddhistdoor Global, 2025). These collaborations include academic exchanges and cultural programs. They help promote Pāli studies and share best practices in teaching.

Challenges and Future Directions

Despite its rich tradition, Pāli education in Myanmar faces several challenges. Addressing these challenges is important for the future of Pāli studies.

Curriculum Limitations

One major challenge is the limited curriculum in many monastic schools. The curriculum often includes only Pāli and Myanmar literature. This narrow focus may not prepare students for the modern world. It may also limit students' ability to apply their Pāli knowledge in new contexts.

Some educators are calling for curriculum reform. They suggest adding subjects like English, science, and social studies. A broader curriculum could help students develop more skills while maintaining their Pāli studies. However, any changes must respect the religious nature of monastic education.

Teaching Methods

Traditional teaching methods, while effective, may need updating. Some methods focus too much on memorization and not enough on understanding. Students may learn to recite texts without truly understanding them. This can limit their ability to use Pāli for deeper study.

New teaching methods could address this issue. For example, teachers could use more discussion and analysis in their classes. They could encourage students to ask questions and think critically about texts. These methods could help students develop deeper understanding.

Accessibility and Language Barriers

Pāli education is not equally accessible to all. Traditional monastic education is mainly available to boys and men. Girls and women have fewer opportunities to study Pāli. People in rural areas may also have limited access to Pāli education.

There is also a language barrier issue. Pāli learning in Myanmar has been comparatively isolated, and the traditional field of Pali studies has developed more or less independently of outside influences. Unfortunately, the language barrier has prevented modern scholars from taking advantage of many contributions of Myanmar towards Pali studies.

Efforts to make Pāli education more inclusive could help. Online courses and distance learning can reach people who cannot attend traditional schools. Women's monasteries and study groups can provide opportunities for female students.

Modern Relevance

Some people question the relevance of Pāli studies in the modern world. They may see Pāli as an ancient language with limited practical use. This perception can discourage young people from studying Pāli.

Showing the relevance of Pāli studies is important. Pāli provides access to the Buddha’s teachings in their original language. It also develops skills in analysis, memorization, and translation. These skills are valuable in many fields. Highlighting these benefits could attract more students to Pāli studies.

Preservation of Tradition

While updating Pāli education, it is important to preserve its traditions. The rich heritage of Pāli scholarship in Myanmar should not be lost. Traditional methods like nissaya and memorization have value. They connect students to centuries of Buddhist learning.

The challenge is to balance tradition and innovation. Teachers and students should respect traditional methods while also embracing new approaches. This balance can help Pāli education remain vital and relevant.

Opportunities for Growth

Despite these challenges, there are many opportunities for Pāli studies in Myanmar. International recognition of Pāli is growing. Digital resources are making Pāli learning more accessible. There is increasing interest in Buddhist studies around the world.

Myanmar can build on its rich Pāli tradition to become a leader in Buddhist studies. By combining traditional scholarship with modern approaches, Myanmar can contribute to global understanding of Buddhism. This contribution can benefit both Myanmar and the wider Buddhist community.

Conclusion

This article has explored the development of Pāli language and learning strategies for Buddhist studies in Myanmar. The study shows that Pāli has been central to Myanmar's religious and cultural life for more than a thousand years. From the Pyu period through the Bagan kingdom to the present day, Pāli has served as the sacred language of Theravāda Buddhism.

The history of Pāli in Myanmar is a story of continuous scholarship and learning. Important works like the Saddanīti and Makāralopa's Encyclopedia of Pali Grammar show the depth of Myanmar's Pāli tradition. The monastic education system, with its nissaya method and examinations, has preserved and transmitted this tradition.

Learning strategies for Pāli in Myanmar include both traditional and modern approaches. Traditional methods like grammar study, text reading, translation, and study with teachers remain valuable. Modern tools like digital resources, online courses, and new textbooks provide additional opportunities. Combining these approaches can help students learn Pāli more effectively.

However, challenges remain. Curriculum limitations, outdated teaching methods, and accessibility issues need attention. At the same time, there are opportunities for growth. International collaboration and digital resources are opening new possibilities.

The future of Pāli studies in Myanmar depends on finding the right balance. It is important to preserve the rich tradition of Pāli scholarship while also embracing innovation. By doing so, Myanmar can continue to be a center of Buddhist learning and contribute to global understanding of the Buddha's teachings.

Ultimately, Pāli is more than just a language. It is a bridge to the Buddha's words and a connection to centuries of Buddhist tradition. For students in Myanmar and around the world, learning Pāli is a way to deepen their understanding of Buddhism and participate in its living tradition.

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Enhancing English Learning Strategies Used by High School Students, Myanmar

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A B S T R A C T

This article aimed to study (1) the English learning strategies used by high school students at Kyon South High School in Myanmar, (2) evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in improving students' English language skills, and (3) identify the challenges teachers face in implementing effective English teaching strategies. The research employed a mixed-method approach with an exploratory design. The instrument for collecting data was a structured questionnaire with 30 items using a five-point Likert scale for 80 high school students, and semi-structured interview guides for five English teachers. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Qualitative data was analyzed through thematic analysis and content analysis. The research results were found as follows:

Students at Kyon South High School demonstrate very positive attitudes toward English learning, with 96% thinking carefully about their progress, over 86% having clear goals, and 87% actively connecting new vocabulary to existing knowledge. Students effectively use cognitive strategies including media-based learning (87%), note-taking (87%), and online resources (87%). Social strategies are strongly employed, with almost all students feeling confident asking questions and practicing with peers. Over 80% attempt to speak despite fear of making errors.

The evaluation of effectiveness revealed that classroom activities improved speaking skills for 75%, reading for 75%, and writing for 75%, while listening skills showed lower improvement at 71%. Overall, 75% of students perceived improvement in their English ability and increased confidence. Teachers reported that role-plays, project-based learning, and video-based activities were most effective. However, significant challenges including large class sizes (40-50 students), limited resources, and a heavy curriculum constrained the full effectiveness of teaching strategies.

Teachers demonstrated creativity in adapting to challenges by using pair work, games, music, and technology, but require better institutional support including improved resources, professional development opportunities, and a more balanced curriculum that emphasizes communication skills alongside grammar instruction.

Introduction

In the globalized world of the 21st century, proficiency in English is increasingly regarded as a critical skill for academic success and career advancement. English serves as the primary language of international communication, business, technology, and higher education. For students in developing countries, particularly in Southeast Asia, English proficiency opens doors to educational opportunities, employment prospects, and participation in the global community. However, in Myanmar, especially in rural regions such as Kyon South High School, the teaching and learning of English face considerable challenges. Many high school students

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struggle to achieve proficiency due to traditional teaching methods, limited resources, and a lack of exposure to English in everyday life. According to Kyaw and Aung (2023), outdated teaching methods, such as rote learning and teacher-centered approaches, often hinder the development of language skills, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This situation highlights the urgent need for a shift toward innovative and student-centered English teaching strategies.

Research has consistently demonstrated that effective language learning depends on the strategies employed by both teachers and students. Studies by Nguyen and Pham (2023) found that task-based learning significantly improved students' speaking and listening skills in Vietnamese rural schools, while Brown and Lee (2021) advocated for integrating technology into language teaching, citing improved student engagement and outcomes. In the Myanmar context, Than and Soe (2021) identified a significant gap in English proficiency between urban and rural students, emphasizing the need for contextualized approaches that address the specific needs of rural learners. Wang (2020) highlighted the importance of teacher training and professional development for successful strategy implementation. The National Education Strategic Plan (2021-2030) emphasizes the development of English language skills as a pathway to empower students and integrate the country into the international community (MOE Myanmar, 2022). However, the implementation of these reforms remains inconsistent, especially in rural schools where teachers often lack training in modern teaching methodologies.

This study focuses on Kyon South High School, a government-run educational institution in Karen State, Myanmar, serving students from middle school to high school levels. The school faces typical challenges of rural educational institutions, including limited resources, large class sizes, and a teacher-centered instructional culture. The student population consists of 80 high school students ranging in age from 15 to 18 years, coming from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Many of these students have limited exposure to English outside the classroom, making school-based instruction their primary source of language learning. The teachers at this institution, though dedicated, often lack access to professional development opportunities and modern teaching resources. This context presents both challenges and opportunities for enhancing English learning strategies. Understanding the specific learning strategies employed by these students and the effectiveness of current teaching methods is crucial for developing targeted interventions that can improve English language outcomes.

This research paper presents an investigation of English learning strategies used by high school students at Kyon South High School in Myanmar, describing the structure and main points discussed. The paper aims to provide new knowledge and practical solutions that can benefit the academic community, teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers in Myanmar and similar educational contexts in developing countries. By examining both student perspectives and teacher experiences, the study offers a comprehensive understanding of the current state of English language education and identifies actionable recommendations for improvement.

Research Objectives

In relation to the problem statement above, the main objectives of the research are to find out:

To study the English learning strategies for high school students at Kyon South High School in Myanmar.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the existing strategies in improving high school students' English language skills at Kyon South High School in Myanmar.

Literature Review

Studies on Effective Teaching Methods for High School Students

Research on English language teaching has consistently emphasized the importance of engaging students actively in the learning process. Harmer (2007) explained that activities like role-play, group discussions, and storytelling help students improve their speaking and listening skills, making the classroom more interactive and interesting. These active learning approaches contrast with traditional methods that rely heavily on passive reception of information. Brown (2007, 2014) highlighted the importance of task-based learning, which involves students in real-world tasks such as writing emails, creating presentations, or planning trips. This method helps students practice language in meaningful contexts and learn better when they can connect lessons to everyday life. Richards and Rodgers (2014, 2021) focused on the communicative approach, emphasizing speaking and listening and encouraging students to use English in practical situations, suggesting that using visual aids, videos, and interactive games can improve student engagement.

Comparative analyses of traditional versus modern strategies reveal significant differences in effectiveness. Traditional teaching strategies such as grammar translation and direct instruction focus on grammar rules and vocabulary memorization. While these approaches help in learning structure, Larsen-Freeman (2000) found that traditional methods were less effective in improving speaking and listening skills. Modern strategies such as task-based learning and the communicative approach focus on practical language use and involve collaborative activities and technology integration, making lessons more dynamic (Ellis, 2003, 2009). Kumaravadivelu (2009) argued that the best approach combines traditional and modern strategies, with teachers choosing methods based on students' needs, language levels, and cultural backgrounds.

English Language Education in Myanmar

The historical development of English language education in Myanmar has shaped current practices and challenges. During the British colonial period (1824-1948), English became the medium of instruction in schools and universities, producing many English-speaking professionals (Than Tun, 1948). However, after independence in 1948, the government shifted focus to Burmese as the national language, reducing the prominence of English in education (Maung Maung Kyaw, 1995). In the 1960s, the socialist government

further reduced the role of English, teaching it only as a subject (Hla Hla Win, 1980). This policy continued until the late 1980s when Myanmar reopened to the international community, leading to the reintroduction of English as a compulsory subject from primary to high school (Ministry of Education, 2016).

Despite these efforts, English proficiency levels among Myanmar students remain low compared to other Southeast Asian countries (Aung Moe, 2002). Today, English language education follows a national curriculum designed by the Ministry of Education, with English taught as a second language starting in Grade 1 (MOE Myanmar, 2022). High school students learn English grammar, reading, writing, listening, and speaking through textbooks following the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. However, classroom practices often rely on traditional methods such as rote learning and grammar translation, with teachers spending more time explaining grammar rules than encouraging communication skills (Kyaw Soe Lin, 2001). Limited teacher training affects how CLT is applied, as most teachers are not fluent in English, making it difficult to create interactive and communicative lessons (Thida Lwin, 2020).

Teaching Strategies for Language Skill Development

Teaching strategies play a crucial role in developing the four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. For reading, strategies like guided reading, shared reading, and silent reading are commonly used. Brown (2007) explained that guided reading helps students understand texts better through step-by-step instruction. Smith (2019) found that students who practiced guided reading scored 20% higher in reading comprehension tests, while Chen (2020) showed that using short stories made reading more enjoyable for Thai high school students. For writing, strategies include writing workshops, peer review, and creative writing activities. Harmer (2007) explained that writing workshops allow students to learn by practicing and receiving feedback, while Rao's (2016) case study from India showed that students improved their essay writing skills by 30% after using peer review activities. For listening, teachers use audio materials, group discussions, and dictation exercises. Field (2008) stated that listening tasks should match students' levels to keep them motivated. Matsumoto (2001) found that students practicing listening to podcasts for 15 minutes daily improved their listening test scores by 25%. For speaking, strategies include role-playing, presentations, and group conversations. Thornbury (2005) argued that role-playing builds confidence by allowing students to practice real-world dialogues in a safe environment, while presentations improve fluency and public speaking skills.

Theoretical Framework

Understanding second language acquisition (SLA) is essential for teaching English. Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis emphasizes the importance of comprehensible input, where learners acquire language when exposed to materials slightly above their current level (Krashen, 1985). The cognitive approach focuses on mental processes such as memory and attention, suggesting that practice and repetition help learners internalize the language (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). The sociocultural approach, based on Vygotsky's

theories, stresses interaction and the role of social context in learning (Dornyei, 2001). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has become a popular pedagogical model, emphasizing interaction as a means to develop communication skills through activities such as role-plays and pair work (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) focuses on completing meaningful tasks using the target language, fostering both engagement and language accuracy (Ellis, 2003, 2009). The Kirkpatrick Model provides a framework for evaluating teaching strategies through four levels: reaction, learning, behavior, and results (Kirkpatrick, 2006).

Barriers to Effective English Teaching in Myanmar

Teacher training and resource limitations represent significant barriers to effective English teaching in Myanmar. Tin Maung Aye (2018) found that 60% of teachers in rural areas have not attended professional development programs, relying on outdated techniques such as rote memorization. Hlaing Win (2017) reported that 75% of schools in rural Myanmar lack access to English textbooks aligned with the new curriculum. Technological resources such as computers and projectors are limited in most schools, preventing teachers from using interactive teaching methods. Student engagement and motivation challenges further compound these issues. Myint Soe (2019) found that only 40% of high school students showed interest in learning English, partly due to the lack of relevance of English to their daily lives. Wai Lin (2020) revealed that students prefer activities like group discussions and role-playing, but these methods are rarely used because teachers lack training or resources.

Research Works Concerned

Several studies have examined English teaching strategies in various contexts. Anisa (2019) studied the teaching learning process at SMP AL-Islam Kartasura, concluding that the process included preparation, teaching materials, media, teacher and student roles, obstacles, and solutions. Friska Dita (2020) explored teaching strategies to promote student engagement in young learner English classes, identifying eight strategies including correction feedback, motivational feedback, interactive lecturing, and role play. Munna and Kalam (as cited in the thesis) found that providing positive feedback and introducing role-play had a profound positive impact on students' confidence and self-esteem, and that active learning environments promote inclusivity and improve academic performance.

Septiana and Rahayuningsih (2022) explored English teacher's teaching strategies to build students' confidence to practice speaking English, finding that partner work, modeled talk, and story reenactment had significant implications for student confidence. Qian (2012) studied the teaching methods of improving students' oral English, discussing factors such as lack of context, cultural factors, and language anxiety, and proposing countermeasures including strengthening listening and speaking teaching, imitation, repetition, and creating a supportive teaching environment. Hassan and Napoli (2020) investigated strategies used by English

teachers at SMK Muhammad Yaasiin Sei Lepan, examining the reasons for choosing those strategies and students' responses to them.

Conceptual Framework

This study is a research-based investigation. The researcher has developed a conceptual framework to guide the study clearly and systematically. This framework is based on the concept or theory of communicative language teaching and task-based learning, together with second language acquisition theories, particularly Krashen's Input Hypothesis and the sociocultural approach.

The framework helps to explain the main ideas, relationships, and directions of the research. It shows how the key concepts are connected and supports the development of research questions and objectives. The framework consists of three main components:

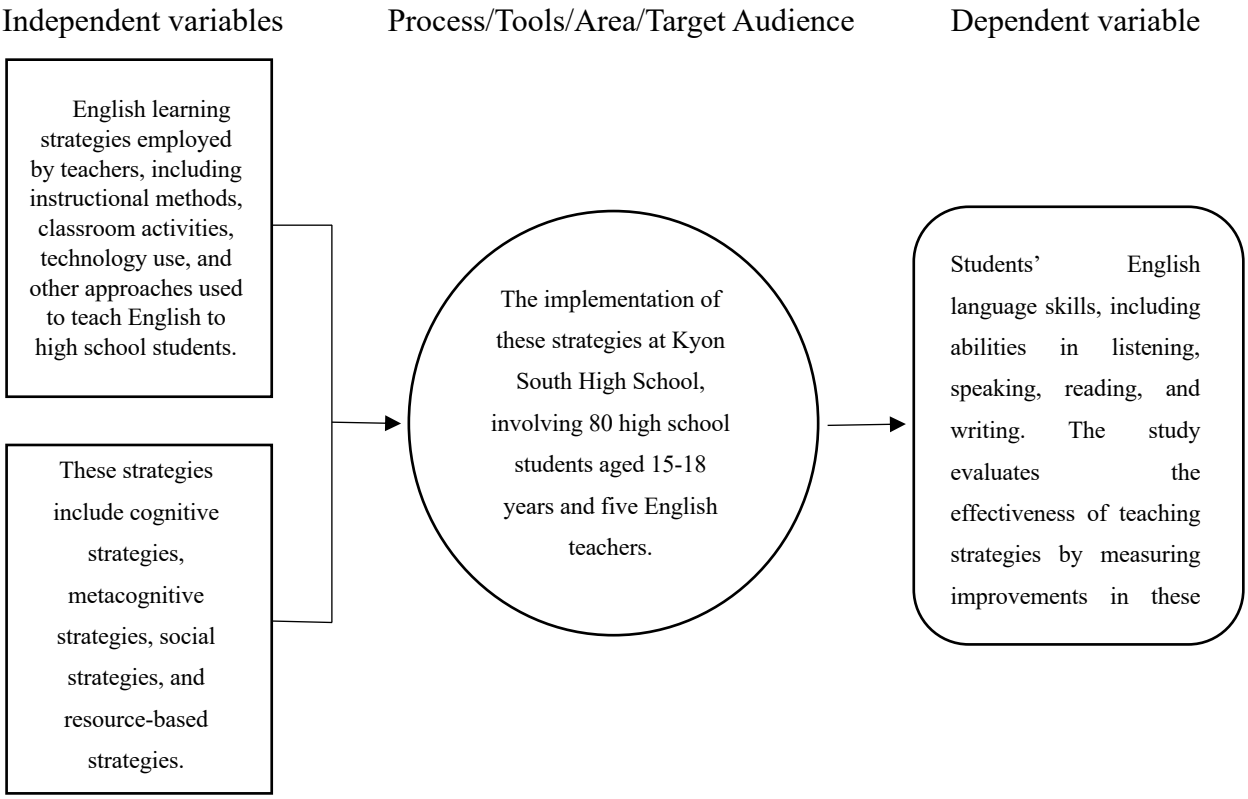


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This mixed-method exploratory study was conducted at Kyon South High School, Myanmar, with 80 students (aged 15-18) and 5 English teachers. Students were selected via stratified random sampling, while teachers participated in semi-structured interviews. Data collection (Nov 2025–Mar 2026) utilized two tools: a 30-item, five-point Likert-scale questionnaire (adapted from Oxford, 1990, and O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) covering five strategy domains, and an interview guide with five open-ended questions. The questionnaire demonstrated strong validity (IOC > 0.50) and reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.87$), and interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, SD)

with SPSS, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The integrated findings offer a comprehensive understanding of English learning strategies at the school.

Research Results

Objective 1: English Learning Strategies Used by High School Students

The results showed that students at Kyon South High School demonstrate very positive attitudes and employ diverse learning strategies. Table 1 presents the findings from the student survey.

Table 1: Summary of Student Learning Strategies

Strategy Category	Items	Mean	Level	Agreement Rate
General Learning Strategies & Awareness	5 items	4.28	Very High	86-96%
Cognitive Strategies	8 items	4.15	High	69-87%
Social & Interaction Strategies	5 items	4.29	Very High	81-90%
Resource & Environment Use	4 items	4.25	Very High	81-96%
Overall	**30 items**	**4.24**	**Very High**	**75-96%**

Regarding general learning strategies, 96% of students think carefully about their progress and how to improve (Mean=4.66, SD=0.67). Over 86% have clear goals for their English learning (Mean=4.20, SD=1.12), and 87% actively connect new words and grammar to what they already know (Mean=4.28, SD=1.05). Approximately 75% plan their English study time outside class (Mean=4.03, SD=1.12) and reflect on which learning strategies work best for them (Mean=4.23, SD=1.02).

For cognitive strategies, over 87% learn through media like movies and songs (Mean=4.38, SD=0.99), use new words in sentences (Mean=4.14, SD=1.02), and take notes (Mean=4.29, SD=1.15). Over 81% read English stories outside their textbook (Mean=4.06, SD=1.18), and over 87% use online resources or apps for learning (Mean=4.28, SD=1.05).

Regarding social strategies, almost all students feel confident asking questions in class (Mean=4.35, SD=1.09) and practice English with friends (Mean=4.48, SD=1.08). Over 80% try to speak even when afraid of making errors (Mean=4.02, SD=1.08). Almost all students ask teachers to correct their speaking or writing (Mean=4.28, SD=0.92).

Objective 2: Effectiveness of Existing Strategies

The results showed that classroom activities effectively improve students' English skills, with some variation across skill areas. Most students feel that activities help their speaking (75%, Mean=3.99, SD=1.20), reading (75%, Mean=3.75, SD=1.24), and writing skills (75%, Mean=3.84, SD=1.26). However, fewer students feel confident about listening activities (71%, Mean=3.54, SD=1.44). Overall, 75% of students feel their English has improved this term (Mean=4.01, SD=1.21) and feel more confident than before (75%, Mean=3.58, SD=1.43). Furthermore, 75% believe the current teaching methods meet their learning needs (Mean=3.88, SD=1.29), and 75% are satisfied with their progress at school (Mean=3.88, SD=1.21).

Table 2: Student Perceptions of Skill Improvement

English Skill	Agreement Rate	Mean	Standard Deviation
Speaking	75%	3.99	1.20
Listening	71%	3.54	1.44
Reading	75%	3.75	1.24
Writing	75%	3.84	1.26

The semi-structured interview results revealed that teachers use various effective methods. Teacher 1 reported: Speaking activities are the most effective. For example, when I ask them to do a short role-play about shopping, they use real language. They remember the words better because they are doing something fun. Teacher 2 emphasized: Grammar exercises are very effective for improving writing. When students understand the structure, they can write better sentences. Teacher 3 explained: Listening activities with videos are very effective. For example, I show a short news clip and ask simple questions. This improves their listening and they learn new vocabulary from the context. Teacher 4 noted: Reading comprehension is very effective for vocabulary. When students read a story, they see words in context. Teacher 5 highlighted: Project-based learning is very effective. For instance, when they create a poster and present it to the class, they practice writing, speaking, and listening at the same time.

Objective 3: Challenges Teachers Face

The results showed that teachers face significant challenges in implementing effective English learning strategies. Thematic analysis of interview data identified three major challenge themes:

Theme 1: Large Class Sizes and Individual Attention

All five teachers identified large class sizes as a primary challenge. Teacher 1 stated: I have 45 students in one class. It is very difficult to listen to everyone speak. Teacher 2 elaborated: The biggest challenge is the

curriculum. It is too big and we have to finish it quickly. There is no time for fun activities. Teachers adapted by using group work to maximize practice opportunities and focusing on the most important topics.

Theme 2: Limited Resources and Technology

Teacher 3 reported: Resources are a big challenge. The school has only one computer for the whole department. The internet is also slow. I adapt by downloading videos at home and using speakers in the classroom. Teacher 4 added: Student motivation is the main challenge. Many students think English is difficult and boring. I adapt by choosing interesting topics like sports or pop culture for reading.

Theme 3: Time Constraints and Heavy Curriculum

Teacher 2 noted: The biggest challenge is the curriculum. It is too big and we have to finish it quickly. Teacher 5 similarly explained: Curriculum constraints are a problem. The syllabus doesn't allow much time for projects. I adapt by integrating small project tasks into the normal lessons.

Despite these challenges, teachers showed creativity and flexibility in adapting to their students' needs. They used pair work, games, music, and rewards to motivate students and encourage participation. Teacher 4 explained: I give them rewards, like stickers or extra points, for reading books outside of class. I also create a small library in my classroom. Teacher 5 described: To encourage active participation, I play games like vocabulary bingo or a quiz competition. Students love competition.

Discussion

This research found that students at Kyon South High School demonstrate very positive attitudes and employ diverse English learning strategies, which is consistent with the findings of Anisa (2019) who found that teaching and learning processes involve preparation, materials, media, and clear teacher and student roles. The finding that 96% of students think carefully about their progress aligns with Friska Dita's (2020) research, which identified correction feedback, motivational feedback, and interactive lecturing as key strategies teachers use to promote student engagement. This may be because students who actively reflect on their learning take greater ownership of their education and are more motivated to improve (Munna & Kalam, 2020). This finding also corresponds with Septiana and Rahayuningsih's (2022) research, which found that teaching strategies like partner work and modeled talk have significant implications for students' confidence and persistence in practicing speaking English. As the research of Anisa (2019) as well as the research of Friska Dita (2020) suggests, active learning environments promote inclusivity and improve academic performance.

Regarding cognitive strategies, this research found that over 87% of students use media, online resources, and note-taking, which is consistent with Xiaoqing Qian's (2012) findings on the importance of strengthening listening and speaking through methods such as imitation, repetition, and creating a conducive teaching environment. This may be because students today are digital natives who naturally gravitate toward

technology-enhanced learning (Kim & Lee, 2020). The finding that over 81% read English stories outside their textbook aligns with Smith's (2019) research showing that guided reading improves comprehension scores. However, it differs from earlier Myanmar studies that found lower rates of independent reading, possibly due to increased availability of digital reading materials. This corresponds with Hassan and Napoli's (2020) research, which found that native speakers and experienced teachers make students more interested in English. As the research of Chen (2020) as well as the research of Matsumoto (2001) suggests, diverse materials and regular practice are essential for skill development.

For social strategies, this research found that almost all students feel confident asking questions and practicing with peers, which is consistent with Brown's (2007, 2014) emphasis on interaction and communication in language learning. The finding that over 80% try to speak despite fear of making errors corresponds with Thornbury's (2005) argument that role-playing builds confidence. This may be because supportive classroom environments created by teachers encourage risk-taking (Wong, 2020). This finding also aligns with Richards and Rodgers' (2014, 2021) communicative approach emphasizing speaking and listening in practical situations.

Regarding effectiveness, this research found that classroom activities improve speaking, reading, and writing for 75% of students, but listening shows lower improvement at 71%. This is consistent with Field's (2008) observation that listening tasks must match students' levels to maintain motivation. However, it differs from Matsumoto's (2001) findings of 25% improvement through podcast practice, possibly because Myanmar students lack access to such resources. This may be because listening is often neglected in traditional teaching (Kyaw & Aung, 2023). The overall finding that 75% of students perceive improvement and increased confidence corresponds with Munna and Kalam's (2020) research on the positive impact of formative feedback and role-play on student confidence.

Knowledge from Research

The body of knowledge resulting from this research can be synthesized as follows:

1. Student Learning Strategies Profile

This study identified a comprehensive profile of English learning strategies used by high school students in rural Myanmar:

Table 3: Student Learning Strategies Profile

Category	Key Strategies	Level of Use
General Learning Strategies & Awareness	Self-reflection, goal setting, connecting new to existing knowledge, time planning, strategic thinking	Very High to High

Category	Key Strategies	Level of Use
Cognitive Strategies	Media-based learning, note-taking, online resources, sentence usage, extensive reading, structural analysis, repetition, summarizing	Very High to High
Social & Interaction Strategies	Peer practice, cultural learning, questioning, seeking correction, risk-taking in speaking	Very High to High
Resource & Environment Use	Textbook utilization, dictionary use, classroom environment, outside practice opportunities	Very High to High

2. Effectiveness Framework

The research established that the effectiveness of English learning strategies can be measured across four dimensions:

Table 4: Effectiveness Framework

Dimension	Key Findings	Implications
Speaking Skills	75.1% students reported improvement	Current strategies effective for speaking, but need continued emphasis
Listening Skills	71.3% students reported improvement	Need for enhanced listening activities and resources
Reading Skills	75.1% students reported improvement	Extensive reading strategies effective; should be encouraged
Writing Skills	75.1% students reported improvement	Writing activities effective; continued support needed

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate English learning strategies used by high school students at Kyon South High School in Myanmar and to evaluate the effectiveness of existing strategies in improving students' English language skills. The research used a mixed-method approach with surveys and interviews to collect data from 80 students and 5 English teachers.

The central conclusion is that students at Kyon South High School are motivated and use a variety of effective learning strategies. Students demonstrate very positive attitudes toward English learning, with high percentages using metacognitive strategies (goal-setting, progress reflection), cognitive strategies (media-

based learning, note-taking, online resources), and social strategies (peer practice, questioning, risk-taking). These strategies are generally effective, with students reporting improvements in speaking, reading, and writing skills, and overall progress and increased confidence. However, listening skills show relatively lower improvement, indicating a need for more focused attention on this skill area.

The study also concludes that teachers use diverse and effective teaching methods including pair work, group discussions, role-plays, project-based learning, and technology integration. However, their efforts are significantly constrained by external factors including large class sizes (40-50 students), limited resources (technology, materials, internet access), and a heavy curriculum that leaves little time for interactive activities. Despite these challenges, teachers show creativity and flexibility in adapting to their students' needs.

The effectiveness of English learning strategies is therefore limited not by student motivation or teacher dedication, but by institutional and systemic factors. Addressing these challenges through better resources, training opportunities, and a more balanced curriculum would help both teachers and students have a more positive and successful learning experience. The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of literature advocating for equitable access to quality education and provide practical recommendations for improving English language teaching in rural Myanmar.

Suggestions

Based on the findings from Kyon South High School, which reveal both the strategic resourcefulness of students and the dedication of teachers amid systemic constraints, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen English language education in similar contexts.

For Teachers

Sustain and promote effective learner strategies, including goal-setting, self-monitoring, and the use of digital resources for autonomous study.

Enrich listening instruction by integrating authentic materials such as songs, videos, and podcasts to expose students to varied accents and real-life language use.

Retain and reinforce collaborative speaking activities, particularly pair work and group discussions, to build oral fluency and interpersonal confidence.

Provide targeted scaffolding for less confident or lower-proficiency students through peer-tutoring schemes, differentiated worksheets, or supplementary practice materials.

For School Administrators

Upgrade technological infrastructure by ensuring reliable internet connectivity, providing access to computers or tablets, and equipping classrooms with audio-visual tools for interactive lessons.

Expand professional development programs, including workshops, peer observations, and mentoring, to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills and technological competence.

Revisit timetable arrangements to allow for extended or more frequent English sessions, thereby increasing students' exposure and practice time.

Reform assessment practices to incorporate balanced evaluations of speaking and listening, alongside traditional reading and writing tests, to better reflect communicative competence.

For Curriculum Developers

Design a more adaptable curriculum that integrates grammar instruction with practical communication skills, ensuring neither aspect is overemphasized.

Embed diverse listening and speaking tasks, along with multimedia and technology-based resources, to make learning more engaging and contextually relevant.

Ensure curricular materials are flexible enough to accommodate varying resource levels across schools, while maintaining core communicative objectives.

For Future Research

Conduct studies with larger and more diverse samples, encompassing multiple schools and regions, to enhance the generalizability of findings.

Undertake longitudinal research to track student progress over extended periods, providing insights into the long-term impact of specific interventions.

Investigate the relative effectiveness of targeted strategies such as role-play, project-based learning, and technology-enhanced instruction to determine which approaches work best in different educational settings.

Explore practical, scalable solutions to support teachers in managing persistent challenges, including oversized classes, limited materials, and variable proficiency levels among educators.

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Development of English Speaking Teaching Model for Higher Education Students in Northern Thailand

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A B S T R A C T

This article aimed to study: (1) the English speaking teaching problems of higher education students in Northern Thailand, (2) the components of an English speaking teaching process based on Buddhist integration, and (3) to develop an English speaking teaching model for higher education students in Northern Thailand. The research employed a qualitative research design. The instrument for collecting data was semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with 36 participants, including students, lecturers, administrators, Buddhist scholars, and ELT experts from Phrae Vocational College in Northern Thailand. Data were analyzed by thematic analysis. The research results were found as follows:

Students face significant problems in learning English speaking, with speaking anxiety (90%) being the most prominent issue. Other major problems included limited speaking practice (85%), vocabulary limitations (78%), fear of peer judgment (75%), and teacher-centered instruction (72%). Cultural values, particularly keng jai (being considerate), created barriers to participation.

The study identified five essential components for the Buddhist-integrative teaching model: Mindfulness-Based Awareness (Sati), Right Speech (Samma Vaca), Collaborative Sangha Culture (Kalyanamittata), Right Effort (Samma Vayama), and Skillful Teaching Methods (Upaya Kausalya).

The Buddhist-Integrative English Speaking Teaching Model (BI-EST Model) was developed, providing a practical framework for teachers to implement Buddhist principles in their speaking classrooms.

Introduction

English has become the global language for business, education, and international communication. Today, over 1.5 billion people use English worldwide, and it is the main language for academic research and global meetings (Crystal, 2003). This situation creates a strong need for English speaking skills in many countries, including Thailand. In Thailand, English proficiency is important for the country's economic plans and for joining the ASEAN Economic Community, where English is the working language (Wongsothorn et al., 2018). The Thai government has tried to improve English teaching in schools and universities for many

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years. However, the results often do not meet expectations, especially for speaking skills. This gap between policy goals and actual student ability is a serious problem for Thailand's future development.

The problem is especially clear in higher education. University students need good English skills for their studies, future careers, and accessing international information (Darasawang, 2021). Many Thai universities require English courses, and some programs teach in English. But studies show that Thai students, even at university level, often struggle with basic English conversation. They can understand grammar rules but cannot use English to communicate effectively in real situations (Subphadoongchone, 2020). This problem affects students' confidence and their chances for good jobs after graduation. Employers in Thailand often say that new graduates lack the English communication skills needed in today's workplace (Thai Chamber of Commerce, 2021). This situation creates a cycle where students learn English for exams but not for real life, and this limits their opportunities.

In Northern Thailand, the situation has some special characteristics. This region has its own cultural traditions and languages. Many students grow up speaking Northern Thai (Kham Mueang) or other local languages at home (Indrambarya, 2019). They learn Central Thai in school, and then they must learn English as a third language. This multilingual background can be both an advantage and a challenge. Some research suggests that students who already speak multiple languages can learn new languages more easily. However, other studies indicate that students in regions far from Bangkok often have fewer opportunities to practice English with native speakers or in real-life situations (Mongkolhuthi & Todd, 2019). Also, English teaching materials and methods sometimes do not consider local culture and context, making English feel like a foreign subject without local relevance.

The traditional approach to teaching English in Thailand has focused on grammar translation and memorization. Teachers often explain grammar rules in Thai, and students practice by translating sentences (Reinders & Darasawang, 2018). This method helps students pass written exams but does not develop speaking ability. In recent years, there has been a move toward Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes real communication. However, implementing CLT successfully has been difficult (Thongpaiw & Subphadoongchone, 2020). Class sizes are often large, with 40-50 students, making individual speaking practice challenging. Teachers may lack training in communicative methods, and both teachers and students may feel uncomfortable with the less structured nature of CLT activities. Additionally, the cultural aspect of Thai classrooms, where students show respect by being quiet and not challenging teachers, can conflict with the interactive nature of communicative approaches (Nimmannit, 2020).

Buddhism, as a central part of Thai culture and identity, offers particularly rich possibilities for integration with education. Over 90% of Thais identify as Buddhist, and Buddhist values influence many aspects of Thai society, including education (National Office of Buddhism, 2020). Traditional Thai education was closely connected with temples, and monks were the main teachers. Even in modern secular education,

Buddhist principles continue to influence educational values and practices. Buddhist concepts like mindfulness (sati), compassion (karuna), and right speech (samma vaca) have direct relevance to language learning. Mindfulness can help reduce the anxiety many students feel when speaking English. Compassion can create a more supportive classroom environment where students feel safe to make mistakes. Right speech emphasizes thoughtful, truthful, and kind communication - principles that apply equally well to communication in any language (Charubusp, 2019).

Some preliminary studies have explored Buddhist principles in education, with encouraging results. Research on mindfulness in education shows it can improve attention, emotional regulation, and learning outcomes (Greenberg & Harris, 2012). In language learning specifically, mindfulness practices have been found to reduce foreign language anxiety and increase willingness to communicate (Teo & Khazaei, 2021). However, most of this research comes from Western contexts or focuses on mindfulness as a standalone practice rather than integrating it with other Buddhist principles into a complete teaching approach. In Thailand, while Buddhist principles are embedded in the culture, their explicit integration into English language teaching, particularly speaking instruction, remains underdeveloped. This represents a significant gap between Thailand's cultural resources and its English teaching methodologies.

This research paper presents the development of an English speaking teaching model for higher education students in Northern Thailand, describing its structure and the main points discussed. The paper aims to provide new knowledge and solutions that can benefit the academic community and educational practice in Thailand.

Research Objectives

In relation to the problem statement above, the main objectives of the research are to find out:

To investigate the English speaking teaching problems of higher education students in Northern Thailand.

To study the components of an English speaking teaching process based on Buddhist integration for higher education students in Northern Thailand.

To develop the English speaking teaching model for higher education students in Northern Thailand.

Literature Review and Related Studies

Theoretical Foundations of English Speaking Teaching

The dominant paradigm in modern language education for developing communicative competence is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Emerging in the 1970s as a reaction to grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods, CLT shifted the core goal of language learning from grammatical accuracy to communicative ability (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Its central principle is that language is a tool for

communication, and therefore, learning must involve the negotiation of meaning. For speaking skills specifically, CLT emphasizes fluency and comprehensibility over perfect accuracy, especially in the initial stages of practice. Activities are designed to create an information gap, where one student has information another needs, forcing genuine communication (Littlewood, 1981).

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is often viewed as a logical development of CLT principles, providing a clearer, more structured framework for lesson design focused on meaning. In TBLT, the central unit of planning and instruction is the task, an activity where learners use language to achieve a real-world outcome, such as planning a trip, solving a problem, or creating a presentation (Ellis, 2003). A typical TBLT lesson follows a three-phase cycle: a pre-task phase to introduce the topic and language, a main task cycle where learners complete the task in pairs or groups, and a final language focus phase where the teacher highlights useful linguistic forms that arose during the task (Willis, 1996).

While pedagogical methods provide the structure for teaching, learning success is deeply influenced by affective factors, the emotions and attitudes of the learner. Among these, motivation, self-confidence, and particularly language anxiety are recognized as powerful determinants of proficiency, especially for speaking. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis posits that even with sufficient comprehensible input, a learner's affective filter, composed of anxiety, low motivation, or poor self-image, can block that input from being fully processed and acquired (Krashen, 1982). Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA), a specific type of anxiety identified by Horwitz et al. (1986), is highly relevant to speaking. It is characterized by communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety. In cultures that place a high value on social harmony and "face," such as Thailand, the fear of making mistakes and being embarrassed in front of peers can be particularly acute, creating a significant barrier to oral participation (Puengpipattrakul, 2018).

Integrative Education and Buddhist Philosophy

Integrative education is an approach that seeks to connect different areas of knowledge, experience, and aspects of the self. It moves beyond the simple transmission of information to foster the holistic development of the learner (Gaff & Ratcliff, 1997). This philosophy argues that effective learning engages not only the cognitive mind but also emotions, social relationships, and ethical understanding. The goal is to educate the whole person, helping students make connections between what they learn in the classroom and their lives outside it (Palmer, 1998).

Buddhist philosophy, while a spiritual tradition, contains secular principles that are highly applicable to modern education. A key concept is Sati, often translated as Mindfulness. In an educational setting, mindfulness means paying attention to the present moment, to one's thoughts, feelings, and environment, without immediate judgment (Thanissaro, 2019). For a language learner, this can mean noticing the anxiety that arises before speaking without being overwhelmed by it, or fully listening to a conversation partner

without distraction. Practicing mindfulness can help calm the mind, improve concentration, and reduce the fear of mistakes that often hinders speaking practice.

Another important principle is Kalyānamittatā, or Good Friendship. In Buddhism, spiritual growth is supported by association with virtuous friends who offer encouragement, good example, and honest feedback (Nānamoli & Bodhi, 1995). Translated to the classroom, this emphasizes the power of a positive learning community. When peers act as "good friends" (kalyānamitta), they create a safe, supportive environment where students feel comfortable taking risks and practicing language without fear of ridicule. Viriya, or Persistent Effort, is the wholesome energy applied to overcome challenges. It recognizes that learning a language requires consistent, diligent practice. This principle helps frame difficulties not as failures, but as natural parts of the learning process requiring sustained effort.

Related Studies

Boonmoh (2021) conducted an action research study at a university in Bangkok to investigate how technology-enhanced tasks could foster English speaking skills. Using a task-based language teaching framework, the researcher designed mobile-assisted tasks for intermediate-level students. The findings indicated a significant improvement in students' speaking fluency and a positive shift in their attitudes towards speaking activities. This study demonstrates the practical efficacy of TBLT in a Thai higher education setting.

Saengsawang (2020) offers the most direct empirical precedent for a core element of this study: using mindfulness to address speaking anxiety. This quasi-experimental research at a Thai university measured the effect of an 8-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program on the language anxiety and Willingness to Communicate of EFL learners. Results showed a statistically significant reduction in reported anxiety and a measurable increase in WTC among the experimental group. This dissertation is crucial as it provides localized evidence that mindfulness training can directly impact the affective barriers to speaking.

Jumpakate (2022) designed and tested a collaborative learning model to enhance the speaking ability and self-confidence of Thai undergraduate students. The model emphasized structured peer feedback, interdependent group goals, and shared accountability in speaking tasks. The mixed-methods study found significant improvements in both objective speaking scores and students' self-reported confidence levels. This research validates collaborative learning as a powerful framework for building the social support necessary for speaking development.

Chandransu (2019) explored the integration of local Lanna wisdom (of Northern Thailand) into English language teaching for community development purposes at Chiang Mai University. Using a participatory action research design, the study involved students in projects that used English to document local folklore, sustainable agricultural practices, and handicrafts. The findings highlighted that this approach greatly increased student motivation, cultural pride, and the perceived relevance of English.

Teo and Khazaei (2021) conducted a large-scale statistical study across multiple Asian EFL contexts to model the relationship between mindfulness, foreign language anxiety, and willingness to communicate. Using structural equation modeling, their research confirmed a clear negative relationship between mindfulness and anxiety, and a positive relationship between mindfulness and WTC. This article provides robust empirical support from a language learning context for the theoretical link proposed in this study.

Knowledge Gap

The synthesis of the literature reveals a distinct and addressable gap in current research and practice. The problem of low English speaking proficiency among Thai university students, particularly in regional areas like the North, is extensively documented. Similarly, the theoretical principles of CLT/TBLT are well-established, and a growing body of international research supports the benefits of mindfulness in educational settings. However, these strands of inquiry have largely remained separate. The gap exists at the point of integration and contextualized application. There is a lack of developed, operationalized, and empirically tested pedagogical models that systematically integrate secularized Buddhist principles into a communicative EST framework specifically for the Northern Thai higher education context. This research aims to fill this gap.

Conceptual Framework

This study is a research-based investigation. The researcher has developed a conceptual framework to guide the study clearly and systematically. This framework is based on the concept of Buddhist integration in education, together with Communicative Language Teaching theory. The framework helps to explain the main ideas, relationships, and directions of the research. It shows how the key concepts are connected and supports the development of research questions and objectives.

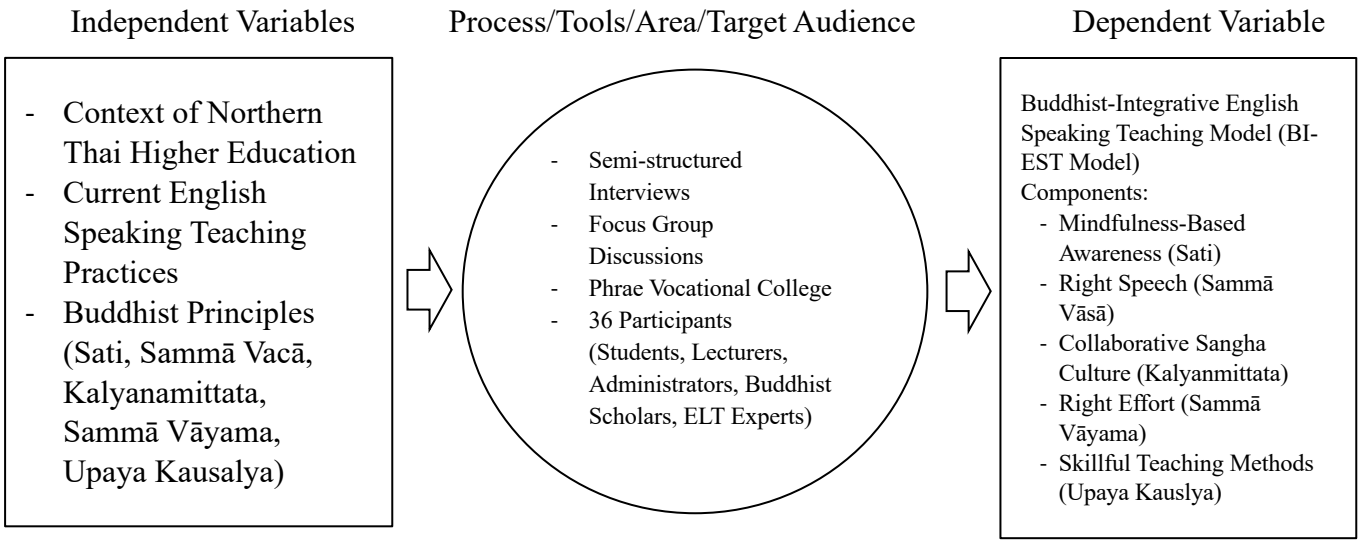


Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This research is qualitative research. The research area is Phrae Vocational College, located at 4 Yantrakitkosol Road, Nai Wang Subdistrict, Mueang Phrae District, Phrae Province 54000, Northern Thailand. The population for this study included students, lecturers, administrators, Buddhist scholars, and ELT experts associated with higher education in Northern Thailand. The sample group consisted of 36 participants selected using purposive sampling to find individuals with the most relevant knowledge and experience. The sample included: 20 higher education students, 5 English language lecturers, 3 educational administrators, 5 Buddhist scholars, and 3 English language teaching experts.

The research tools were two types: 1) Semi-structured interview guides containing open-ended questions for lecturers, administrators, and experts. These guides were designed to explore teaching problems, current practices, and perspectives on Buddhist integration. The questions were developed based on the research objectives and reviewed by three experts for content validity using the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) method. All IOC scores exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.50, with an average score of 0.90. 2) Focus group discussion guides with topics and prompting questions for student discussions. These guides explored students' experiences, anxieties, and suggestions for improving speaking instruction.

Data was collected through two main phases. Phase I: Exploratory Data Collection involved one-on-one interviews with lecturers, administrators, and experts, followed by focus group discussions with students. All conversations were audio-recorded and later transcribed word-for-word into text for analysis. Phase II: Model Development involved analyzing the findings from Phase I and designing the components of the new English speaking teaching process based on Buddhist integration. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved familiarization, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming themes. The qualitative data were collected between March 2026 and June 2026.

Research Results

Objective 1: The English Speaking Teaching Problems of Higher Education Students in Northern Thailand

The findings from semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions revealed several key problem areas categorized into five main themes:

Theme 1: Student-Centered Affective Barriers

Students reported significant anxiety when speaking English in class. One student shared: "When I have to speak English in class, my heart beats fast. I am afraid I will say something wrong and my friends will laugh at me" (Student S03, Female, Age 19). Another student explained: "I know the words in my head, but when I try to speak, my mind goes blank. I cannot find the words. It is very frustrating" (Student S08, Male, Age 20). Lecturers confirmed these observations: "I can see many students understand the grammar

and vocabulary, but they freeze when asked to speak. The anxiety is very real and it prevents them from showing what they really know" (Lecturer L01, Female, 5 years experience).

Theme 2: Pedagogical and Methodological Problems

Students reported that classrooms were dominated by lectures with limited speaking opportunities. "Our teacher speaks most of the time. We just listen and take notes. When we do speak, it is only for a short time. I need more practice, but the class is too big" (Student S05, Male, Age 20). Lecturers acknowledged these constraints: "There is a lot of pressure to prepare students for tests that focus on grammar and reading. Speaking is not emphasized in the examinations, so it often becomes a secondary priority in teaching" (Lecturer L02, Female, 10 years experience).

Theme 3: Linguistic and Pronunciation Challenges

Students struggled with vocabulary limitations and pronunciation difficulties. "Sometimes I know what I want to say, but I cannot find the right words. The vocabulary I have is not enough to express my thoughts clearly" (Student S02, Female, Age 18). An ELT expert explained: "The phonological system of Thai and English differ significantly. Thai is a tonal language, while English uses stress patterns. This fundamental difference creates persistent pronunciation problems for Thai learners" (ELT Expert E01, PhD in Applied Linguistics).

Theme 4: Cultural and Contextual Challenges

Cultural values impacted student participation. "In Thai culture, we are taught to be humble and not show off. I feel shy to speak English because I do not want to sound arrogant or make mistakes" (Student S09, Female, Age 20). A lecturer observed: "The concept of 'keng jai' (being considerate) is very strong in Northern Thailand. Students do not want to speak up because they do not want to make their friends feel inferior or put them in an awkward position" (Lecturer L05, Male, 8 years experience).

Theme 5: Systemic and Institutional Challenges

Administrators identified systemic constraints: "The budget for English language resources is limited. We try our best, but we cannot provide the technology and materials that would support more speaking activities" (Administrator AD01, Male). Lecturers also noted: "The assessment system does not value speaking skills. Students know that the final exam is written, so they focus their effort on writing and grammar" (Lecturer L04, Male, 6 years experience).

Table 1: Summary of Student Problems by Frequency

Problem	Frequency	Key Findings
Speaking Anxiety	90%	Fear of mistakes, embarrassment, nervousness
Limited Practice	85%	Insufficient time for speaking activities

Vocabulary Limitations	78%	Inability to express complex ideas
Fear of Peer Judgment	75%	Worry about being laughed at or criticized
Teacher-Centered Instruction	72%	Limited student talking time
Cultural Barriers	70%	Keng jai, saving face, humility

Objective 2: Components of the English Speaking Teaching Process Based on Buddhist Integration

Based on the thematic analysis of qualitative data, the researcher identified five key components for the Buddhist-integrative English speaking teaching model:

Component 1: Mindfulness-Based Awareness (Sati)

This component helps students manage speaking anxiety by teaching them to be present and aware of their thoughts and feelings without judgment. A Buddhist scholar explained: “Sati (mindfulness) is the foundation of all learning. When students are mindful of their present experience, they are not caught up in worry about the past or fear of the future. This is essential for reducing speaking anxiety” (Buddhist Scholar BS01, PhD). Students confirmed the effectiveness: “When the teacher asked us to take a few deep breaths before speaking, I felt calmer. My heart was not beating so fast. I could focus better on what I wanted to say” (Student S04, Female, Age 19).

Component 2: Right Speech (Sammā Vācā)

This component provides an ethical framework for communication in the classroom. “Right Speech has four qualities: speaking what is true, what is beneficial, at the right time, and in a gentle manner. These principles can transform how we teach and learn speaking skills” (Buddhist Scholar BS04, PhD). A student shared: "When my classmates gave feedback kindly, I was not afraid to try again. They encouraged me and I felt supported" (Student S16, Male, Age 20).

Component 3: Collaborative Sangha Culture (Kalyanamittata)

This component builds a supportive learning community. “I like working in small groups. When I make a mistake, my friends help me. We learn together and it is not so scary” (Student S10, Female, Age 20). An ELT expert noted: “Kalyāṇamittatā is one of the most powerful principles in Buddhism for learning. The Buddha emphasized that good friends are the whole of the spiritual life. This is equally true in the language classroom” (ELT Expert E02, PhD).

Component 4: Right Effort (Samma Vayama)

This component encourages consistent, balanced practice. “Right Effort means finding the middle way between being too lazy and trying too hard. When students practice regularly but without forcing, they make steady progress. It is about balanced effort” (Lecturer L02, Female, 10 years experience).

Component 5: Skillful Teaching Methods (Upaya Kausalya)

This component guides teachers to adapt their methods to meet student needs. "Upaya Kausalya means knowing the right method for the right person at the right time. Teachers need to be flexible and creative in how they apply the model" (Buddhist Scholar BS05, PhD).

Table 2: The Five Components of the BI-EST Model

Component	Buddhist Principle	Teaching Application	Student Problem Addressed
1. Mindfulness-Based Awareness	Sati	Breathing exercises before speaking; body awareness; noticing anxiety without judgment	Speaking anxiety, fear, nervousness
2. Right Speech	Sammā Vācā	Kind peer feedback; encouraging language; respectful communication	Fear of judgment; negative classroom atmosphere
3. Collaborative Sangha Culture	Kalyanamittata	Pair/group work; peer mentoring; supportive community	Keng jai; shyness; lack of confidence
4. Right Effort	Sammā Vāyama	Regular practice; goal setting; balanced study habits	Limited practice; low motivation
5. Skillful Teaching Methods	Upaya Kausalya	Culturally relevant topics; flexible approaches; scaffolding	Irrelevant content; teacher-centered methods

Objective 3: Development of the English Speaking Teaching Model

Based on the findings from Objectives 1 and 2, the researcher developed the "Buddhist-Integrative English Speaking Teaching Model" (BI-EST Model). This model combines the five key components with teaching strategies that address the identified problems.

Fig 2: The Buddhist-Integrative English Speaking Teaching Model (BI-EST Model)

The model provides a structured approach for teachers to implement Buddhist principles in their speaking classrooms. It includes specific techniques for:

Reducing anxiety (mindful breathing)
Fostering positive communication (Right Speech)
Building community (Sangha culture)
Encouraging practice (Right Effort)
Adapting instruction (Skillful Means)

Table 3: Sample 90-Minute BI-EST Model Lesson Plan

Time	Activity	Component	Description
0-5 mins	Mindful Breathing	Sati	Students close their eyes and focus on their breath for 3 minutes
5-10 mins	Mindful Body Scan	Sati	Students notice physical tension and relax their muscles
10-15 mins	Introduction to Topic	Upaya Kausalya	Teacher introduces a topic from Northern Thai culture
15-30 mins	Pair Work Discussion	Kalyanamittata	Students discuss the topic in pairs; practice speaking
30-45 mins	Group Activity	Kalyanamittata	Small groups share ideas and plan a short presentation
45-55 mins	Right Speech Practice	Sammā Vācā	Groups practice their presentations with kind feedback
55-70 mins	Presentations	Kalyanamittata	Groups present; classmates give encouraging feedback
70-80 mins	Reflection	Sammā Vāyama	Students reflect on their speaking; set goals for next time
80-90 mins	Closure and Loving-Kindness	Sati, Sammā Vācā	Brief loving-kindness meditation to close the class

Knowledge from Research

The researcher identified six key areas of knowledge from this study:

1. Understanding of Student Problems: The research provides a comprehensive understanding of the problems students face in learning English speaking in Northern Thailand. The findings show that problems are interconnected and include affective problems (speaking anxiety, fear of mistakes, low confidence), cultural problems (keng jai, saving face, reluctance to speak up), pedagogical problems (teacher-centered instruction, limited practice, grammar focus), linguistic problems (vocabulary limits, pronunciation difficulties, Thai interference), and systemic problems (large classes, limited resources, writing-focused assessment).

2. Application of Buddhist Principles in Language Teaching: The research demonstrates how Buddhist principles can be practically applied in English language teaching.

Fig 3: Buddhist Principles and Their Application in Language Teaching

Buddhist Principle	Application in Speaking Class
Sati (Mindfulness)	Breathing exercises to reduce anxiety
Samma Vaca (Right Speech)	Kind, encouraging peer feedback
Kalyanamittata (Good Friendship)	Collaborative group work
Samma Vayama (Right Effort)	Regular practice habits
Upaya Kausalya (Skillful Means)	Flexible, culturally relevant teaching

3. Importance of Cultural Responsiveness: The research confirms that effective English speaking instruction must be culturally responsive. The Buddhist-integrative model respects and uses Northern Thai cultural values rather than working against them.

4. Integration of Pedagogical and Psychological Approaches: The research shows that successful speaking instruction must address both pedagogical (teaching methods) and psychological (affective) dimensions. The BI-EST model integrates mindfulness practices with communicative teaching to address both areas.

5. Practical Model Development: The research provides a practical, step-by-step model that teachers can use in their classrooms. The model includes specific activities, lesson plans, and implementation guidelines.

6. Contribution to the Field: The BI-EST model represents a new contribution to the field of English language teaching. It synthesizes previous research on mindfulness, collaborative learning, and cultural integration into one coherent framework.

Transferring and Utilizing: This research can be transferred to other educational institutions in Northern Thailand and other Buddhist-majority countries facing similar educational challenges. The model can be implemented through teacher training programs, curriculum development workshops, and educational policy recommendations. The findings can also be used to develop culturally responsive teaching materials and assessment tools.

Discussion

This research found that students face significant speaking anxiety and cultural barriers in learning English, which is consistent with the findings of Baker and Jarunthawatchai (2017), who identified teacher-centered pedagogy, exam pressure, and student anxiety as primary factors in poor EFL speaking performance in Thailand. The high level of speaking anxiety reported by participants (90%) is consistent with research by Saengsawang (2020), who found that speaking anxiety is a significant barrier for Thai EFL learners. The current study extends this finding by examining the specific cultural factors that contribute to this anxiety, particularly the concepts of keng jai (being considerate) and saving face.

As for the five components identified in the Buddhist-integrative model, it was found that the integration of mindfulness (Sati) into language teaching is supported by research by Teo and Khazaei (2021), who found a negative relationship between mindfulness and language anxiety and a positive relationship between mindfulness and willingness to communicate. The Right Speech component (Samma Vaca) connects to previous research by Jumpakate (2022), who found that collaborative learning and supportive peer relationships were important for speaking development. The Collaborative Sangha Culture component (Kalyanamittata) aligns with the principle of good friendship in Buddhism, as explored by Phongsirikul (2018). The Right Effort component (Samma Vayama) addresses the importance of consistent practice, as

found by Boonmoh (2021). The Skillful Teaching Methods component (Upaya Kausalya) aligns with research on culturally responsive teaching by Chandransu (2019).

For the development of the BI-EST model, this research represents a novel contribution to the field. While previous research has examined either mindfulness interventions, collaborative learning, or cultural integration separately, the current study synthesizes these elements into a single coherent model. The model addresses the gap identified in the literature review by providing a comprehensive framework that addresses both the pedagogical and psychological dimensions of speaking instruction, specifically designed for the Northern Thai higher education context.

Conclusion

This research has provided a comprehensive investigation into the development of an English speaking teaching model for higher education students in Northern Thailand. The study identified significant problems, including speaking anxiety, limited practice opportunities, pedagogical limitations, cultural barriers, and systemic constraints. These problems are interconnected, with anxiety and cultural factors creating a cycle that reinforces limited speaking ability. The study proposed a Buddhist-integrative model that addresses these problems through five components: Mindfulness-Based Awareness (Sati), Right Speech (Samma Vaca), Collaborative Sangha Culture (Kalyanamittata), Right Effort (Samma Vayama), and Skillful Teaching Methods (Upaya Kausalya). This model offers a culturally responsive approach that transforms Buddhist values from barriers into resources for learning.

The model recognizes that effective English speaking instruction must address multiple dimensions: linguistic, pedagogical, psychological, cultural, and systemic. By integrating mindfulness practices, ethical communication principles, collaborative learning structures, and culturally relevant methods, the model provides a comprehensive framework for teaching speaking. The integration of Buddhist principles is particularly significant in the Northern Thai context. Rather than viewing cultural values as obstacles, the model incorporates them as resources for learning. This approach is consistent with the principle of Upaya Kausalya (skillful means), which emphasizes adapting methods to the needs and context of learners.

While further research is needed to test the model's effectiveness, the findings of this study provide a strong foundation for developing more effective speaking instruction in Northern Thai higher education. The model offers practical guidance for teachers, curriculum developers, and administrators seeking to address the persistent challenges in English speaking education. The Buddhist-integrative model represents a novel contribution to the field, synthesizing previous research and providing a culturally responsive framework for language teaching.

Suggestions

Future Studies: Future research should test the BI-EST model’s effectiveness using experimental or quasi-experimental designs with larger samples from multiple institutions. Research should also examine the

long-term impact of the model on students' speaking proficiency and confidence. Comparative studies across different regions of Thailand would help establish the model's generalizability.

Future Researcher: Future researchers should consider applying the BI-EST model in different educational contexts, such as secondary schools or adult education programs. Research should also explore how technology can enhance the implementation of the model, particularly through online learning platforms and mobile applications.

Analytical Teacher: Teachers should receive training in Buddhist psychology and mindfulness techniques to effectively implement the model. Teacher development programs should include workshops on integrating Sati, Samma Vaca, and Kalyanamittata into language teaching. Action research training should be provided to enable teachers to continuously adapt and improve the model based on their classroom experiences.

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