


Learning Strategies of ELT Students for IELTS Test Preparation to Meet English Learning Outcomes

Luu Quy Khuong^{1*}, Luu Ngoc Bao Trang¹

¹ University of Foreign Language Studies – the University of Da Nang, Vietnam

*Corresponding author's email: lqkhuong@ufl.udn.vn

*  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8565-8378>

 <https://doi.org/10.54855/ijte.222321>

Received: 07/03/2022

Revision: 12/07/2022

Accepted: 13/07/2022

Online: 20/07/2022

ABSTRACT

Keywords:
preparation; English learning outcome; IELTS test; learning strategies; IELTS mocks

The present research aimed to examine the learning strategies for the IELTS test preparation to meet the English learning outcomes (ELOs) used by students majoring in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Vietnamese universities, especially at the University of Foreign Language Studies – the University of Da Nang (UFLS-UD) and provided solutions to improve their IELTS test preparation efficiency. Data were collected from the questionnaires completed by 120 English language teaching (ELT) students, the in-depth interviews with 10 student informants, 5 experts in English teaching, and 10 students who have taken the IELTS test to meet the ELOs. The findings showed that most student informants chose the IELTS test to meet the ELOs requirements and did some preparation for the test. Regarding the learning strategies, practicing English pronunciation and communication skills were used for speaking, listening to the audio, watching English videos for listening, reading the IELTS writing samples, and learning grammar for writing. To overcome problems faced by informants, some suggested solutions were proposed, such as employing self-study strategies, practicing the IELTS sample test, attending IELTS courses, sitting for the IELTS mocks, and finding support from lecturers.

Introduction

In the present trend of educational quality assurance, the English learning outcome (ELOs) plays a crucial role in assessing the graduate qualification in Vietnamese universities. Nowadays, Vietnamese university students have various choices to meet the ELOs required, among which the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test is one of the most widely-chosen ones. However, success in this test is a challenge for students, even for those majoring in English Language Teaching (ELT), as they have inappropriate learning strategies in the test preparation. Although there have been many studies investigating the

students' IELTS test preparation and learning process, the research on IELTS learning strategies and difficulties in choosing appropriate learning strategies for ELT students, especially Vietnamese ELT students, remains limited. This has given us an impetus to carry out research in this area. This research is aimed at examining (1) the reality of choosing the IELTS test to meet the ELOs of ELT students in UFLS-UD, one of the three state universities specializing in English Teacher Education in Vietnam, (2) what language strategies ELT students used and the difficulties they faced during the IELTS test preparation. Also, some solutions to enhance the productivity of the IELTS test preparation to satisfy the ELOs required by their ELT training programme were proposed. The study can be applied to develop the language teaching, and learning process, as well as help teachers and students, find solutions to cope with difficulties in the IELTS test preparation. In addition, it adds to the existing theories of IELTS test preparation and learning strategies with evidence taken from Vietnamese ELT learners.

Literature Review and Theoretical Background

Literature Review

There have been many studies on language learning strategies (LLSs) and their application of them to developing language testing skills so far.

Oxford (1990) has provided the definition of an LLS and divided LLSs into two types: direct and indirect. Besides, the author has provided foreign language teachers with practical recommendations for developing their students' learning strategies.

Griffiths and Jordan (2004) have examined the strategies used by international students in the process of developing the language skills needed to be successful in IELTS. The study findings supported the hypothesis that more successful students employed LLSs more frequently than less successful students did. In addition, the researchers investigated the strategies used for four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and suggested that those who scored 6.0 or more reported using strategies related to all four skills more frequently

Strategies used by language learners to achieve high scores in TOEFL and IELTS have been discussed by Munzaki (2018). The results showed that IELTS learners mostly used compensation strategy and social strategy, and the problem found was about learners' inconsistency and instability in using the strategies.

Even though a considerable body of literature exists on English learning strategies and the IELTS learning process, the IELTS learning strategies employed by Vietnamese ELT students and their difficulties in the test preparation have been assessed only to a limited extent. In addition, the reality of ELT students choosing the IELTS test to meet the ELOs is rarely demonstrated. Therefore, this study examined the Vietnamese ELT students' use of learning strategies in the IELTS test preparation to meet the ELOs and suggested some solutions to overcome the challenges in the learning process.

The research into choosing the IELTS test to meet the ELOs of English-majored students in Ho Chi Minh Open University of Duyen and Duy (2018) has indicated that 97.6% of participants

took the IELTS test to meet the university ELOs. The authors have also found out about students' IELTS learning process and difficulties in the test preparation.

Regarding strategies used for practicing each language skill, Tan and Dang (2022) suggested that IELTS takers should focus on the types of sentences they employ in their IELTS writing task 2 and attempt to use a variety of them rather than just one as compositions with more single-clause sentences tend to be graded with a lower band score. In terms of speaking skills, a research study by Islam et al. (2022) which explored some experienced English teachers' viewpoints, indicated that students should put effort into building their vocabulary knowledge and reduce their anxiety and phobia about English speaking and using English media on the Internet. Furthermore, a study by Pham (2022) on the effects of reading habits on reading comprehension of EFL students showed that students get good reading comprehension when they maintain reading habits and vice versa. The author also stated that if students wish to perform well in reading, they need have the desire and motivation to improve their reading habits.

Theoretical Background

The IELTS test

Jointly owned by Cambridge ESOL, British Council, and IDP, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test is the world's most popular English proficiency test, which is designed for those who want to work, live or study in an English-speaking country. Test takers are assessed on listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. There are two forms of IELTS tests – IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training. (British Council, 2017, p.7). This research mainly focuses on IELTS Academic test because its results help ELT students meet their ELOs.

English learning outcomes for ELT students at UFLS-UDN

Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes (Circular No.7/2015/TT-BGDĐT, p.2) are “the minimum requirements of knowledge, skills, attitude, professional responsibilities that learners are expected to meet after completing training programmes. Learning outcomes are commitments that educational institutions have made to learners and society and are publicly announced with conditions to ensure the performance.”

English learning outcome for ELT students at UFLS-UD

According to the Official Dispatch No. 3990/ĐHĐN-ĐT on November 22nd, 2019, on updating the six-level Foreign Language Proficiency Framework for Vietnam, English-majored graduates have to reach Level 5 in the Framework, which is equivalent to level C1 in CEFR or IELTS test overall score 6.5 - 7.5. (The University of Da Nang, 2019, p.1).

Learning strategies

Oxford (1990, p.8) defined learning strategies as “*specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situation.*”

Methodology

Research questions

To achieve the aims stated, this study tried to find the answer to the following questions:

- (1) What is the rate of ELT students choosing the IELTS test to meet the ELOs?
- (2) What are the learning strategies used by ELT students for IELTS test preparation to meet the ELOs?
- (3) What are the difficulties faced by ELT students in the IELTS test preparation?

Participants

There were 120 ELT students of UFLS-UD participating in the study. They were in 2nd, 3rd and 4th year and randomly chosen. This population accounted for 88.9% of the current ELT students at UFLS-UD because each cohort UFLS-UD enrolls 45 ELT students. Thus, the 3 cohorts consist of 135 students in total. In principle, high school graduates are required to be at level 2 of the Vietnamese six-level Language Proficiency Framework (equivalent to level A2 CEFR and IELTS 3.5) for university entrance, according to Circular No.7/2015/TT-BGDĐT and Announcement No.4513/ĐHĐN-ĐT about the English entrance requirements of the University of Danang. Therefore, all the participants in this study are at least at level 2 of the Vietnamese six-level Language Proficiency Framework.

Research method

In this study, quantitative research and qualitative research were combined.

The quantitative data were collected from 120 ELT students. The qualitative data were collected from 10 randomly chosen students from the study population mentioned and five experts in English teaching at the Faculty of Foreign Language Teacher Education, UFLS-UD. Besides, more qualitative data were gained from in-depth interviews with ten students who had sat for an IELTS test to meet the ELOs.

Data collection procedures

The data for the research was collected as follows.

(1) *Questionnaire distribution to all participants*: The questionnaire was designed to investigate the reality of the IELTS test choice, the IELTS test preparation, and some difficulties during the learning process to meet the ELOs. Thus, some solutions to effectively prepare for the test could be proposed. The questionnaire consists of two main parts: the first part investigates general background information of the participants, and the second one aims to find out the IELTS

learning strategies ELT students used and difficulties in the IELTS preparation to meet the ELOs. The questions in the second part are designed based on the theory of Second Language Learning Strategies of Oxford (1990). Questions about IELTS learning strategies employed by students are on the 5 Likert Scale, most of which are designed based on the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning version 7.0 introduced by Oxford (1989).

(2) *In-depth interview with ten randomly chosen students from 120 participants of the study.*: the questions were designed to capture qualitative data about research-related issues which cannot be fully mentioned in the questionnaire, including the purposes for choosing the IELTS test, the IELTS learning strategies, and some suggested solutions.

(3) *In-depth interview with experts in English teaching*: Because ELT teachers are experts who have experience in teaching English at UFLS-UD, they can provide information about, and advice on how to employ appropriate learning strategies in the IELTS preparation from a professional perspective and which challenges their students to face the most when learning IELTS. In this study, 5 ELT teachers of the Faculty of Foreign Language Teacher Education were randomly chosen.

(4) *In-depth interview with students who had sat for an IELTS test*: 10 students who had taken the IELTS test were interviewed. The questions aimed to gain an insight into the IELTS test preparation, especially the obstacles in the learning process and solutions students had made to solve the problems that occurred during the test preparation.

Data analysis

Quantitative data analysis: After data were collected from the questionnaire surveys, they were encoded and analyzed with Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS Statistics 20.0.

Qualitative data analysis: Thematic analysis was implemented to interpret data from interviews, following six steps: transcribing recorded audio, coding the data, combining codes into themes, reviewing themes, and writing up.

Findings and Discussion

The rate of students choosing the IELTS test to meet the ELOs

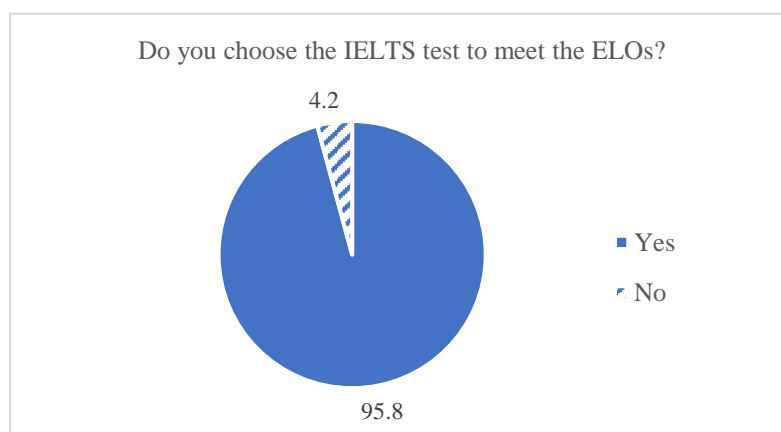


Figure 1. The rate of students choosing the IELTS test to meet the ELOs

Figure 1 showed that 95.8% of student participants chose the IELTS test to meet the ELOs, while 4.2% of them said “No” to the question. Anyway, they have to achieve the ELO before their graduation. Perhaps they opted for other types of English proficiency tests.

Learning strategies for practicing vocabulary

Many students adopted the strategies “*making sentences with new words*” (85.2%) and “*putting new words into conversational contexts*” (77.3%). New vocabulary just taught in the previous lessons is normally applied to the presentation or passage writing. The strategy “*writing or saying the new words many times*” is used by 57.4% of students. The strategy “*using flashcards*”, however, proved to be unpopular among ELT students, with 77.3% of them “disagreeing” or “strongly disagreeing” with employing it. “*This strategy is similar to learning by heart which is boring and ineffective*”, said one interviewee.

Table 1. Strategies used for learning vocabulary

Strategy	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I make sentences with new words.	85.2%	13.9%	0.9%
I put new words into conversational contexts.	77.3%	19.1%	4.0%
I use flashcards to learn vocabulary.	9.6%	13.0%	77.3%
I say or write new words many times.	32.1%	57.4%	10.4%

Learning strategies for practising reading

The number of informants opting for the strategy of *practicing every question type in the IELTS sample tests* to master reading skills accounted for 89.6%. *Responding well to all questions in the Cambridge IELTS series and similar reference materials* is considered to be the priority

over enjoying English books or novels though informants were usually encouraged by their teachers to do so. Only a small group of informants *learned new words and grammar from the reading, writing, and listening sessions of the IELTS sample tests*. In addition, 70.5% of informants *translated the reading passage word by word*. This habit may slow their reading speed down in the real IELTS test environment, especially when they encounter low-frequency words that have never been seen before.

Table 2. Learning strategies used for practicing reading

Strategy	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I read English books, articles and stories to learn academic words.	30.5%	9.6%	60%
I learn new words and grammar from the IELTS sample tests' reading, writing, and listening sessions.	39.1%	26.1%	34.7%
I try not to translate the reading passage word by word.	12.2%	17.4%	70.5%
I practice every question type in the IELTS sample tests.	89.6%	2.6%	7.8%

Learning strategies for speaking

As can be seen from Table 3 below, student informants *focused on verbal communication practice* more than on non-verbal one (with 56.5% of students never using body language when they do not know the word). The strategy "*practicing popular topics in the IELTS speaking test*" was employed by 79.1% of ELT students. Whereas the number of students *learning English with other people* comprises a large proportion (73%), the percentage of participants practicing speaking alone by *recording themselves and checking pronunciation mistakes* was extremely low (11.3%). *Youtube channel or English audio for intonation practice* was also popular among ELT students who strive for British-like or American-like pronunciation.

Table 3. Strategies used for practicing speaking

Strategy	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I practice popular topics in the IELTS speaking test.	79.1%	13.0%	7.8%
I practice native pronunciation and intonation.	66.1%	28.7%	5.2%
I always try to communicate in English.	73%	22.6%	4.3%
I use body language when I don't remember words.	15.7%	27.8%	56.5%
I record myself and check pronunciation mistakes	11.3%	17.4%	71.3%

Learning strategies for writing

The highest usage can be seen in the strategy of *practicing writing about popular topics in the IELTS writing test* (at 83.5%). Similar to the reading skill, the writing skill was improved through *using the Cambridge IELTS series and similar learning materials*. Furthermore, the strategy “*learning the high-score IELTS writing samples*” was chosen by 70.4% of participants. ELT students *focus on learning grammar for academic writing* because they believe that advanced grammar plays an important role in IELTS writing.

According to the results, only 23.5% of informants *asked other people to proofread or mark their essays*. This may have resulted from the fact that all writing exercises performed at university followed the format of the Cambridge writing test (B1, B2, C1) rather than the IELTS test. Moreover, when doing further practice, informants were *reluctant to ask for the support of other people* for fear of being burdensome.

Table 4. Strategies used for practicing writing

Strategy	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I practice writing about popular topics in the IELTS writing test.	83.5%	14.8%	1.8%
I asked other people to proofread or mark the essays.	23.5%	11.3%	65.2%
I learn the high-score IELTS writing samples.	70.4%	14.8%	14.0%
I focus on learning grammar for academic writing.	73%	25.2%	1.8%

Learning strategies for listening

The rate of informants *using the passive listening* strategy accounts for 72%. Many participants still worked while having the podcast or Youtube channel like BBC or TED Talks on in the background. In addition, some informants believe that *television English-speaking programmes or movies* can help them be accustomed to the native speakers’ intonation. The strategy “*practicing popular topics in the IELTS listening test*” was frequently employed by 74.8% of ELT students.

Table 5. Strategies used for practicing listening

Strategy	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I listen to English audio or video while doing other things.	72%	10.4%	10.4%
I usually watch English movies or programs.	39.1%	15.7%	45.2%
I practice popular topics in the IELTS listening test.	74.8%	16.5%	8.7%

Difficulties in the IELTS test preparation

The most challenging skill

Figure 1 shows that student informants struggled with their writing skills the most (36.5%), whereas they faced less difficulty in reading skills. When being interviewed, 80% of experts in English teaching of UFLS-UD stated that most of the problems were caused by *inappropriate learning strategies applied to different skills during the preparation*. For example, the experts said that *most students do not have the skill of brainstorming and making an outline before doing the writing task 2*. Furthermore, 60% of ELT teachers in the Faculty of Foreign Language Teacher Education agreed the fact that using the strategies of translating word-for-word when doing the writing test also prevents IELTS learners from mastering the writing skill. “*Word-for-word translation makes their writing work unnatural. Besides, if they cannot think in English when writing essays, they cannot get high scores in the writing tasks,*” – said an ELT expert.

Besides, the results from interviewing the students who have experience in taking the IELTS test showed that students have difficulties in time management. Students stated that they *spent too much time on writing task 1*. In addition, some students agreed that *they failed to meet the word count requirement, resulting in a poor grade for the criterion called task response*.

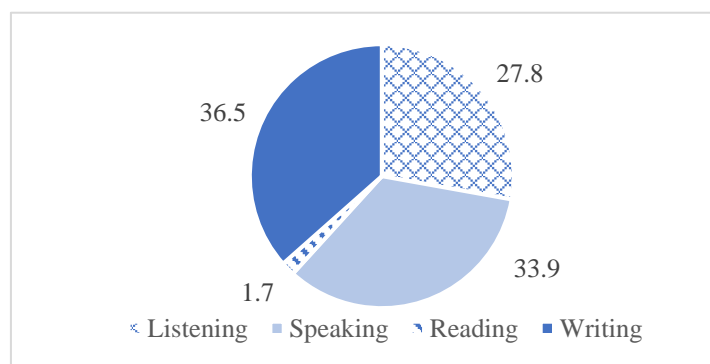


Figure 2. The most challenging skill

Difficulties in doing the IELTS listening test

The interview results with students who took the IELTS test indicated that the most common problems ELT students encountered were *failing to follow the speech pace, lacking attention, and confusion among different English accents*. Although ELT students have exposure to a variety of accents during their learning process, they found that the strange accents were the barriers to their listening skills.

Student 01	<i>They spoke too fast. I didn't get what they meant.</i>
Student 02	<i>I was distracted while doing the 3rd session. I guess because the test was too long.</i>
Student 06	<i>The Indian accent was too difficult to understand.</i>

Difficulties in doing the IELTS reading test

In the interviews, ELT interviews agreed that *limited vocabulary range* hindered their reading comprehension. Meanwhile, others could not understand the topics of the passage due to their *lack of ability to guess the meanings of new words*.

Student 10	<i>I encountered many new words in the Reading test. I couldn't do the Heading matching type in the test, too.</i>
Student 04	<i>Lots of new vocab. The topic was unfamiliar so I couldn't guess the meaning.</i>
Student 05	<i>There were too many questions. I didn't meet the time requirements.</i>

Difficulties in doing the IELTS speaking test

All interviewed students who took the IELTS test indicated that the very first problem on entering the exam room was *the anxiety of sitting in front of native speaker examiners*. Furthermore, due to their *limited language skills*, especially the listening ones, and *poor vocabulary*, students *could not understand the questions from the examiners*.

Student 01	<i>I'm afraid of being judged by the native examiners.</i>
Student 08	<i>I usually communicate with native friends. But on the test day, I was so scared that I couldn't speak even a word.</i>
Student 09	<i>I just feared that foreign examiner, perhaps because she knew very well when I made a mistake.</i>

Difficulties in doing the IELTS writing test

The data collected from ELT students who took the IELTS test shows that many of them have *poor idea organization and sentence-making skills*, which adversely affects their writing process. *Limited academic vocabulary* is another obstacle.

Student 03	<i>My sentence structure and idea organization were terrible. What I wrote in the essay wasn't logical at all.</i>
Student 06	<i>I had so many ideas, but the problem was that I couldn't put them into words. I found the process description type the most challenging to deal with.</i>
Student 09	<i>I often write irrelevant things in essays.</i>

Other difficulties in the test preparation

Furthermore, what is remarkable about the difficulties in the IELTS test preparation is the *weak will to improve English skills* and *little time spent on learning*, accounting for 93.9% and 84.3%,

respectively. According to many students, they were likely to give up IELTS preparation due to poor performance in the IELTS mocks.

Table 6. Other difficulties in the test preparation

Challenge	Yes	No
Not having appropriate learning strategies	55.7%	44.3%
Lack of perseverance in practicing	93.9%	6.1%
Lack of time.	84.3%	15.7%

Overall, the findings of this study are in accordance with findings reported by Griffiths and Jordan (2004) and Islam et al. (2022). Similar findings are that strategies employed for four language skills play a key role in the IELTS test preparation. In addition, some strategies students and experts suggested, such as improving vocabulary range and learning grammar, in the IELTS learning process are in line with those in previous research by Islam et al. (2022).

Furthermore, this research conducted an interview with both ELT experts and students, which is different from the method proposed in prior studies. Compared with those of previous studies, the results in this study provided more information about the strategies Vietnamese ELT students used in the IELTS test preparation to meet the ELO, rather than strategies for learning IELTS in general.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Conclusion

In brief, the paper has presented the investigation into the learning strategies for IELTS test preparation to meet the English learning outcomes (ELOs) used by Vietnamese students majoring in English Language Teaching (a case study of students of UFLS-UD). The research findings show that most ELT students (95.8%) of the UFLS-UDN chose the IELTS test to meet the ELOs.

As for the learning strategies applied to each language skill, practicing English pronunciation and communication skills strategies were used for speaking practice; listening to audio and watching English videos strategies for listening practice; reading the IELTS writing samples and learning grammar strategies for writing practice were frequently used by ETE students. Besides, students did the exercises and found out topics frequently seen in the IELTS test.

Students face difficulties mainly in *speaking, writing, and listening skills*. Furthermore, *poor vocabulary range* is a noticeable problem among ELE students, which leads to many other barriers during the test preparation.

Suggestions

Based on the study results, the following solutions are singled out to enhance the productivity of the IELTS test preparation to satisfy the ELOs required by the ELT training programme.

Firstly, students should spend more time *practicing the sample tests in IELTS materials* available in book stores or on the Internet to get used to the pace of tests and develop four language skills in IELTS test orientation. In addition, *self-study* helps learners to deeply understand the lessons and enhance the ability to analyze, gather materials, as well as apply the knowledge gained in the class to solve learning problems. What is more, it is necessary for students to *have a plan to do one test per day or make a detailed study plan and stick to it*.

Secondly, based on the data collected, the researchers realize that a lack of academic vocabulary causes most difficulties students face. Therefore, putting effort into improving the vocabulary range is of vital importance. Students ought to expand their vocabulary knowledge by setting a goal of learning a certain number of intermediate and advanced English words, reading more English books to build vocabulary, and taking vocabulary quizzes to increase their ability to retain new words. Furthermore, some vocabulary learning strategies recommended are using new words to make sentences and putting new words into conversational contexts.

Thirdly, *registering for an IELTS course and finding support from lecturers and friends* are advisable. Finally, students' *participation in the IELTS mocks* held by language centers like British Council, or IDP is also a useful strategy for the IELTS test preparation to achieve the ELOs required by their ELT training programme.

References

- British Council (2017). *IELTS essential guide*. Ha Noi: Women Publishing House.
- Duyên, N. T. T., & Duy, L. H. (2018). Chọn thi IELTS đầu ra của sinh viên ngành ngôn ngữ Anh Đại học Mở TP.HCM: Khảo sát thực trạng chuẩn bị và giải pháp, *Sinh viên Nghiên cứu Khoa học Eureka năm 2018*.
- Griffiths, C., & Jordan, D. (2004). *Strategies for success in IELTS*, Auckland, N.Z.: AIS St Helens, Centre for Research in International Education.
- Islam, W., Ahmad, S., & Islam, M. D. (2022). Investigating the problems faced by the university EFL learners in speaking the English language. *International Journal of TESOL & Education*, 2(2), 47-65. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54855/ijte.22223>.
- Munzaki, D. F. (2018). Learning strategy: Identifying strategy used by language learners (for TOEFL, IELTS, and Global English learners), *Jurnal Ilmiah DIDAKTIKA February 2018*, 18(2), 153-171. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/jid.v18i2.3240>.
- Oxford, R. (1989). *Strategy Inventory for language learning (SILL) Version 7.0 for Speakers of Other Languages Learning English* in Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Harper Collins.

- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Pham, U. M. N. (2021). The effects of reading habits on reading comprehension among EFL students at Van Lang University. *International Journal of TESOL & Education*, 1(2), 15-44. Retrieved from <https://i-jte.org/index.php/journal/article/view/19>.
- Tan, T. T., & Dang, T. D. M. (2022). The influence of single-clause sentences on IELTS writing task 2 band score. *International Journal of TESOL & Education*, 2(1), 23-39. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54855/ijte2202012>.
- The Ministry of Education and Training (2015). Circular No.7/2015/TT-BGDĐT on April 16th, 2015, on Stipulating the Minimum Amount of Knowledge, Required Capacity of Graduates at Each Training Level of Higher Education and Procedures for Establishment, Appraisal and Issuance of Training Program for Bachelor, Master and Doctoral Levels.
- The University of Danang (2014). Announcement No.4513/ĐHĐN-ĐT on July 29th, 2014, on Implementing the Method of English Entrance Examination and English Teaching from the 2014 Cohort.
- The University of Danang (2019). Official Dispatch No. 3990/ĐHĐN-ĐT on November 22nd 2019 on updating the six-level Foreign Language Proficiency Framework for Vietnam.

Biodata

LUU Quy Khuong (Assoc. Prof. Dr.) is a high-rank lecturer of English at University of Foreign Language Studies-UD. He has been working in the field of TEFL and teaching Vietnamese as a foreign language. He has many publications in applied linguistics and contrastive linguistics nationwide and worldwide. (<http://scv.udn.vn/lqkhuong>)

LUU Ngoc Bao Trang is a third-year student in Faculty of Foreign Language Teacher Education, Faculty of Foreign Language Teacher Education, UFLS-UD. She is majored in English Language Teaching. Beside TEFL she is also interested in SLA, translation and CALL. Her mobile phone number: 0869170261.

Appendices

Appendix 1:

QUESTIONNAIRE

I. General Information

- Gender: Male Female
- Which year are you in?
 First-year Second year Third-year Fourth year
- Do you choose the IELTS test to meet the English learning outcomes?
 Yes No

(If no, which proficiency test do you choose.....)

II. Learning Strategies of ELT Students for IELTS Test Preparation to Meet English Learning Outcomes

- Below are statements about IELTS learning strategies. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with them by ticking the appropriate option next to each statement.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Part A: Vocabulary					
I make sentences with new words.					
I put new words into conversational contexts.					
I use flashcards to learn vocabulary.					
I say or write new words many times.					
Part B: Reading skill					
I read English books, articles and stories to learn academic words.					
I learn new words and grammar from the IELTS sample tests' reading, writing, and listening sessions.					
I try not to translate the reading passage word by word.					
I practice every question type in the IELTS sample tests.					
Part C: Speaking skill					
I practice popular topics in the IELTS speaking test.					
I practice native pronunciation and intonation.					
I always try to communicate in English.					
I use body language when I don't remember words.					
I record myself and check pronunciation mistakes					
Part D: Writing skill					
I practice writing about popular topics in the					

IELTS writing test.					
I asked other people to proofread or mark the essays.					
I learn the high-score IELTS writing samples.					
I focus on learning grammar for academic writing.					
Part E: Listening skill					
I listen to English audio or video while doing other things.					
I usually watch English movies or programs.					
I practice popular topics in the IELTS listening test.					

2. Which skill is the most challenging in your IELTS test preparation to meet the English learning outcomes?
 - Listening skill
 - Speaking skill
 - Reading skill
 - Writing skill
3. You often face difficulties in: *(You can choose more than one option)*
 - Vocabulary
 - Grammar
 - Pronunciation
4. What difficulties do you often face in your IELTS learning process? *(You can choose more than one option)*
 - I cannot find the appropriate learning strategies.
 - I am not patient and consistent enough in the learning process.
 - I don't have much time for IELTS learning.
 - I don't have the basic English foundation, so I feel demotivated and give up easily.
 - The reading text is too long with many new words.
 - I have poor vocabulary range.
 - I feel panic when talking with native examiners.
 - I cannot manage the time well in the writing text.
 - The IELTS fee is too expensive
5. Do you suggest any solution to cope with the difficulties?
 - Join the IELTS preparation courses.
 - Focus on the Integrated Language Skills courses at university.
 - Employ more self-study strategies.
 - Participate in the mocks hold by English centers.
 - Others:.....

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix 2**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ELT STUDENTS**

1. Which strategies did you use to practice speaking skills?
2. In your opinion, which is the most important skills in doing IELTS reading text? How did you practice those skills?
3. Which strategies did you use to practice writing skills?
4. Which strategies did you use to practice listening skills?
5. Have you ever tried passive listening? If yes, how did you practice passive listening? If no, why didn't you apply that skill?
6. Which strategies did you use to practice speaking skills?
7. Did you face any difficulties in the IELTS test preparation? If yes, how did you solve the problems?

Appendix 3**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ELT STUDENTS WHO HAVE TAKEN THE IELTS TEST**

1. What difficulties did you face while doing the IELTS speaking test?
2. What difficulties did you face while doing the IELTS reading test?
3. What difficulties did you face while doing the IELTS speaking test?
4. What difficulties did you face while doing the IELTS writing test?
5. What other difficulties did you face when taking the IELTS test?
6. How did you solve the problems?
7. From your experience, what IELTS learners can do during the IELTS test preparation to prevent those difficulties?

Appendix 4**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ELT EXPERTS**

1. In your opinion, what mistakes do many ELT students often make while learning for the IELTS test?
2. How can student apply what they learn in the Integrated Language Skill courses at university into their IELTS learning process?
3. What difficulties do students often face in the IELTS test preparation? How do they solve the problems?
4. Do you suggest any solutions to improve the efficiency of the IELTS learning process to meet the English learning outcomes?