

A Comparative Study of English Language Learning Among Male and Female Students

Durgesh Kumar Gupta, Research Scholar, Department of English, Faculty of Arts, P.K. University Shivpuri (India)
Dr. Vineeta, Associate Professor, Department of English, Faculty of Arts, P.K. University Shivpuri (India)

Abstract

Globalization, technical progress, and the increasing significance of English as a worldwide medium of communication have all contributed to the rise of English language study as an integral part of contemporary education. Problems that students have when trying to learn English are the focus of this research. Data was gathered from 130 students using a structured questionnaire in a descriptive and analytical study style. According to the average scores, female students ($M = 3.078$, $SD = 0.891$) seem to have a little more trouble than male students ($M = 2.948$, $SD = 1.021$), although this difference isn't statistically significant ($t = -1.382$, $p = 0.169$). These findings highlight the need of better learning methods, efficient teaching tools, and student engagement tactics to increase ESL students' proficiency.

Keywords: English learning, Challenges, Pronunciation, Issues, Gender

I. INTRODUCTION

English has emerged as the global lingua franca, playing a crucial role in communication, education, business, science, and technology. English, spoken by more than 1.5 billion people throughout the globe, has a significant impact on international dialogue and understanding. Students from all over the world are making English language study a top priority in the classroom because it may improve their chances of getting a job, getting into prestigious universities, and communicating effectively with people from other nations. Nevertheless, there are a number of elements that impact how English is learned, such as prior knowledge of the language, methods of instruction, amount of exposure to the language, and students' intrinsic drive. In this introductory piece, we look at why it's important for students to study English, what obstacles they encounter, how technology helps with language learning, and how globalization has affected English language classes.

In today's globally interdependent society, the value of learning English cannot be emphasized enough. Many people believe that being able to communicate well in English is essential for getting ahead in school and in one's profession. Many nations where English is not the native language start teaching their children the language as a second language early on in their school careers. Because English is the *de jure* language of record for the world's literature, scientific discoveries, and technological developments, fluency in the language opens doors to immense information. The universality of the English language has the added benefit of easing communication across national boundaries and increasing mutual understanding across nations. Consequently, schools and governments put a lot of money into English language programs so kids may have a leg up in the real world.

Students still face several obstacles on their path to become proficient in English, despite the many efforts made to help them do so. The impact of their original language is a major obstacle as it could cause them to make mistakes in pronunciation, grammatical irregularities, and the adoption of English syntax. The severity of these difficulties is proportional to the linguistic gap between English and the pupils' native language. Some students may find it simpler to learn English than others; for example, those whose mother tongue is in the same linguistic family as English (e.g., German or Dutch) may have an easier time with the writing system and grammar than those whose mother tongue is totally different (e.g., Arabic or Chinese). A lack of everyday exposure to the English language may also be a barrier to learning, especially in areas where the language is not often spoken or utilized for purposes other than formal education.

The efficacy of English teaching approaches is another major obstacle. When it comes to engaging pupils and helping them improve their practical communication skills, traditional teaching methods that center on rote memorization and grammatical exercises are often ineffective. Because they don't have enough opportunities to practice speaking and listening,



many kids have trouble communicating effectively even when they are strong readers and writers. Contrarily, contemporary pedagogical methods like task-based learning (TBL) and communicative language teaching (CLT) place an emphasis on authentic English use, student-teacher interaction, and hands-on experience. These techniques inspire pupils to use the language in meaningful ways, which boosts their self-assurance and fluency. Unfortunately, not every school has the resources, qualified educators, and positive classroom climates needed to put these strategies into practice.

Thanks to technological advancements, students now have access to cutting-edge materials that may greatly improve their English language skills. Learning a new language is now easier and more interesting than ever before thanks to digital platforms, smartphone apps, and online classes. Students may practice English at their own speed and in an engaging way using applications like Rosetta Stone, Babbel, and Duolingo, which provide gamified learning experiences, quick feedback, and interactive courses. In addition, students may enhance their language abilities from any location thanks to online platforms like Khan Academy, Coursera, and Udemy, which provide English courses suited to various competency levels. Another way that AI and VR are changing language learning is by making it possible for students to practice English in realistic simulations of real-world scenarios. Students in rural locations or those without access to regular classroom teaching have benefited greatly from the increased adaptability and efficiency brought about by these technology advancements in the realm of English language learning.

One cannot deny the impact of globalization on the promotion of English language acquisition. With more and more companies going global and more and more people working together on projects, English has quickly become the language of choice across many sectors. Many jobs in the business world, academic institutions, and government agencies need candidates to demonstrate fluency in English. Consequently, students all around the globe are realizing that studying English is crucial if they want to improve their job prospects. The proliferation of Internet platforms like Facebook and Twitter has also helped propel English to the forefront of global communication. English is the *de jure* language for most online information, whether it's news, entertainment, or educational resources. Students with strong English skills have more opportunities to learn about the world, have meaningful conversations with individuals from all over the world, and broaden their perspectives.

To overcome these obstacles, however, at the institutional and policy levels, we can guarantee that all students will be able to study English effectively. Legislators should set aside enough funds for language programs so that students may learn English from certified instructors, create interesting lessons, and use technology in the classroom. Rather of focusing on teachers' wants and preferences, schools should take a student-centered approach. Students may improve their language abilities in a fun and natural way by participating in extracurricular activities including debates, storytelling sessions, and English-speaking organizations. For students to gain self-assurance and make progress, it is essential to provide a safe learning atmosphere where they may practice English without worrying about making errors.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Wang, Shuoying et al., (2023) The most challenging aspect of studying English for those who did not major in the language is expanding their vocabulary. Among the challenges faced by non-English majors while attempting to acquire an English vocabulary are: a dearth of exposure to the language, the need to memorize individual words, poor memory retention, and the potentially detrimental impact of one's native language. Learning new words based on context, using differentiation and induction, reviewing often, and learning by association are all approaches that may help with these issues. To maximize the impact of English language acquisition, students should choose the methods that work best for them.

Machfudi, Moch et al., (2022) This research set out to characterize the students' struggles



with vocabulary mastery and identify the elements that contributed to those struggles. Phenomenology was the method of choice for this study's qualitative analysis. Observation, interviews, and document examination were used to collect the data. To ensure the accuracy of the collected data, data source triangulation and data method were used. Several kids struggled with language mastering, according to this study. The results of this research revealed the following: first, those students had trouble with translating expressions or whole phrases from English to Indonesian and vice versa. Word meaning, pronunciation, spelling, and memorization or recall of English terminology were all areas where students struggled. Secondly, there were a number of reasons why pupils had trouble learning new words. Students showed little enthusiasm for studying English and were hesitant to use dictionaries. They were unable to consistently practice English due to this problem. Inadequate facilities and the negative impact of friends were additional external problems that ultimately made it difficult for them to learn English, particularly vocabulary acquisition.

Ovitigama, Sumudu. (2022). Following the COVID-19 epidemic, distant learning became more popular across the globe, including in Sri Lanka. The outcome was the integration of the widely-used video conferencing software "Zoom" into instructional English programs. Because taking classes online is so new to Sri Lankan students, it was important to look at the difficulties they had when using "Zoom" to study English. Consequently, this study set out to answer concerns about the perceptions of students and the difficulties they have while learning English using "Zoom" among students in the tenth grade at the Mawanella educational zone. In addition to looking at the positive aspects of utilizing "Zoom" for English language learning, the study also examined the challenges that instructors have when their pupils use the platform to learn English, as well as the solutions that teachers have found to be effective. The result was derived using a mixed-methods technique, which included collecting quantitative data via a questionnaire and qualitative data through an interview. One hundred pupils and ten instructors from the Mawanella educational zone made up the study's sample. More than half of the students in the sample had problems with things like signal and network problems, power outages, less face-to-face engagement, inattention, technical difficulties, inadequate equipment, etc., according to the data that was analyzed. It was clear that the pupils lacked motivation to study with "Zoom" because of the issues highlighted before. Despite the issues that students face, 84% of the sample determined that "Zoom" sessions are beneficial to some degree; yet, 12% of the students did not have a clear understanding of "Zoom," and 41% had a moderately clear understanding. It was proposed that in order to enhance the teaching and learning process, instructors and students should get enough training on how to use the "Zoom" app. Furthermore, it was suggested that students record their lectures.

Wahyuni, Sri et al., (2022) The education sector was among those rendered inactive by the global pandemic that the 2019 Coronavirus outbreak triggered. The result was a shift from traditional classroom instruction to an online one. The purpose of this research was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of using Google Classroom as an English language learning tool among Pekanbaru municipal high school students. Thirty students from general and vocational high schools were selected using a purposive sampling strategy for this descriptive research. The data was collected using a Google Form in conjunction with Zoom interviews. According to this research, students were able to successfully substitute an online learning system like Google Classroom for traditional classroom instruction during a pandemic.

Susanto, Herri. (2021). The purpose of the study named "A Study on Students' Difficulties in Learning Vocabulary" was to identify the aspects and types of vocabulary learning challenges that students face. The individuals who participated in this research were first-semester Stitek Bontang English class participants. A qualitative research strategy resembling a case study was used in this investigation. The researcher used interview and questionnaire methods to gather data. Describing each piece of data allowed for its analysis.



The results demonstrated that pupils continued to encounter challenges while attempting to expand their vocabulary. When it came to expanding their vocabulary, pupils encountered a wide range of challenges. One kind of difficulty that students had was learning new words; another was learning how to write and spell; and a third understood the many grammatical forms of words, which is called inflections. Almost all students had trouble pronouncing the words. Furthermore, (4) students still struggle with understanding how to apply the phrases in different contexts, and (5) students still have trouble picking the right words for the job. Finally, (6) even after looking for idiomatic expressions and terms, the pupils remained confused. Vocabulary acquisition challenges among kids were caused by a number of circumstances. (1) Writing and speaking English are not the same thing; (2) there is an enormous vocabulary that students must master; (3) there are few reliable resources for word definitions; and (4) word knowledge is intricate. There is a lot more to learning a word than just looking it up in a dictionary; (5) this leads to problems with grasping the term's grammar; and (6) students' original languages and English don't sound very comparable, which frequently results in poor pronunciation.

Afzal, Naeem. (2019). People who speak English as a first language, as well as those learning it as a second or foreign language, rely on their vocabulary expertise to communicate effectively. Vocabulary development is essential, but it may be challenging for students of English who are not native speakers. Students' academic performance in many university-level language, linguistics, literature, and translation courses suffers when their vocabulary knowledge is inadequate. Finding out how English majors at Saudi Arabia's Prince Stattam bin Abdulaziz University (PSAU) struggle to acquire new words are the specific goal of this research. In order to lessen the impact of these issues, it also suggests ways to learn new words. The information is based on the replies of one hundred students selected at random from five levels (four, five, six, seven, and eight) of PSAU's four-year BA English program. The data for this quantitative research was collected via an online questionnaire. The findings show that PSAU English majors had a hard time with vocabulary acquisition in general, including understanding definitions, accurately pronouncing and using new words, remembering and spelling new terms, and many other issues. This research contributes by drawing students' attention to the significance of acquiring the English vocabulary, illuminating the difficulties students face, and raising their vocabulary awareness. The viewpoints of educators about the challenges students have while trying to acquire new words and the strategies used to teach such words in English language classes could be the subject of future studies.

Tippabhotla, Vyomakesisri. (2017). When people want to communicate, they usually pick English since it is the most spoken language. The ability to communicate in English is become a must for today's youth. The value of teaching English as a second language in schools and the abilities necessary for fluent speakers are the topics of this article. Issues and obstacles encountered by ESL students are also discussed in the study.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A research design that is both descriptive and analytical is used in this study.

Population and Sample

Students learning the English language are the intended recipients. To make sure that everyone was fairly represented, a random selection approach was used to choose 130 students for the sample.

Scale Used

Answers were documented by use of a Likert Scale.

Statistical Tools Used

In order to analyze the data, we used:

- Frequency and percentage analysis
- Mean and Standard Deviation



- t-Test

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1 Gender of the students

Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Boys	50	38.5
Girls	80	61.5
Total	130	100.0

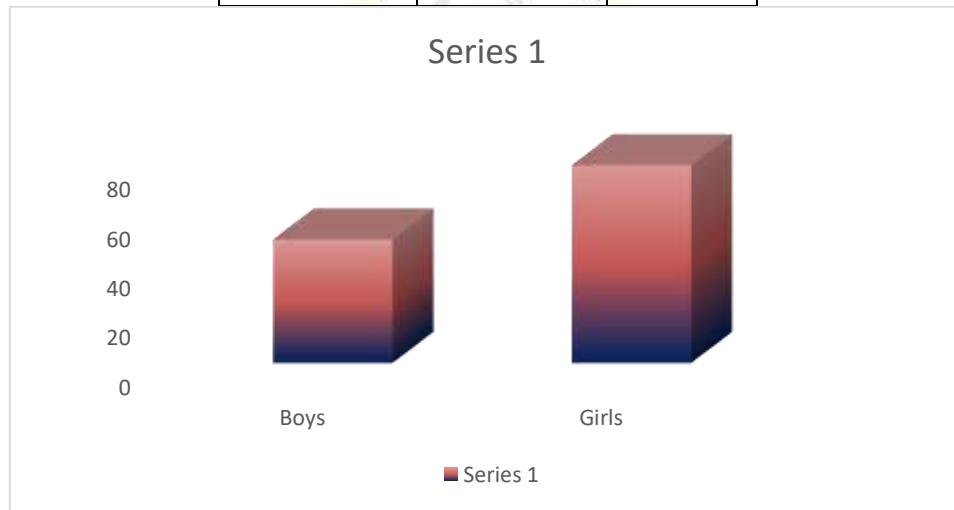


Figure 1: Gender of the students

A greater number of females (61.5%) than boys (38.5%), according to the statistics, make up the sample of 130 kids. The study's overall trends may be impacted by the fact that females make up the majority of the respondents.

Table 2 Students' Problems in learning English

Particulars	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
Learning English is not something that interests me.	49.5	34.4	9.3	6	1.871	1.183
I am not really enthusiastic about learning English.	28.6	35.4	26.1	9.3	2.522	1.385
Memorizing English is not my strong suit.	19.3	35	34.4	11.2	2.834	1.384
The definitions of English are confusing me.	11.3	37.6	36.4	14.2	3.064	1.335
The spelling differences between Arabic and English make it hard for me to learn new words.	13.4	33.3	33.3	19.4	3.121	1.413
The English terms don't seem right to me.	14.6	37.5	35	13.2	2.947	1.358
The classroom does not have any tools that may help students learn English.	16.7	32.4	32.1	18.2	3.032	1.438
The spelling and pronunciation of words in English are different, which makes it hard for me to learn new words.	9.5	28.4	38.2	23.4	3.372	1.361
Words with distinct meanings and words with similar meanings are proving to be rather challenging for me to learn.	12.3	23	44.1	20.4	3.365	1.363



The fact that certain English words have visually similar but conceptually distinct meanings makes it hard for me to grasp their meanings.	10.2	21.5	44.7	23.4	3.507	1.332
Some terms in the English language have specific meanings that make it hard for me to utilize them appropriately.	8.5	21.2	49.4	19.7	3.503	1.272
The fact that a term may have both good and bad connotations makes it hard for me to grasp its meaning.	12.6	34.3	39.5	13.2	3.064	1.339
It's unclear to me if this is a noun, adjective, verb, or adverb.	15.5	29.1	34.6	20.5	3.153	1.437

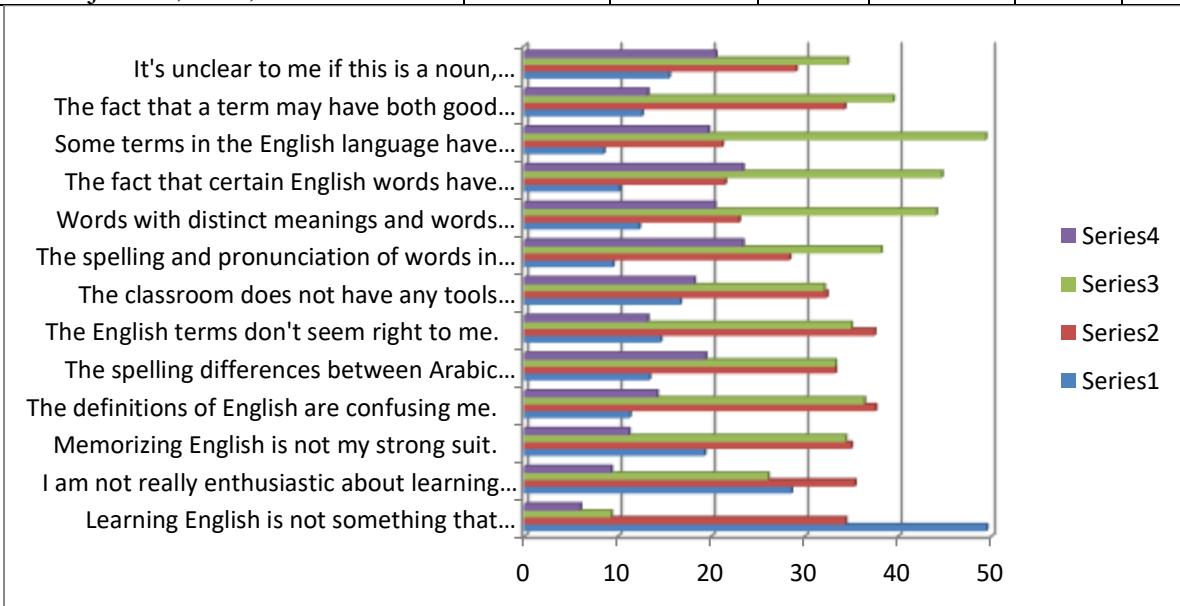


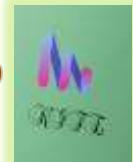
Figure 2: Students' Problems in learning English

Although there is a lot of enthusiasm in studying English, the data shows that many students struggle due to issues with grammar, spelling, pronunciation, and vocabulary. While most students find English to be an attractive subject, a sizeable minority has difficulty with vocabulary, terminology, and memory. Words with physically similar but different meanings provide the most challenge (Mean = 3.507). Another difficulty is the lack of consensus on how to classify grammar rules and the fact that Arabic and English spellings vary. Furthermore, students may not be learning as much as they might be due to a lack of classroom resources. Although there is motivation, there is a need to address the language complexity and learning resources.

Table 3 Difference between learning English according to gender

	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test	Sig. (2-Tailed)
Students' Problems in learning English	Male	2.948	1.021	-1.382	0.169
	Female	3.078	0.891		

Problems in learning English by male and female students are compared in the statistics. According to the average results, female students (Mean = 3.078) face somewhat greater challenges than male students (Mean = 2.948). This disparity may not be statistically significant, nevertheless, according to the t-test result (-1.382) and the significance threshold ($p = 0.169$). So, it seems that learning English isn't that much of a problem for men and women alike.



V. CONCLUSION

Although both male and female students encounter challenges with learning, the results show that female students report somewhat greater degrees of difficulty. Having said that, there is no statistically significant difference. The importance of better classroom resources, more effective teaching practices, and approaches to increase student involvement in order to support successful English language acquisition is highlighted by these findings. The language skills of pupils and their educational experience as a whole may be enhanced by tackling these issues via focused interventions. Additional variables impacting English learning challenges might be investigated in future study, along with the efficacy of various teaching approaches in overcoming these obstacles.

REFERENCES:

1. Afzal, Naeem. (2019). A Study on Vocabulary-Learning Problems Encountered by BA English Majors at the University Level of Education. *Arab World English Journal*. 10(3). 81-98. 10.24093/awej/vol10no3.6.
2. Machfudi, Moch & Afidah, Anissa'ul. (2022). Students' Difficulties in Vocabulary Mastery. *CREW Journal*. 1(1). 01-12. 10.35719/crewjournal.v1i1.1359.
3. Nugraha, S. V., Irawan, L. A., Haerazi, & Frank, T. O. (2022). Segmental Aspects of Pronunciation Errors Produced by ELE Students in Classroom Settings. *Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, 2(2), 88–98.
4. Nurdiana, S., Laaribi, M., Thi, N., & Chuyen, H. (2023). Applying Wattpad Platform as an Instruction Medium to Improve Reading Skills Viewed from Reading Strategies. 3(1), 80–91.
5. Ovitigama, Sumudu. (2022). The Challenges Experience by Students in Learning English Language via Zoom Platform. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*. 12(11). 26-32. 10.29322/IJSRP.12.11.2022.p13105.
6. Reskiawan, B., Andas, N. H., & Hajra, H. (2020). A Study on Students' Difficulties In Vocabulary Mastery at First Grade Students of SMPN 1 Baula. *Tamaddun*, 19(1), 34–54.
7. Rohmatillah, R. (2016). Dictionary Usage In English Language Learning. *English Education: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris*, 9(1), 186–197.
8. S. Alenazi, O. (2018). Spelling Difficulties Faced by Arab Learners of English as a Foreign Language. *Arab World English Journal*, 9(2), 118–126.
9. Salam, U., & Nurnisa. (2021). Students' Difficulties in Learning Vocabularies. *English Community Journal*, 5(1), 46–53.
10. Salam, U., Sukarti, & Arifin, Z. (2020). An Analysis of Learning Styles and Learning Strategies Used by a Successful Language Learner. *JET (Journal of English Teaching)*, 6(2), 111–121.
11. Susanto, Herri. (2021). A STUDY ON STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN LEARNING VOCABULARY. *Journey: Journal of English Language and Pedagogy*. 4(2). 46-50.
12. Tippabhotla, Vyomakesisri. (2017). Challenges in Learning English as Secondary Language. *International Journal of English and Literature*. 7(6). 21-24.
13. Wahyuni, Sri & Eftita, Fauzul & Alkhaira, Nadya. (2022). Students' preferences and challenges in learning English fully online with Google Classroom. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*. 16(2). 244-253.
14. Wang, Shuoying & Ge, Shan & Tang, Chang. (2023). Non-English Majors' Problems in Learning English Vocabulary and Strategies Revisited. *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy*. 4(4). 64-67. 10.24018/ejedu.2023.4.4.716.