

THE IMPACT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING BARRIERS ON STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

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Abstract

Language serves as a means of exchanging ideas, feelings, and thoughts; therefore, it is crucial to human existence. The present examined the impact of language learning barriers on students' English language proficiency at the secondary level. English language proficiency is students' ability to use and understand the English language which is measured through a multiple-choice question-based test in this study. English language learning barriers are measured on four main factors; students' motivation, ineffective teaching, exposure to the English language, and lack of opportunities to use the English language. A quantitative method was used, in which quantitative data were collected and analyzed. The current study's population consisted of public and private secondary school students. The study's sample was comprised of secondary school students (male and female). A total of 360 students were chosen randomly. The second aim of the study was to compare the English language competence of students in public and private schools as well as English language competence across gender. The current study found no significant difference between the English language competence of male and female students and students from public and private schools. However, the study found a significant but low effect of English language barriers on students' English language competence. Implications of the study are discussed.

Keywords: Language learning; barriers, English language proficiency; students' motivation; ineffective teaching.

INTRODUCTION

The English language is the official language of Pakistan. It is utilized for all types of official and international communication. According to Article 251 of the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2014, English will continue to be Pakistan's official language until mechanisms are enacted to replace that language with Urdu over fifteen years of its implementation period. Students across Pakistan learn English language as compulsory subject at schools. The four linguistic skills essential to effective communication in English include the ability to speak, listen, read, and write. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), the world's political, cultural, social, and economic interconnection have resulted to new demands imposed upon people, the most important of which includes English language proficiency. English seems to have emerged as the most extensively used language in conversation. English language proficiency refers to the ability to effectively employ the language in scholastic and social contexts.

The key objective of the English language proficiency assessment was to determine a level of proficiency among learners who studied English as their second language. Language will be used for communication. Canagarajah (2006) stated that English possesses a high status in Pakistan via three distinct senses: initially, that is used as either an interpersonal language as well as the language of state, and these indicate that when people communicate with one another for the sake of trade, English language establishes a link among people; secondly, it occupies a very dominant position within the educational system as a whole. English and Urdu were the sole languages extensively used throughout business, the government, the media in particular, and various other fields. Chomsky (2007) describes proficiency having linguistic grammatical comprehension paired with sociolinguistic users of language, and language fluency as grammatical system together with the ability to use that knowledge for linguistic exchanges.

Szmigiera (2021) found that English is used by 1.35 billion people who either understand it well or consider it to be their second language. As a result of this, relying entirely upon the number of speakers of the language, that we are able to determine that English was the language with the greatest number of speakers. Numerous individuals, as well as entire continents, determine English primarily an indispensable language across trade, science, technology, and a variety of fields.

This form of instruction (EFL) has commonly referred to as ESL (English as a Second Language) or EFL (English as a Foreign Language). English additionally serves a significant position in literature, encompassing more than 20 per cent of all literature produced globally. Adejumbi (2007) stated that "English language could be regarded substantially as a way of interaction via different kinds of languages as well as the outside world." As stated by Rao (2000), students generally study English several years in sufficient to enhance their understanding of grammar as well as vocabulary to successfully complete an English subject assessment.

Therefore, it is safe to say that English is the global language in the modern era and English proficiency has become one of among the most crucial elements of successful today's societies. Although English is introduced to each and every school-age level both as a primary subject and a medium of instruction for various subjects, students lack in proficiency in English. That inadequate level of English proficiency in learners led to numerous concerns pertaining to English education. A study by Marshall and Rossman (2006) using a learner's mother tongue generates "syntactic inaccuracy on children's performance" that possesses an indelible mark on their cognitive abilities. Moghaddam et al. (2011) reported that those who do not speak English might experience difficulties when studying internationally throughout countries with an English-speaking population.

In the opinion of Adil (2021), speaking and listening skills have been mostly disregarded within the schools we attend although both writing and reading gain an abundance of priority. However, unfortunately, that isn't how it is carried out in Pakistan. To impart an unfamiliar language, the instructor ought to assist students strengthen their abilities to speak and listen. Another 2012 Swiss research study revealed that acquiring a foreign language improves students' structures of the brain, exerting a ripple effect upon those parts of the brain that are that regulate memory or conscious mental processes. That, consequently, might assist students in becoming more innovative or strengthen their personality as well as their sense of dignity. As noted by Thompson and Wyatt, acquiring proficiency in another language appeared to have been a skill that was acquired through the growth of linguistic rhythms as opposed to by the learning of grammar constraints. The method known as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) was implemented to teach English throughout public educational institutions. A common way to impart knowledge of a language that is unfamiliar involves the GTM technique. This strategy, outlined by Wyatt, was established on three distinct concepts. In the beginning, using your mother language has a guide whenever translating terms and expressions is suggested. The second step relating an alternate communication framework with the structure of the native tongue optimizes the efficiency of language acquisition. Third, GTM assists students with their written work in the target language.

Williams and Wyatt claimed that the grammar translation method was used in public schools to teach English. Popular techniques for teaching a foreign language include the GTM method. This approach, according to Wyatt, was founded on three guiding ideas. It is suggested to start by translating single words and sentences using your mother tongue as a reference. Second, comparing a foreign language's structure to that of the native tongue maximizes the effectiveness of language learning. Third, GTM offers assistance to pupils writing in the target language. However, this approach ignores the student's abilities to communicate and places them in a passive position. Furthermore, pupils' propensity for transferring knowledge restricts their ability to learn English.

Private educational institutions use a direct approach to teach English. Directly approach was the process of learning English without using someone's genuine dialect. Recent research indicates that acquiring an additional language naturally without the assistance of textbooks or textual rules is similar to mastering one's mother tongue. Learners who employ this kind of approach accomplish so instinctively. As a result, we can conclude that various instructional techniques have been implemented in both private and public educational institutions, which undoubtedly will have an effect on the academic achievement of the students. Strong English proficiency among children would contribute to their achievement in school. Inadequate English proficiency affected educational achievement and learning. Authorities ought to stress the use of modern educational methods along with offering adequate educational materials in an attempt to increase the achievement of students in English language instruction in public educational institutions. As a result, they comprehend that students at private and public educational institutions are going to demonstrate distinct levels of proficiency.

Palmer's (2014) wrote that the fundamentals of Language Learning emphasized the importance of verbal work concerning learning the English language. Students are advised to spend some time communicating with practitioners in that particular language. Whenever learning an additional language, a teacher ought to conduct conversational lessons, which is known simply as verbal practice. Another extremely important tool for studying the English language is graduation. The gradation was the process of progressing between simple to difficult. The material, on the other hand, had been organized within an organized manner, having each level working as a basis for the subsequent ones beyond that. Numerous prior research investigations on the English language as a barrier to learning have been conducted, but the primary goal of this study is to investigate the impact of language learning barriers on English language proficiency at the secondary level. A study was conducted in the city of Faisalabad. Faisalabad has a total of 175 public and private secondary schools. Learners from these schools come from different background, culture and different learning abilities that influence their academic achievement especially their proficiency in English language. Moreover this study will assist all stakeholders in identifying the various issues that have hampered students' improved performance in the English language in the school system.

Rationale of the Study

The study of English as a second language or a foreign language was practiced by students in Pakistan. Speaking, listening, reading, and writing are the four language skills needed for effective communication in English. In the opinion of Adil (2021), speaking and listening skills have been mostly disregarded within the schools and both writing and reading gain an abundance of priority. However, unfortunately, that isn't how it is considered in Pakistan. To impart an unfamiliar language, the instructor ought to assist students strengthen their abilities to speak and listen. According to a Swiss study published in

2012, learning a new language alters the way some areas of the brain work. Essential to memory and mental processing, and finally, it can boost personality and sense of self-worth and encourage creativity in children. Speaking a second language appears to be a skill that has been acquired more via the development of speech patterns than through the study of grammatical rules. Grammar translation method was used to teach English in public schools and is a common way of teaching a foreign language in Pakistan.

Directly approach was the process of learning English without using someone's genuine dialect. Further research indicates that acquiring an additional language naturally without the assistance of textbooks or textual rules is similar to mastering one's mother tongue. Learners who employ this kind of approach accomplish so instinctively. As a result, we can conclude that various instructional techniques have been implemented in both private and public educational institutions, which undoubtedly will have an effect on the academic achievement of the students. Strong English proficiency among children would contribute to their achievement in school. Inadequate English proficiency affected educational achievement and learning. Authorities ought to stress the use of modern educational methods along with offering adequate educational materials in an attempt to increase the achievement of students in English language instruction in public educational institutions. As a result, they comprehend that students at private and public educational institutions are going to demonstrate distinct levels of proficiency Palmer's (2014) book he wrote, the fundamentals of Language Learning emphasized the importance of verbal work concerning learning the English language. Students are advised to spend some time communicating with practitioners in that particular language. Whenever learning an additional language, a teacher ought to conduct conversational lessons, which is known simply as verbal practice. Another extremely important tool for studying the English language is graduation. The gradation The current study, among other things, will operate as a roadmap for future research on the impact of language learning barriers on English language ability at secondary level.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In the opinion of Szmigiera (2021), English has been utilized as a language across the globe, having 1.35 billion people speaking English as fluently or in addition to an additional language. Hence, based on the total number of speakers of the language, we can determine that English was the most widely spoken language. A lot of individuals and even countries perceive English as primarily a communication and connecting language when it comes to commerce, sciences, and technology, among other things. That can be referred to as the practice of learning (English as a second language) ESL or (English as a foreign language) EFL. English has become a key language in writing; around 20% of the worldwide writing has been published within English. "English acquisition could be regarded essentially as an instrument of connecting with various other languages as well as the outside world as a whole," Adejumbi (2007) stated that "Other people might consider it as a tool towards success, personal development, and accessibility to new knowledge and perspectives." As stated by Rao (2000), students frequently practice English for years to develop an understanding of grammar and vocabulary to achieve success in an English subject examination. They are, however, quite poor in listening and speaking and can't have conversations in English in their everyday interactions. That low level of English competency among students generated multiple concerns about English education. English proficiency is an essential skill in successful modern societies. The current era's universal spoken language was English.

A study by Norton (2000), the utilization of language is a tool to convey information through the way learners construct their understandings throughout the discussion. By affecting whether communicators were as well as they comprehend the globe via successful use of language, language additionally determines what students perceive about the connection they have towards the community around them. Heath and Schieffelin (2008) discovered that oral language development was rarely utilized as a method of teaching for acquiring knowledge about a group of people's interpersonal and enlightening practices, because individuals perceive communication to have been an essential element of the social and cultural environment. Anderson et al. (2009) assert that, the language of the student had been altered to English because of experience and inspiration from languages of other individuals' backgrounds, such as Urdu, Punjabi, as well as others. As a result of their interactions with people from various language origins at school, college, and university, their language was automatically transformed into English. According to Pham (2008), a language is a tool for communication used to learn about social records and preceding occurrences.

Rahman (1996) argued that individuals must learn English. The formal education system plays a significant part in the learning procedure. Because of the British reign, the English language has gained social, political, and governmental status. When Pakistan was formed in 1947, two most important languages were presented as the early stage of language acquirement in the Pakistani circumstances. One be Urdu, as well as the other be English. The official language legislation elevates the status of English. Further languages, including Persian, Punjabi, and Sindhi, were added as well, although these two became the country's primary languages and an essential element of its culture. According to Mansoor (2007), Muhammad Ali Jinnah's inaugural speech, given in English at Pakistan's first constitution assembly following independence, highlights the significance of the English language in that country. According to Ashraf (2007), after Pakistan got independence, English became an official language within the country's sociopolitical culture.

Pakistan's English Language Education Status

After achieving socio-political importance within the country, English gained a prominent status in the educational system. Kashrus (1985) highlighted the three models/circles of English language importance when discussing the value of the English language in Pakistan. The initial kind, referred to as the inner circle, was particularly common in nations that use English as their first language, including the UK, the United States of America, Australia, as well as the nation of New Zealand. The subsequent circle, often referred to being the outermost circle, concentrated on English as an additional

language. India has been recognized as a region wherein English usage expanded throughout the era of colonialism. The final paradigm was centered upon nations like China wherein English is seen as just an international language. Mansoor (2002) asserts that English had been taught as just a required language in schools, colleges, and universities in any country besides the inner circle where it was considered a second language, together with West Pakistan as well as Urdu. It should be noted that English became an obligatory subject throughout first grade to twelfth grade only emphasizes how important the language is. Additionally, since English was also thought to be a teaching language, every aspect of the higher education system was instructed in English. The Western German test was a requirement for all students in both the sciences and the arts. According to Rahman (1997), the reason why the nation views English as a vital language in a variety of contexts; economic, political, and cultural—is that it has grown in societal importance. In comparison to Urdu, it obtains a special significance. According to Rahman (2004), the English language serves as a barrier to the younger generation's access to management positions and work opportunities both inside and beyond the nation, because English was once thought of as a useful communication tool. In contrast to English medium schools, Rahman (1997) noted that students whose parents sent them to Urdu medium schools had relatively little exposure to the English language. Therefore, students who spoke Urdu had virtually little chance of finding employment abroad, because Urdu-medium schools received less economic and social support than English-medium schools.

A qualitative study on the impact of English as a second language on Pakistani pupils was undertaken by Ambreen in 2014. This research was carried out at a women's university in Lahore, Pakistan. The investigation involved conducting interviews. According to the study's findings, educators and decision-makers must create regulations in a nation where pupils were successfully engaging in language practice. The environment is a key factor in how well pupils learn English as a second language. In Canada, Northern (2000) also carried out a study on local talking context and identity about 5 Immigrant Women's and Identification Creation. This study was qualitative, and it involved an interview study. After gathering data, this study concludes that there aren't enough studies looking into the effects of learning English as a second language. The study also concluded that only formal education involves teaching English. We can infer that these kinds of English language instruction have an impact on pupils' language ability. According to Eberhard et al. (2020), the status of English among a nation's elite has increased to facilitate social and informal educational interactions. According to Hanna and Rahman (2017), the majority of people now find English to be a very fascinating language because it is the language of law, science, technology, and government.

According to Rahman (2005), the national colonial system in Pakistan gave birth to its educational institutions and system. Two different sorts of school systems were introduced under this educational system. The first had schools that were both English- and Urdu mediums. Elite residents of a country sent their children to English-medium schools that charged high tuition. This educational system is considered as offering high-quality instruction. According to Ashraf (2018), these various educational systems have an impact on students' academic performance, due to the fact that low-income families are unable to enroll their children in English-medium schools. According to National Education Policy (2009), English is taken into account as a language of opportunity in worldwide employment opportunities and jobs for the goal of providing quality education. To foster nationhood, this program emphasized the idea of one nation and one language.

Education, Language, and Development

According to Chabot and Ramirez (2021), achieving goals for national and individual progress in terms of development and education necessitates language proficiency. Then, because languages like English are used, we may establish ties between development and education at the international or national level. The primary goals of education, which were agreed upon by 150 countries including Pakistan, were poverty eradication and universal education. The English language should be the primary emphasis of this educational initiative because it was the nations themselves who started the language's development. According to Coleman (2020), English was accepted as the universal language or lingua franca. According to recent research by Runde (2017), more than 1 million students were admitted to US institutions in 2015–2016 as compared to earlier years to receive a quality education through the study of English. Even staffs who speak English well were compensated by global firms in China. Thus, we may conclude that having a good command of the English language was beneficial for the advancement of the nation and quality education. According to Appleby (2002), a nation's socioeconomic progress is significantly influenced by its language. Because language has been viewed as a tool for development, English has been taught as a means in and of itself, according to which it supplies how development occurs.

Multiple Educational Streams

Traditionally, there are two distinct types of schools in Pakistan: Urdu and English medium, which can be distinguished primarily based on the language of instruction. The English-medium, privately owned schools serve the upper class and some segments of the middle class. Most Urdu-medium schools (at least at the primary level) are public institutions that primarily serve lower-income individuals while offering free education as well as other privileges like free textbooks. Students who attend private schools receive a top-notch education in English in well-equipped classrooms. Children who have more exposure to the language outside of their daily 30–35 minute English courses at school have higher levels of English proficiency than those who study in classrooms with limited resources. Specifically in terms of the capacity to utilize English for oral and written communication, as stated by Ramanathan (2016), the requirements versus achievement of learners within both of these categories of schooling systems (public & private) are what distinguish it distinctive. Mansoor 2015 conducted a case study on language planning in higher education points out that the level of English proficiency now possessed by Pakistani schools and university graduates does not quite align with the country's general demand for the language.

Research on English Language Acquisition

One study was carried out at King Khalid University in Saudi Arabia. This study's primary objective was to investigate the challenges that come with teaching and learning English as a second language. Ineffective teaching methods, lack of enthusiasm, and exposure to English as a second language were among the obstacles this study also looked at. Action research was used using mix-method study and data was collected from teachers and students from the English department. Data collecting tools included interviews and a questionnaire. According to the study's findings, teachers felt they faced a range of difficulties when instructing students in English as an additional language. Learners whose native language was not English but were forced to learn English as the mandatory subject have difficulties due to inadequate resources, textbooks, and a lack of significant use of teaching methodologies. Another study conducted in university of technology MARA in Malaysia investigated the motivational factors and cultural obstacles to learning English as a second language. The data for this quantitative investigation were gathered using a survey method. The university's numerous departments contributed a total of 69 respondents. In this study, a questionnaire was the instrument. The study's conclusions show that motivational factors are also influenced by cultural factors during the teaching-learning of English as a second language. Therefore, we can conclude that cultural boundaries do, in certain ways, impair pupils' English language competency. One investigation was carried out inside the South African educational system. In this empirical study, the effect of the teachers' inadequate English language ability on the student's proficiency in English as a second language was examined. The teachers' and students' portfolios served as the primary source of data for this study. Lesson plans from teachers, student work produced in their final year of study, and information about inclusive education were gathered in portfolios. A questionnaire was created per the study's data gathering and conclusions. The study's findings indicate that learners' learning of English as a second language was significantly impacted by teachers' inadequate instruction and their limited English ability. A further investigation has been carried out in Pakistan's Mianwali Bhakkar region. The purpose of the research study was to investigate the difficulties that male students have during learning English as an additional language at an intermediate level. That was a qualitative investigation, using a representative group of three male students' institutions selected along with information obtained from those educational institutions. Based on the survey results, Mianwali Bhakkar was the least remote district. Learning English had been challenging when Urdu and Saraiki were around, thus failing in English is regarded as be failure in all subjects. We can conclude that the preceding language contributes to the establishment of an additional language as the mother tongue was useful in acquiring a second language as English.

METHODOLOGY

The current research study has employed quantitative approach. The information was gathered using a survey research design. A survey method is a quantitative research approach that asks a predetermined list of items to sample. There were two instruments in the present study; a questionnaire measuring English language learning barriers and multiple choice based questions to measure students' English language proficiency.

Sample of the Study

The population of the study includes all public and private secondary school students in Faisalabad City. The study's sample was recruited from secondary school students (male and female) in Faisalabad. Due to limited resources, only four secondary schools were chosen at random from a total of 175 secondary schools in both the public and private sectors. There were two public schools and two private schools chosen, with both male and female students. A total of 360 students were participated in this study in which 90 students from each school (45 Male and 45 Female) students of class 9th and 10th were randomly selected.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire was created to gather quantitative data regarding the English language proficiency of both public and private school students. The questionnaire on language learning barriers contained 25 items. Expert help was used while creating the items that assess language learning barriers. Four English language barriers were measured in this study, these include; students' motivation, ineffective teaching, lack of exposure to English language and opportunities to use English language. Data on English language barriers were measured using five-point Likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). The second section of the instrument was a test. The test was created with the help of English language professionals and contained 20 items that measured English language proficiency.

The questionnaire of language learning barriers was pilot tested to confirm its reliability. A language learning barriers questionnaire was employed to obtain the data from 60 secondary school respondents. The analysis of the data was done to examine the value of Cronbach's-alpha reliability coefficient. The item with the lowest internal reliability was deleted using the criterion of internal consistency. The Cronbach's-alpha value was 0.86, which is good enough to collect data.

RESULTS

The data for the current study was collected from four secondary school i.e. two were public and other two were private secondary schools. Forty five students were taken from each school and there were 360 students from four secondary schools belonging to public and private sides. The researcher proceeded to the relevant authorities and got permission for data collection. Data were analyzed by using both descriptive and inferential statistics such as percentage, mean scores, standard deviation, regression Analysis and independent samples t-tests. The demographic characteristics of participants

are listed as male respondents (180) 50% and the number of female respondents (180) 50%. Therefore, a 20 items (each item equals one score) multiple choice test (MCQS) was designed and the test score was range between 13 to 19. Majority of respondents got (17) marks in test.

Table 1: Multiple choice test score of respondents

| Test Score | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| 13 | 3 | .8 |
| 14 | 16 | 4.4 |
| 15 | 39 | 10.8 |
| 16 | 66 | 18.3 |
| 17 | 103 | 28.6 |
| 18 | 71 | 19.7 |
| 19 | 51 | 14.2 |
| 20 | 11 | 3.1 |
| Total | 360 | 100.0 |

Table 1 displays the Academic Achievement Test Scores of Respondents. It represents the mean (17.01, SD=1.482) of respondents.

Table 2: English language proficiency of male and female secondary school students

| Gender | N | M | SD | t | Sig |
|--------|-----|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Male | 180 | 16.99 | 1.449 | -.213 | .563 |
| Female | 180 | 17.02 | 1.517 | | |

The results of Table 2 are not statistically significant and show that there is no significant difference in the English language proficiency of male and female secondary school pupils because the p-value is greater than 0.05. There were no appreciable differences in the students' levels of English language ability across both genders. The survey found that the level of English language competency was about the same for both male and female students. Thus, the research hypothesis debunking the gap in English language proficiency between male and female secondary school students was disproved.

Table 3: English language proficiency of public and private school students

| School Type | N | M | SD | t | Sig |
|-------------|-----|-------|-------|--------|------|
| Public | 180 | 16.72 | 1.480 | -3.692 | .861 |
| Private | 180 | 17.29 | 1.432 | | |

Table 3 demonstrates that no significant differences between students' English language proficiency in public and private schools. The survey discovered that the degree of English language competency in public and private schools is nearly the same. Therefore, the research hypothesis on the disparity in English language proficiency between students from public and private schools got rejected.

Table 4: Lack of English language usage on English language proficiency of students

| | B | SE | Sig |
|------------------------------|-------|------|--------|
| English Language Proficiency | 0.044 | .014 | .000** |
| R –Square | .02 | | |
| P≤0.05 | | | |

Table 4 shows that a lack of English language usage has a significant effect on students' English proficiency because the p-value is less than 0.05. The study discovered that students' English language proficiency was significantly impacted by

English language usage. The R-square value demonstrated the weak influence of students' lack of English language usage on their English language competency.

Table 5: Ineffective teaching on English language proficiency of students

| | B | SE | Sig |
|------------------------------|-------|------|--------|
| English Language Proficiency | -.039 | .022 | .000** |
| R square | .09 | | |
| P≤0.05 | | | |

Table 5 demonstrates that ineffective instruction has a substantial influence on students' English language proficiency because the p-value is less than 0.05. The study discovered that the impact of ineffective teaching on students' English language ability was minimal. The R-square value demonstrated the weak effect of teaching on students' English language skills.

Table 6: Lack of motivation on their English language proficiency

| | B | SE | Sig |
|------------------------------|-------|------|--------|
| English Language Proficiency | -.005 | .030 | .000** |
| R square | .000 | | |
| P≤0.05 | | | |

Table 6 shows that lack of motivation has a significant effect on student's English language proficiency because the p-value is less than 0.05. The study discovered that pupils' English language competency was severely affected by a lack of motivation. The R-square value demonstrated the negative effect of pupils' lack of motivation on their English language skills.

Table 7: Student's lack of exposure of English language on their English language proficiency

| | B | SE | Sig |
|------------------------------|-------|------|--------|
| English Language Proficiency | -.027 | .023 | .000** |
| R square | .004 | | |
| P≤0.05 | | | |

Table 7 shows that students' lack of English language exposure has a significant effect on their English language proficiency because the p-value is less than 0.05. The study discovered that students' lack of English language exposure negatively affects their English language proficiency. The R-square value demonstrated the weak influence of students' lack of English language exposure on their English language ability.

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The present study concluded that although private schools use the English language as a medium of instruction, their students' English language competence is not significantly different from the competence of public school students. The primary goal of the current study was to examine language learning challenges, particularly those that arise whenever English is being learned as a second language at the secondary school level. However, generally, students perform well on English language competence tests. Furthermore, the study investigated the differences between the English language competence of male and female students and it found no significant difference in English language competence across gender.

A further aim of the study was to investigate the barriers students face in learning the English language. In this context, the study investigated three barriers in English language learning; ineffective teaching of English, lack of opportunities in using the English language, lack of exposure to the English language, and students' motivation.

The study found that all the above-mentioned factors served as significant barriers to English language learning. Students believe that ineffective teaching of English effect their English language competence negatively which is in line with the findings of the past research; ineffective teaching cannot lead to proficiency in the language. Moreover, the study found that lack of opportunities of using language is another significant factor to hinder students' English language proficiency. Similarly, lack of exposure negatively affects students' English language proficiency at schools. Moreover, students' low motivation to learn the English language negatively affects their language proficiency. Therefore, all four factors of English language barriers are found to be determinants of English language proficiency. In this way, the present study gave a significant contribution to the present body of knowledge about English language learning as a second language. Therefore, teachers and policymakers should consider these factors while preparing lesson plans and books for English language teaching.

The findings of the present study are comparable to those of a 2016 study on English as a second language and a comparison of public and private education systems carried out at Kargi University in Malaysia. According to this study, children in public and private schools learn in similar ways while they are in fifth to tenth grades, but in private schools, additional programs like pre-primary and nursery help students develop their language skills at an early stage. According to Farah

(2014), private school pupils create their foundational language during their later learning years. This language serves as the student's starting point for learning English as a second language. The development of a second language or foreign language would benefit from the formation of a student's language foundations. We can also conclude that pupils' mother languages act as a foundation for the acquisition of a second language as a result. Students had difficulties learning at both the public and private levels if their first language was insufficient, which also affected their competency in a second language.

Zia (2015) did a study in Pakistan on the country's public and private educational systems. According to the report, parents highly value private education because they believe it fosters in their children a variety of communication skills that would pave the way for a great future. The students of the two educational systems differed significantly because low-income parents sent their kids to public school. The current survey's findings are comparable to those of a 2014 study on English language competency in Bulgarian primary public and private schools. In contrast to teachers in public schools, private school teachers are more likely to have additional English language diplomas, according to the study, and this helps students become proficient in the language. In addition, compared to public schools, which lacked these amenities, private schools had superior facilities, more comprehension substance, or access to the Internet for the enhancement of instruction and education process involving the foreign language. In 2019, Nancy made the argument that in-depth exposure to the English language has a significant impact on students' ability to learn the language in a classroom setting. This study found that when parents and instructors supported their students' exposure to English as a foreign language, their proficiency in the language increased as well as their ability to speak it fluently.

Rawan (2021) did a study on the subject of language learning challenges faced by English department students in high-level education. This study demonstrates that female students aged 11 and 12 had a modest degree of English language competency due to their background schooling being in an English-medium setting. As a result, some students learn English to just pass the board/school annual exams since they encounter linguistic hurdles while learning because their prior education was not in the English language. Due to the English language's role as a worldwide language, a study by Kocama (2017) showed that using the language was crucial for the growth of trade, the economy, and other areas. The Opiyo (2021) study found and suggested that Students' When students don't use or converse in the language inside or outside of the classroom, their proficiency in the English language can be diminished across all four language skills—reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This study demonstrates how using appropriate textbooks, charts, and dictionaries would improve students' early-level proficiency in the English language. According to the results of the current study, students in public schools are more confident than those in private schools because they believe that English is taught as a required subject and that, with the help of teachers, parents, and other motivational factors, they will eventually become fluent in the language. This is because public school students already have an average comprehension of speaking English.

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