

# **“The acquisition of common English language skills from the perspectives of educators and learners”**

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## Abstract

The current research aims at ensuring the significance of teaching English language skills from the perspectives of learners and educators. Furthermore, the research assists the types of English language skills clarifying their types and importance. The research reviews the role of both teachers and learners in acquiring the English language with making use of technological teaching tools. More importantly, the study recommends certain steps to enhance effective strategies in acquiring the language clarifying influential strategies and how to apply them in teaching the English language. In addition, it suggests some recommendations for educators and learners to help them in achieving the acquisition of the language perfectly .

**Keywords:** acquisition - learning strategies – perspectives – international - language skills- technological tools.

## المخلص

يهدف البحث الحالي إلى التأكد على أهمية تدريس مهارات اللغة الإنجليزية من وجهة نظر المتعلمين والمعلمين، كما يساعد البحث على تعزيز أنواع مهارات اللغة الإنجليزية موضعًا أنواعها وأهميتها. استعرض البحث دور كل من المعلمين والمتعلمين في اكتساب اللغة الإنجليزية مع الاستفادة من أدوات التدريس التكنولوجية. والأهم من ذلك أن الدراسة توصي بخطوات معينة لتعزيز الاستراتيجيات الفعالة في اكتساب اللغة وتوضيح الاستراتيجيات المؤثرة وكيفية تطبيقها في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. بالإضافة الي ذلك يقترح البحث بعض التوصيات للمعلمين والمتعلمين لكي تساعد في تحقيق اكتساب اللغة بشكل متقن.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** اكتساب - استراتيجيات تعلم - وجهات نظر - مهارات لغوية - أدوات تكنولوجية

### **the elements of the study**

- English language as an international language.
- English language acquisition theories and application.
- The significance of teaching the four skills in acquiring the English language.
- Teaching listening and speaking skills.
- Teaching reading and writing skills.
- The definition of English language learners (ELL).
- The role of learners in the acquisition of English language.
- The perception of educators in teaching the English language.
- The definition of technology.
- The use of technology in teaching English.

### **Introduction**

English has spread widely in recent years all over the world and has advanced as an international language specifically after the Second World War, and now it's used by millions of speakers all over the world. So, in over the past four decades teaching English as a second language has blossomed in several countries. We can figure out

that English language teaching has passed through ups and downs due to the attitudes people have shared in recent years. Actually, it has been proven that it is crucial to start thinking positively towards language acquisition teaching and learning as well. ( **Shatz, M., & Wilcox, S 1991**). **people use language to communicate their beliefs, knowledge to share their rules and cultural norms** . Therefore, weather for personal or professional reasons recognizing the importance of learning English will definitely help learners to achieve their goals.

### **English language as an international language**

In fact, we can ask ourselves why should we learn English? the answer will be realistic if you recognize that as the third most widely spoken language in the world, English is taught and widely spoken in over 118 countries and it is commonly used around the world as it is used in many fields such as trade, signs, aviation, computer, tourism and diplomacy.

English is the main language of international communication. In fact, English language is the official language in 53 countries and is considered the most common second language in the world. Nowadays, around 2 billion people in the world is studying English.

### English is the language of computers and Internet

As millions are using the Internet every day and visiting different websites which are all displayed in English, therefore learning English language gives access to over half the content of the Internet.

## English is the language of tourism

As English language is spoken as the first language in 35 countries learning English makes it easier to travel anywhere. As you can find everything written in English starting from airports to street signs. Therefore, learning English is not only useful and important but also gives you a lot of satisfaction and self-confidence.

## **English language acquisition theories and application**

It is really important to have an understanding about the process of acquiring a new language especially for educators to effectively meet the needs of English language learners. As it's clear that similar language and thinking processes are at play between acquiring a first language and acquiring another language.

The numbers of English language like monolingual learners acquire English through a series of developmental stages that form a continuum. So, we must realize that while all English language learners typically acquired English by passing through the same stages, the pace of acquisition varies greatly. Generally, English language students have a stronger receptive language skills (listening and reading) then productive skills (speaking and writing) and their lexical items will be stronger in any language they are exposed to the most often. As an English language learner could know the name of a word in one language but not in the other language. ( **Mohamed Salleh and others 2020**) we can figure out that other than the home language

**environmental factor, the children's language aptitude also contributes to their English acquisition..**

Theories about how people would learn a new language are driven from theories about how people learn a first language. Linguistic Stephen Kashen supports the idea that there is no difference between how people acquire their first language and how they acquire other languages. When people in general have acquired a language they don't need to think about the rules of the language Instead, there is a strong feeling that sentences sound right or sound wrong. On the other hand, learning a new language should include understanding things such as grammar and formal rules of the language.

Knowing about language acquisition and theories will help educators understand that language learning is a gradual process, and they should be away from the idea of forcing learners to present academic content until they have strong grasp on the language.

### **The significance of teaching the four skills in acquiring the English language**

English language consists of four skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing such skills are important in the acquisition of English language for example:

listening skills: improves imagination and increases the vocabulary of the learner. While listening we usually visualize the scene and memorize it in our memory.

speaking skills: as the learner speaks, he gets to know his own mistakes and can improve them further.

reading skills: reading a passage or a book helps in improving vocabulary and the concentration of the reader.

writing skills: when we write we know what we are writing and do we know the spelling of the words or not.

If any learner masters the four skills, then his English will automatically improve and gain self-confidence in presenting his skill.

### **Teaching listening and speaking skills**

We're learning a language first step we should acknowledge its skills to identify the best way of acquiring the language. to begin with, speaking and listening are considered an important set of literacy skills which will create the foundation to a lot of students further learning. Listening requires the fundamental skills of paying attention on the speaker to be able to hear and understand well what the speaker is saying. Also, it requires students to speak confidently, stay on to pick and speak with clarity. Identifying what are speaking and listening skills are crucial for acquiring the language as they are behaviors and actions we use to communicate effectively and here we have some examples of listening skills:

- 1- Concentrating on the speaker while they are talking.
- 2-Making gestures or movements to acknowledge what the speaker is saying as nodding and making appreciated comments.

speaking is the second basic skill which is considered one of the most difficult skills English language learners must face. While it is the most important of the four skills some learners complain that they have been studying English for many years but still they can't speak it fluently. The most difficult aspect of speaking English is that it is accomplished via interaction with other speakers which we hadn't been prepared for especially when we are faced with spontaneous communication and couldn't cope with simultaneous demands.

In fact, students need to communicate face to face sometimes or through the phone, asking for directions and chatting with friends.

Therefore, each of these situations requires different register related to the formality of the moment, and here are some examples of speaking skills:

1-Learners have to speak to be able to ask relevant and appropriate questions.

2-Using inside voices and speaking at suitable volume for each situation.

Finally. teaching listening and speaking skills in English language can be very different depending on the methodology by teachers. But what is really vital to develop during English classes to get all students learn English language entirely and encourage them to participate in class and to be able to do interaction activities to develop listening and speaking skills. Such activities allow learners to feel confident and more comfortable when they have to hold a conversation in English, and they make such skills more effective to get



perfect acquisition of the English language covering all the skills listening, speaking, reading and writing.

### Teaching reading and writing skills

Reading is considered one of the most important skills in the English language that learners have to acquire and from pedagogical perspective. It is noticed that we have interaction between reading and writing skills in English language. Actually, reading would improve writing at the beginning and advanced levels. They motivate students to use extensive reading for beginners' writing class as they realized that the outcome of a reading activity will serve as an input for writing.

**( Holm, A., & Dodd, B. (1996) The reading and spelling tasks showed no differences between the groups on real word processing.**

In addition, pleasure reading and assigned reading have proven to bring positive effect on developing composition skills. Regardless of the level of students, written texts actually emanate partly from long-term, self-initiated reading. Relatively, writing skills in English language is a good way for students to progress their reading skills. As writing is an act of understanding and can aid the reading process, students could be asked to write from their own experience about an event contained in the work that they are about to read. It will help learners to be better readers as they relate the text with their personal knowledge first, thus facilitating their comprehension of the skill of reading.

To sum up, we have to admit that the teaching of reading and writing cannot be torn apart, nor can they be organized in linear order so that one necessarily precedes the other.

## **The definition of English language learners (ELL)**

The English language learners is a term used for a person who learns English in addition to his native language. So, we have to put in mind that such learners are learning English while learning in English. So, they are learning and progressing in a new language. As a result, we should highlight the learning aspects of acquiring the new language instead of suggesting that learners with other native languages are in some way deficient.

### English language students in schools

To be fully aware that academic performance of English language learners can't be fully understood without considering their cultural, social, and economic characteristics. Therefore, we have to keep in mind that the educational achievements of English language learners like native English-speaking students can be influenced by a variety of background factors including parental educational attainment, family income and the structure.

It is obvious for educators that learners' experiences and background will impact how they learn. So, it is not expected that all learners will act and learn in the same way as learners develop language skills at different speeds. Also, it is important to know that some learners come to school with prior exposure to English while others may not be introduced to the English language until they Start learning English at schools.

### Educational programs used for English language learners

It should be noted that there is a wide variety of different types of educational programs for English language learners such as bilingual programs and English- only programs. English only programs may differ in the amount of help they allow, whereas bilingual programs can encompass anything from dual language to early exit programs.

As in dual language programs learners are taught content in two languages while early exit programs begin in the learners' native language and then gradually transition to completely English instruction.

In immersion programs, the learners' native language plays no role actually as such programs are being encouraged in many countries due to adoption of English- only legislation. That's why many countries have replaced bilingual programs with structured English immersion programs, which aim to use simple English in classroom with little to no attention on the learner's native language.

on the other hand, when using bilingual education programs learners will be able to further their language abilities in their native language learning the English language and improve reading and other academic skills and achievements.

### **The role of learners in the acquisition of English language**

As The English language plays an essential role in our world today and has become the language of communication, So it is considered now the main language for studying any subject all over the

world. English broadens their minds, develops emotional skills, improves the standard of living by providing job opportunities.

Moreover, the use of English language as an international language is growing with time as it is the language of communication in many countries and widely used in literature and media for publishing books. The writers write in English language due to the majority of readers know only English language and can express their ideas best in English. A learner of English language should put into consideration why he is learning English surely for gaining the following:

- 1-Gain confidence: if they have good communication skills then their confidence will sure be high.
- 2-Perfect communication: it is important to speak English effectively as people get impressed by those who have good communication skills.
- 3-Fulfill their goals early: if learners have effective English skills, they will help them to meet their career goals quickly.
- 4-Part of the global community: English is a part of the global world so if learners know good English, then they can interact with each other.
- 5-Effective personality: if learners speak fluently and with confidence anyone can get attracted.
- 6-More career prospects: the person who possess effective communication skills will have more career opportunities than others.

So for learners of English language, they realize the importance of learning English in their life and they have to do their best and work hard to acquire the language through the following steps:

- \* Speaking in English with friends and family members.
- \* Learning at least 10 new lexical items daily.
- \* Watching English news channels, serials, and movies to understand them.
- \* Making a diary and taking notes daily.
- \* Thinking in English and try to write stories to improve both writing and speaking skills.
- \* Never feel shy while making any conversation as no one is perfect and we have to learn by speaking.
- \* Using daily used items in English on a regular basis.
- \* Having native English speakers as friends, this will help them a lot learning English language skills.

Therefore, the English language can't be learned without the active cooperation and willing participation of learners themselves. As learning the language doesn't mean knowing it or about it. learners don't have to wait for the whole of English language to be learned first then they can use it since such a thing is not only impossible but also unnatural.

### **The perception of educators in teaching English language.**

Educators are considered one of the key factors for successful teaching concerning the English language. As they must meet high criteria to be qualified for teaching the language. Teachers who have positive attitudes towards English and teaching the language will

definitely influence learners' motivation to acquire the language. Therefore, we have different ways in which teachers can engage students effectively in the English teaching classes for example:

1- providing feedback which leads learners to recognize their next steps and how to take them.

**2- (Lessard-Clouston, M. 2018). Educators have to use pair work and occasionally small-group work in every class, including brainstorming, exchanges of ideas and opinions, information gap tasks, and so on.**

3- Sharing learning objectives with their students.

4- Engaging learners in peer and self-assessment.

5- Motivating confidence that every learner can improve.

6- Involving both learners and teachers in reviewing and reflecting on assessment information.

7 -Helping learners to recognize their intentions and develop their resources.

8-Teachers have to know students well enough to understand what they need and would like to do.

9- Direct learners' participation in pedagogically useful direction.

Furthermore, a successful teachers of English language should have certain characteristics such as:

\* Being aware of and question the values and assumptions they will bring to teaching.

- \* Examine and attempt to solve problems of classroom practice.
- \* Participate in curriculum development and are involved in school change efforts.
- \*Take the whole responsibility for their own professional development.

### **The definition of technology.**

Technology is defined as the way of doing a certain task, especially using technological methods, processes, or knowledge. Also, the use of technology not only includes machines like computers, but also involves structured relation with other machines, human and environment. From this definition we can figure out that we should have technology integration in teaching the English language which means that teachers have to use technology to perform similar activities more effectively. In addition, this will help them to re-shape the usage of these activities. By doing so, teachers can improve the educational environment and create opportunities for learners to complete their assignments on the computer rather than the normal way.

### **The use of technology in teaching English.**

Technology should be used by English language educators to enhance language and instructions, assessments, and practice to help learners to present their tasks easily and practice discrete skills with engaging online games and applications. Using technology is not good in itself as it is one tool to support language learners as they use the target language in appropriate ways to accomplish authentic tasks. All

language learning facilities, especially technology, should aim at developing proficiency in the target language through meaningful, interactive and cognitively engaging learning experiences. The development of technology is best driven by the essential needs of the English language learners to qualify our learners needs and support the kinds of interactions to become college, career , life and world- ready.

In addition, technology-enhanced teaching environment it's more effective than lecture-base class. As educators will find that methods of applying technology as a useful learning and instrument in acquiring the English language even if they are not computer experts. It is noticed that the application of technology has changed English teaching methods dramatically. It provides So many alternatives for making teaching more interesting and more productive in terms of advancement. On the contrary, we notice that in traditional classes teachers give lectures and explanations in front of learners using black or white boards which must be changed concerning the development of technology. In fact, the use of multimedia texts in English classrooms assist learners to be familiar with vocabulary, language structures and linguistic knowledge. We can apply technology in our English classes through the following:

- 1- Network communication: by having network communication and other classes we can ask learners to interact with English -speaking people and ask them to choose their favorite social network such as Instagram to convey meaningful communication in English.
- 2- Online games: learners can master speaking, vocabulary, grammar, and other English skills by playing games on computers or mobile devices that contain the use of vocabulary they have to practice daily.



3- Web quests: such quests are fun ways for learners to use the Internet to build English proficiency Through using databases of pre-created web quests.

4- Blogging: having class blog provides great forums for learners to practice their writing skills. As students will have life journal, Edu blog and the Blogger which all students will be asked to create blogs for free

5- Broadcasts: learners can listen to broadcasts to practice their listening skills and improve comprehension. Teachers can encourage their learners to create their own broadcast to give them the chance to practice their speaking skills.

6- Video and film: using short videos is an engaging way to improve learners' skills and increase their vocabulary to enhance comprehension. By doing so learners will use natural English which is suitable for young and older students.

To sum up, learners and educators should work integrally to enhance the teaching process through the available educational tools by which students will get fun and be educated at the same time. Realizing the importance of acquiring the four skills in English will be the first step for both learners and educators to start teaching English language clearly and in an easy way. and here we have some recommendations which can be beneficial for both learners and educators as well.

## Recommendations

- 1 -Professional development have to be specifically considered to assure learners' learning and change the attitude of educators unfamiliar with the advantages that technology provides in acquiring English language.
- 2 -Universities must regard technology as an important part of teaching and learning English language programs.
- 3 -Educators must be aware of their roles as facilitators and guides for their learners to master the English language perfectly.
- 4 -Teachers have to vary their techniques while teaching English language to help learners applying learner- centered instruction as opposed to teacher- centered instruction.
- 5 -Learners must make deliberate effort to learn without their teachers and try to depend on themselves to acquire more skills in learning the language.
- 6 -Learners should get audio and visual materials so they can hear and watch correct pronunciation and words so they can practice them daily to acquire the language easily.
- 7 -Cooperation is one of the most important tools for learning a language. So, learners have to work cooperatively to create tasks and learn from each other through reading and discussing their peers' work.
- 8 -Learners should use technology as a significant part of their English learning process.
- 9- Teachers have to model the use of technology to support the curriculum so that learners will be able to increase the use of technology in learning their English language skills.

**10-( Ur, P.2012) . Teachers have to get the knowledge and the skills needed to perform competently from the beginning of their teaching.**

11- Educator must adjust their teaching plan according to the curriculum standard as they have to know what educational approach is the most efficient one for their English language learners.

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