Investgating Language Learning Difficulties Among Non-Departmental Students

تقصي صعوبات تعلم اللغة للطلبة غير الاختصاص

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قسم اللغة الإنكليزية كلية التربية الأساسية جامعة ديالى

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Abstract

Language is a means of human communication.English language is considered an international language used by a great number of people around the world.Many countries give an interest for learning this language in different stages of learning . Depending on the primary observation, many of non-departmental students face difficulties in learning English that needs further exploration. This study is based on investigating difficulties of non-departmental students in language learning in their academic study.English Language is studied as a subject by students of Arabic as part of fulfillment to have MA degree. The study aims to investigate the difficulties faced by students in Diyala university –college of Basic education –MA-students at Arabic Department during the academic year 2023-2024 in learning English. A descriptive method is used for taking information from the respondents. Questionnaires and interviews are adopted for collected data. Analyzing data has hepled in finding out resultsof the research. This study aimes to investigate students difficulties in language learning. Quantitatively ,the information has analyzed. The results of the study show that students have difficulties in pronunciation ,vocabulary; grammar and translation.The study presents suitable suggestions and recommendations due to the aim of the research Keywords: English language Learning

ملخص عري

تقصي صعوبات تعلم اللغة الانكليزية للطلبة غير الأختصاص تعتبر اللغة بصورة عامة وسيلة اتصال بين البشروتعتبر اللغة الأنكليزية لغة عالمية تستخدم من قبل عدد كبير من الناس حول العالم والكثير من البلدان تعطي المزيد من الأهتمام لهذه اللغة في مراحل التعلم المختلفة.بالأعتماد على الملاحظة الأولية نجد الكثير من الطلبة من غير الاختصاص باللغة الأنكليزية لديهم عدد من الصعوبات في مجال تعلم اللغة وهذه تحتاج الى المزيد من التوضيح وهذه الدراسة تعتمد على تقصي الصعوبات التي تواجه الطلبة من غير الاختصاص في تعلم اللغة حيث تدرس اللغة الانكليزية كمادة دراسية من قبل طلبة قسم اللغة العربية كجزء من متطلبات نيل شهادة الماجستير .تهدف الدراسة الى ايجاد الصعوبات التي تواجه الطلبة في تعلم اللغة الأنكليزية في جامعة ديالى-كلية التربية الأساسية- قسم اللغة العربية للسنة الدراسية ٢٠٢٣- ٢٠٢٤ وقد استخدمت الطريقة الوصفية في الحصول على المعلومات من عينة البحث وتم استخدام الاستبيان والمقابلة من أجل الحصول على تلك المعلومات. ساعدت عملية تحليل المعلومات في الحصول على نتائج البحث حيث ان الدراسة تهدف الى ايجاد ومعرفة المشاكل بشكل كمي بينت الدراسة بان الطلبة لديهم صعوبات في التلفظ والمعاني وقواعد اللغة والترجمة وأساليب التدريس وضعف الحافزللتعلم وقد قدمت الدراسة مقترحات وتوصيات طبقا الى أهداف الدراسة.الكلمات المفناحية : تعلم اللغةالأنكليزية

1.Introduction

English language is a global language of many nations and organizations. Almost English is the main language of science and the professions. Onishchuk et al., (2020-4)stated that understanding the content may increase when students knowledge in English language because it is a global language used in different fields of life as education,science and technology. Agustina, D. (2012)emphsised on the term of Global English due to its role in communication among comunities and individuals as well. Many countries in the world, containing Iraq,work hard to build Englishlanguage proficiencyfor people in geneal and students in specific. According to B. Setiawan, (2010-11), English language is the greatest universally known language among students, permitting educational improvements to be reached appropriately.In Iraq, English is formally taught to students at all stages of education: at primary,secondary schools, and universities. Language skills take part in managing different kinds activities properly. Developing of foreign language skills is essential in order to manage the language properly Carter, R. &Nunan, D. (2002).Teachers can use class activities for improving language skills which helps to increase their knowledge. Therefore,the main aim of the study is to investigate the proplems of language learmimg of MA students at Arabic department in Diyala University - College of Basic Education in language learning.In higher education, the application of language skills can help to provide suitable learning strategies to students , In the process of language learning siyuation, language has a positive role in handling language skills of students. This supports to advance the skills that can help students grow their academic performances. In the academic field, language learning may help to create opportunities for students to understand the subject present studentds with knowledge .advance. English language consists of four basic skills; reading .writing ,listening and speaking.Teachers need certain techniques in order to teach theses skills effectively . E. M. Suri :2012-45) emphasises on selecting effective strategies in foreign language classrooms. Practice can help students in the management of language skills. Improving language skills in academics can help students in expressing language processes (Hill, F., Tieleman, O., von Glehn, T., Wong, N., Merzic, H., & Clark, S :2020:12).

2.Forgein Language Teaching and Learning

Foreign language learning and teaching have changed from teacher-centered teaching to learner centered teaching.(McKay, S.L. 2002 :3) .Selecting proper curruculum may participate in helping students improve their basicskills in language learning.Teachers can use effective teaching stratgies in order to reach tis aim. Newton, J., Ferris, D., Goh, C., Grabe, W., Stoller, F. & Vandergrift, L. (2018)states that language learning strategiesplay an important part of language learning particularly to non-departmental students because students need an interesting techniques helps them in undrstanding the content of the subject matter. Ortiz, Alba. A. (2007)states that each skill of language learning play a vital role in aquiring the language,Thus teachers may select teaching techniques that help to develop each skill properly. Many approaches and methods have presented modern techniques and strategies for language learning.These techniques are interested by students and play a positive role in language learning.Teaching a foreign language needs a well qualified teachers help students in having language skills in a simple way Thornbur, S. (2002) discucces that learning more than language give a chance to get additional information about different topics in academics .. language learning develops language skills by practice and participate in class activities. Furthermore, knowing more than one language can support self-confidence and assists in managing the problem-solving skills among students.MA textbook concerning English language is consisted of a number of chapters contaning international passages,questions,writing composition in certain topics and topics in basic structures in English language and basic cocepts in pronunciation .One of the basic needs are understanding the subject-matter then the ability to answer the questions orally and in a written form

3.METHODOLOGY

A descriptive method is used in this study to investigate the aim of the research. Data is collected by using a questionnaire and an interview .The sample of the study consisted of (14 male and female) of MA studentsof Arabic Department –College of Basic Education-Diyala University during the academic year 2023-2024 . Data were collected and analyzed due to the aim of the research

3.1Participants

The sample comprises of (14)MA students (females and males) of Arabic Department –College of Basic Education-Diyala University during the academic year 2023-2024 . Data were collected and analyzed due to the aim of the research

3.2 Instrument

Students' data is collected with the help of difficulties in learning English questionnaire.The tool includes both

closed and open ended items.four point scale (Strongly agree),(agree),(disagree) and (strongly disagree).

3.3 Procedure

A descriptive method is used in this study to investigate the aim of the research. Data is collected by using a questionnaires and an interviews for data collection, Each question were explained by the researcher and allowed time to respond. Approximately fifty minutes were allowed to students for completing the questionnaire.

3.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative as well as quantitative methods were used for data analysis. Percentageanalysis and draw findings according to the answers of students to the questionnare.It is analyzed statistically due to the aim of the research.Analyzing data revealed certain difficulties in language learning.

4.- RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

Teaching English to non-departmental students face many difficulties and challanges face students In the process of language learning.But,due to the importance of English language as an iternational language,certain interests may be presented to students concerning activate the positive role of teachers in language learning by adopting an interesting techniques in presenting language activities.Using modern teaching aids may add additional chance for learning language skills.These problems can not be considered as an excuse for giving up teaching language to non-departmental students but,it is a reason for finding out the best atmospher to teach English language in all fields and stages of learning. The results of the study states the main difficulties that face students in language learning.(Table No. 1) arranged according to the percentage degree **Table no. 1 Difficulties of language learning**

No.	Difficulties in language learning	Percentage of Difficulty	Notes
1 1.	Translation	85.71	
2 2.	Vocabulary	78.57	
3 3.	Grammar	71.42	
4 4.	Pronunciation	64.28	
5.	Teaching techniques and learning atmosphere	57.14	
6.	low motivation and low efficiency in English learning	35.71	

4.2 Discussion

Due to analyzing data ,the results of the study revealed that students face eal difficulties in language learning. The results of data analysis show that there are six difficulties face MA students at Arabic Department in learning English language.The results will be discussed according to their percentage degree as follows:-

A-Prooblems in translation (85.71%)

Participants agree that they have a problem related to translating the English texts and passages to Arabic language in order to understand the subject.Lack of meaning leads to failing of comprehending the language in its different forms.Students need practice in order to acquire meaning of new words and expressions.

B-lack of Vocabulary (78.57%)

Students have a limited number of English language vocabulary.Lack of vocabulary leads to unability to use the language skills properly as these skills need an accepted average of vocabulary in order to communicate with others successfully.This problem needs serious attention by teachers to increase the average of vocabulary and improve their language skills.Without sufficient knowledge of vocabulary,students are unable to use language skills for communication.

D-Problems in English language Structure (71.42%)

One of the basic sruggles of foreign language learning is that English language structure is completely different from the structure of students mother tongue.Students need alot to have practice about language structure in order to lessen the contrast in the structure of the foreign and mother language among students.

E-Problems in Pronunciation (64.28%)

Difficulty in pronouncing certain words or expressions lead to unability in using the oral skills of language.In addition,certain sound are found in English languge but not found in Arabic language (mother language of students). some of the English words or expressions have different form of pronunciation unlike their spelling.t.Poor pronunciation of students makes students unable to express their ability to speak the language properly. The correct pronunciation of students improve their confidence in their performing English language.Students sometimes are unable to express themselves or not understood by teachers due to their weak pronunciation.

E. Teaching Techniques and Atmospher of language learning (57.14%)Some students afirm that language learning atmosphere does not support their achievement concerning language learning.Poor learning atmosphere participate indirectly of developing students language skills. learning atmosphere is one of the considerable factors in building students' English proficiency. Learning environment may contain the time of the lecture, the classmates, teachers, and teaching strategies. The time is limited to once a week,so,learners need additional time to practice the language with thir teachers. Waekness of media inside the classroom affects on language learning.Using interesting teaching aids help students in understanding the materials presented by teachers.It has a vital role in language learning in addition of saving time and effort.F-weakness in motivation 35.71%

Some of students have weakness in motivation towards language learning.The lesson is boring and they want to pass the course ony.Teachers may motivate students by using different kinds of teaching techniques and changestudents attitude toward language learning.. They need more interesting and enjoyable techniques in learning process. These suggested techniques may help students in language learning.Scholars emphasize on the role of motivation in all the stages of language learning.

5.CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study investigated the difficulties of language learning and explored them according to its percentage degree.Students difficultiesare;: lack of vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties, unexpected learning atmosphere, difficulty in translating certin word or expressions ,English language structure and less motivation.Teachers may give an interest to these difficulties and find out solution s for each one. Interesting teaching techniques can be a solution to reduce some of these difficulties.Teaches have a great task by dealing with these difficulties seriously .Nowadays alot of teaching stratedies and techniques are created and approved its positive role in foreign language learning in all stages of language learning.Each skill of language needs certian techniques for teaching.Thus a well-qualified teachers have a big responsibility to make the English language lesson interesting in order to give a chance to students manage the basic language skills or at least reduce these

6-Suggestions and Recommendations

English Language learning is one of the interested topic in learning.It has an imortant role in the devekopement of communities and individuals.Thus a great interest can be given for learning this language in all stages of learning.Teachers have an impotant role in the process of learning.According to the importance of English language learning,the researcher may suggest further studies about language learning.It my give an interest to the role and effect of each of language skills; reading,writing ,listening and speaking on language learning . The studt recommends to give an interest for teaching techniques because it is considered as a key for language learning properly.

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