

FACTORS AFFECTING THE LEVEL OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY AMONG THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AT SULU STATE UNIVERSITY

Fatima Ayesha Ventura, Prof. Nelson U. Julhamid, PhD
School of Graduate Studies, Sulu State College, Jolo, Sulu, 4700, Philippines
*Corresponding author: sscgspub@sulustatecollege.edu.ph

ABSTRACT. This descriptive-correlational study used a sample of 100 students chosen through purposive selection to assess the English proficiency levels of college students at Sulu State University for the Academic Year 2025–2026. Weighted mean, standard deviation, one-way ANOVA, t-tests for independent samples, and Pearson's *r* were among the statistical techniques used in the investigation. Important conclusions include: 1) According to the respondents' demographic profile, the majority are female, between the ages of 21 and 31, have parents who only completed elementary school, and make an average of 10,000 pesos or less per month. 2) It was discovered that college students had a high level of overall English language competency. According to the study, a number of elements, including environmental influences, educational experiences, and individual motivation, are important in determining how well kids speak English. Students' proficiency levels are significantly influenced by factors like motivation, cognitive abilities, and emotional aspects like anxiety and self-confidence. 3) However, factors like gender, age, parental education, and family income did not significantly mediate how students assessed their English proficiency levels. 4) The study found a significant relationship between students' competence in comparison to peers, the degree of influencing factors, and the significance of these elements with regard to English proficiency. 5) The results also support Krashen's Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theory (1982), with a focus on the Affective Filter Hypothesis, which holds that learners' emotions, including motivation and anxiety, can have a major impact on language acquisition. In conclusion, this study highlights the significance of diverse influences on English language proficiency among the college population while aligning with established language acquisition theories. The Input Hypothesis was also highlighted, indicating that language exposure slightly exceeding the student's current ability is crucial for effective learning.

KEYWORDS: *English Proficiency, New Language, Importance of Exposure, Comprehensible English, Influences*

ARTICLE DETAILS

JEAS-00106; Received: February 5, 2026; Accepted: February 26, 2026; Published: March 17, 2026

CITATION:

Ventura, F.A., Julhamid, N.U. (2026). "FACTORS AFFECTING THE LEVEL OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY AMONG THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AT SULU STATE UNIVERSITY." *Journal of Education and Academic Settings*, 3(1). DOI: 10.62596/q29wzs83

COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2026 by author(s). *Journal of Education and Academic Settings* is published by Stratworks Research Inc. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), allowing redistribution and reproduction in any format or medium, provided the original work is cited or recognized.

INTRODUCTION

In an era propelled by globalization, proficiency in the English language stands as a cornerstone for academic excellence, professional growth, and socio-cultural integration. English

proficiency is especially important at Sulu State University's dynamic educational environment since it gives students access to a variety of possibilities and paths to success in a world that is becoming more interconnected by the day. This concept is consistent with Chavez, Adalia, and Alberto's (2023) findings that the English language might influence children's ambitions and zeal. The main indicators of parents' motivation to teach their children English were competency, application, reputation, and optimism. Listening comprehension, oral communication, reading comprehension, and written expression are just a few of the skills that make up English proficiency, a complicated and multidimensional concept that is crucial for academic success, particularly for students in higher education institutions where English is the primary language of instruction (Jo, 2021).

Numerous factors, from linguistic competency and cognitive talents to socioeconomic background and educational experiences, have an impact on learning English as a second or foreign language (Ahsan et al., 2020). Effective English communication goes beyond simple language proficiency; it fosters intellectual growth, provides access to a wide range of scholarly materials, and serves as a conduit for worldwide communication and cooperation. English proficiency emerged as a critical success factor at Sulu State University, where a diverse student body sought to succeed academically and professionally.

Despite acknowledging the importance of English proficiency, Sulu State University students continued to face obstacles in reaching the highest level of language proficiency. The complexities of learning and mastering English in a particular school setting require a thorough investigation of the many variables affecting language competency and acquisition. These factors combined to influence a person's capacity to interact with others from different cultures, handle academic pressures, and communicate in English. This concept is consistent with Chavez's (2022) study. These narratives are collaborative materials that schools can take into account when creating the English Language Teaching Curriculum. The difficulties encountered by students from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds underscore the necessity of comprehending the factors influencing English language acquisition and creating focused interventions to support their academic success (Gardiana et al., 2023).

Proficiency in the English language was essential for success in both the workplace and higher education. However, reaching high proficiency levels can be difficult, especially for students who have little exposure to the English language or come from non-English speaking homes. It is crucial to comprehend the variables that affected university students' English proficiency levels in order to enhance language learning initiatives and assist this demographic's accomplishment in both their academic and professional endeavors. Self-assurance is directly related to the capacity to express ideas and feelings, which is frequently impeded by communication difficulties; people who are more confident in themselves typically speak English more fluently (Bakhtiar & Suwandi, 2022). It was unclear how the many cultural origins of Sulu State University's student body might be affecting their English skills. In order to comprehend how these factors might be influencing language learning outcomes and to offer suggestions for how these factors might be addressed in language learning programs, this study sought to identify the factors influencing the level of English proficiency among university students at Sulu State University.

The results of this study have the potential to influence Sulu State University's language learning policies and procedures as well as offer advice to teachers and students on how to best assist the growth of English proficiency. Furthermore, this study may advance our knowledge of the variables affecting language acquisition and proficiency in general, which may have consequences for language learning in other settings.

LITERATURE

A solid basis based on accepted theories, empirical research, and academic insights is necessary for the investigation of the variables influencing students' English proficiency. Using both traditional theories and current research findings, this chapter provides a thorough analysis of the literature on English language competency.

This review attempts to clarify the current level of knowledge in the subject, highlight prevailing themes and gaps, and place the current study within the larger academic debate by combining various views, approaches, and empirical data. According to a study by Entong, Garil, Muarip, and Chavez (2024), speakers who have deep emotional links are better at explaining complex ideas and creating a welcoming, supportive environment in the classroom. This link enhances learning because pupils are more likely to remember and process knowledge related to emotional reactions. People can retain knowledge for a long time through body language, tone of voice, facial expressions, storytelling, humor, and personal narratives. The examined literature includes a variety of sources, such as foundational books, current scholarly articles, and studies that are pertinent to the area.

English proficiency is still a crucial factor in determining success in the global academic environment, especially for students from non-English-speaking nations. The learning and mastery of English are influenced by a variety of interconnected factors, including psychological and emotional components as well as socioeconomic, environmental, and institutional impacts, according to international literature.

A study by Lam Ky Nhan (2024) assessed the English speaking skills of English majors at a Vietnamese university, identifying four main factors influencing proficiency: language anxiety, exposure to English beyond the classroom, self-confidence, and motivation. These factors affect not only verbal communication but also overall language proficiency. Supporting this, research by Ceneciro, Estoque, and Chavez (2023) indicated that participation in competitive debates can alleviate public speaking anxiety and highlight areas for grammatical and vocabulary improvement. Nhan emphasized the importance of engaging language exercises and a low-stress classroom environment in enhancing student performance. These findings are particularly relevant to the context at Sulu State University in the Philippines, where students may experience anxiety from cultural and linguistic challenges. A broader review by Tayyab, Imran, and Arif (2023) identified additional environmental factors, such as limited access to learning resources and emotional barriers, which significantly affect English speaking abilities in EFL contexts. The study underscores the need for institutional support and resource accessibility in addressing the systemic challenges faced by students in underfunded or rural educational settings like Sulu State University.

According to Maramag-Manalastas and Batang's (2024) study on cognitive processing issues among Isabela State University students, 68% of them had trouble understanding grammar and remembering terminology, which hindered the growth of their English competence. Additionally, their study revealed that worry and low self-esteem were significant obstacles to successful language learning (Maramag-Manalastas & Batang, 2024).

Numerous studies show that psychological factors have a significant impact on pupils' English competence. For instance, low language use and poor performance have been repeatedly linked to language anxiety. According to a study by Yusop, Gatchalian, and Ruiz (2022), pupils who felt more nervous when speaking English did much worse than those who felt more confident. This theory is consistent with the findings of Adelia, Chavez, et al. (2025), who found that students unintentionally adopted grammatical structures and language patterns by watching social media

interactions and influencers, prioritizing tone and clarity over rigorous grammar rules. The researchers also highlighted the importance of peer interaction and the classroom environment in controlling anxiety levels.

When taken as a whole, these international studies highlight how complex English proficiency is. They agree that learners' performance is significantly shaped by psychological characteristics like anxiety and confidence, contextual factors like classroom assistance and exposure to English, and socioeconomic factors like family income and parental education. This concept is consistent with Chavez's (2020) results that the respondents' health insecurities comprised anxiety, fear, despair, and borderline anxiety. They used open communication with others as one of their adaptive techniques. The present study's focus on both internal (motivation, self-confidence) and external (demographic profile, classroom environment) elements is justified by these findings, which also provide strong theoretical and empirical support.

This study adds to a more complex understanding of English competence by analyzing how these global findings relate to Sulu State University's local educational environment. It emphasizes how crucial it is to implement context-specific treatments and policies that are based on both regional realities and global best practices.

METHODS

1. Research Design

A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was used in this investigation. While the correlational component establishes the connections and distinctions between demographic variables (such as gender, age, parents' educational attainment, and monthly income) and English proficiency indicators, the descriptive component identifies and characterizes the respondents' demographic traits and degree of English proficiency. This architecture is suitable because it makes it possible to use statistical techniques to analyze patterns, trends, and possible correlations among measured variables.

2. Research Locale

The study was carried out at Sulu State University, a public university in Jolo, Sulu, Philippines. The university is a good place to study the elements that affect English competence in a multicultural learning environment since it serves a varied student body from a range of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

3. Participants of the Study

The study's respondents were chosen from among Sulu State University's enrolled students for the 2024–2025 academic year. These students represent a wide range of academic backgrounds and disciplines and come from different universities within the institution. Students enrolled in general education courses that require English communication skills were the main focus of the admission criterion.

4. Sampling Procedure

In order to guarantee that the sample fairly represents various subgroups within the student population, such as age, gender, year level, and academic program, this study employed a non-probability sampling strategy using a purposive sampling technique. Following demographic stratification, university students were purposefully selected as responders to guarantee proportionate representation, irrespective of year level.

5. Research Instrument

A structured survey questionnaire that was modified from Islam & Stapa (2021) was used in this study to collect data on respondents' demographics, English proficiency levels, and

perceived factors influencing language acquisition. Three sections made up the questionnaire: Part I concentrated on the demographic profile, which included monthly income, parental educational achievement, age, and gender. Three subcategories were used in Part II to evaluate English proficiency: Perceived Level of Proficiency Compared to Other Students (10 items), Importance of Factors Related to English Proficiency (15 items), and Extent of Influencing Factors (20 items). A five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), was used to score each item in Parts II and III. The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) by Horwitz (1985) and earlier research by Islam & Stapa (2021) and Tang (2022), which focused on self-perceived proficiency and influential factors like motivation, exposure, and instructional quality, served as the basis for the items.

6. Data Gathering Procedure

The Research Ethics Committee and the University President received a letter granting permission to carry out the study. Depending on the accessibility of the students, survey questionnaires were either provided manually or digitally. The responses were gathered, verified for accuracy, and coded. Data was exclusively utilized for scholarly purposes, and respondent identities were kept private.

7. Ethical Considerations

The ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects were followed in this work. All respondents gave their informed consent prior to data collection, and participation was entirely voluntary. The research's goals, methods, possible hazards, and advantages were all explained in detail. Participants' identities were secured, and personal information was either withheld or encoded to guarantee confidentiality and anonymity. All of the data gathered was only utilized for thesis-related academic objectives. The researcher made sure there would be no psychological, emotional, or physical harm, and the study tool was thoroughly examined to make sure there was no objectionable or intrusive material. Prior to data collection, the project was approved by Sulu State University's Research Ethics Committee and adhered to its ethical norms.

RESULTS

1. What is the level of the Language proficiency of the University Students of Sulu State University in terms of: 1.1 Extent of factors that influence the level of English proficiency; 1.2 Importance of factors in relation to English proficiency; and 1.3 Level of English proficiency when compared to other students?

Table 1.1 In the context of Extent of factors that influence the level of English proficiency

	Factors that influence the level of English proficiency	Mean	S.D.	Rating
1	I am studying English to be more at ease with people who speak English	4.0400	.54901	Agree
2	To learn English, it is important for students to look for the definition of every new word from a dictionary.	4.1700	.60394	Agree
3	It is important for a student to monitor their own learning in English.	4.1400	.60336	Agree
4	Children learn a foreign language more easily than adults.	4.1100	.58422	Agree
5	To learn English, it is important to have an opportunity to express opinions in my English classes.	4.2000	.58603	Agree
6	The most important part of learning English is learning vocabulary words.	4.1500	.57516	Agree
7	I am studying English to make myself a more knowledgeable person.	4.1700	.56951	Agree
8	Some languages are easier to learn than others.	4.1400	.55085	Agree
9	To learn English, it is important to practice conversation with other students several times.	4.1600	.56354	Agree
10	I am studying English to get a good job.	4.1800	.62571	Agree
11	The most important part of learning English is mastering the grammar.	4.1800	.62571	Agree
12	It is important to speak English with excellent pronunciation.	4.1900	.66203	Agree

13	I am studying English to gain the respect of other people.	4.2900	.70058	Agree
14	It is important to know how the English I have learned can be used in everyday life.	4.2600	.67600	Agree
15	To learn English, it is important to have a supportive teacher of English.	4.3200	.63373	Agree
16	It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.	4.2900	.64031	Agree
17	It is important to have a classmate who is interested in learning English.	4.2900	.62434	Agree
18	To learn English, it is important to work in the whole class.	4.2700	.61718	Agree
19	To learn English, it is acceptable for students to attempt a word they don't know in English.	4.2200	.62893	Agree
20	To most people in my country, it is important to be able to speak English.	4.2200	.62893	Agree
Total Weighted Mean		4.1995	.33216	Agree

Legend: (5) 4.50-5.0=Strongly Agree (SA); (4) 3.50 – 4.49=Agree (A); (3) 2.50 – 3.49=Neutral (N); (2) 1.50 – 2.49=Disagree (D); (1) 1.00 – 1.49=Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 1.1, students at Sulu State University reported a total weighted mean score of 4.1995 regarding factors influencing their English proficiency, classified as "Agree." Personal, environmental, and educational elements are important influences, with motivators like language exposure, cognitive abilities, and emotional factors like anxiety and self-confidence. Students stressed the need of studying English for social ease, using dictionaries, keeping an eye on their own learning, expanding their vocabulary, and engaging in peer conversations. These results highlight the variety of factors influencing university students' acquisition of the English language.

Table 1.2 In the context of Importance of factors in relation to English proficiency

Importance of factors in relation to English proficiency		Mean	S.D.	Rating
1	To learn English, it is important to watch TV programs in English outside the classroom.	4.1200	.64008	Agree
2	To clarify a problem with English, it is important to search for information from several resources.	4.1500	.59246	Agree
3	To learn English, it is important to use real-life activities in the classroom.	4.1700	.55149	Agree
4	I am studying English to better understand and appreciate American arts and literature.	3.9900	.55949	Agree
5	People who are good at mathematics or sciences are not good at learning foreign languages.	4.0000	.55048	Agree
6	It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.	4.0900	.55222	Agree
7	To learn English, it is important to repeat words and phrases several times by oneself.	4.1500	.60927	Agree
8	It is important to learn new concepts by relating them to things that I already know.	4.2200	.59595	Agree
9	To learn English, it is important that students have good communication with their teachers of English.	4.2100	.60794	Agree
10	I am studying English to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups.	4.2500	.55732	Agree
11	To learn English, it is acceptable for students to attempt a word they don't know in English.	4.1900	.63078	Agree
12	It is important for my teachers to know what classroom activities work best to help me learn listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English.	4.1500	.68718	Agree
13	To learn English, it is important to read printed materials in English outside the classroom.	4.2000	.69631	Agree
14	To learn English, it is important to have a skillful teacher.	4.3000	.61134	Agree
15	To learn English, it is important to work individually with a teacher.	4.3200	.60101	Agree
Total Weighted Mean		4.1673	.36521	Agree

Legend: (5) 4.50-5.0=Strongly Agree (SA); (4) 3.50 – 4.49=Agree (A); (3) 2.50 – 3.49=Neutral (N); (2) 1.50 – 2.49=Disagree (D); (1) 1.00 – 1.49=Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 1.2 reflects Sulu State University students' English proficiency levels; a weighted mean score of 4.1673 indicates broad agreement among respondents. The following factors have been found to have a significant impact on English proficiency: exposure to English-speaking contexts, teaching strategies, self-motivation, and confidence. The importance of watching English-language television, using a variety of resources, practicing the language in real-world situations, appreciating American literature and art, opinions about math and science students' language proficiency, and the difficulties of speaking and comprehending as opposed to reading and writing were all highlighted by the students. It was also considered crucial to practice words and sentences on one's own.

Table 1.3 In the context of Level of English proficiency when compared to other students

Importance of factors in relation to English proficiency		Mean	S.D.	Rating
1	It is important to practice English with native English speakers.	4.0707	.55792	Agree
2	The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language.	4.0700	.55514	Agree
3	To learn English, it is important for my native language to have similar grammar to English.	4.0900	.63715	Agree
4	I am studying English to gain the respect of other people.	4.1700	.63652	Agree
5	A non-native English speaker who speaks English fluently has a better opportunity to get a job.	4.2100	.60794	Agree
6	To learn English, it is important for my native language to have similar pronunciation to English.	4.2200	.64479	Agree
7	To learn English, it is important to have a native English speaker as a friend to converse with outside the classroom.	4.1900	.66203	Agree
8	To learn English, it is important for the writing system of my native language to be similar to English.	4.1800	.64165	Agree
9	To learn English, it is important for one's native language to be similar to English.	4.2400	.60503	Agree
10	To learn English, it is important to work with other students in pairs or small groups.	4.1800	.64165	Agree
Total Weighted Mean		4.1623	.47679	Agree

Legend: (5) 4.50-5.0=Strongly Agree (SA); (4) 3.50 – 4.49=Agree (A); (3) 2.50 – 3.49=Neutral (N); (2) 1.50 – 2.49=Disagree (D); (1) 1.00 – 1.49=Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 1.3 describes Sulu State University students' levels of English proficiency, with a total weighted mean score of 4.1623 and a standard deviation of 0.47679, classified as "Agree." The data shows that students recognize substantial gaps in vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension when compared to native speakers. Fluency and structured writing difficulties are also mentioned. The significance of practicing with native speakers, translation abilities, and grammatical parallels between English and their original tongue were highlighted by the respondents. Additionally, it was thought to improve their learning to have a companion who speaks English as their first language for conversational practice outside of the classroom.

2. Is there a significant difference in the level of English proficiency of the University students of Sulu State University when data are grouped according to: 2.1 Gender; 2.2 Age; 2.3 Parent's educational attainment; and 3.4 Parent's monthly income?

Table 2.1 According to Gender

VARIABLES	Grouping	Mean					
		Mean	S. D.	Difference	t	Sig.	Description
Extent of factors that influence the level of English proficiency	Male	4.2030	.33376	.00527	.074	.941	Not Significant
	Female	4.1978	.33387				

Importance of factors in relation to English proficiency	Male	4.1576	.37706	-.01456	-.187	.852	Not Significant
	Female	4.1721	.36203				
Level of English proficiency when compared to other students	Male	4.1343	.53343	-.04178	-.410	.683	Not Significant
	Female	4.1761	.44995				

*Significant at alpha 0.05

Table 2.1 provides a gender-specific comparison of Sulu State University's English proficiency levels. At an alpha level of .05, the mean performance disparities between male and female students are not statistically significant. This suggests that gender does not confer any benefit in these assessments, as both genders evaluate their English proficiency levels identically. As a result, student evaluations of their English skill are not significantly influenced by the gender variable. Therefore, the hypothesis that "There is no significant difference in the level of English proficiency of the University students of Sulu State University when the data are grouped according to the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of gender" is deemed acceptable.

Table 2.2 According to Age

SOURCES OF VARIATION		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Extent of factors that influence the level of English proficiency	Between Groups	.014	1	.014	.122	.728	Not Significant
	Within Groups	10.909	98	.111			
	Total	10.922	99				
Importance of factors in relation to English proficiency	Between Groups	.237	1	.237	1.795	.183	Not Significant
	Within Groups	12.967	98	.132			
	Total	13.204	99				
Level of English proficiency when compared to other students	Between Groups	.012	1	.012	.052	.819	Not Significant
	Within Groups	22.494	98	.230			
	Total	22.506	99				

*Significant at alpha 0.05

Table 2.2 investigates the age-grouped English proficiency levels of Sulu State University students. There are no significant differences at alpha .05, according to the F-ratios and P-values for each subcategory. This result implies that students' evaluations of their English proficiency are unaffected by age differences. In particular, when it comes to assessing English competence, older students (31 years and older) do not significantly outperform younger groups (20 years and younger, and 21–30 years old). Because age does not significantly mediate these assessments, the premise that there are no significant disparities in respondents' English proficiency levels based on age demographics is accepted.

Table 2.3 According to Parent's Educational Attainment

SOURCES OF VARIATION		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Extent of factors that influence the level of English proficiency	Between Groups	.482	4	.121	1.097	.362	Not Significant
	Within Groups	10.440	95	.110			
	Total	10.922	99				
	Between Groups	.183	4	.046	.333	.855	

Importance of factors in relation to English proficiency	Within Groups	13.022	95	.137			Not Significant
	Total	13.204	99				
Level of English proficiency when compared to other students	Between Groups	.211	4	.053	.225	.924	Not Significant
	Within Groups	22.294	95	.235			
	Total	22.506	99				

*Significant alpha .05

Table 2.3 examines the relationship between the educational achievement of parents and the English proficiency levels of Sulu State University students. Parental education has little effect on pupils' self-evaluations of their English ability, according to F-ratios and P-values that show no significant differences at the alpha.05 level. When compared to students whose parents have less education, even those with doctorates do not exhibit an advantage. This supports the idea that adolescents' judgments of their English competence are not much impacted by parental education.

Table 2.4 According to Parent's Average Monthly Income

SOURCES OF VARIATION		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Extent of factors that influence the level of English proficiency	Between Groups	.367	2	.183	1.684	.191	Not Significant
	Within Groups	10.556	97	.109			
	Total	10.922	99				
Importance of factors in relation to English proficiency	Between Groups	.445	2	.223	1.693	.189	Not Significant
	Within Groups	12.759	97	.132			
	Total	13.204	99				
Level of English proficiency when compared to other students	Between Groups	.123	2	.061	.265	.767	Not Significant
	Within Groups	22.383	97	.231			
	Total	22.506	99				

*Significant alpha .05

Table 2.4 F-ratios and P-values above the alpha threshold of .05 show that there are no significant differences in the English proficiency levels of Sulu State University students based on their parents' average monthly income. When it comes to evaluating their own English competence, students from higher parental income levels do not have an edge over those from lower income brackets. Therefore, it is believed that parental income has no bearing on the assessment of English proficiency.

3. Is there a significant correlation among the sub-categories subsumed under the level of the English proficiency of the University students of Sulu State University?

Dependent	Variables		Pearson <i>r</i>	Sig	N	Description
	Independent					
Factors that influence the level of English proficiency	Importance of factors in relation to English proficiency		.660**	.000	100	High
	Level of English proficiency when compared to other students		.671**	.000	100	High
Importance of factors in relation to English proficiency	Level of English proficiency when compared to other students		.624**	.000	100	High

*Correlation Coefficient is significant at alpha .05

Correlation Coefficient Scales Adopted from Hopkins, Will (2002):

0.0-0.1=Nearly Zero; 0.1-0.30=Low; .3-0.5 0=Moderate; .5-0.7-0=High; .7-0.9= Very High; 0.9-1=Nearly Perfect

Table 3 reveals a strong relationship between the subcategories influencing English proficiency at Sulu State University. At an alpha level of .05, the Pearson Correlation Coefficients demonstrate strong positive correlations between: 1) the importance of factors influencing proficiency; 2) these factors and students' proficiency levels in comparison to peers; and 3) the significance of factors and proficiency levels in relation to peers. The hypothesis of no significant association is rejected since this suggests that students who prioritize particular influencing factors tend to rate their proficiency levels similarly.

DISCUSSION

1.) On the level of the Language proficiency of the University Students of Sulu State University

At Sulu State University, personal, environmental, and educational factors are all considered to have a significant impact on English competence. Motivation, linguistic exposure, cognitive capacity, and affective characteristics like fear and self-confidence have all been recognized as important drivers. According to a study by Zhao, Hassan, and Burhanuddin (2024), the mesosystem stresses the function of digital learning tools, whilst the microsystem level focuses on the connections between teachers, families, and students. The ecosystem level deals with more general factors like mass media and socioeconomic position. Furthermore, Nhan, K.L. (2024) addresses speaking proficiency issues among English majors at a Vietnamese university, advocating for improved language teaching methods and encouraging learning settings to boost speaking abilities.

2.) On the Differences in the level of English proficiency of the University students of Sulu State University

Based on a variety of demographic factors, there is no discernible variation in the degree of English competence among Sulu State University students. This result applies to parents' average monthly income, age, gender, and level of education. The constant results across these categories imply that the university students' English proficiency levels are unaffected by these demographic characteristics.

3.) On the Correlation among the sub-categories subsumed under the level of English proficiency of the University students of Sulu State University

The several subcategories pertaining to students' English proficiency levels at Sulu State University are strongly positively correlated. The student respondents who gave the elements affecting their English proficiency a "High Extent" or "Agree" rating are probably the same people who assessed the significance of these factors and their own degree of English proficiency in a similar way. This implies that the group has a consistent assessment pattern concerning the impact of specific elements as well as their proficiency levels in relation to their peers.

CONCLUSION

This study looks at Sulu State University students' English language competency and finds that the student body is fairly represented in terms of gender, age, parental educational background, and economic levels. The results show that pupils have a high average level of English proficiency, which they attribute to a combination of educational, environmental, and personal factors. Interestingly, factors like gender, age, parental education, and income do not significantly mediate how students perceive their English proficiency. Key drivers include motivation, exposure to language, cognitive abilities, and emotional aspects like self-confidence

and anxiety, all of which play significant roles in the development of language skills. According to Krashen's Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theory, the study supports the affective filter hypothesis, which holds that emotions like motivation and anxiety have a significant impact on language acquisition. It also shows a strong correlation between the degree of influential factors, the significance of these factors regarding English proficiency, and comparisons of proficiency levels among students. Learners may become less proficient in English if they are anxious or unmotivated. The input hypothesis, which emphasizes the significance of meaningful and understandable exposure to the language, is also mentioned. It claims that students gain the most from language exposure that pushes them just over their current proficiency level.

REFERENCES

- Adalia, H.G., Chavez, J.V., Hayudini, M.A.A., et al., (2025). "Relevance of Grammar among Gen Z College Students Using Social Learning Perspectives". *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, 7(3): 432–450. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i3.8401>
- Ahsan, M., Asgher, T., & Hussain, Z. (2020). The effects of shyness and lack of confidence as psychological barriers on EFL learners' speaking skills: a case study of South Punjab. *Global Regional Review*, 2, 109-119.
- Alaya, M. & Muñoz, J. (2023). Anxiety And Self-Confidence in Second Language Learning. *Journal Of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 8(1).
- Ashcraft, A. (2023). Effects of Socioeconomic Status on English Language Learners' Success in School.
- Asio, H., & Quijano, M. (2023). English Proficiency and Academic Performance of University Students. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis*.
- Bakhtiar, M. R., & Suwandi, S. (2022). The psychological factors impact on the students' speaking skill. *English Education Journal*, 12(3), 356-363.
- Britten M. Aton, Jeny Liza C. Canumay, Dhallyn G. Lapasaran, Yomi Gale C. Pascual, Jeniclaire L. Segundino, & Reynaldo V. Moral, Phd. (2024). Vocabulary Proficiency and Language Skills Development of English Majors: Various Factors and Significant Impacts. *Texas Journal of Philology, Culture and History*, 27, 11–22.
- Ceneciro, C.C., Estoque, M.R., Chavez, J.V., (2023). "Analysis of Debate Skills to the Learners' Confidence and Anxiety in the Use of the English Language in Academic Engagements". *Journal of Namibian Studies History Politics Culture* 33:4544-4569 DOI: 10.59670/jns.v33i.2812
- Chavez, J.V., Adalia, H.G., Alberto, J.P., (2023). "Parental support strategies and motivation in aiding their children learn the English language". *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. <http://doi.org/10.59400.fl.s.v5i2.1541>
- Chavez, J.V., (2022). "Narratives of Bilingual Parents on the Real-Life Use of English Language: Materials for English Language Teaching Curriculum". *Arab World English Journal* 13(3):325-338 DOI: 10.24093/awej/vol13no3.21
- Chavez, J.V., (2020). "Academic and Health Insecurities of Indigent Students during Pandemic: Study on Adaptive Strategies under Learning Constraints". *Journal of Multidisciplinary in Social Sciences*. 16(3): 74-81.
- Charttrakul, T., & Damnet, S. (2021). The impact of class size on speaking confidence among Thai pre-service teachers. *Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*, 15(2), 45–60.

- Daianne, D. S. (2022). Determinants Of English Language Proficiency of Freshmen Education Students. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*, 3(6), 999-1010.
- Entong, MB.M., Garil, B.A., Muarip, V.C., Chavez, J.V., (2024). "Language Delivery Styles in Academic Trainings: Analysis of Speaker's Emotional Connection to Audience for Lasting Learning". *Forum for Linguistic Studies* 6(3):326-342 DOI: 10.30564/fls.v6i3.6533
- Gardiana, M. D., Nugroho, R. A., Naini, A. M. I., & Wahyudi, S. J. (2023). Intercultural Communication Strategy for the Development of International Student Service Systems. *Journal of Educational Analytics*, 2(2), 245-262.
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitudes and Motivation*. Edward Arnold.
- Gloria, D. (2022). *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*.
- Hakim, B. M. (2019). A Study of Language Anxiety among English Language Learners in Saudi Arabia. *Arab World English Journal*, 10(1), 64-72.
- Hashim, A. A. (2024). Speaking Problems in The English Language Among University Students at Mindanao State University - Sulu. *Ignatian International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 2(5), 1261–1276.
- Hashim, M. (2024). Factors affecting English speaking proficiency among MSU-Sulu students. *Mindanao Journal of Education*, 12(1), 78–95.
- Horwitz, E. K. (1985). Using Student Beliefs About Language Learning and Teaching in The Foreign Language Methods Course. *Foreign Language Annals*, 18(4), 333-340.
- Iribani, A., Julhamid, N., & Sabdani-Asiri, M. (2024). Growth mindset and English language learning efficacy among junior high school students at Sulu State University – Laboratory High School. *SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND HUMAN EXPERIENCE*, 1(1), 1-15.
- Islam, M. S., & Stapa, M. B. (2021). Students' Low Proficiency in Spoken English in Private Universities in Bangladesh: Reasons and Remedies. *Language Testing in Asia*, 11(1), 22.
- Jhun, F. (2024). Language Skills and Exposure to English Language Among Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies Students at Mindanao State University- Sulu. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 20(5), 526–533. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11444747>
- Jo, C. W. (2021). Exploring general versus academic English proficiency as predictors of adolescent EFL essay writing. *Written Communication*, 38(2), 208-246.
- Jugo, J. (2020). English speaking anxiety and its effects on proficiency among Filipino teacher education students. *Philippine Journal of Linguistics*, 51(1), 23–40.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles And Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Pergamon Press.
- Lam Ky Nhan. (2024). Factors Affecting English Speaking Proficiency Among English-Majored Students in A Vietnamese University. *International Journal of Science and Management Studies (IJSMS)*, 237–245.
- Ma, F. (2021). Factors Affecting the English Language Preparedness of University Freshman Students. *Journal Of Language Teaching and Research*, 12(2), 252.
- Maramag-Manalastas, M., & Batang, Z. (2024). Cognitive processing difficulties and English proficiency among Filipino University students. *Asian Journal of Language Education*, 9(1), 101–119.
- Mardiya J. Balahim. (2023). A Study of Language Learning Strategies and Styles of First Year University Students at Sulu State University. *International Journal of Novel Research in*

- Education and Learning, 10(3), 161–171.
- Pham, V. P. H., & Le, H. L. (2022). Factors Affecting Students' English Proficiency at Lac Hong University. *ICTE Conference Proceedings*, 1, 57–63.
- Phan, T., & Nguyen, L. (2024). Motivation and institutional factors influencing English speaking proficiency in Thai EFL learners. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 34(3), 215–230.
- Sarabi, A. A., & Ututalum, C. S. (2024). Effectiveness of English language teaching methods and language learning skills among University students in public higher education institutions in Sulu. *Environment and Social Psychology*, 9(7).
- Seo, Y. (2025). The role of home language environment and parental efforts in children's English development in an EFL context. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 46(2), 273-287.
- Tang, D. (2022). English Proficiency Evaluation Model of University Students by Using Intuitive Fuzzy Information Theory. *Advances In Multimedia*, 2022(1), 3954648.
- Tantalie, E. M. (2021). Influence of Language Preference on Vocabulary Proficiency and Reading Comprehension of Selected Grade 10 Bilingual Students at MSU Sulu Laboratory High School. *RA Journal of Applied Research*, 7(12), 2726–2740.
- Tayyab, J., Imran, Z., & Arif, M. (2023). Review Of Factors Affecting English Speaking Skills Among Foreign English Learners. *Global Language Review*, VIII(II), 487–498.
- Vajirakachorn, S., Thongkaew, R., & Pothisiri, W. (2023). Development and validation of a CEFR-aligned English proficiency test for Thai university students. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 20(1), 1–22.
- Yu, Q., Brunsting, N.C., Smart, J. Et Al. Language Proficiency, Second Language Educational Experience, And Psychological Well-Being Among International Students at U.S. Universities. *Res High Educ* 66, 3 (2025).
- Yusop, K., Gatchalian, D., & Ruiz, J. (2022). Oral English Proficiency: Factors Influencing University Students' Language Performance. *International Journal of Social and Management Studies*, 7(3).
- Zhao, Hassan & Burhanuddin (2024). A systematic review of factors influencing English language competency for ethnic minority students: an ecological systems theory perspective. *Cogent Education*, Volume 11, Issue 1, 2024.