
**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE GENDER-BASED ABILITY OF SECONDARY
SCHOOL STUDENTS TO LEARN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
CONCERNING BIASES AND GENDER IN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

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Abstract

The language learning process promotes inclusivity by accounting for differences in intelligence regarding English as a foreign language between male and female pupils, which has a direct impact on their proficiency in language acquisition. The present study examines the gender-based disparity in language acquisition, concentrating on the English language competence of secondary school pupils. By examining the correlation between gender identity and English learning outcomes, this study seeks to fill a knowledge deficit regarding the inclusiveness of the language learning process. The researchers apply feminist stylistics and systemic functional linguistics to the analysis of written text products of high school pupils, which were gathered as part of an extensive data collection effort. Utilizing this analysis, they investigate how texts are constructed and scrutinize the impact of gender on the selection of linguistic structures. The results obtained from this research enhance our comprehension of disparities in language acquisition based on gender and provide valuable perspectives for the enhancement of language education methodologies that promote fairness and inclusivity for every student.

Keywords: Language Learning, English as a Foreign Language, Gender Bias, Systemic Functional Linguistic

INTRODUCTION

Numerous researchers in the field of language education, particularly in the instruction of English as a second language, are concentrating on the acquisition of a second language, which is continuously evolving to comprehend, from the standpoint of linguistic competence, how capable students are of learning English. This implies that current research has certain constraints regarding the influence of linguistics on the cognitive capacity of students when it comes to language acquisition (Zuana, 2023). The author's goal is to further explore how the linguistic approach can overcome constraints on language learning by expanding research to include gender identity and social background, which are indicators of students' language learning abilities, and to comprehend how gender influences the construction of language by students from diverse social backgrounds, particularly those with gender identity backgrounds. This research is also intended to serve as a buildup to previous investigations, aiding future language education researchers and educators in the organization and development of language teaching strategies for the betterment of the field. To comprehend how this research validates the hypothesis, the researcher commences by expanding upon the literature review that follows.

Considerable emphasis has been placed on second language acquisition and the comprehension of students' linguistic proficiency when acquiring English as a foreign language within the domain of language education. However, the majority of recent research has been devoted to linguistic aspects, with little investigation into the relationship between language acquisition and the cognitive abilities of students (Wardhani, 2023). A lack of comprehension regarding the impact of social contexts, including gender identity, on language learning outcomes has resulted from this limited viewpoint. To overcome this constraint, the primary

objective of this research is to broaden the linguistic framework through an exploration of the influence of gender identity and social context on students' language acquisition capabilities, as well as how gender structures language. Through an investigation into these facets, we intend to surpass the limitations of prior studies and make a valuable contribution to the broader comprehension of language acquisition. Moreover, this study endeavors to function as a valuable scholarly resource for subsequent researchers in language education and for instructors to formulate efficacious pedagogical approaches that foster enhanced results in language education. In support of and to illustrate the research hypothesis, the following is an exhaustive review of pertinent literature.

The literature review is of paramount importance in scholarly writing and investigation, especially when considering the literature review as a whole. It serves multiple critical functions, such as furnishing the fundamental basis for ongoing research and facilitating comprehension of the extant corpus of literature. By conducting a literature review, scientists can acquire knowledge regarding the dynamics, concepts, and discoveries of prior investigations that are pertinent to their research. Furthermore, by conducting a literature review, scientists can engage in an independent and critical evaluation of prior research, providing a forum for constructive criticism and the development of new ideas in the field (Abdhul, 2021). Scholars can contribute to the advancement of knowledge and discover deficiencies in the current body of knowledge by undertaking an exhaustive literature review. The literature review functions as a structural foundation and set of principles that direct the researchers in devising the research inquiries, delineating the objectives of the study, and establishing the methodology. It provides an aspect of originality and allows scholars to situate their investigations within the wider academic conversation. In addition, the

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literature review functions as an indispensable tool, furnishing scholars with an all-encompassing comprehension of the present condition of knowledge and functioning as a benchmark throughout their investigative trajectory. Literature reviews are, at their core, essential to the research process because they allow scholars to contextualize their investigation within the current corpus of knowledge, detect deficiencies, and make contributions to the progression of the discipline. This study seeks to enhance our comprehension of the phenomenon of gender bias in English language learning and offer valuable insights for future research and educational practices through an exhaustive literature review.

Humans and language are inextricably linked since language serves as the predominant mode of communication, incorporating both verbal and nonverbal exchanges. Nevertheless, it is critical to acknowledge the presence of a gender disparity in language acquisition, including Indonesian and other foreign languages, specifically about the relationship between men and women. Muhammad Jaeni (2009) presents an article titled "Language and Gender Inequality" in which he investigates a methodology for addressing the disparity in language acquisition. Furthermore, his investigation uncovers the prevailing gender disparity in language acquisition, encompassing Indonesian, Arabic, and English, with a particular focus on the experiences of men and women. through examination of the current grammatical aspect. This body of literature indirectly contributes to a more recent lacuna in the literature that examines gender bias in language acquisition, specifically English as a subject studied during junior high or high school. Including an examination and investigation of the causes of gender inequality from multiple perspectives Consider Jaeni (2009).

Additionally, Foley and Safran (1994) conducted research titled "Gender-Based Language in Learning Disability" that sheds light on the situation of

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individuals with disabilities. Textbooks addressed the issue of gender bias as it pertained to individuals with disabilities. The present article undertakes an analysis of the pronouns and frequencies of "masculine and feminine" that are present in the book, which establishes the gender-based hierarchy of superiority and inferiority for individuals with disabilities. In language acquisition, there are power dynamics and a hierarchical structure between men and women, according to the research.

The diversity of language learners has emerged as a compelling subject that merits attention within the field of education. The gender identity of students is correlated with the diversity of language learning that indicates their capacity to construct their competence in language learning; pertinent research has unveiled how gender identity and its biases impact learning ability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A considerable number of scholars in the domain of language education, specifically in the teaching of English as a second language, are focused on the ever-changing process of second language acquisition to determine how proficient students are at acquiring English from a linguistic competence standpoint. This suggests that there are limitations to the current body of research concerning the impact of linguistics on the cognitive abilities of learners in the context of language acquisition. By expanding research to include gender identity and social background, which are indicators of students' language learning abilities, the author hopes to further investigate how the linguistic approach can overcome barriers to language learning. Additionally, the author seeks to comprehend how gender influences the construction of language by students from diverse social

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backgrounds, particularly those with gender identity backgrounds. Further, this study aims to supplement prior inquiries by guiding future language education researchers and educators regarding the structure and advancement of language teaching methodologies, thereby contributing to the advancement of the discipline. To facilitate comprehension of how this research substantiates the hypothesis, the researcher begins by providing further elaboration on the subsequent literature review.

Significant attention has been devoted to the understanding of students' linguistic proficiency when acquiring English as a foreign language and the acquisition of a second language within the field of language education. Nevertheless, the prevailing focus of recent scholarly inquiry has been on linguistic dimensions, neglecting to explore the correlation between students' language acquisition and cognitive capacities. Due to this restricted perspective, there is a lack of understanding regarding the influence of social contexts, including gender identity, on language learning outcomes. To surmount this limitation, the principal aim of this study is to expand the linguistic framework by investigating the impact of social context and gender identity on the language acquisition abilities of students, as well as the manner in which gender structures language. By conducting an inquiry into these aspects, our goal is to overcome the constraints of previous research and provide a significant contribution to the wider understanding of language acquisition. Furthermore, this research endeavours to serve as a significant scholarly resource for future scholars in the field of language education and for instructors to develop effective pedagogical strategies that promote improved language education outcomes. To substantiate and elucidate the research hypothesis, the subsequent section comprises an exhaustive examination of relevant literature.

Particularly when examining the literature review in its entirety, the literature review holds significant value in scholarly writing and inquiry. It fulfills various essential roles, including providing foundational support for ongoing research and aiding in the understanding of the existing body of literature. Through the implementation of a literature review, researchers can gain access to germane information concerning the concepts, dynamics, and findings of previous inquiries that affect their scientific endeavors. Moreover, through the implementation of a literature review, researchers are capable of undertaking an autonomous and discerning assessment of previous investigations. This process serves as a platform for constructive critique and the emergence of novel concepts within the discipline (Abdhul, 2021). Academics can enhance the existing corpus of knowledge and identify gaps by conducting a comprehensive literature review. The literature review serves as a fundamental framework and collection of guiding principles that researchers adhere to when formulating research questions, specifying study objectives, and establishing methodology. It affords an element of novelty and enables researchers to contextualise their inquiries within the broader scholarly discourse. Furthermore, the literature review serves as an essential instrument, providing researchers with a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge and acting as a standard against which their investigation is measured. Literature reviews are fundamental to the research process as they provide scholars with the opportunity to situate their inquiry within the existing body of knowledge, identify gaps, and contribute to the advancement of the field. Through an exhaustive review of the literature, this study aims to deepen our understanding of the phenomenon of gender bias in English language learning and provide insightful recommendations for future research and educational practices.

The interdependence between humans and language stems from the fact that language functions as the primary means of communication, encompassing both verbal and nonverbal transactions. However, it is imperative to recognise the existence of a gender discrepancy in the process of acquiring languages, such as Indonesian and other foreign languages, particularly in regards to the dynamic between males and females. In his scholarly article entitled "Language and Gender Inequality," Muhammad Jaeni (2009) examines a potential approach to rectify the discrepancy that exists in the process of acquiring a language. Moreover, his inquiry reveals the pervasive gender discrepancy in the process of acquiring languages, including English, Arabic, and Indonesian, with an emphasis on the differences between male and female learners. by means of scrutinising the present grammatical element. This corpus of scholarly work indirectly addresses a more recent gap in the literature concerning gender bias in language acquisition, particularly as it pertains to the study of English in junior high or high school. An exhaustive examination and investigation from multiple vantage points of the causes of gender inequality Take into account Jaeni (2009).

Furthermore, an investigation carried out by Foley and Safran (1994) entitled "Gender-Based Language in Learning Disability" provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by people with disabilities. The topic of gender bias against individuals with disabilities was addressed in textbooks. This article examines the frequency and usage of the pronouns "masculine" and "feminine" throughout the book. The book in question establishes a gender-based hierarchy of inferiority and superiority concerning people with disabilities. The research indicates that power dynamics and a hierarchical structure exist in language acquisition between males and women.

The topic of language learner diversity has become a significant and noteworthy aspect that warrants consideration in the realm of education. A correlation exists between the gender identity of students and the variety of languages they learn, which serves as an indicator of their capacity to construct competence in language learning; relevant research has revealed how gender identity and its biases influence learning ability.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilized a qualitative approach in conjunction with descriptive analysis methodology. To investigate how students of various gender backgrounds construct language in their written work and to cast light on the influence of gender background on language learning ability, the qualitative method was selected. In addition, qualitative research respects the contextual nature and subjective nature of the investigation. Utilizing literature enrichments, the research integrates systemic functional linguistics and stylistics approaches to analyze the linguistic characteristics of the written products of the students. The data utilized in this analysis were written products produced by secondary school students residing in two cities. Descriptive analysis was employed to analyze the data.

The procedure of data analysis adhered to the four-step framework that Spradley (1980) outlined, as elaborated by E. Clara (2011). Domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and motive discovery are included in these procedures. To segregate data that did not align with the predetermined categories of the study, domain analysis was implemented. By applying principles from language learning, gender theory, systemic functional linguistics, and

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taxonomic analysis, the function of language to the psychological state of the utterances was determined. In conducting complementary analysis, the function of data classification was determined.

The analysis process began with domain analysis, which entailed the acquisition of data from the written products of the students and the selection of samples. The gathering of data centered on items that were pertinent to the theories of linguistics, language acquisition, and gender identity that were utilized in the study. Following the completion of domain analysis on the data, taxonomic analysis was undertaken to gain insight into the meta-function of language in the production of meaning. To analyze the data, the three meta-functions of language postulated by Halliday (1994) were utilized. The primary objective of examining these meta-functions was to discern the distinct language construction styles exhibited by male and female pupils in their written work.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis centered on the results that demonstrated a correlation between gender identity and language learning ability. It was hypothesized that gender possesses linguistic competence, which refers to the skills employed by students from diverse backgrounds in understanding construction and intelligence assessment. Additionally, the analysis reveals that the systemic functional linguistics pattern of language meta-functions reveals a pattern of written product differentiation according to gender background. This demonstrates that gender heritage influences how discourse is constructed regarding language proficiency. Conversely, gender background has an impact on how the strategic learning process is constructed during language acquisition. As

previously mentioned, systemic functional linguistics also demonstrates a disparity in the manner in which female and male students construct their understanding of language learning ability. The data analysis yields a variety of results that aid in categorizing the outcomes of language learning according to gender background. The percentage of three meta-functions of language in the text according to gender identity is detailed in the table below. According to the data in the table, male students exhibit a greater propensity for constructing texts that convey ideational meaning or physical/biological relationships between the author and the readers (12:3). In contrast, female students demonstrate a greater emphasis on interpersonal meaning (4:25) among the same set of 58 texts. An interpersonal meaning suggests that the author maintained a social connection with the reader during the process of text construction. The data set consists of 58 items, and textual meaning indicates that male students are more prevalent than female students in terms of usage of semiosis construction (8:6). This finding suggests that male students are more proficient in this area than their female counterparts. This is due to the fact that the majority of male students construct directive language and ideational processes with an average presentation of mental processes; this explains why male students are more abstract than their female counterparts. Trust, T. L. Banks, 1988. Conversely, female students are more likely than male students to engage in cognitive processes that are constructed, suggesting a more audacious constructivist perspective on the phenomenon that language serves. Furthermore, the majority of female students construct language critically (Thornborrow J, 1996).

Things That Affect the Occurrence of Gender Bias in Language Learning

The discourse surrounding gender and all forms of discrimination is quite singular; it even assumes the status of an undeniable reality. It is not only evident in the domains of social, legal, economic, and other authorities, but also the realm of education. Particularly about variations in language proficiency and acquisition (e.g., English). As a result, gender inequality or bias is extremely prevalent in the community and is regarded as extremely detrimental, particularly towards women. Additionally, a gender bias between men and women is evident, particularly in the curriculum and learning policies about English instruction, which are extremely discriminatory, particularly towards female students (Astina, 2016). Indeed, the essence and purpose of language acquisition ought to be comprehended; it is not subject to differential evaluation based on gender; rather, students are endowed with equivalent opportunities and capabilities. Various factors contribute to gender bias in language learning among students. One such factor is the preponderance of female students who engage in critical language construction, as supported by constructivism on the subject (Thornborrow J, 1996).

Already Constructed in a Patriarchal Society

The factor that contributes to gender bias in the realm of education, particularly regarding the efficacy of English language learning, is the social construction domain of an extremely patriarchal society. The patriarchal nature of our society, particularly in Indonesia, gives rise to numerous instances of gender discrimination and bias. To illustrate, when instructing junior high or high school pupils in English, instructors frequently place greater emphasis on the capabilities of males. Despite this, female student participation remains higher than that of male students. However, it is important to note that this social construction has

evolved from the preexisting gender inequality and has consequently contributed to the emergence of discriminatory practices (Rohmaniyah, 2020). This is the reason why men and women occupy such dissimilar positions in the field of education (learning), despite possessing equivalent levels of aptitude.

Unequal Language Learning Teaching Materials

The prevalence of gender bias is frequently attributed to the content of English literature, which is perceived to be more male-centric than female-centric. It is evident from the grammatical and structural usage of pronouns in the English language that the pronouns he (he/him/his) and she (she/her) designate females rather than males initially. Conversely, gender is also acutely observed in the English-learning curricula provided to students, including both the foundational theoretical and practical instruction as well as all material presented in the form of activities and practice. Gender bias in students' English learning abilities is extremely disquieting and must be addressed expeditiously so that things can be brought into balance, as is abundantly clear from this phenomenon alone. An additional instance that is frequently encountered is in English textbook texts or readings that categorically or compartmentalize the world in such a way that contrasts drastically between men and women. The texts under consideration explore various topics such as the freedom of men, business dealings with fathers, out-of-town vacations, and the pursuit of ideals. The reading proficiency of women in the English language is notably low, as they are preoccupied with domestic tasks such as assisting their mothers in the kitchen, purchasing at the market, and resolving kitchen issues. As a result, the prevalence of gender bias in English instruction for junior high and high school pupils remains influenced (Hardiningsih, 2006).

The Concept of Wrong Language Learning Role Model

Lastly, the fallacy of serving as a role model in the process of acquiring English proficiency, particularly among second-grade pupils (Junior and Senior High School). In certain settings, pilot models continue to be given lower priority by instructors when it comes to English learning for males compared to women. As a result, this phenomenon has a significant impact on English acquisition, as students tend to identify males as their role models. Conversely, numerous female role models possess English proficiency and are available for emulation by individuals of any gender, including males. Once more, when it comes to acquiring and perfecting foreign languages (particularly English), females exhibit superior progress and language proficiency. Even though women's minds are vastly different from men's in terms of biology and intelligence, masculine authority (men) remains extremely powerful and can easily prevail. Consequently, this singular influence can significantly sway the current language learning process in a gender-biased direction, and the solution in no way dictates the identity of the role model; both men and women are highly permissible. For the development of foreign language skills (read: English) to be equitable and progressive, that is to say, without discrimination.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, gender identity introduces a bias into the process of acquiring English as a second language. The investigation demonstrates that students hailing from diverse backgrounds individually develop their approach to comprehending the problem presented in the English written text. The investigation reveals that male students are more daring in their abstract

reasoning than their female counterparts, whereas female students are more pragmatic in their approach to language learning perspectives. Complicated are the distinctions between gender identities for men and women. The research findings indicate that an individual's gender identity has an impact on their language acquisition ability. This is consistent with the notion that each gender possesses a unique set of linguistic abilities that learners from diverse backgrounds employ to expand their intellectual horizons. Systemic functional linguistics analysis identifies the pattern of differences in written products based on gender background through the pattern of meta-function of language.

A patriarchal society's pre-existing learning opportunities, disparities in language-learning instructional materials, and the notion of an inadequate language-learning role model are a few of the factors that, according to the research, contribute to the prevalence of gender bias in the field of education. This fact illustrates how linguistic ability discourse is constructed about gender context. To advance theory and structure language learning practices for the benefit of language education in the long run, these findings are intended for future language instructors and scholars. Gender bias is a very real phenomenon in the field of education, particularly in the context of English language acquisition. The interactions between male and female pupils frequently result in the exchange of gender-biased materials. The issue at hand significantly impacts their ability to acquire proficiency in a foreign language, specifically English, due to the prevailing gender inequality in our society. In essence, it is extremely detrimental when masculine dominance in the learning process suppresses the feminine to an extreme degree.

A few real-life occurrences that significantly impact gender balance,

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particularly in the realm of English instruction for junior and senior high school pupils, are the imposition of patriarchal norms that are ingrained in society, the provision of unequal language learning materials that constitute gender bias, and the definition of roles. A gender-biased approach to English instruction. Essentially, there appears to be a genuine gender bias in the field of English language learning education, which necessitates prompt attention to prevent further detrimental consequences, particularly for women. Subsequently, it is imperative to refine the learning paradigm to ensure greater inclusivity and equality. This can be achieved by directing attention towards the instructional curriculum and issues of students' English proficiency. In conjunction with the provision or execution of initiatives and theories that promote gender equality. These factors can contribute to a more gender-inclusive English learning environment in which male and female students have equal opportunities and enthusiasm for the subject matter; there are no unjust or discriminatory gaps.

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