

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING OBSTACLES TO SECOND LANGUAGE ENGLISH LEARNERS: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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### ABSTRACT

*English is essential as an effective communication tool in both local and international contexts. In addition to being used in schools, it is also a teaching tool in colleges and universities. ESL (English as a Second Language) classes are now required in all educational institutions and can't be skipped. When learning a second language, anyone must be physically, mentally, and emotionally involved to communicate and understand what is being said. This systematic review employed qualitative documentary research and adopted content analysis. Following a random selection of reliable and legitimate sources, purposive sampling was used to conduct a content analysis of the selected papers. For this systematic review, sources from EBSCO, Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, and ScienceDirect were used. The findings reveal that English-language obstacles in this article include English learners' writing, speaking, listening, reading, translation, and interpretation skills. The conclusion focuses on English learning obstacles and their improvement through teaching methods and educational technology adoption. The recommendation is to look into quantitative and qualitative research for further study.*

**Keywords:** English learning, skills, obstacles, second language, learner

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## INTRODUCTION

A classic phrase for the use or study of the English language by non-native speakers in a setting where English is the dominant language is "English as a Second Language." Different methods are used in many schools to teach English as a second language to students whose native language is not English. Anyone can learn a language if they possess listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Literacy refers to the ability to speak, listen, and read. So, *lingua* is the combination of literacy and oracy. Speaking and writing are considered productive talents while the first two skills, listening and reading, are employed as routes for information reception (Vyomakesisri, 2017).

It's now the twenty-first century. There has never been a more important time for educational institutions to help students develop the kinds of skills they will need to live and work in the twenty-first century, and there is a strong sense of urgency to prepare our students for "jobs and technologies that don't yet exist in order to solve problems that we don't even know are problems" (Dass, 2014). Nobody can deny English's dominant status as a language of communication. It has the status of both a required subject and a medium of education. But it has a lot of issues with learning. It is regrettable that more pupils are failing classes. Failure in this topic translates into failure in the open exams. All parties involved can see the concerns regarding the issue (Khan & Khan, 2016).

The use of English as a second language (ESL) in the educational system has become indispensable and inescapable. To properly send and interpret linguistic information, one must be involved physically, intellectually, and emotionally when learning a second language (Raja & Selvi, 2011). The various reasons why pupils struggle with their speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities. It is critical that learners obtain maximal help in terms of a supportive and suitable learning environment as well as enough meaningful language experience when learning a second language. Enlightening students in English language learning is a positive hope that they will try to enhance their English skills, making language teaching and learning more effective and relevant for both lecturers and students (Binti Talib et al., 2019).

Issues with policies that fail to distinguish enough between native (or extremely excellent) English speakers and ESL students who still struggle with the language are (1) Insufficient policy differentiation between literacy demands and oral communication needs is one of the most frequent problems and needs of ESL students. The lack of a clear demarcation between literacy and oracy, and even the idea that oral communication is a "type of literacy," is theoretically intriguing and appropriate for some purposes. But because the system is unable to appropriately identify and meet the requirements of those who need assistance with oral communication, in particular, the very real practical needs of ESL learners are being jeopardized; (2) A general lack of proficiency and efficacy among general ESL instructors in teaching pronunciation; and (3) There isn't enough solid, organized evidence to support important judgments about teaching pronunciation to ESL students (Fraser, 2000). EFL students are frequently stigmatized as having poor writing skills in the target second language, English.

The problems that an English student faces in trying to comprehend and communicate contextually important issues are subtle, but they have a profound impact nonetheless. The implications for targeted approaches to the writing task and skill development with an understanding of English learner identity and history are needed to understand (Wardhono & Spanos, 2018). Therefore, discussing English learning methods that could improve students' English learning skills is crucial.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Second Language English Learners

Teaching any second language has always been a challenging undertaking, but it is especially challenging when dealing with pupils from diverse cultures and backgrounds since it contains various complexity that can be resolved via the use of effective tactics. The difficulties and obstacles that speakers of second languages, notably English speakers, frequently face, as well as the solutions that can help them overcome these challenges (Abdullah, 2015). Grammatical rules are among the problems encountered when learning another language. This is also true for folks who are studying English at various levels of schooling.

Second-language learners frequently make grammatical errors. This study aims to discover and analyze such grammatical challenges to contribute to the study of linguistics and assist students in spotting grammatical faults typically made by second-language English learners (Widianingsih & Gulö, 2016).

Speakers of English as a second language experience crippling effects from second language anxiety on their oral communication skills. Concerning the idea of speaking anxiety in a second language, the connection between anxiety and proficiency in a second language, and two main causes of second language anxiety are skills deficit and retrieval interference (Woodrow, 2006). The underlying causes of English learning performance are grammatical efficacy, apprehension toward grammar education, importance of communication, the importance of grammar, the importance of grammatical precision, and negative attitude toward error correction).

The differences in opinions among students studying various target languages were then examined using these parameters. Additionally, themes that emerged from the qualitative data were noted. There are differences in how grammar instruction and error correction are perceived by students learning English as a second language and those studying a foreign language (Loewen et al., 2009). Thus, educators and teachers should pay attention to English language learning in communication skills and methods.

### **English Writing**

English has a significant significance as an efficient communication tool in both local and global contexts. It is used as a teaching tool at colleges and universities in addition to schools. Writing difficulties in the English language are faced by second-language learners (Farooq et al., 2020). University students struggle with a variety of writing issues, including morphological and syntactic issues, use and mechanical errors (such as incorrect capitalization, punctuation, and spelling), a lack of several writing development skills, cognitive issues, and graphomotor issues. A number of recommendations have been made in light of these findings: Informing students to read their revised written work aloud is usually beneficial. They will naturally pause while they speak, which will aid them in punctuation. Using dictionaries or spellcheckers can help you fix spelling errors.

If kids read a lot of English, their usage and grammar errors will ultimately disappear (Alfaki, 2015). A weblog (also known as a blog) is a web-based writing space where all content is written, edited, and controlled using a web browser before being immediately and widely visible on the Internet. Blogging technology has a wide range of possible uses in education and training, including communication between students and teachers, the distribution of instructional materials, the provision of mentorship to students, group projects and teacher professional development, and knowledge management. In recent years, educators have started to see the potential of blogs for teaching and learning as they become more and more widespread. The use of blogs in education, and notably in language acquisition, is still relatively new at this moment (Zhang, 2009).

All facets of language use are being profoundly impacted by information and communication technologies, particularly in written communication. With the widespread use of computer-mediated communication, both for first- and second-language writers, the genres of written communication as well as the nature of the audience and author are all changing quickly (Warschauer, 2007). Thus, educational technology such as mobile applications and websites are very useful for second-language English learners or English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

### **English Speaking and Listening**

Strong oral comprehension abilities are necessary for English language learners to obtain oral content in their academic sessions. Unfortunately, their English as a Second Language (ESL) curriculum frequently does not include instruction in effective listening techniques (Carrier, 2003). One of the most crucial abilities to cultivate and improve for effective communication is speaking. One of the most challenging facets of language learning is speaking. It might be challenging for many language learners to express themselves verbally. In general, they have trouble adequately expressing themselves in a foreign language (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). The mobile test delivery, which can be taken on a smartphone or

computer, was designed to determine whether learning apps can boost communicative learners' involvement with real-world English resources. The mobile exam makes use of the enormous amount of internet multimedia content that may be transferred, including audio and video. In the Speaking Section, test takers could react to prompts by recording themselves, and in the Listening Section, they select the appropriate multiple-choice answer.

The test administrator receives every test-taker response via an integrated Telegram bot (Wardhono & Spanos, 2018). One technique to enhance English learning is for students to evaluate their own progress in communication skills. The Internet research on expert English-language websites, and the outcomes of their reading and listening during that research were presented in the classroom in the forms of speaking and writing in English (Tarnopolsky, 2013). Thus, speaking and listening among second-language English learners could be improved by adopting audio, video, and technologies.

### **English Reading**

The difficulties of maintaining classroom discipline, the diversions brought on by unrelated websites, the absence of infrastructure, and inadequate upkeep. It is anticipated that it will give educators and decision-makers a clearer, more accurate view of the challenges and opportunities associated with using information and communication technology (ICT) in the instruction of reading comprehension in ESL classrooms (Maduabuchi & Emechebe, 2016). The primary difficulties that English learners faced were unfamiliar vocabulary and slow reading, whereas extracurricular readers and those who were able to infer word meanings from context had higher reading scores. Many people struggled with their language skills to the point that they didn't reach the linguistic threshold. EFL training at upper-secondary schools fails to foster the academic English reading proficiency required for higher education (Hellekjær, 2009). Only a small percentage of students are found to have good reading habits in English, as evidenced by their readiness to consistently spend time reading different kinds of English texts and their strong desire to read English for enjoyment.

The EFL students read in English for a variety of reasons, such as to fulfill academic requirements, for enjoyment, and to advance their knowledge and language proficiency. EFL students don't read English for pleasure because of their positive reading beliefs; instead, they seem to be most motivated by schoolwork (Iftanti, 2012). Thus, English reading in traditional and virtual classrooms is related to academic requirements. It is better if students learn English with enjoyment and advance students' language proficiency at the same time.

### **English Translation and Interpretation**

Over the past few decades, the number of English language learners and students with limited English proficiency has increased dramatically. The enormous cultural and linguistic diversity among them makes it difficult for teachers to effectively teach this group of students (Khong & Saito, 2014). Many English-second language (ESL) students encounter learning obstacles and think they have poor English skills. The following elements influence ESL students with limited English proficiency demographic factors, linguistic difficulties, educators' perception of students who have language barriers, and the way these students are taught. Therefore, assistance is required for the teachers of ESL students (Theron, & Nel, 2005).

In recent years, foreign language teaching has evolved and achieved a variety of successes. A variety of methods, including grammar-translation, audio-lingual, natural approach, etc., have arisen and are now dominant in the field of teaching foreign languages. English has become a more widely utilized international language in the modern era. Without a doubt, students are drawn to the practical applications of information sharing and commercial interchange around the globe, making it one of the most crucial subjects in the curriculum (Carrier, 2003). The four criteria below can be used to evaluate how language learners improve their performance and meet their language learning objectives. The macro skills of speaking, reading, and writing are typically the ones that are examined and given the greatest attention.

Speaking, however, as a productive talent, appears intuitively to be the most significant of the four language abilities because it may clearly demonstrate a language learner's grammatical accuracy and faults. Several factors, including speaking test formats and pronunciation, need to be taken into consideration because English-speaking examinations often attempt to evaluate how learners communicate their growth and success in pronunciation and communication (Tarnopolsky, 2013). Thus, translation and interpretation are related to English communication skills among ESL students.

## METHODOLOGY

When choosing the best sample for their research, researchers must rely on their experience. In qualitative research, this methodology is frequently applied. To gain a thorough understanding is the goal. A frequent starting point for qualitative content analysis is a text. The goal is to reduce a substantial amount of text into a clear, orderly, and succinct summary of key results (Limna et al., 2022 Jaipong et al., 2022). For this review, the researchers employed the documentary technique. Purposive sampling was used to conduct a content analysis on the chosen papers after conducting a random sampling of reputable and valid sources in the first phase.

For this systematic review, five databases; EBSCO, Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, and ScienceDirect were recruited. Studies that met the following criteria were also included: 1) clearly related to English language learners, 2) obstacles, and 3) the second language. The database was searched using the following keywords after secondary data were examined: Between September 30 and October 28, 2022, contributions were made in writing, reading, speaking, translating, and interpreting in English as a Second Language. Out of 17,900 results, 28 articles were selected and analyzed by adopting content analysis. The previous studies that were chosen for inclusion were released between 2000 and 2022. The researchers adopted NVivo Trial version for data analysis and interpretation of the content.

## NVivo RESULTS



Figure 1. Word Frequency Query Results





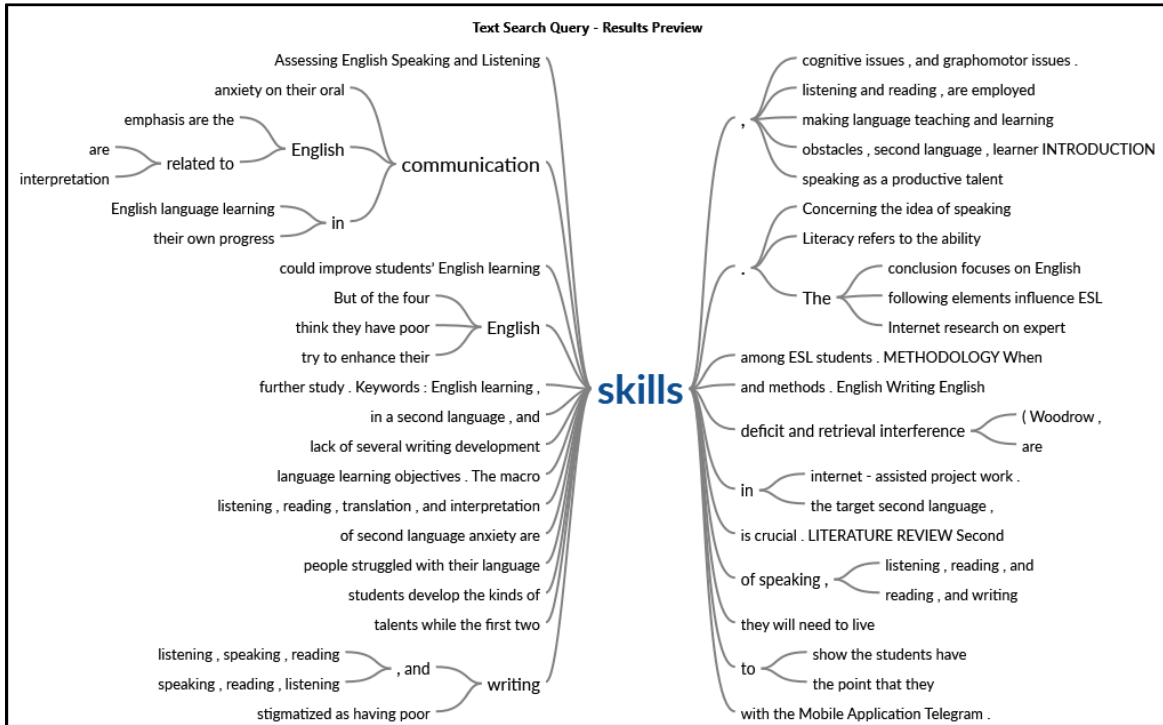


Figure 4. Text Search & Word Tree (Skills)

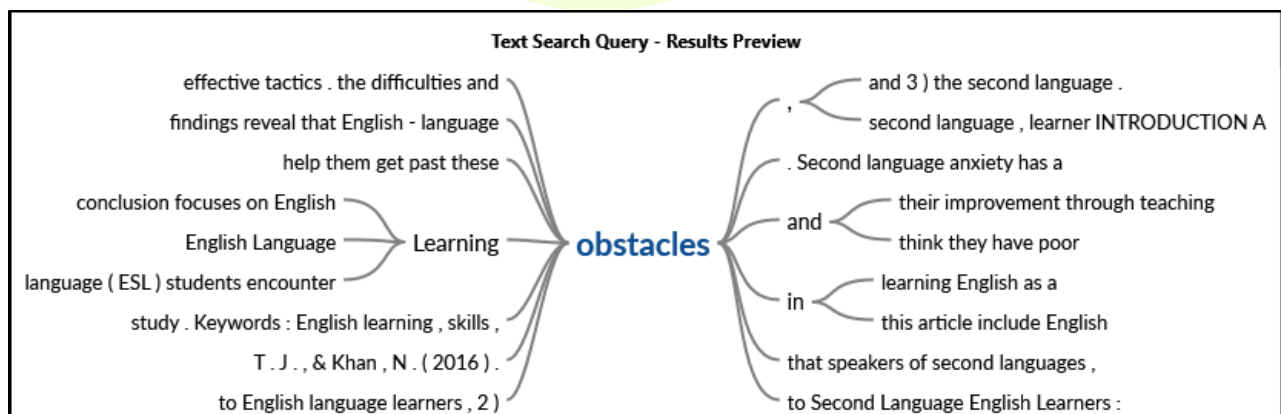


Figure 5. Text Search & Word Tree (Obstacles)





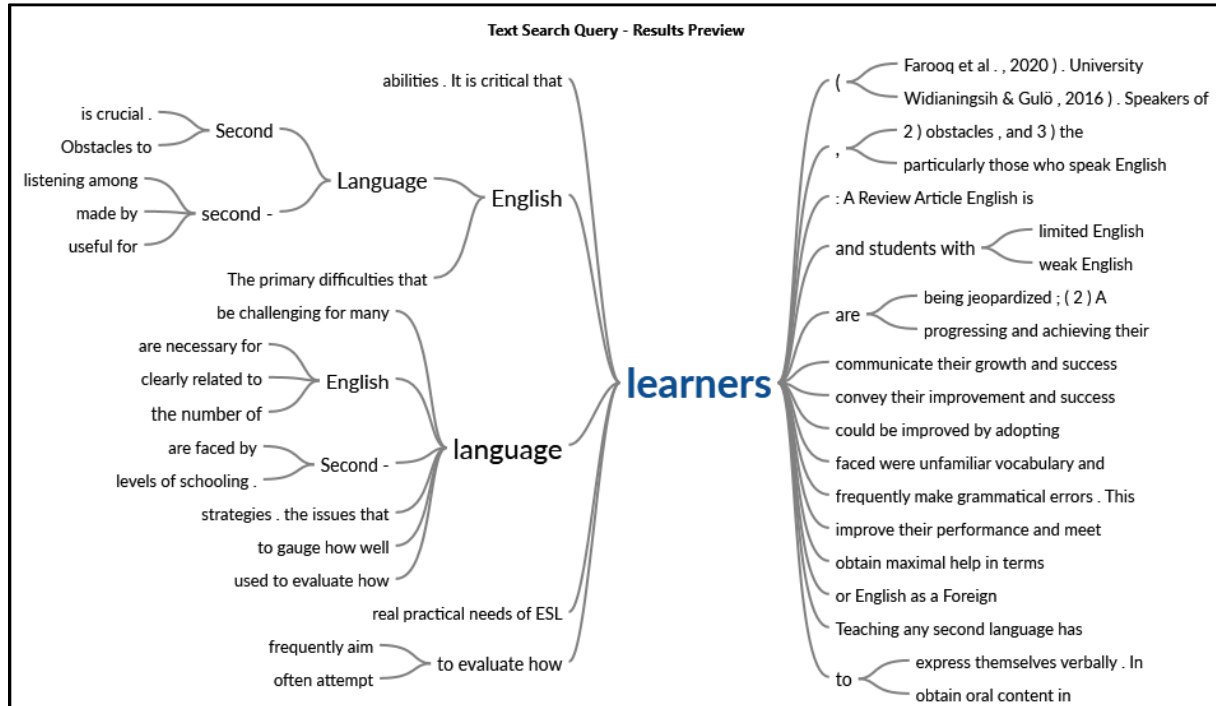


Figure 7. Text Search & Word Tree (Learners)

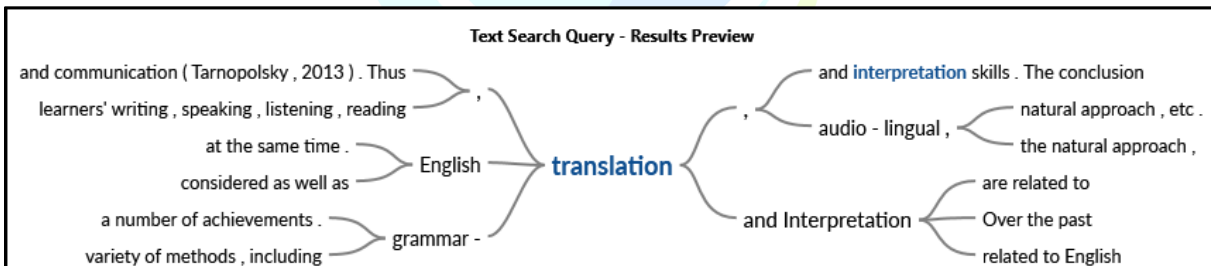


Figure 8. Text Search & Word Tree (Translation and Interpretation)

## CONCLUSIONS

English as a Second Language is a well-known expression for the use or study of the English language by non-native speakers in a context where English is the prevailing language. Many schools employ various techniques to teach English to students whose first language is not English. When learning a second language, it is essential that students receive the most assistance possible in the form of a conducive and supportive learning environment as well as a sufficient relevant language experience. Students who are informed about English language learning are more likely to try to improve their English, which will make language instruction and learning more efficient and applicable for both lecturers and students. English teaching a second language has always been difficult, but it becomes even more difficult when dealing with students from different cultures and backgrounds because there are many complex issues that may be managed by using efficient strategies. the issues that language learners, particularly those who speak English as a second language, regularly confront, as well as the solutions that can help them get past these obstacles. Second language anxiety has a devastating impact on oral communication abilities in

English language second language speakers. Concerning the idea of speaking with anxiety in a second language, there is a link between anxiety and proficiency in a second language, and skills deficit and retrieval interference are the two main causes of second language anxiety.

The number of English language learners and students with weak English competence has drastically expanded over the past few decades. Since they have such a wide range of cultural and language backgrounds, it is challenging for teachers to successfully instruct this set of kids. Many English-second language (ESL) students have learning challenges and believe their English is subpar. Due to demographics, linguistic challenges, how these students are taught, and educators' perceptions of students who have language barriers, the following factors have an impact on ESL students with limited English proficiency. Supporting is needed for the teachers of ESL students as a result. Foreign language instruction has developed recently and had a number of achievements. Grammar-translation, audio-lingual, the natural approach, and other approaches have emerged and are now prevalent in the field of teaching foreign languages.

In the present day, English is a more often used worldwide language. It is without a doubt one of the most important subjects in the curriculum because students are drawn to the real-world implications of information exchange and global commerce. The four factors listed below can be used to gauge how well language learners are progressing and achieving their goals. Usually, the ones that are assessed and given the most emphasis are the English communication skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. But of the four English skills, speaking as a productive talent seems intuitive to be the most important because it may make a language learner's grammatical accuracy and errors crystal evident. Because English-speaking exams frequently aim to evaluate how learners convey their improvement and success in pronunciation and communication, a variety of criteria, including speaking test forms and pronunciation, need to be considered as well as English translation and interpretation related to English communication skills to show the students have effective learning and good performance.

## LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Consideration of limitations can assist researchers in determining when a review article should be accompanied by a few words of caution. The primary data, or should be completely omitted due to the serious concerns about its methods and/or conclusions. It can also help us evaluate the caliber and relevance of a review article. In additional research, including quantitative and qualitative research, it should be taken into account that some respondents did not participate in further study.

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