Does schooling make a difference in English Language Proficiency?
A comparison of Pakistani undergraduate students coming from English and Urdu medium schools

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Abstract:

    The present study was undertaken to establish the level of English Language Proficiency (ELP) of first semester undergraduate students at COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Lahore, Pakistan in the context of the established parallel system of education in the country. Students of various departments were assessed on English grammar and vocabulary. There was a significant difference in English and Urdu medium students' achievement in vocabulary use whereas no significant difference in grammar use. Percentage analysis of data revealed that majority of the students could achieve less than 50% marks in grammar and less than 50% in vocabulary. The findings identify problematic areas of ESL learning by providing insights into

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learners' second language errors and pinpointing areas for remedial work. The study recommends content based language learning and proficiency assessments to inform ELT and the use of communicative approaches for ELT pedagogy.

Key words: English Proficiency, Assessment, Content based language Teaching, Communicative Approach

1. INTRODUCTION

With English increasingly being positioned as the pre-eminent language of international communication, every year, more and more speakers of other languages are learning English. In countries around the world, public school systems are teaching English to children from primary or pre-school grades. Secondary schools are making English mandatory and are using English-language instruction in other academic subjects. A growing number of universities require English for admission or graduation. According to Pinon and Haydon (2010), employers prefer candidates who are proficient in English.

English is ubiquitous in Pakistan, especially in education. A strong emphasis has been placed on English study as it is the official language, is used widely in the public and private sector, and in higher education. It is taught both in the public school system and in the thousands of private English medium institutions in the country. In institutions of business management and computer sciences, which have cropped up during the last two decades because of the IT (Information Technology) boom, English is not only the medium of instruction, but is taught as a compulsory subject at the undergraduate level. English is the language of the computer and its users are presupposed to be proficient in English. In professional education, like medicine, law and engineering, as well English is the medium of instruction. As Waseem (2009)

points out, lectures and text-books are in English and examinations and viva voce are conducted in English. Students' school success hinges upon their proficiency in the academic language. To support English learning many institutions have mushroomed for preparing candidates for their IELTS and TOEFL examination. However in spite of thousands of rupees poured into this very profitable business of ELT, a vast majority of Pakistani learners of English fall below the required proficiency level when it comes to getting admissions in foreign and local higher education universities and acquiring jobs for which they have been academically trained.

1.1. Purpose

The present study was motivated by perceptions about the inadequacy of undergraduate students of COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Lahore, in the use of English as revealed by their examination results which indicate their failure in using English in their core courses. It aims to find out the English skills which these first semester students bring with them when they enter the university. English proficiency assumes utmost importance in their achievement and success as the core subjects are taught through English. A study of this kind is thus long overdue as it could provide us with insights into the effectiveness of English courses offered, and to point directions towards changes in the curriculum and syllabus of the English course, as Stephenson et al (2003) point out that "Good testing and good teaching are grounded in research from the field of second language acquisition".

1.2. Problem

It has been observed that majority of Pakistani students lack academic language proficiency in English. Furthermore they fail to improve their English language skills even after attending various courses of English. This has seriously

affected their performance in their 'core' courses which are taught through English. In spite of having a clear understanding of the concepts they do not have the appropriate language skills to express them in writing.

The present study is an attempt to have a distinct model of learners' proficiency, which can point out problematic areas, so as to assess their needs as well as for taking remedial measures to assist students. As such this study can be seen as a pre-test as well as a needs analysis experiment. Results reported in this way would provide a new and powerful tool for tailoring instruction for English language learners.

COMSATS Institute of Information Technology is an IT university which enjoys the prestige of being ranked as 6th in the league of universities in the country. It has departments of Computers Sciences, Business & Management, Engineering, Physics, with the Humanities and Mathematics departments functioning as allied departments. English operates under the Humanities department. It is a 3 credit hours program and is taught for approximately 15-16 weeks in a semester. English Comprehension and Composition, Report Writing, Communication Skills and Communication Skills Workshop are the various modules of Academic English. There seems to be an unspoken assumption that by studying these English Language modules the students' academic English will improve. However it is seen that even after this period of study students achievement in English is below satisfactory.

As an international partner of Lancaster University, UK, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology awards a dual degree to its students (The Dual Degree program or DDP) in addition to the national degree in its undergraduate programs. Students enrolled in these programs expect to fare better academically as well as in the competitive job market. However it is evidenced that a large majority of these students fail to achieve good scores not only in the English modules but

also in the other subjects which are taught through English. When it comes to acquiring jobs, they fail to find employment in the occupations for which they were academically qualified.

Students get admission in the university on the basis of the NTS Test in which they have to score 50% marks in all subjects. Students enrolled in the DDP are required to pass their General Training module of the IELTS Test with a 5.5 band score, before the third semester. Presently, i.e. the spring of 2013, the university has 5299 enrolled students in various departments. All of them have to take the ECC (English Comprehension and Composition) Module in the 1st semester.

1.3. Research Questions

The basic question which the study asks is:

What is the level of proficiency of Pakistani undergraduate learners of English?

More specifically it asks:

1. What is the English grammar proficiency of Pakistani undergraduate learner?
2. How proficient are the students in English vocabulary?
3. How can the English proficiency of Pakistani learners of English be improved?
4. Is there any difference in the English proficiency of English-medium and Urdu-medium students?

1.4. The Instruments

ESL programs often use a combination of standardized and alternative assessments to assess literacy and language proficiency. However in order to make this research compatible with students' needs, we had to select test items by looking at the most common learners' errors. We found that subject verb agreement, use of articles and errors in vocabulary were generally the weak areas of students. Consequently the test included a grammar and a vocabulary section. The grammar

section included an article question of 16 items, and the subject verb agreement section had 6 items. The vocabulary section included two sets of synonyms and antonyms of 10 items each. Since the aim of this study is to address the question of whether the amount of previous schooling in English had an effect on their proficiency in English and whether the Urdu/English medium education variable affects the level of competence, the demographic part of the questionnaire included number of years of English learning, medium of instruction, age of students.

1.5. Participants
A total of 178 students of both genders were included in the data collection, of whom 113 had an English medium background, and 65 had an Urdu medium educational background. Students' average age was 17 years and had an average of 14 years of English education.

1.6. Methodology
The researchers first collected a corpus of 178 learners' tests based on grammar and vocabulary. The items included subject-verb agreement, use of article and vocabulary. Assessment of the test was based on the grading system in use at the university where the research was conducted, as well as at many other Pakistani universities. A pass grade in any one subject represents a percentage mark between 50% and 64%; a credit grade is between 65% and 74%; (B +); a distinction grade between 75% and 84% (A-); and a High Distinction grade between 85% and 100%. (A +).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Very few studies have been conducted in Pakistan to find out the proficiency of ESL learners at a certain level. The results of

the various state examinations (matriculation, the intermediate and graduation) are usually accepted as authentic indicators of students' proficiency in English. Mostly proficiency has been examined as one of the variables in ESL researches conducted on students' ESL motivation and anxiety: by Shahbaz et al, (2005); Waseem and Jibeen (2013); Awan, (2010); Pathan (2010) and Adeel (2012); attitudes and perceptions towards English by Shams (2008)and Awan (2010) and of assessments of proficiency by Sarfaraz 2010). The earliest studies which exist establish lack of English proficiency as the basic reason for the overall dismal educational situation in the country: Abedi (1991); Malik(1996) ; Mansoor (1993); Haque(1983); Rahman (1990). Abedi (1991) and Malik (1996) have pointed out the deteriorating standards of English in the country's state-run institutions. Abedi (1991) contends that the pass percentage in English in the BA examination has remained abysmally low through the years and "is 22% and it has remained at that for many years". Malik (1996) finds through her research that a graduate of that time lacks competence in written and spoken English. She says that this affects the students negatively and finds that the current English teaching situation in Pakistan is demoralizing for the students. Sarfaraz (2010) researches the ESL proficiency of Pakistani undergraduates, and by analyzing the errors, finds them to be the result of learner's interlanguage and mother tongue transfer. Taking 50 students' essays to find their writing proficiency she finds that 61 out of 76 errors which were collected from the essays, resulted from learners' interlanguage process and 15 errors were those which resulted from mother tongue (MT) interference. "Therefore, the percentage of interlanguage errors is 46.36% and the percentage of errors based on MT interference is 11.4%". Though, the participants had the experience of English learning of twelve years but the researcher concludes that the lack of practice, positive feedback and lack of motivation could be some

of the reasons which account for the low proficiency of learners in English.

There is an obvious need that models of English proficiency should be constructed so that they can become the starting points to improve instruction as well as to develop instruments capable of providing reliable and valid measurements of L2 knowledge. Research in this area will depend on the above as it will establish valid findings. Tremblay (2011) has pointed out the need for controlling and documenting second language learners' proficiency to help establish more robust proficiency assessment standards in educational research. Since there is a lot of variability in ELT students' levels of proficiency depending on their ages, educational background, and number of years spent in the target language community and so on, this affects the outcome of any research in which they are participating. So, besides pointing directions to improve ESL learners' achievement in university challenges, measurement of proficiency in ESL is also a prerequisite for valid findings for research conducted on ESL.

2.1. Proficiency

ESL proficiency is generally measured by looking at learner's communication competence in the target language. Foreign language proficiency in a global society can be defined as capability of smooth communication with people of the target language. Cummins (1980) theorizes about two kinds of language proficiency: BICS and CALP. BICS are Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills; these are the "surface" skills of listening and speaking which are typically acquired quickly by many students; particularly by those from language situations where English is the second language and learners have ample opportunities to listen to the target language in their environment. CALP is Cognitive Academic Language

Proficiency, and, as the name suggests, is the basis for a learner's ability to cope with the academic demands placed upon her in the various subjects. Cummins states that while many children develop native speaker fluency (i.e. BICS) within two years of immersion in the target language, it takes between 5-7 years for a child to be working on a level with native speakers as far as academic language is concerned. Brown (2004) says, "CALP English is characterized as context-reduced, as is found in written texts in content areas such as math, science, and social studies. Due to its decontextualized nature, ESL students struggle to comprehend what they read and to express what they know in writing. CALP English used in context-reduced academic learning demands high cognition on the part of the ESL student".

In making the distinction between these two different kinds of language proficiency, one has to consider which type of proficiency is needed for a second language learner. Stephenson et al (2003) say that "An ELL student does not need to be as fluent as a native speaker to be considered proficient. Rather, an ELL student needs to be proficient enough to participate in regular classes conducted in English without requiring significant English language support". The proficient English student in the Pakistan's context should have two types of knowledge – content knowledge and academic language proficiency in the language of instruction in order to have a good chance of success in core subjects like computers, management, physics, social sciences and engineering which are taught through English. Mukhopadyay (2011) says in this regard that, "if ESL/EFL learners are taught through English, then content assessment for them would demand a high level of proficiency in the language of instruction, that is, English. Proficiency in English would be a necessary ingredient for their understanding of the subject matter". In other words ESL students need to have appropriate academic proficiency in

English in order to achieve well in the other subjects and to succeed in the core subjects.

Craven (2010) has emphasized the English proficiency need for students with non English background for getting employment in areas in which they are academically qualified. Taking the IELTS Test as the research method to assess the proficiency level of students she says that, "there is no 'level playing field' when it comes to developing proficiency in English. Some students are more likely to begin with a greater advantage than others. It helps if one has a European language background or if one has been educated in well-provisioned English-medium schools in a country where English is widely used as a second language". Research done by Pathan et al.(2010), Sarfaraz et al.(2010), Shams (2008), Shahbaz (2012), Abedi (1991) and Shamim (2000), shows that besides medium of instruction, age, gender, motivation, teaching pedagogies and social interaction in English are important variables in ESL achievement

It is an assumption generally accepted that students enter university poorly equipped to handle the academic writing which is required in the core courses. Even native English students face difficulties when it comes to academic writing, because of a lack of grammar knowledge and writing techniques. It has been pointed out by many educationists that success in other school subjects hinges upon academic English so the students overall proficiency is affected if they do not possess a satisfactory level of proficiency in it. Celce-Murcia (1991), for instance, emphasizes the importance of a reasonable degree of grammatical accuracy in academic writing. She mentioned that high frequency of grammatical errors in nonnative speaker's academic writing (an average of 7.2 errors per 100 words) makes their writings unacceptable to the university faculties. Brown (2004) holds that ESL students' school success hinges upon their proficiency of academic

language. Hinkel (2004) advocates intensive and consistent instruction in L2 grammar for academically bound nonnative speakers. Others (Cumming, 1990; Ellis 2001; Fotos, 2002; Norris and Ortegga 2001; Schmidt 1994). Baleghizadeh and Gordani, 2012) agree that consistent grammar instruction has been shown to be effective in improving the quality of L2 production.

Blake and Pates (2010) argue that students rarely come equipped to handle the demands of academic writing at the university level and need extra support with written language. The "Bolt-on" methods of the Academic Literacies Approach do little to help students to cope with language demands. Instead, embedding the language module with the core course module could be more helpful in giving students assistance where they really need it. Craven (2010) has suggested that the embedding of English language support across all university courses could help the less advantaged learners. Brown (2004) advocates content based ESL teaching for learners who lack behind in Language proficiency to bring them up to the mainstream level.

2.3. Assessment of Language Proficiency

Various researches have been conducted to find a valid and reliable assessment method which would be able to elicit critical evidence of English language proficiency. In USA, the Stanford ELP has been used with success. The EF English Proficiency Index (EPI) has been created in this context as a standardized measurement of adult English proficiency, comparable between countries and over time. It is the first index of its kind to give countries a benchmark against which to measure the average English competency of the working population. The index uses a unique set of test data from over two million adults who take free online English tests over a period of three years. Pakistan is not listed in the EF English Proficiency Index (EPI). In Asian countries only China and

India are mentioned. The test determines whether students need to take any English courses and the level of English courses they need to take.

The Diagnostic English Test (DET) for new entrants which most universities use for placement of all incoming undergraduate students, consists of a text-editing task and a set of reading comprehension questions. In Pakistan, students' proficiency is measured on the basis of the NTS Test in which they have to score 50% marks in English to get admission in higher education institutions. COMSATS Institute of Information Technology requires its DDP students to pass their (General Training or Academic module of the IELTS) in addition to the 50% in the NTS test.

However assessing English language proficiency in an institution like COMSATS Institute of Information Technology entails that not only are the English modules tested, but it is also crucial to assess the students' language proficiency in other subjects. Since English is the medium of instruction, students' success hinges on their proficiency in English. To get a true picture of learner's English proficiency it is imperative that English assessment of these areas as well as of the regular English modules is carried out. Drawing on the work of Gottileb (2006) and O'Malley & Pierce (1998), Mukhopadyay (2011) says that in situations where two types of language knowledge has to be tested, i.e. knowledge of content as well as academic language proficiency in the language of instruction, then content assessment is required. Language proficiency would be equally necessary to display their understanding of content in a variety of assessment modes like summative, formative and alternative modes.

2.4. Differentiated System of Education

In the Pakistani context, the parallel system of education becomes a crucial variable for any research in ESL. It is

particularly relevant when testing proficiency. This system can be seen in the two types of schools operating in Pakistan according to Mansoor (2004), Rahman (2004), Waseem (2009) and Shamim (2000). On the one hand are the cash-strapped, Urdu-medium, state-run schools which are poorly resourced. These are frequented by the children of the low-income government servants and other less privileged groups of the society, who nevertheless aspire to acquire the better English medium education. Until recently, English teaching had started from class 6th and continued till BA as a compulsory subject and the standard of education generally and English teaching particularly in these schools, is poor. Teaching methodologies are outdated, majority using a local version of the Grammar Translation method with stress on rote learning. The teacher dictates the learning item and students try to write down each word, to cram and reproduce later in the examinations. The learners cannot use English effectively for any real communicative purpose. In a recent study, Shamim and Allen (2000) say, " In public sector schools, English is mainly taught using the grammar-translation method through Urdu and/or the local language in crowded and under-resourced classrooms. In private schools, while English is 'officially' the medium of instruction, bilingual discourse is commonly used in the classroom". They conclude that the need to provide enhanced teaching-learning facilities in public sector universities cannot be over-emphasized, particularly in terms of the huge demand for English in the employment market and in view of the relatively low levels of proficiency of graduates from public sector higher education institutions in Pakistan.

Shamim et al (2011) point out that proficiency in English can be related to the differentiated system of education which operates in Pakistan. She finds, "The positive correlation of high family income with students' higher levels of proficiency in English [......] may be attributed to their earlier education in

private English medium schools compared to students in the lower income bracket" (also see Mansoor 2009; Rahman, 2004). Similarly, in students' assessment of their current language skills, as used in the academic domain, the upper group was about twice as heavily represented in the categories of 'good' and 'excellent' compared to the lower third of the population. Hence, there seems to be a positive relationship between students' socio-economic status and their proficiency in English, probably due to the difference in opportunities available outside the classroom in the home and community for learning and using English. This indicates the urgent need for developing relevant and high quality English language programmers for learners in public sector universities to enable them to compete with their more fortunate counterparts of the private institutions. Waseem's (2009) work on the parallel system of education in Pakistan shows that the lack of English proficiency of Urdu medium students results in spewing social inequalities by marginalizing these students in the job market.

3. METHOD

The participants of the research were 178 undergraduates, both male and female student of the first semester of COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Lahore, and were studying English Composition and Comprehension. The average age of the students was 19 years. These students were a mixed ability group with 113% students with an English medium education up till matriculation and 65% with Urdu medium educational background. Students were administered the test in their regular classes and it took about 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The researchers personally collected the data. Respondents were asked to complete the questionnaires and supply the demographic information and were assured that their confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained. They

were assured that it was not an assessment of their English proficiency and the purpose of the research was ultimately only to improve the teaching of English in their institution. They were told that if anyone was not interested he/she was free to decline. However, all of the students were keen to complete the questionnaire. The researcher read aloud all the instructions at the beginning of administering the questionnaire and after clear understanding the students completed the questionnaires while the researcher remained in the classroom to answer questions.

4. RESULTS

For each measure, the mean, standard deviation, median, mode, and score range were calculated to determine the proficiency of learners in English grammar and vocabulary. Descriptive statistics are shown in Table 1. The data was checked regarding coding errors, outliers and missing value points on the individual questionnaire items. All variables were checked regarding the normality assumption and they were approximately normally distributed.

1 Table

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Subject Verb agreement	178	6.00	19.00	9.8371	1.94889
Synonyms	178	10.00	20.00	15.1685	2.42275
Antonyms	175	9.00	18.00	12.2800	2.09169
Articles	178	16.00	27.00	21.0056	2.42980
Valid N (list wise)	175				

Table I shows the descriptive statistics of basic variables of the study i.e. subject verb agreement, synonyms, antonyms and articles. The descriptive statistics of the data reveals that the

minimum and maximum scores on the subject verb agreement item of the participants remained 6 and 19 respectively. The mean score was 9.83 and standard deviation 1.94 which shows the range of dispersion of responses either towards or away from the mean.

All participants responded to all the ten items of synonyms. The minimum and maximum scores remained 10 and 20 with 15.16 mean value and 2.42 standard deviation. The responses of the participants show a greater variance as compared to their responses to subject verb agreement which indicates that the participants considered different options to be the correct answers. 175 responses were received for the antonyms item where minimum and maximum scores remained 9 and 18 with 12.28 mean and 2.09 standard deviation. Participants' minimum and maximum scores remained 16 and 27 on the articles item with 21 mean and 2.42 standard deviation.

Table 2
Group Statistics

	Medium	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
vocabulary	English	112	26.7054	3.26223	.30825
	Urdu	63	28.8095	4.37315	.55096
grammar	English	113	30.2389	3.53370	.33242
	Urdu	65	31.8923	3.59306	.44566

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the data. 175 out of 178 participants responded to vocabulary items whereas, all the participants responded to the grammar items. It is clear from the findings that in the vocabulary item, the mean value of 112 English medium respondents, remained 26.7 with 3.26 standard deviation and 0.3 standard error mean. Scores of the 63 Urdu medium respondents had 28.80 mean value with 4.37 standard deviation and 0.55 standard error mean.

Data indicates that in the grammar item, 113 English medium respondents' mean score was 30.23 with 3.53 standard deviation and 0.33 standard error mean. Contrary to this the mean score, of 65 respondents of Urdu medium institutions, remained 31.89 with 3.59 standard deviation and 0.44 standard error mean.

Table 3
Independent Sample T Test

Factors		Leven's Test for Equally of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Vocabulary	Equal variances assumed	8.038	.005	-3.612	173	0.00
Grammar	Equal variances assumed	.042	.837	-2.987	176	.003

Table 3 presents the two tailed independent sample t-test and significant values, with 173 degree of freedom. The "t" value on vocabulary is -3.61 with significance (2-tailed) 0.00. The "p" value shows that there is a significant difference among the respondents of English and Urdu medium institutions in the vocabulary item. The above table shows the two tailed independent sample t-test and significant values, with 176 degree of freedom. The "t" value on grammar is -2.98 with sig. (2-tailed) 0.003. The "p" value again shows the significant difference in grammar proficiency between the English and Urdu medium background respondents.

Table 4
Group Statistics

	medium	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Overall Proficiency	English	112	57.0089	5.62571	.53158
	Urdu	63	60.6349	7.12855	.89811

The group statistics indicates that the mean score of 112 students, of English medium background, i.e. 57 whereas the Standard Deviation and Standard Error Mean were calculated as 5.6 and 0.5 respectively. On the other hand, the mean score of 63 students of Urdu medium remained 60.6 while their Standard Deviation was 7.1 with 0.89 Standard Error Mean. On the basis of these statistics it can be said that the students of English medium background possess better language proficiency than the Urdu medium students.

Table 5 Independent Sample T Test

Factors		Leven's Test for Equally of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Overall Proficiency	**Equal variances assumed**	4.137	.043	-3.710	173	.000

Table 5 indicates the two tailed independent sample t-test and significant values, with 173 degree of freedom. The "t" value of overall proficiency is -3.71 with sig. (2-tailed) 0.00. The "p" value shows the existence of significant difference in English language proficiency difference between English and Urdu medium backgrounds students.

5. DISCUSSION

There is a significant difference in grammar proficiency and vocabulary between the two groups. Overall the proficiency of English medium background students is better than the Urdu medium background students. This can be explained on grounds of the difference in teaching methodologies employed in these institutions. The learners of English medium institutions have been taught English through immersion in the target language and through the communicative approach. They have been given opportunities to interact in the target language in the classroom and for social interaction. Also it needs to be kept in mind that these learners would have belonged to the urban areas and their families would also be using some degree of English. The Urdu medium students have been taught English through a version of Grammar Translation method with emphasis on rote-learning.

6. CONCLUSION

The study aimed to assess proficiency of a group of mixed educational background students in English grammar and vocabulary with the view to modify instruction accordingly and make researches based on these respondents more valid and reliable. The findings provide insights into problematic areas for Pakistani ESL teachers to design an effective curriculum for teaching of English as a second language. The findings revealed that both groups lacked the required level of proficiency in grammar and that there was a significant difference in the achievement in vocabulary between the two groups of students. Since English is the medium of instruction for the core courses, the findings point directions for language as well as content assessments to be carried out to give a more holistic picture of learners' proficiency in core courses. The findings imply that if

learners are not proficient in the language of instruction, then it would affect their overall achievement in other subjects which are taught through English. ESL students' content area success matters because ESL teachers, as well as mainstream language teachers, are held responsible for their inadequate yearly academic progress and seriously undermines their overall achievement.

In particular, the findings caution both institutions and students against the simplistic assumption that a student who achieves a 50% score in the NTS Test would be able to handle the university level requirements of academic language. This becomes especially complex in the context where learners come with a varying degree of educational backgrounds. Intensive English for Academic Purposes and more communication in the target language would ensure better English proficiency. Another way is to merge the language courses into the core courses. Thus, it is critical for ESL teachers to move beyond the current English syllabus and to start providing a content-rich, high-standards curriculum that prepares ESL students to become academically successful in content learning.

The study is limited to testing only grammar and vocabulary skills of learners. It did not assess the other language skills of reading, listening and speaking which could have provided a more holistic picture of students' proficiency, in the hope that this will be taken by other researchers.

7. SUGGESTIONS

Relatively little research to date has investigated the relationship of proficiency of English and requirements of English in a range of different disciplines. There is much scope now for research in this area. The findings have relevance to a wide range of stakeholders involved with ELT in Pakistan. Taken as a needs analysis, the present study has pointed out

problematic areas of English language teaching which need remedial work. It is suggested that a content based curriculum of English would be more helpful for learners. In this context embedding language courses with core subject areas could be helpful. The results of analyses suggest that ELP assessment outcomes can help inform decisions regarding participation of English language students in state content-based language courses. However, more work needs to be done if the new ELP assessments are to inform the instruction and content-based assessment of English language learner students. A whole body of related researches will lead to a mass of research which will afford a deep understanding of this problem confronting Pakistani students and teachers.

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