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English Language Learning Skill and The Relationship To Academic Achievement Among Primary School Students

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<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-8099-5436>**Abstract:**

The current study aims to explore the relationship between english language learning skills and academic achievement among primary school students. The study sample consisted of 150 students from various primay schools in the chlef province. The descriptive method was used, along with a questionnaire on english language learning skilsl prepared by the researchers after ensuring its psychometric properties. The data was prossed using appropriate statistical methods, leading to the following results : the most common english language learning skills among primary school students include: motivation and rediness, listning comprehension , speaking, and writin. there is no satistically significant relaionship between english language learning skills and academic achievement among primary school students. There are no statistically significant differences in english language learning skills based on gender (male, female) among primary school students.

*** Mohamed Habib Yahiaoui**

Introduction:

The primary education stage is considered the gateway for children into the world of knowledge and learning. It is a critical phase in which a child's personality is built and forms the foundation for future educational stages. The educational process during this period aims to develop various aspects and abilities—cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and social—of the students (Abdeen, 2022). It focuses on enhancing their personalities and capabilities while instilling fundamental values and principles in them. Furthermore, it encourages thinking and learning, particularly concerning the teaching of foreign languages, which is regarded as one of the essential pillars for individual and societal development. Learning foreign languages, such as English, has become increasingly urgent, given that it is the first global language spoken by approximately 1.5 billion people worldwide (Al-Araimi, 2021). Teaching English has become highly significant in Algeria, prompting substantial encouragement from academic education experts (Bouakaz & Bachir, 2023). This importance is reflected in the mandatory teaching of English in primary education, as stated in Ministerial Decision No. 1513 issued on August 29, 2022, which mandates the teaching of English starting from the third grade across the nation (Jouzeh, 2024).

Teaching English at the primary education level is both important and beneficial. The curriculum is designed with a focus on simplicity, integrating play and interactive activities that emphasize listening and comprehension skills, as well as speaking and writing abilities. These skills help students learn both spoken and written language. Educational literature indicates that 45% of learning time is spent on listening, 30% on speaking, 16% on reading, and only 9% on writing (Al-Dossary, 2018)). These skills foster effective interaction with teachers and peers inside and outside the classroom, enabling students to participate in discussions, ask questions, and give presentations. Such activities require significant effort, motivation, and readiness, which in turn help students build self-confidence, making the learning process enjoyable and engaging.

In the context of globalization, the integration of one's mother tongue (Arabic) with the English language has become essential for students' cognitive progress and development. Lado cited in (Al-Damour, 2013) highlighted that the interaction between English and the culture of the mother tongue is inevitable. According to an online writing collaborative project on English language teaching, which surveyed 153 students and teachers of English in the Arab world, 61.44% of respondents believed that learning English could help preserve the mother tongue, while 38.56% disagreed (Al-Jurf, 2004).

Learning English and its skills is considered one of the contributing factors to enhancing students' academic achievement, serving as an important indicator

of their progress in acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills, thereby boosting their academic and social capabilities. This process also promotes critical thinking and analytical skills, better preparing them for the demands of future education and the global job market. A study by (Al-Jurf, 2004) found that 77% of mothers believed that early English language learning would make children more successful in later educational stages compared to their peers who did not start learning English early. Furthermore, they believed that learning English would enhance children's comprehension abilities and equip them with more knowledge. Another study (Abdulaziz, Imam, & Khabiri, 2020) examined the relationship between reading comprehension skills and academic achievement among low-achieving students learning English as a foreign language. The study found a statistically significant positive correlation between reading comprehension skills and academic achievement in English among the students in the sample.

1.Problem Statement: Acquiring English language skills is considered essential for ensuring students' academic success during the primary education stage and opening promising future opportunities. Given the importance of this stage in shaping students' academic foundations and personal development, examining English language skills and understanding their relationship with academic achievement raises the following question: What is the relationship between English language skills and academic achievement among primary school students?

1.1 Research Questions:

- What are the most common English language learning skills among primary school students?
- Is there a statistically significant relationship between English language learning skills and academic achievement for primary school students?
- Are there significant differences in English language learning skills based on gender (male, female) among primary school students?

2. Research Hypotheses:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between English language learning skills and academic achievement for primary school students.
- There are no significant differences in English language learning skills based on gender (male, female) among primary school students.

3. Objectives of the Study:

This study aims to identify the most common English language learning skills and their relationship to academic achievement among primary school

students. Additionally, it seeks to explore whether there are significant differences in English language learning skills based on gender within this group.

4. Significance of the Study:

The current study is significant for the following reasons:

- It contributes to the scientific knowledge and research related to learning and teaching English.
- It assists researchers in developing effective educational strategies to improve students' performance in English and achieve better outcomes.
- It helps in the development of educational programs and activities aimed at enhancing students' performance in English.
- It fosters collaboration and dialogue between teachers and school administration to improve students' performance in English.

5. Operational Definitions of Study Concepts:

5.1 English Language Learning Skills: A set of abilities that enable primary school students to use English effectively. Operationally, it refers to the score obtained by primary school students on an English language learning skills questionnaire, which includes:

- **Listening Comprehension:** The ability of primary school students to understand spoken English, including sounds, words, sentences, and the overall context of the conversation.
- **Speaking:** The ability of primary school students to use English for verbal communication, including sentence construction and expressing ideas fluently and clearly.
- **Writing:** The ability of primary school students to use English for written communication, including correct and clear writing of letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs.
- **Motivation and Readiness:** The driving force that motivates primary school students and enables them to make the most of the English language learning process.

5.2 Academic Achievement: In this study, it refers to the level of knowledge and skills acquired by primary school students, measured by their second-term average.

5.3 Primary School Students: The students who are regularly enrolled in primary school during the 2023-2024 academic year and are the sample for this study.

6. Study Boundaries:

- **Spatial Boundaries:** The study was conducted in the primary schools of the Wilaya of Chlef: Mohamed El-Tawil, Badrouni Mohamed, and Ali Rezak.

- **Temporal Boundaries:** The study was conducted from May 27 to May 30, 2024.

7. Research Methodology:

The descriptive method was adopted, as it is suitable for the study's topic and nature.

8. Study Sample:

The study sample consisted of 150 students from Mohamed Al-Tawil Primary School, Badruni Mohamed Primary School, and Ali Razak Primary School, selected using a simple random sampling method. The following

Table 01: Distribution of the Study Sample by Gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	60	40%
Female	90	60%
Total	150	100%

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the study sample.

9. Study Tool: To meet the objectives and requirements of the study, a questionnaire on English language learning skills was developed by the researchers. This questionnaire was constructed based on a review of previous studies related to language skills and learning, as well as an analysis of curricula, educational programs, and English language textbooks for primary education.

9.1 Description and Scoring of the Questionnaire: The questionnaire consists of 21 statements used to measure English language learning skills among primary school students. Respondents answer using one of the following options: Always, Sometimes, Never, which are assigned scores of 3, 2, and 1, respectively. The statements measure four different dimensions of English language skills, as follows:

- **Listening Comprehension Skill:** This consists of 5 statements that assess the student's ability to listen to and understand English through auditory analysis.

- **Speaking Skill:** This includes 5 statements that evaluate the student's ability to express themselves in spoken English.

- **Writing Skill:** This consists of 5 statements that assess the student's ability to write in English.

- **Motivation and Readiness Skill:** This includes 6 statements that measure the student's motivation and readiness to learn English, as well as their persistence in improving their skills.

9.2 Psychometric Properties of the Questionnaire: To calculate the psychometric properties of the questionnaire on the study sample, the scale was

administered to a pilot sample of 50 primary school students. The results were as follows:

9.2.1 Content Validity: The face validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by presenting it to a group of experts, including English language teachers and university professors specializing in educational sciences and psychology. They evaluated the clarity of the language used in the statements, the appropriateness of the items, and their relevance to the dimensions. Based on their feedback and observations, some items were modified and rephrased.

9.2.2. Construct Validity (Internal Consistency) of the Questionnaire: The correlation coefficients between the score of each item and the dimension it belongs to were calculated, as shown in the following table:

Table (02): Construct Validity (Internal Consistency) of the Questionnaire on English Language Learning Skills for Primary School Students Using Construct Validity

Dimension	Items	Correlation Coefficient	P-Value	Statistical Significance
Listening Comprehension	Item 1	0.724**	0.000	Significant
	Item 2	0.582**	0.000	Significant
	Item 3	0.456**	0.000	Significant
	Item 4	0.713**	0.000	Significant
	Item 5	0.545**	0.000	Significant
Speaking	Item 6	0.951**	0.000	Significant
	Item 7	0.400**	0.004	Significant
	Item 8	0.702**	0.000	Significant
	Item 9	0.385**	0.006	Significant
	Item 10	0.674**	0.000	Significant
Writing	Item 11	0.650**	0.000	Significant
	Item 12	0.679**	0.000	Significant
	Item 13	0.694**	0.000	Significant
	Item 14	0.674**	0.000	Significant
	Item 15	0.352**	0.012	Significant
Motivation and Readiness	Item 16	0.667**	0.000	Significant
	Item 17	0.774**	0.000	Significant
	Item 18	0.751**	0.000	Significant
	Item 19	0.772**	0.000	Significant
	Item 20	0.804**	0.000	Significant
	Item 21	0.632**	0.000	Significant

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

* Significant at the (0.01) level.

** Significant at the (0.05) level.

From Table No. (02), we observe a statistically significant correlation at the (0.01 or 0.05) level between the score of each statement and the dimension it belongs to, indicating the construct validity of the English language learning skills questionnaire for primary school students using construct validity.

9.3 Reliability of the Questionnaire: The internal consistency coefficient was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha, as shown in the following table:

Table 03: Reliability of the English Language Learning Skills Questionnaire among Primary School Students using Construct Validity

Dimensions	B1	B2	B3	B4	Total
Number of Items	5	5	5	6	21
Cronbach's Alpha	0.81	0.80	0.79	0.76	0.84

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS outputs

The results in Table 03 indicate that the reliability coefficients of the English language learning skills questionnaire for primary school students using Cronbach's Alpha ranged from 0.76 to 0.81 across different dimensions, with an overall score of 0.84, which is statistically significant. Therefore, the English language learning skills questionnaire for primary school students is considered reliable.

Thus, we can conclude that the study tool possesses psychometric properties that qualify it for use in collecting the primary data of the study.

10. Statistical Methods Used: We relied on the following statistical methods to process the study data:

1.10 Descriptive Statistics: Frequencies (Effectifs), Mean (Moyenne), Standard Deviation (Ecart Type).

2.10 Inferential Statistics: T-test for differences between two independent groups, Pearson correlation (R) to study relationships, with data processed using SPSS21.

11. Presentation and Analysis result of Research:

1.11 Presentation and Analysis of the Main Research Question:

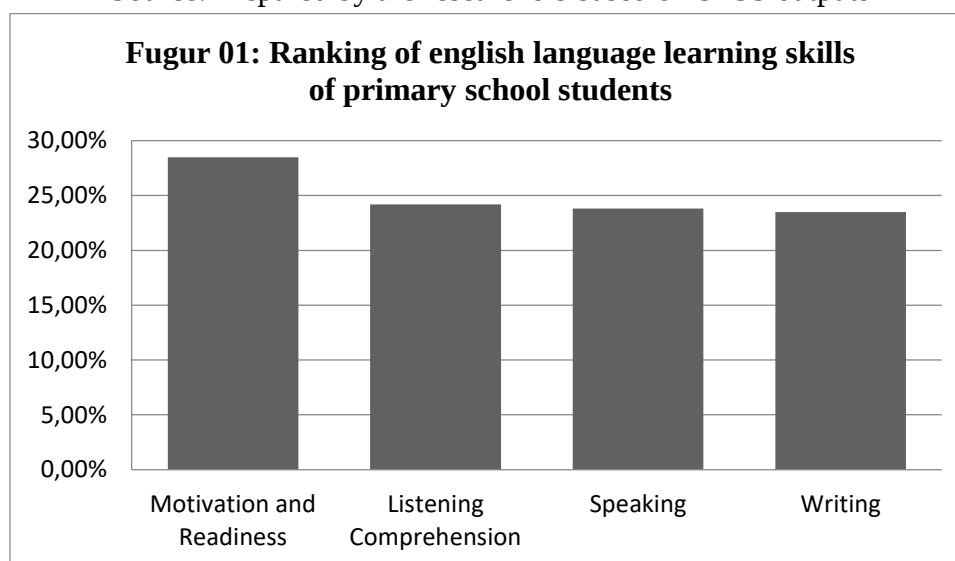
The question is: "What are the most common English language learning skills for primary school students?"

To address this question, we used descriptive statistics, including means, theoretical means, standard deviations, and relative weights. The results are shown in the following table and figure:

Table 04: Ranking of English Language Learning Skills for Primary School Students

Skills	Sample	Theoretical Mean	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Weight	Rank
Listening Comprehension	150	10	8.54	2.77	24.2%	02
Speaking	150	10	8.39	2.46	23.8%	03
Writing	150	10	8.27	2.45	23.5%	04
Motivation and Readiness	150	12	9.98	3.75	28.5%	01

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS outputs



Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS outputs

From Table 04 and Figure 01, we observe that the relative weights of the dimensions of the English language learning skills questionnaire are close, in the following order: Motivation and Readiness (28.5%), Listening Comprehension (24.2%), Speaking (23.8%), and Writing (23.5%).

11.2 Presentation and Analysis of the First Hypothesis Test Results:

The first hypothesis states that "there is no statistically significant relationship between English language learning skills and academic achievement among elementary school students." To verify this hypothesis, the correlation coefficient (R) was calculated to study the relationship, and the results were as follows:

Table 5: Correlation Between English Language Learning Skills and Academic Achievement Among Elementary School Students

Variables	Statistical Methods	(R) Value	P-Value	Statistical Significance
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English Language Learning Skills and Academic Achievement	-0.46	0.57	0.001	Not Significant
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Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS output.

From Table 5, it is evident that there is no significant correlation between English language learning skills and academic achievement among elementary school students. The R value of -0.46 is not statistically significant at the 0.001 level. These results suggest that the hypothesis stating a relationship between English language learning skills and academic achievement is not supported.

11.3 Presentation and Analysis of the Second Hypothesis Test Results:

The second hypothesis states that "there are no statistically significant differences in English language learning skills among elementary school students based on gender (male, female)." To test this hypothesis, an independent samples t-test was used, and the results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Significance of Differences in English Language Learning Skills Among Elementary School Students by Gender

Writing	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degrees of Freedom	T-Value	P-Value	Statistical Significance
English Language Learning Skills	males	60	36.23	11.85	148	0.95	0.093
	Females	90	34	10.07			

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS output.

As shown in Table 6, there are no statistically significant differences in English language learning skills based on gender (male, female). The t-value of 0.093 is not statistically significant at the 0.001 level, with degrees of freedom at 148. These results confirm the hypothesis that "there are no statistically significant differences in English language learning skills among elementary school students based on gender (male, female)."

12. Interpretation and Discussion Results of research:

12.1 Interpretation and Discussion of the First Research Question: The first research question posed was, "What are the most common English language learning skills among primary school students?"

After analyzing the data using appropriate statistical methods, the results indicated no significant differences between the English language learning skills, which were ranked as follows: motivation and readiness, listening comprehension, speaking, and writing.

These findings can be interpreted as follows: Motivation and readiness are critical factors in English language learning for primary school students. At this

stage of development, the brain is highly flexible and capable of absorbing new languages. Motivation plays a central role in fostering students' desire to learn languages; enthusiasm and interest encourage active participation in educational activities. Motivation can stem from internal sources such as a desire to discover, communicate, or excel academically, or from external sources like encouragement from teachers or family, or rewards-based reinforcement. Motivation is the primary driver that makes students more prepared to engage in language-related educational activities, especially with foreign languages.

Following the establishment of motivation and readiness, listening comprehension emerges as the cornerstone of English language learning for primary school students due to various scientific and educational reasons. It serves as the gateway to entering a new linguistic and cultural world, providing a strong foundation for developing robust language abilities. Through listening, students interpret meanings and understand context, forming new neural connections that link sounds to meanings, thereby building a strong linguistic base. Good listening comprehension facilitates learning to read and write, helping students recognize words and texts they have previously heard. Furthermore, this skill contributes to the development of other language skills, such as speaking, reading, and writing, acting as the foundation upon which they are built. Effective listening requires learners to focus on pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation, which enhances their ability to understand spoken messages and lays a solid foundation for acquiring natural language use.

Speaking follows listening comprehension as a skill, reflecting students' ability to use the language interactively. At this stage, students begin applying what they have learned through listening in real-life situations, requiring them to think quickly and use vocabulary and grammar effectively to express their ideas and needs in spoken English. Developing speaking skills not only depends on acquired language skills but also requires self-confidence and the ability to overcome language errors.

Finally, writing skills emerge as an advanced stage in language learning, where ideas and information are converted into written texts. This skill requires a high level of organized thinking and precise knowledge of grammatical rules, enabling students to produce written texts that clearly and coherently express their ideas. Additionally, writing helps integrate vocabulary and grammar learned in earlier stages, enhancing students' overall proficiency in English.

It is evident from the aforementioned discussion that English language learning in primary education follows a logical sequence, starting with motivating and preparing the child for language learning, progressing through developing listening comprehension skills, then speaking, and finally writing. Each skill

supports and reinforces the others, ultimately leading to students effectively and efficiently using English.

These findings align with educational literature, which suggests that 45% of time is spent listening, 30% speaking, 16% reading, and writing occupies the last position with 9%.

12.2 Interpretation and Discussion of the First Hypothesis Test: The first hypothesis proposed a relationship between English language learning skills and academic achievement among primary school students.

After testing this hypothesis using statistical methods, the results indicated that it was not confirmed; no relationship was found between English language learning skills and academic achievement among primary school students.

These results differ from the study by (Abdulaziz, Al-Khubiri, and Imam, 2020) on the relationship between reading comprehension skills and academic achievement among low-achieving English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, which found a statistically significant positive correlation between reading comprehension skills and academic achievement in English among the sample students.

The researchers attribute these findings to several factors: an excessive focus on English at the expense of developing other essential skills, such as mathematics, science, and reading in their native language, which may have a more significant impact at this age. Conversely, students at this stage may be more capable of learning and developing in an educational environment that focuses on their native language, enhancing their understanding of academic subjects and boosting their self-confidence. Learning a foreign language may present an additional challenge that distracts students and drains their energy. Moreover, some schools may lack the resources or appropriate teaching methods to make English learning enjoyable and effective at this age, especially given the short period of teacher training. Finally, cultural background and family support could also be influential factors.

12.3 Interpretation and Discussion of the Second Hypothesis Test: The second hypothesis posited that there are no differences in English language learning based on gender (male, female) among primary school students.

After testing this hypothesis using statistical methods, the results indicated that it was confirmed; no differences were found in English language learning skills between males and females.

The researchers attribute these results to the minimal biological differences between genders in general cognitive abilities, especially in childhood, leading to a significant similarity in children's ability to learn languages. Both genders are exposed to the same curriculum and learning environment, providing equal

opportunities to acquire English language learning skills. Additionally, modern education systems promote the principle of equal educational opportunities and adopt teaching strategies that address the needs of all students, reducing the likelihood of differences attributed to gender.

Conclusion:

English language learning skills are essential factors influencing the academic achievement of primary school students. Developing these skills may enhance their ability to comprehend different academic subjects and grasp fundamental concepts in the curriculum. Furthermore, mastering English opens up greater opportunities for effective communication with teachers and peers, contributing to a positive and motivating learning environment.

In this study, we explored English language learning skills and their relationship to academic achievement among primary school students. We identified the most common English language learning skills: motivation and readiness, listening comprehension, speaking, and writing. We found no relationship between English language learning skills and academic achievement among primary school students, and no statistically significant differences in English language learning skills were observed between male and female students.

In light of these findings, we recommend the following:

- Conducting further studies on English language learning skills in other community groups.
- Organizing training courses for English language teachers in Algerian primary schools.
- Encouraging students to speak and write in English freely without fear of making mistakes, thereby helping them build self-confidence.
- Promoting the use of interactive educational apps and games that enable students to learn English in an enjoyable and age-appropriate way.
- Guiding teachers to design instructional strategies that consider individual differences among students in learning speed, comprehension, and learning styles.
- Developing psychological intervention programs for children experiencing difficulties or anxiety while learning English to ensure their continued learning without negative impacts on their personality or academic performance.

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