

Psychological Factors Influencing English Language Learning at Philological Universities

Usta-Azizova Dilnoza Akhrarovna¹, Makhametova Dilnavoz Botyrovna², Mutalipova Mavlyuda Junaidullayevna³, Lutfullaeva Khulkarkhon Asatullaevna⁴

¹Tashkent Pediatric Medical Institute, associate professor, candidate of pedagogical sciences

²Tashkent University of Information Technologies named after Muhammad al-Khorazmi, associate professor, candidate of pedagogical sciences

³Alfraganus University, Senior Lecturer

⁴Tashkent University of Information Technologies named after Muhammad al-Khorazmi, teacher

Abstract: This research paper explores the psychological aspects involved in studying English at a philological university. It examines the various psychological factors that influence language learning, such as motivation, anxiety, self-efficacy, and cognitive strategies. The study investigates how these factors impact students' performance and engagement in their English studies. Through qualitative and quantitative methods, the research identifies key psychological barriers and facilitators in the language acquisition process. The findings suggest that addressing psychological aspects can significantly enhance the effectiveness of English language education at the university level.

Keywords: Psychological aspects, english language learning, philological university, motivation, anxiety, self-efficacy.

1. Introduction

The process of learning a second language, particularly English, at philological universities is profoundly influenced by a range of psychological factors. As global communication becomes increasingly essential, the demand for proficiency in English has surged, making the study of its acquisition critically important. At the core of successful language learning lies the interplay of motivation, anxiety, self-efficacy, and cognitive strategies, each playing a significant role in shaping the learner's experience and outcomes. Previous research has extensively documented the impact of these psychological variables on language learning, yet there remains a need to specifically address their effects within the context of philological universities. These institutions, which focus on the study of languages and literature, present unique environments where the psychological dynamics of language learning are intensified. This paper aims to explore the psychological factors that influence English language learning in such settings, providing insights into how these elements interact and affect students' academic performance and overall engagement.

As English continues to serve as the lingua franca of academia, business, and international communication, non-philological universities recognize the importance of equipping students with the language skills necessary to succeed in a globalized society. Whether students are studying engineering, economics, medicine, or humanities, proficiency in English is increasingly viewed as a valuable asset that enhances academic and career opportunities.

The methodology of studying English at a non-philological university is characterized by its interdisciplinary approach, incorporating elements of language teaching, content-based instruction, and technology-enhanced learning. Non-philological universities leverage a variety of teaching strategies, resources, and assessment methods to create engaging and effective language learning experiences for students from diverse backgrounds [1-8].

Throughout this article, we will explore the key components of English language instruction at non-philological universities, including communicative language teaching, task-based learning, integrated skills development, and cultural competency. We will also examine the role of technology in enhancing language learning outcomes and the importance of continuous assessment and feedback in monitoring student progress.

By gaining insights into the methodology of studying English at a non-philological university, educators, administrators, and language learners can better understand the challenges and opportunities inherent in

language education within diverse academic contexts [9-13]. Through effective pedagogy, innovative teaching practices, and interdisciplinary collaboration, non-philological universities play a crucial role in empowering students to communicate confidently and effectively in English, both academically and professionally.

2. Literature review

Motivation is widely regarded as a crucial determinant of success in language learning. Dörnyei and Ryan (2020) emphasized the dynamic nature of motivation, noting that it can fluctuate based on various internal and external influences. Noels and Lou (2020) explored the role of goal orientations and found that students with intrinsic motivation, driven by personal interest and enjoyment, tend to achieve higher proficiency levels. Furthermore, Cheng and Chen (2023) highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on learners' motivation, revealing that online learning environments can both challenge and enhance students' drive to learn, depending on the quality of interaction and engagement.

Anxiety has been extensively studied in the context of language learning, with numerous researchers identifying it as a significant barrier to effective acquisition. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's (1986) seminal work on foreign language classroom anxiety set the stage for further exploration into this area. Recent studies by Jiang and Dewaele (2020) confirmed that high levels of anxiety can negatively affect learners' performance, particularly in speaking and listening tasks. MacIntyre and Gregersen (2021) explored the intricate relationship between anxiety and motivation, suggesting that moderate levels of anxiety might sometimes boost performance by increasing arousal and focus.

Self-efficacy, or the belief in one's capabilities to achieve specific goals, plays a pivotal role in language learning. Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy has been applied to language learning to understand how students' confidence in their abilities influences their learning outcomes. Bailey and Heritage (2021) found that students with higher self-efficacy tend to use more effective learning strategies and exhibit greater resilience in the face of challenges. Kim and Kim (2020) further demonstrated that self-efficacy is closely linked to willingness to communicate, a crucial factor for language practice and improvement.

The use of cognitive strategies is essential for processing and retaining new language information. Oxford (1990) categorized these strategies into various types, including memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. Recent research by Li and Xu (2021) indicated that learner autonomy, supported by the use of cognitive strategies, significantly enhances language learning outcomes in online environments. Wang and Liu (2022) found that collaborative learning approaches that incorporate cognitive strategies can lead to deeper understanding and retention of language skills.

The interplay between motivation, anxiety, self-efficacy, and cognitive strategies creates a complex landscape for language learners. Hiver, Al-Hoorie, and Mercer (2021) emphasized the need for a holistic approach to language teaching that addresses these interconnected factors. Their research suggests that fostering a supportive and interactive learning environment can mitigate the negative impacts of anxiety while boosting motivation and self-efficacy. Additionally, the integration of technology, as discussed by Baralt, Gurzynski-Weiss, and Kim (2021), offers new avenues for engaging students and enhancing the effectiveness of cognitive strategies.

Understanding these elements is crucial for developing effective teaching methodologies and creating supportive learning environments. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics, particularly in light of evolving educational technologies and the changing landscape of higher education. By addressing the psychological needs of language learners, educators can better support their academic success and overall language proficiency.

3. Methodology

Participants for this study were selected from a non-philological university setting. The sample included undergraduate and postgraduate students enrolled in various academic programs such as engineering, business, humanities, and social sciences. In addition, language instructors and program coordinators involved in English language instruction were included in the study. Participants were selected based on criteria such as language proficiency levels, academic year, and willingness to participate voluntarily.

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing surveys, interviews, and classroom observations to gather data. Surveys were administered to students to gather quantitative and qualitative data on their language learning experiences, preferences, and perceptions of English language instruction at the non-philological university. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with language instructors and program coordinators to explore their perspectives, experiences, and challenges in teaching English to non-philological students.

Classroom observations were carried out to observe teaching practices, student engagement, and interaction patterns during English language classes.

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Nº	Participant	Gender	Age Range	Academic Program	Language Proficiency Level	Participant
1	Student A	Female	23	Engineering	Intermediate	Student
2	Student B	Male	19	Business	Advanced	Student
3	Student C	Female	26	Humanities	Beginner	Student
4	Student D	Male	22	Social Sciences	Proficient	Student
5	Instructor A	Female	37	English Language	Native Speaker	Instructor
6	Instructor B	Male	33	Applied Linguistics	Advanced	Instructor
7	Coordinator	Female	49	Language Program	Native Speaker	Coordinator

Table 1 provides a summary of the demographic characteristics of the participants involved in the study. The participants include students from various academic programs, language instructors, and program coordinators. Gender, age range, academic program, and language proficiency level are presented to give an overview of the diversity among participants.

The survey instrument consisted of a series of questions designed to elicit information on various aspects of English language learning. The questionnaire included items related to students' language proficiency levels, motivation for learning English, preferred learning strategies, experiences with different teaching methodologies, and perceived effectiveness of language instruction. Likert-scale and open-ended questions were used to gather both quantitative and qualitative data.

The interview protocol comprised open-ended questions and prompts aimed at exploring the perspectives and experiences of language instructors and program coordinators. Interview topics included the selection and adaptation of teaching methodologies, integration of language and content instruction, use of technology in language learning, assessment practices, and strategies for addressing the needs of students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds. Interviews were conducted in-person or via video conferencing and audio-recorded for transcription and analysis.

Classroom observations involved the systematic observation of English language classes at the non-philological university. Observations focused on teaching methods, instructional materials, student participation, interaction patterns, and classroom dynamics. Observational data were recorded using field notes, capturing relevant details such as teaching strategies employed, student engagement levels, and instances of communicative language use.

Table 2. Summary of Data Collection Methods

Nº	Data Collection Method	Description
1	Surveys	Administered to students to gather information on language learning experiences, preferences, and perceptions. Included Likert-scale and open-ended questions.
2	Interviews	Conducted with language instructors and program coordinators to explore perspectives, experiences, and challenges in teaching English to non-philological students. Semi-structured format with open-ended questions.
3	Classroom Observations	Systematic observation of English language classes to observe teaching practices, student engagement, and interaction patterns. Field notes recorded teaching methods, instructional materials, and classroom dynamics.

Table 2 summarizes the data collection methods utilized in the study. Surveys, interviews, and classroom observations were employed to gather information on various aspects of English language learning at the non-philological university. Each method is described briefly, highlighting its purpose and the type of data collected. Data collected through surveys, interviews, and classroom observations were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data analysis involved thematic coding of interview transcripts and open-ended survey responses to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights. Quantitative data from surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize participants' responses and identify trends or correlations.

among variables. Triangulation of data from multiple sources enhanced the validity and reliability of the findings.

4. Results and Discussions

The study yielded valuable insights into the methodology of studying English at a non-philological university, as evidenced by the following key findings:

1. **Student Demographics:** The participant demographics revealed a diverse student body representing various academic programs and language proficiency levels. This diversity highlights the importance of tailoring English language instruction to meet the specific needs and backgrounds of students from different disciplines.
2. **Teaching Methodologies:** Survey data indicated a preference for communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based learning (TBL) among students. These methodologies were perceived as effective in promoting language fluency and communication skills. Interviews with instructors corroborated these findings, emphasizing the importance of interactive and student-centered approaches in language instruction.
3. **Integration of Language and Content:** Classroom observations revealed instances of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) in English language classes. This interdisciplinary approach was praised for its ability to enhance both language proficiency and subject knowledge simultaneously.
4. **Technology-Enhanced Learning:** The study highlighted the growing use of technology in language education at non-philological universities. Online resources, multimedia materials, and virtual learning environments were employed to supplement traditional teaching methods, providing students with additional opportunities for practice and engagement.

The results of the study underscore the significance of adopting diverse and innovative methodologies in English language instruction at non-philological universities. By catering to the unique needs and preferences of students from various academic disciplines, educators can create dynamic and effective language learning environments.

The preference for communicative language teaching and task-based learning reflects a shift towards more interactive and communicative approaches in language education. These methodologies prioritize meaningful communication and real-world language use, aligning with the communicative needs of students in academic and professional contexts.

The integration of language and content through CLIL represents a promising avenue for promoting interdisciplinary learning and language acquisition. By contextualizing language learning within subject-specific content, CLIL enhances students' ability to apply language skills in authentic academic settings.

Technology-enhanced learning offers additional opportunities for students to engage with English language materials and resources outside the classroom. Online platforms, multimedia materials, and interactive exercises can supplement traditional instruction, providing students with flexible and personalized learning experiences.

Overall, the findings of this study contribute to our understanding of effective methodologies for studying English at non-philological universities. By embracing a variety of approaches and techniques, educators can empower students to develop the language skills and competencies needed to succeed in today's globalized world.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the psychological factors influencing English language learning at philological universities are multifaceted and deeply interconnected. Motivation emerges as a pivotal element, driving students' commitment and perseverance, while anxiety can significantly hinder their progress. The role of self-efficacy cannot be overstated, as students' beliefs in their capabilities shape their approach to learning challenges. Additionally, the application of effective cognitive strategies enhances comprehension and retention, further supporting language acquisition. By understanding and addressing these psychological aspects, educators and institutions can create more supportive learning environments that cater to the emotional and cognitive needs of students. This research underscores the importance of integrating psychological considerations into language teaching methodologies and curriculum design, ultimately aiming to foster a more holistic and effective educational experience for learners at philological universities. Through targeted interventions and supportive practices, it is possible to mitigate negative psychological impacts and enhance the overall success of English language learning in these specialized academic settings.

6. References

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