

## **Factors Affecting Learning of English at Secondary Level in District Layyah**

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### **Abstract**

*English is used widely as a medium of communication and also an official language in majority of countries all around the world. By keeping in view, the growing need of English, it is important to develop English language skills. The present study explored the factors affecting the learning of English at secondary level in District Layyah. All students of secondary level in academic year 2019-2020 from male and female secondary schools of District Layyah are considered as the population of this study. 382 students were selected from male and female secondary schools as a sample of the present study by simple random sampling technique. The instrument used in this study was a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire, developed by the researcher. With the permission of school administration, the researcher personally visited the secondary schools in order to collect data from the respondents and the questionnaire was administered to the students by the researcher. The collected data was analyzed by presenting in frequency distribution tables and percentages. The major findings of the study revealed that understanding level of students is not satisfactory because they have poor reading, listening, speaking and writing skills, the instructional methods used by teachers are not helpful for students to learn English, and syllabus of English needs modification because it is not helpful for students to improve English. Thus, it is recommended that students should improve their level of understanding of English by improving their listening, reading, writing and speaking skills. Teachers should improve their teaching methods by introducing activities, AV aids and assignments to improve their students' English language skills. Schools should arrange extra language classes for student and classes should not be overcrowded. Syllabus of English should be revised.*

**Keywords:** factors, learning, english language, students' understanding level of english, instructional methods of english teacher, syllabus of english.

### **Introduction**

Since independence English has the status of an official language in Pakistan. Urdu was declared as the national language in the first educational conference, by Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali

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Jinnah, but he always admitted the worth of English language. Considering the need and importance of English language at national and international level, government of Pakistan introduced this language as a compulsory subject from grade 1 to graduate level. English is considered as a language of global communities, the benefits of better learning opportunities and better career choices are attached to it (Ariyanti, 2016).

English is used widely as a medium of communication and also an official language in majority of countries all around the world, that's why it is influencing the cultural and social norms of these countries globally (Hao & Moore, 2015). This massive increase in the need and importance of English language make it necessary to develop better communication skills in English. For higher studies, travelling around the world, for social contacts and various kinds of professional links English proficiency is needed (Hashemi, 2011).

According to Ahmad, Ahmad, Bukhari and Bukhari (2011), English teaching standards have become worse in Pakistan. They stated that unfortunately teaching of English language is almost missing in schools. The practical aspect of English is not given importance, which results in falling standards of English teaching and it headed towards further decline. The condition of English language learning at secondary level is not good and it is the need of the hour to deal with these problems urgently.

Extensive research is conducted in many countries, including Pakistan relating to English language learning. Despite all the efforts made by the public and private sectors, desired results are still awaiting and lots of efforts are needed to achieve our goal. Especially in Layyah, the situation is not satisfactory. The area related to English language learning in secondary school is unnoticed. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research to explore the factors affecting the learning of English at secondary level in District Layyah.

This study will bring attention to the problem of low achievement and helps to identify different opportunities for improving the academic outcomes of students. This study will give a new dimension to existing research, provide clear understanding of the factors, which are responsible for badly affecting the students' English language learning and help in improving the practice at various levels of education system.

The findings of this study will help the teachers to plan individualized learning techniques to improve the academic performance of learners in English by increasing their attention, involvement and motivation. Educational administrators will be able to invest time, resources and energy to improve the factors, which are responsible for badly affecting the learning of the students. The results of this study are significant for curriculum planners in selecting

syllabus and teaching strategies that can improve the English language learning of the students.

This study intended to achieve the following objectives: (1) To investigate the factors, that affect learning of English at secondary level; (2) To identify the extent to which students' understanding level affect the learning of English at secondary level; (3) To identify the extent to which teachers' instructional methods affect the learning of English at secondary level; (4) To investigate the extent to which syllabus of English affect the learning of English at secondary level.

## **Literature Review**

### *Status of English*

According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), in educational sector, English is used as a medium of instruction in many countries. The study of English language around the globe is attached to its social and political benefits. The increasing demand of English in most of the countries is the major reason of its widespread importance in the world. It is a fastest spreading language in the world (Wozniak, 2010; Hessein, Demirok, & Uzunboylu, 2009; Carlo, 2012; Tomlinson, 2012; Haryati, 2019).

The findings of the researches conducted by Hashemi (2011) and Hao and Moore (2015) revealed that in Pakistan more than 90 percent of higher educational institutions utilize English as medium of instruction. Keeping in consideration, the growing need of English, it is important to develop the English language skills. According to Barnett, Lee, Jiang, & Park (2016), English is a language of science and technology, a language of media, a language of literature, a language of communication, a language of cultural preservation, an international language and a global language because majority of knowledge assets are stored in it. English is a source of cultural and lingual understanding around the globe. Thus, English language learning is a necessity for the people of developed, developing and underdeveloped countries of the world.

### *Factors, that affect learning of English*

There are many studies on the factors affecting English language learning. According to Alhabbash, Mahdi and Naser (2016), students at secondary level have very non-serious attitude towards English, their lack of interest make teaching of English a difficult job for teachers. It is a well-known fact that all four language skills; that are, reading, listening, writing and speaking skills, are important to learn in order to be proficient in English, and it needs a lot of dedication and hard work by the students.

According to Gudu (2015), absence of instructional material causes poor performance of the students. Westwood (2016) stated that the Grammar-Translation method is used for teaching English in

Pakistan, textbook has the central position in teaching and learning process, and reading and writing is focused during English teaching. Haryati (2019) stated that it is a known fact that improper selection and use of teaching method badly affects the English language learning which results in poor learning of the students. Moreover, while teaching language the age and interest level of the students are not taken into consideration.

The findings of the study conducted by Sa'ad and Usman (2014) revealed that the factors affecting the English language learning are improper use of teaching methods, unavailability of facilities and instructional materials in schools, negative attitude of teachers toward innovation and negative attitude of students toward learning English.

According to Nguyen, Warren, & Fehring (2014), uninteresting teaching styles, less effort by teachers in lesson preparation, insufficient time allocation for language-skills based activities, teachers' inadequate use of AV aids and technology, grammar based teaching method, large class size, poor time management, teachers' limited ability of classroom management, unclear instructions by teachers, teachers' inability to guide their students in learning English, unequal students' level of understanding and lack of confidence in students for using English in classroom, are the factors affecting the English language learning.

According to the observation of Richards and Rodgers (2014), the students have no knowledge about the importance of English regarding practical life and employment in national and multinational companies, they only think of it as a school subject.

According to Rany, Jafre, Abidin and Mei (2013), the factors affecting the English language learning are lack of motivation by teachers to use English in day to day communication, inadequate English background knowledge of students, untrained and inexperienced English teachers, lack of confidence in students to use English because they hesitate to speak English and they have a fear of making mistakes in the classroom, negative attitude of students towards English as they think of it as an unimportant subject, traditional, grammar-driven, uninteresting and boring teaching methods, boring drills of grammar rules and lack of interest of students.

Rany et al. (2013) stated that at secondary level, lack of instructional material, language laboratories and resources in schools badly affect the English language learning. Moreover students from rural areas are not familiar with English language; they are uninterested to learn English as they have poor vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, syllabus of English is not suitable for learning English as it lacks exercises for improving students' listening, speaking, reading, writing skills, for most of the students syllabus of English is difficult to learn, time allocated to each period is not

sufficient for students, classrooms are over-crowded, students are not interested to practice English as they have a negative attitude towards learning English.

A study conducted by Ahmad, Khan and Munir (2013) about the factor affecting English language learning stated that at secondary level English teachers were not well qualified and well experienced. The study also found that there was a lack of instructional materials in schools, grammar translation teaching method English was used, the classroom was over-crowded and teachers could not give attention to all the students individually, the medium of instruction was not English, rather Urdu or Pashto was used as a medium of instruction. Because of this, students could not develop speaking skills in English. All the above-mentioned factors hamper the English language learning in students.

The studies conducted by Souriyavongsa, Abidin and Mei (2013) and Tara (2012) at secondary level students at Lao, regarding the factors affect poor performance of students in English found that untrained and inexperienced teachers and ineffective teaching, poor English background, lack of confidence in students to use English, lack of motivation, ineffective content that is unfavorable for students to learn English are the major factors that badly affect English language learning.

There are many factors, which influence English language learning for instance untrained and inexperienced teachers, inadequate teaching methods, unavailability of instructional materials, tough and boring grammar exercises, unavailability of infrastructural facilities, lack of resources in schools and non-serious attitude of students towards English language learning (Mohammed, 2015).

A research study conducted by Nation and Macalister (2010) on the need of revision in the syllabus of English revealed that revision of English syllabus is needed and for this needs analysis is required. The organization and sequencing of content, the presentation style of the material and the techniques of evaluation need to be revised. According to Tomlinson (2012), for providing effective English language learning, syllabus, instructional material and teachers play a vital role.

## **Methodology**

### *Research Design*

This study was quantitative in nature and descriptive approach was used. Survey was conducted to explore the factors affecting the learning of English at secondary level in District Layyah.

### *Population and Sampling*

The population included all secondary level students from public schools of District Layyah in academic year 2019-2020. Based

on the population of this study, the researcher used “Simple Random Sampling Technique” for selecting the sample of 382 students. Twelve schools were randomly selected among them six were boys’ schools and six were girls’ schools.

### *Instruments for Research*

After studying the literature thoroughly, the researcher developed the research instrument. In order to explore the factors that affect the learning of English at secondary level, a self-reported questionnaire was constructed. The questionnaire was based on 5-point Likert scale i.e. 1 = strongly disagreed (SD), 2 = disagreed (D), 3 = neutral (N), 4 = agreed (A) and 5 = strongly agreed (SA). The questionnaire was divided into three sections which are given below.

- Section 1 was about the students’ views regarding their understanding level of English. The items related to the listening skills of students, reading skills of students, writing skills of students, speaking skills of students, the confidence level of students for speaking English and interest of students in English were added in this section.
- Section 2 was about the students’ views regarding instructional methods of English teacher. The items related to the classroom activities, use of AV aids, use of grammar translation method, assignment related to four language skills, lesson planning, medium of instruction, teacher’s guidance in learning English, over-crowded classes, insufficient time allocation, instructional techniques, rote learning and learning by understanding were added in this section.
- Section 3 was about the students’ views regarding the syllabus of English. The items related to the use of four language skills in syllabus, importance of English syllabus, required modification in English syllabus, usefulness of components of English syllabus, difficulty level of syllabus, English as a language or as a subject were added in this section.

Each section consisted of 25 questions. In order to ensure that the respondents answer all the questions with enough attention, the length of the questionnaire was kept short. Furthermore, the guideline was attained for further improvement in the construction of the questionnaire from the worthy supervisor.

### *Validity and Reliability*

The panel of area experts checked the validity of the questionnaire. By keeping in view, the comments of the panel and guidelines of supervisor some changes were made in the test items for improving the content validity of the tests.

After Pilot Study in two secondary schools, the reliability of the questionnaire was ensured. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.75, that is why the reliability of the questionnaire was considered acceptable.

### Procedure

With the permission of District Education Officer and principals of selected secondary schools of District Layyah, the survey was conducted in twelve selected secondary schools, among them, six were girls' schools and six were boys' schools. The researcher briefly introduced the questionnaire to the students and responded to their queries. When the students filled the questionnaire, the researchers collected them and recorded the responses.

### Results

The results of this study are divided into three parts: students' understanding level of English, instructional methods of English teacher and syllabus of English.

**Table 1**  
*Students' Views regarding their understanding level of English.*

Items	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed	Mean
	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	
I can listen and understand English TV programs.	213 (55.8)	132 (34.6)	4 (1)	11 (2.9)	22 (5.8)	1.68
I can listen and understand English news broadcasts on radio.	122 (31.9)	148 (38.7)	9 (2.4)	89 (23.3)	14 (3.7)	2.28
I can listen and understand English lectures in the classroom.	206 (53.9)	113 (29.6)	5 (1.3)	45 (11.8)	13 (3.4)	1.81
I can read and understand English novel without using dictionary frequently.	151 (39.5)	216 (56.5)	2 (0.5)	1 (0.3)	12 (3.2)	1.17
I can read and understand English newspapers and magazine articles.	207 (54.2)	155 (40.6)	1 (0.3)	10 (2.6)	9 (2.4)	1.58

I can read and understand English and other textbooks without using dictionary frequently.	167 (43.7)	171 (44.8)	4 (1)	29 (7.6)	11 (2.9)	1.81
I can read only English textbook but no other English texts e.g. newspapers, magazines.	31 (8.1)	64 (16.8)	5 (1.3)	151 (39.5)	131 (34.3)	3.75
I can write a short comment on a person, a movie, a book, or an article in English.	62 (16.2)	51 (13.3)	2 (0.5)	130 (34)	137 (35.9)	3.61
I can write biographical information about my education and my experience in English.	52 (13.6)	43 (11.3)	5 (1.3)	131 (34.3)	151 (39.5)	3.78
I can write letters and personal notes in English.	6 (1.6)	13 (3.4)	2 (0.5)	255 (66.8)	106 (27.7)	4.16
I can write a report in English for describing a specific task which I performed.	43 (11.2)	34 (9)	3 (0.8)	118 (31)	14 (48.2)	1.73
I can speak English without grammatical mistakes.	191 (50)	184 (48.2)	1 (0.3)	3 (0.8)	3 (0.8)	1.54
I can use grammatical rules properly while speaking.	225 (58.9)	128 (33.5)	5 (1.3)	20 (5.2)	4 (1.1)	1.56
I have enough vocabulary to speak English when needed.	183 (47.9)	184 (48.2)	3 (0.8)	2 (0.5)	10 (2.6)	1.62
I get nervous while speaking English in the classroom.	4 (1)	41 (10.7)	2 (0.5)	151 (39.5)	184 (48.2)	4.23
I have a fear of being trolled by the students when I speak English.	69 (18.1)	8 (2.1)	3 (0.8)	118 (30.9)	184 (48.2)	3.89
I always feel that other students have better English-speaking skills than me	45 (11.7)	57 (14.9)	8 (3)	129 (33.8)	143 (37.4)	3.70
I am not satisfied with my level of English proficiency.	10 (2.6)	3 (0.8)	8 (2.1)	169 (44.2)	192 (50.3)	4.39
I am not afraid to speak to English.	121 (31.7)	173 (45.3)	7 (1.8)	17 (4.5)	64 (16.8)	2.29
I pay attention when someone else is speaking English.	60 (15.7)	58 (15.2)	5 (6.1)	145 (38)	114 (29.8)	3.51
I like to learn English.	101 (26.4)	114 (29.8)	2 (0.5)	89 (23.3)	76 (19.9)	2.89



I avail every opportunity of speaking English I get.	184 (48.2)	189 (49.5)	6 (1.6)	2 (0.5)	1 (0.3)	1.55
I like to spend my time on courses other than English.	104 (27.2)	29 (7.6)	3 (0.8)	121 (31.7)	125 (32.7)	3.35
I think learning English is a waste of time.	133 (34.8)	227 (59.4)	5 (1.3)	11 (2.9)	6 (1.6)	1.77
I believe English is a difficult subject.	48 (12.5)	56 (14.6)	2 (0.5)	152 (39.8)	124 (32.5)	3.65

After analyzing the responses of the students on the items related to their listening skills, it was found that majority of the students could not listen and understand English TV programs, English news broadcasts and lectures in English in the classroom. It can be concluded that students have poor listening skills.

Analysis of items related to reading skills revealed that majority of the students could not read and understand English novel, English newspapers, magazine and English textbooks and another field without using dictionary frequently. However, most of the students could read English textbook but no other English texts e.g. newspapers, magazines. It can be concluded that students have poor reading skills.

Responses of students on the items regarding writing skills showed that majority of the students could write a short comment on a person, a movie, a book, or an article in English, biographical information about themselves, their education and experience, in English, letters and personal notes in English and report in English describing a specific task they performed. It can be concluded that students have acceptable writing skills.

After analyzing the responses of the students on the items related to their speaking skills, it was found that majority of the students could not speak English without grammatical mistakes; they cannot use grammatical rules properly while speaking. Similarly, they do not have enough vocabulary to speak English when needed. It can be concluded that students have poor speaking skills.

Responses of students on the items related to confidence level of student in speaking English revealed that majority of students got nervous when they speak English. Most of them are afraid of getting trolled when they speak English. They felt that other students have better speaking skills. Majority of the students were not satisfied with their level of English proficiency. Similarly, majority of the students were afraid to speak English. It is concluded that most of the students have low confidence level in speaking English.

Analysis of items related to Interest of students in English revealed that majority of the student's dislike English; they did not

speak English whenever they have the opportunity to do it outside the classroom; they liked to spend their time on courses other than English and they believed that English is a difficult subject. Contrary to this majority of the students paid attention when someone is speaking English and they did not think that learning English is a waste of time. It is concluded that majority of students have lack of interest in English language

**Table 2**  
*Students' views regarding instructional methods of English teacher.*

Items	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed	Mean
	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	
The classroom activities used by teacher are helpful in learning English.	228 (59.7)	119 (31.2)	1 (0.3)	4 (1)	30 (7.8)	1.66
Teacher use audio visual aids appropriately while teaching English.	268 (70.2)	91 (23.8)	2 (0.5)	20 (5.2)	1 (0.3)	1.41
Teacher uses grammar translation method.	8 (2.1)	5 (3.4)	1 (0.3)	220 (57.6)	148 (38.7)	4.29
Teacher gives me listening assignments to improve English listening skill.	195 (51)	172 (45)	1 (0.3)	4 (1)	10 (2.6)	1.59
Teacher gives me reading assignments to improve English reading skill.	81 (21.2)	248 (64.9)	8 (2.1)	39 (10.2)	6 (1.6)	2.06
Teacher gives me writing assignments to	149 (39)	133 (34.8)	6 (1.6)	81 (21.2)	13 (3.4)	2.15

improve English writing skill.							
Teacher gives me speaking assignments to improve English-speaking skill.	253 (66.2)	92 (24.1)	3 (0.8)	15 (3.9)	19 (5)		1.52
Teacher prepares his/her lesson properly before coming in the classroom.	39 (10.2)	1 (0.3)	3 (0.8)	213 (55.8)	126 (33)		4.01
Teacher uses English as a medium of instruction.	238 (62.3)	117 (30.6)	2 (0.5)	20 (5.2)	5 (1.3)		1.52
Teacher uses Urdu as a medium of instruction.	9 (2.4)	15 (3.9)	5 (1.3)	118 (30.9)	235 (61.5)		4.45
Teacher gives me feedback on my progress in English.	9 (2.4)	59 (15.4)	1 (0.3)	69 (18.1)	244 (63.9)		4.25
Teacher helps me to learn English.	233 (61)	71 (18.6)	1 (0.3)	42 (11)	35 (9.2)		1.89
Teacher tells me what to study to improve my English.	137 (35.9)	169 (44.2)	6 (1.6)	31 (8.1)	39 (10.2)		2.12
Teacher tells me my mistakes.	9 (2.3)	21 (5.5)	1 (0.3)	176 (46.1)	175 (45.8)		4.30
Teacher encourages me to speak English.	163 (42.6)	145 (38)	6 (1.6)	42 (11)	26 (6.8)		2.01
The classrooms are crowded and teacher cannot pay attention to ever student.	15 (3.9)	28 (7.3)	6 (1.6)	173 (45.3)	160 (41.9)		4.14
Time given to English is not sufficient for learning it.	18 (4.7)	11 (2.9)	5 (1.3)	151 (39.5)	197 (51.6)		4.30
Teacher slows down when I don't understand lessons in English.	10 (2.6)	69 (18.1)	2 (0.5)	190 (49.7)	111 (29.1)		3.84
Teacher translates English lessons for students.	49 (12.8)	33 (8.6)	8 (2.1)	129 (33.8)	163 (42.7)		3.85

Teacher only gives notes in English.	4 (1)	88 (23)	1 (0.3)	138 (36.1)	151 (39.5)	3.90
Teacher makes learning English fun.	113 (29.6)	249 (65.2)	4 (1)	15 (3.9)	1 (0.3)	1.80
Teacher gives more time to Grammar portion of English syllabus.	83 (21.7)	206 (53.9)	6 (1.6)	76 (19.9)	11 (2.9)	2.28
Teacher gives more time to English lessons and their exercises.	30 (7.9)	10 (2.6)	4 (1)	256 (67)	82 (21.5)	3.91
Teacher emphasizes “rote memorization” of English syllabus.	42 (11)	23 (6)	2 (0.5)	117 (30.6)	198 (51.8)	4.06
Teacher emphasizes “learning by understanding” of English syllabus.	142 (37.2)	147 (38.5)	4 (1)	79 (20.7)	10 (2.6)	2.13

Analysis of items related to classroom activities revealed that the classroom activities used by teachers were not helpful in learning English, teachers did not use appropriate AV aids while teaching English and teachers used Grammar translation method. It can be concluded that classroom activities used by teachers are not helpful for the students in learning English.

Responses of students on the items related to assignments given to students to improve four language skills showed that teachers did not give listening, reading, writing and speaking assignments to their students for improving their English language skills. After analyzing the responses of the students on the items related to lesson planning of English teachers, it can be concluded that teachers prepare their lesson properly before coming in the classroom.

Analysis of items related to medium to instruction revealed that teachers did not use English as a medium of instruction rather they used Urdu as a medium of instruction. It can be. After analyzing the responses of the students on the items related to Teacher’s guidance in learning English, it was found that teachers gave feedback to their students on their progress in English and told them their mistakes in English. But teachers did not help the students to learn English, they did not tell them what to study to improve their English as well as they did not encourage their students to speak English. It can be concluded that teachers do not guide their students in learning English.

It can be concluded from the responses of students on the items related to overcrowded classrooms that the classrooms are crowded that is why teachers cannot pay attention to every student and the time given to English is not sufficient for learning it.

Analysis of items related to instructional techniques revealed that the teachers slow down when the students did not understand lessons in English and they translate English lessons for students. The results also revealed that the teachers only give notes in English, they did not make learning English fun, they did not give more time to Grammar portion of English syllabus rather they gave more time to English lessons and their exercises. It can be concluded that instructional techniques used by teachers are not helpful in learning English.

It can be concluded from the responses of students on the items related to rote learning and learning by understanding in English that the teachers emphasized rote memorization of English syllabus.

**Table 3**  
*Students' views regarding the syllabus of English*

Items	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed	Mean
	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)	
Syllabus of English is helpful for the development of listening skills.	195 (51)	105 (27.5)	1 (0.3)	42 (11)	39 (10.2)	2.02
Syllabus of English is helpful for the development of reading skills.	18 (4.7)	15 (3.9)	2 (0.5)	156 (40.8)	191 (50)	4.27
Syllabus of English is helpful for the development of writing skills.	38 (10)	36 (9.4)	5 (1.3)	176 (46.1)	127 (33.2)	3.83
Syllabus of English is helpful for the	195 (51)	132 (34.6)	3 (0.8)	21 (5.5)	31 (8.1)	1.85

development of speaking skills.						
The English I am learning in English lessons can be used in my daily life.	79 (20.7)	36 (9.4)	6 (1.6)	177 (46.3)	84 (22)	3.39
English should be taught because it makes persons more knowledgeable.	59 (15.4)	43 (11.3)	7 (1.8)	129 (33.8)	144 (37.7)	3.67
English should be taught because it helps in professional purposes.	40 (10.5)	56 (14.6)	2 (0.5)	122 (31.9)	162 (42.4)	3.81
English should be taught because it helps in making interaction and communication with other cultures.	22 (5.8)	18 (4.7)	3 (0.8)	152 (39.8)	187 (49)	4.21
English should be taught because it is an international language.	30 (7.9)	97 (25.4)	4 (1)	113 (29.6)	138 (36.1)	3.61
English should be taught because it is a requirement.	45 (11.8)	17 (4.4)	1 (0.3)	140 (36.6)	179 (46.9)	4.02
English should be taught because it fulfils academic purposes, e.g. book reading and articles writing and pursuing higher education.	26 (6.8)	9 (2.3)	2 (0.5)	139 (36.4)	206 (54)	4.28
English should not be taught as compulsory subject.	31 (8.1)	27 (7.1)	4 (1)	148 (38.7)	172 (45)	4.05
I could achieve more if English	46 (12)	45 (11.8)	9 (2.4)	151 (39.5)	131 (34.3)	3.72

syllabus is developed in a different way.						
English syllabus is not helpful for students for improving English.	29 (7.6)	22 (5.8)	2 (0.5)	176 (46.1)	153 (40)	4.05
English syllabus should be revised.	63 (16.5)	47 (12.3)	3 (0.8)	143 (37.4)	126 (33)	3.58
English syllabus should have speaking practice exercises along with written exercises.	33 (8.6)	30 (7.8)	1 (0.3)	225 (59)	93 (24.3)	3.82
The grammar rules taught in English syllabus are helpful for learning English.	31 (8.1)	65 (17)	3 (0.8)	139 (36.4)	144 (37.7)	3.78
The lessons in English syllabus are helpful for learning English.	153 (40)	145 (38)	6 (1.6)	36 (9.4)	42 (11)	2.13
English syllabus only promotes rote learning.	15 (3.9)	12 (3.1)	8 (2.1)	195 (51)	152 (39.8)	4.19
Syllabus of English is very difficult to understand.	112 (29.3)	193 (50.5)	8 (2.1)	56 (14.7)	13 (3.4)	2.12
English syllabus is difficult than my level of understanding.	142 (37.2)	153 (40.1)	5 (1.3)	52 (13.6)	30 (7.9)	2.15
English syllabus is according to my level of understanding.	54 (14.1)	17 (4.4)	4 (1)	136 (35.6)	171 (44.8)	3.92
English syllabus is easier than my level of understanding.	112 (29.3)	124 (32.5)	5 (1.3)	57 (14.9)	84 (22)	2.68
English syllabus is prepared as if	142 (37.2)	177 (46.3)	7 (1.8)	43 (11.3)	13 (3.4)	1.97

English is a language.							
English syllabus is prepared as if English is a subject.	11	18	4	113	236		4.42
	(2.9)	(4.7)	(1)	(29.6)	(61.8)		

Analysis of items related to the use of four language skills in syllabus revealed that syllabus of English is not helpful for the development of reading, listening, writing and speaking skills. That's why students have poor language skills.

After analyzing the responses of the students on the items related to importance of English syllabus, it was found that English that the students are learning in English lessons can be used in their daily life. Students thought that English should be taught because it makes persons more knowledgeable, it fulfils professional purposes, it helps in interaction and communication with other cultures, it is an international language, it is a requirement and it fulfils academic purposes as well. Moreover, English should be taught as compulsory subject. It can be concluded that students are well aware of the importance of English.

Responses of students on the items related to the need of Modification in English showed that students believed that they could achieve more if English syllabus is developed in a different way, it is not suitable for improving English, and it should be revised. Moreover, English syllabus should include speaking practice exercises along with written exercises. It can be concluded that syllabus of English needs modification in order to improve English learning of the students.

Analysis of items related to Usefulness of components of English syllabus revealed that the grammar rules taught in English syllabus are helpful for learning English. However, the lessons in English syllabus are not helpful for learning English. English syllabus only promotes rote learning. It can be concluded that some components of English syllabus are not helpful for learning it.

Responses of students on the items related to the difficulty level of syllabus of English revealed that the student felt that English syllabus is not difficult or easy than the level of understanding of student rather it is according to their level of understanding. It can be concluded that English syllabus is according to the level of understanding of students.

It can be concluded from the responses of the students on the items related to preparation of English syllabus as a language or as a subject that English syllabus is prepared as a subject not as a language.

### Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the factors affecting the learning of English at secondary level were explored. Detailed analysis of the understanding



level of the students shows that most of the students had poor reading, listening, speaking and writing skills. These results are supported by the findings of the study conducted by Alhabbash, Mahdi and Naser (2016) which showed that mastering of skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing is significantly related to performance in English language learning.

According to the findings, low confidence level in speaking English is also a factor that affects the English language learning. These results agree with the results of Tara (2012), Souriyavongsa, Abidin and Mei (2013) and Rany, Jafre, Abidin and Mei (2013), which stated that students' lack of confidence in using English is one of the reasons of poor performance in English.

The results about the interest of students in English language reveal that most of the students do not have interest in learning English. These results agree with the finding of the studies conducted by Rany, Jafre, Abidin and Mei (2013), Sa'ad and Usman (2014), Mohammed (2015) and Alhabbash, Mahdi and Naser (2016) which shows that lack of interest of the students, negative and non-serious attitude of students about English language learning causes poor performance in language learning.

Analysis of the findings about instructional methods of English teacher shows that the ineffective classroom activities, lack of audio-visual aids and grammar translation method used by teachers cause hindrance in learning English. Similarly, teachers do not give listening, reading, writing and speaking assignments to students to improve English language skills. These results agree with Ahmad, Khan and Munir (2013), Mohammed (2015), Gudu (2015), Westwood (2016) and Haryati (2019) that lack of effective classroom activities, lack of audio-visual aids, lack of assignments for improving English language skills and grammar translation method causes poor performance in learning English.

Results show that English teachers prepare their lesson properly before coming in the classroom, they slow down when the students did not understand lessons in English and they translate English lessons for students. It is contradictory to the results of Nguyen, Warren and Fehring (2014) that unclear instructions and poor lesson preparation by English teachers are among the major factors affecting the English language learning. Research findings concur with Ahmad, Khan and Munir (2013) that Urdu is used as a medium of instruction.

Results show that English teachers do not help the students to learn English; they *do* not tell them what to study to improve their English as well as they do not encourage their students to speak English. These results agree with the results of Nguyen, Warren and Fehring (2014) who discusses that teachers do not guide their students in learning English. Results also shows that teachers cannot pay

attention to every student because of over-crowded classes and the time given to English was not sufficient for learning it. These results are supported by the findings of the study conducted by Ahmad, Khan and Munir (2013), Rany, Jafre, Abidin and Mei (2013) and Nguyen, Warren and Fehring (2014).

According to the findings, teachers only give notes in English, they do not make learning English fun, and they give less time to Grammar portion and more time to English lessons and their exercises and lay undue emphasis on rote learning in English. These results agree with the results of Mohammed (2015) and Westwood (2016) that these factors negatively affect the English language learning.

Analysis of the findings about syllabus of English shows that syllabus of English is not helpful for the development of listening, reading, writing and speaking skills, components of English syllabus are not helpful for learning English and English syllabus is prepared as a subject and not as a language. These findings are supported by the results of researches conducted by Tara (2012), Souriyavongsa, Abidin and Mei (2013) and Rany, Jafre, Abidin and Mei (2013) that syllabus is not helpful for students in improving English.

Results reveal that students know the importance of English and they think that it is helpful in fulfilling professional and academic purposes. Therefore, these findings are contradictory to Rany, Jafre, Abidin and Mei (2013) and Richards and Rodgers (2014) that majority of students think English is not an important subject.

According to the finding, students think that modification is needed in syllabus of English. These results agree with the results of Nation and Macalister (2010), Tomlinson (2012), Tara (2012), Souriyavongsa, Abidin and Mei (2013) and Rany, Jafre, Abidin and Mei (2013) who discusses the need of revision in the syllabus of English and highlight the importance of aligning, evaluating, formatting and presenting instructional materials of English.

Findings also show that syllabus of English is according to their level of understanding of the students. These results are contradictory to Rany, Jafre, Abidin and Mei (2013) and Nguyen, Warren and Fehring (2014), that English syllabus is difficult for students to learn.

### **Recommendations**

Keeping in view the results, conclusions and discussions of the study following recommendations were made.

- Students should improve their level of understanding of English by improving their listening, reading, writing and speaking skills.

- Teachers should improve their teaching methods by introducing activities and AV aids which can help the students to take interest in English.
- Teachers should give their students assignments related to listening, reading, writing and speaking skills and introduce language practice sessions to improve their students' understanding level.
- Teachers should guide their students and encourage them to learn English.
- Classes should not be overcrowded so that teacher can pay attention to every student.
- Schools should arrange extra language classes for student to help them develop their language skills.
- Syllabus of English should be revised. Listening, reading, writing and speaking exercises should be included in it.

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