

ENGLISH COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES OF ESL STUDENTS IN ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES AT KFUEIT: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Sadia Riaz, Dr. Mehwish Muzaffar, Noor ul Ain, Waheed Shahzad

Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan sadiariaz319@gmail.com

Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan mehwish.muzaffar@kfueit.edu.pk

Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan noor.ain@kfueit.edu.pk

Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan waheed.shahzad@kfueit.edu.pk

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2237-8237

Corresponding author: waheed.shahzad@kfueit.edu.pk

Abstract

This study examines the comparative English communication challenges faced by ESL students at KFUEIT. The objectives of study were to explore the English communication challenges faced by ESL students in the Allied health sciences and humanities at KFUEIT, to compare the English communication faced by ESL students in the allied health sciences and humanities at KFUEIT. A quantitative research method was adopted, involving both survey and classroom observation. The sample of study consisted of 230 ESL undergraduate students from Allied health sciences and Humanities at KFUEIT, the recommended sample size was 144. To ensure equal representation, the sample was divided with 72 students selected from each program using stratified random sampling techniques. The researcher developed two main instruments for data collection: a questionnaire and an observation sheet. The questionnaire included two parts; Part-1 Demographic, Part-2: Closed-Ended. The observation sheet was used to collect data from both departments. The collected data was organized systematically and fed into data sheet. The data was analyzed through SPSS statistic software using an Independent Samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores between departments.

Keywords: *ESL students, English communication, allied health sciences, Humanities, Communication styles*

1 Introduction

English is the most often used language for communication around the world. Some countries use this language as their official language. It has a significant cultural impact in numerous nations (Tieu 2022). It is extremely widespread in countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and other countries where many People primarily speak English (Braine 2014). More and more individuals have to strengthen their English communication skills, as the English language becomes more popular. It is really necessary to be able to speak English properly if you want to attend school go to other nations or create foreign acquaintances and commercial ties (Hashemi 2011).

Research shows that children with limited resources are more likely to experience anxiety about studying. English Khattak, Jamshed et al. (2011) is the world's most commonly used language in the twenty-first century. English has an essential part in education worldwide, with billions of

people using it. By 2020, two billion people will use it for reading and education. English is now. Almost every educational institution in the world uses it into its educational system. Teaching English in poor nations, such as Pakistan, can be tough. Also, with the huge variety of knowledge available online, and the significance of using the internet it is absolutely vital to learn English. Mastering English is helpful, culturally. Exchanges between nations, including the suggestion for a conversation between civilizations.

In the English teachers have historically faced numerous challenges. Even at the higher education level, many ESL students struggle with proper use of language and communication. This problem can be related to individual difficulties they encountered during their academic careers that affected their efforts at study. Therefore, to identify the main challenges addressed by EFL students in their language learning and assess the challenging factor associated with direction and then, school factors attempt to find practical ways to improve learning. EFL students encounter challenges in learning a language, such as low self-esteem and lack of motivation, shyness, the fear of making mistakes, the effect of a large class, or crammed classrooms (Alsalihi 2020).

Every student in Pakistani higher education institutions is required to study English, but a lot of them need the comfort or proficiency to communicate in the language fluently and efficiently. Programs for education are created to impart particular management concepts and aid in bridging the gap between theoretical understanding and real-world implementation. In Pakistan, speaking English could only be a dream. Language's intentional component is not very well comprehended, which is why the present generation's English is so weak. It is clear from numerous examinations and rejections that the second-level English study is extremely low. To solve these issues, it is necessary to concentrate on core ideas (Muhammad 2013). It's essential to build communication skills, especially for people studying a language as a second. Communicating ability as an ability of language learners to use the language effectively in a variety of communication contexts or situations. According to Savignon (2018) ability to communicate puts an important emphasis on appropriateness in communication rather than accuracy. Language learners who possess communicative competence are able to speak clearly and effectively without leading to misconceptions or miscommunications (Hymes 1972).

The purpose of this study is to compare the English communication obstacles encountered by ESL students studying allied health sciences and humanities at KFUEIT. By identifying the specific challenges that these students face, this study hopes to give practical insights for instructors and curriculum creators, allowing for the introduction of specialized support measures that address the unique demands of both disciplines. Finally, knowing these issues can help ESL students in KFUEIT improve their academic performance and professional preparation (Abbasi et al., 2025).

1.1 Research Objectives

To explore and compare the English communication challenges faced by ESL students in the Allied Health Sciences and Humanities at KFUEIT.

2 Literature Review

It explores the English communication challenges encountered by ESL (English as a Second Language) students studying Allied Health Sciences and Humanities at Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology (KFUEIT), comparing their difficulties in these fields. Previous research suggests that ESL students often struggle with academic vocabulary, pronunciation, Grammar struggles, and confidence in speaking, which may vary based on their

field of study. These fields encounter challenges in fear of making mistakes and difficulties in pronunciations, specific terminology barriers.

2.1 Effective English Communication

Effective English communication is critical for students studying Allied Health Sciences and Humanities because it influences academic progress and professional competency. Linguistic challenges, writing difficulties in academic, speaking challenges, and cultural barriers are some of the challenges. Since communication is crucial in Allied Health sciences and humanities courses, such barriers can impact both academic and professional growth (Rachdan 2015, Chang-Bacon, Hu et al. 2025). For instance, allied health students are required to clearly communicate with patients and fellow workers, yet they find it hard to effectively communicate information as a result of limited vocabularies and grammatical faults (Henderson, Barker et al. 2016). In the same way, humanities students are required to present intricate ideas and arguments in written form, something that may prove difficult for non-academic English speakers (Bunch, Schlaman et al. 2020). Allied Health Sciences MLT students and Humanities English students commonly face a variety of communication obstacles that impede their academic and professional achievement. These are due to linguistic differences, cultural differences, and low confidence in the use of English in academic and clinical environments. Communication is important in these disciplines, particularly in healthcare, where accurate use of language can affect patient safety and care outcomes (O'Toole, 2024; Sarwat, 2024a; Sarwat, 2024b; Sarwat).

2.2 English as a Second Language (ESL) Students in Higher Education

English Second Language (ESL) students pursuing higher education encounter many communication challenges, particularly in allied health sciences and the humanities. Effective communication facilitates academic success, clinical practice, and workplace communication. ESL students typically have language problems, which make it difficult for them to participate in class discussions, understand complex vocabulary, and carry out fieldwork. This literature review analyzes ESL students' English communication issues in allied health sciences and humanities and compares the distinctive issues in these fields. ESL Medical Laboratory Technology [MLT] students possess unique communication issues that affect their academic and clinical practice. Effective verbal and written communication are crucial in healthcare environments where proper application of language can influence patient safety and quality care (Rogan and San Miguel 2013; Sarwat, 2023; Ain, 2023).

2.3 English Communication Challenges in Allied Health Science

Allied Health Science is a broad field that includes a variety of medical practitioners offering the diagnosis, treatment, and support services required for patient care. These professionals collaborate with physicians and nurses to provide specialist services in areas such as healthcare laboratory information technology, radiology, physiotherapy, and occupational treatment, and therapy for speech (Deeba, Pandey et al. 2024). Medical Institute Technology (MLT) is the healthcare profession that conducts diagnostic tests through the use of various devices and conducts diagnostic tests that analyze biological samples for the diagnosis of disease to monitor the health of patients, and physicians determine medical opinions based on laboratory tests. Patients can suffer from death or living conditions, but accurate laboratory testing at the time allows doctors to make the best decisions to save a patient's life (Amaewhule, Eghujovwo et al. 2023). This requires a properly oriented educational institute that must be installed in teaching hospitals to produce qualified professional for medical research institutes (Wood 2002). They face

many challenges like understanding Medical Terminology, Patient interaction, Interprofessional communication, pronunciation of medical terms, writing laboratory report, Difficulty in explaining laboratory procedures, understanding varied dialect and lack of practice.

2.4 English Communication Challenges in Humanities

The field of humanities is a vital component of higher learning, concentrating on studying about of human communication, history, and culture. It comprises areas such as literature, philosophy, history, languages, religion, and the arts, providing students with a broad understanding of human creativity and thought. In contrast to the sciences, which depend on real evidence and tests, the humanities examine human values, beliefs, and behaviors using critical thinking and interpretation (Nussbaum 2010). English field students, even after long study of language and literature, frequently face different communication problems. These communication problems could be due to linguistic, cultural, or theoretical intricacies of English studies. One such critical issue is the effective transfer of theoretical knowledge into understandable and practical communication. Students in English often spend a lot of time reading convoluted literary theory and concept, which makes it difficult to communicate ideas succinctly at times (Barry 2017).

Motivation is important to realize that it can affect resistance among English students. According to Juhana (2012), motivation is internal energy. Students turn their interest from motivation. According to Juhana (2012), when it comes to fear of making mistakes, this fear is linked to issues of correction and negative evaluation. According to the Krismanti and Siregar (2017), most English students feel shy when speaking the language because they fear making mistakes while conversing. Dörnyei (2006) stated the concept of self-confidence is closely related to self-respect. Both are common to his perception of his abilities as a person.

According to a study conducted by Höl and Kasımi (2022), the majority of students reported feeling moderately anxious when engaging in English conversations with others. Students encounter challenges in expressing themselves in English due to a limited vocabulary. Ineffective teaching methods, and an unsuitable learning environment (Rababah 2002). Pronunciation is an important feature of successful English communication for ESL learners. Poor pronunciation can result in misunderstandings and even humiliation in social as well as educational contexts (2024). Grammatical mistakes can lead to miscommunication and can be detrimental to a student's reputation (Trang and Ha).

3 Research Methodology

Research methodology which encompasses various aspects such as design of study, population and sample selection techniques, sampling methods including determining appropriate sample size. Moreover, it examines various tools for conducting research along with a pilot study before moving onto data collection and analysis procedures.

3.1 Research Design

This study was quantitative research design to systematically examine the English Communication Challenges faced by ESL students of Allied health sciences (MLT) and Humanities (English) at KFUEIT.

3.2 Population and Sampling

The Target Population was the students enrolled in 5 and 6 semesters in Medical Laboratory Technology and English Programs at KFUEIT. A Stratified Random Sampling technique was used to ensure representation from both programs. The sample size for this study was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table. Based on a total

population of 230 ESL undergraduate students from Allied Health Sciences and Humanities at KFUEIT, the recommended sample size was 144. To ensure equal representation from both academic programs, the sample was equally divided, with 72 students selected from each program using a stratified random sampling technique.

3.3 Data Collection Tools

The questionnaire and observation sheet were used for the proposed study. A Standardized questionnaire was designed to gather responses from participants. The questionnaire contained closed-ended questions based on a Likert scale. An Observation Sheet was developed to systematically record specific Behaviors and Communication Challenges observed in a natural classroom setting. The questions were Closed-ended and based on a Likert-type frequency scale.

3.4 Data Analysis

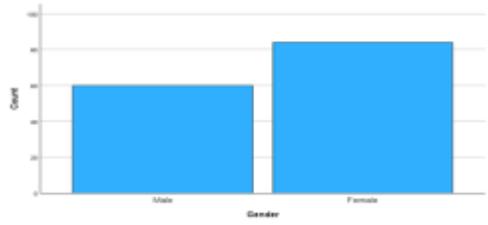
Data collected is analyzed and interpreted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-30.0.0.0) Software. An Independent Samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores between departments.

4 Data Analysis

This chapter presents, analyses and interprets the data collected from the questionnaire and observation sheet.

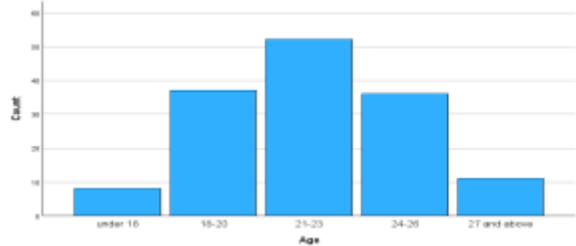
➤ **Questionnaire Analysis (Departments-Based analysis through T-test)**

Graph 4.1



This graph (4.1) represents the gender distribution of the study participants. There were 84 females and 60 males included.

Graph 4.2



This graph (4.2) represents the age of the respondents. The respondents' ages range from under 18 to above 27, and they can fill out questionnaires.

Table 4.3 Confidence

Independent Sample Test									
Levene's Test for Equality of variances				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig	
1		MLT	72	3.3194	1.18472	-1.494	142	.954	

	I speak English fluently with my English teacher.	English	72	3.6111	1.15741	-1.494	141.923	
2	I speak English well with my classmates.	MLT	72	3.5278	1.06112	-1.235	142	.936
		English	72	3.7500	1.09737	-1.235	141.840	
3	I speak English well in front of the audiences.	MLT	72	3.4583	1.11251	-1.437	142	.943
		English	72	3.7222	1.09058	-1.437	141.944	
4	I believe confidence is essential for effective English communication.	MLT	72	3.7222	1.10342	-1.513	142	.169
		English	72	3.9861	.98572	-1.513	140.231	
Total		MLT	72	3.5069	1.11544	-1.419	142	0.750
		English	72	3.7673	1.08277	-1.419	141.484	

Table (4.3) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.5069 and English is 3.7673 that reflects that English students have more confidence than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.08277, t-value -1.419, df 141.484 and Sig 0.7505 also supported.

Table 4.4 Motivation

Independent Sample Test								
Levene's Test for Equality of variances				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
5	I am motivated to communicate in English.	MLT	72	3.5833	1.23048	-1.327	142	.026
		English	72	3.8333	1.02091	-1.327	137.322	
6	I think I will speak perfect English someday.	MLT	72	3.5417	1.19786	-2.325	142	.064
		English	72	3.9861	1.09407	-2.325	140.849	
7	I often struggle to find the motivation to practice speaking English.	MLT	72	3.7083	1.16809	-1.461	142	.014
		English	72	3.9722	.99254	-1.461	138.393	
8	I am always motivated when learning English course.	MLT	72	3.6944	.98780	-1.978	142	.350
		English	72	4.0278	1.03423	-1.978	141.701	
Total		MLT	72	3.6319	1.14605	-1.7727	142	0.113
		English	72	3.9548	1.03547	-1.7727	139.566	

Table 4.4 Motivation

Table (4.4) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.6319 and English is 3.9548 that reflects that English students are more motivated than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.03547, t-value -1.7727, df 139.566 and Sig 0.113 also supported.

Table 4.5 Shyness

Table (4.5) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.4722 and English is 3.7118 that reflects that English students feel less shy than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.06082, t-value -1.322,

9	I am not afraid of starting a conversation in English.	MLT	72	3.3611	1.02511	-2.238	142	.515
		English	72	3.7639	1.13203	-2.238	140.625	
10	I do not feel shy when speaking English.	MLT	72	3.5139	1.11321	-1.124	142	.118
		English	72	3.7083	.95589	-1.124	138.827	
11	I am afraid of speaking English in public places.	MLT	72	3.3889	1.19336	-1.618	142	.271
		English	72	3.6944	1.06993	-1.618	140.340	
12	I avoid speaking English in large groups due to shyness.	MLT	72	3.6250	1.06728	-.310	142	.877
		English	72	3.6806	1.08545	-.310	141.960	
Total		MLT	72	3.4722	1.09974	-1.322	142	0.445
		English	72	3.7118	1.06082	-1.322	140.438	

df 140.438 and Sig 0.445 also supported.

Table 4.6 Fear of Mistakes

Independent Sample Test								
Levene's Test for Equality of variances				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
13	I am afraid of making mistakes while speaking English.	MLT	72	3.4444	1.11189	-1.800	142	.024
		English	72	3.7500	.91544	-1.800	136.951	
14	The fear of making mistake makes me nervous when speaking English.	MLT	72	3.5833	1.14756	-1.092	142	.043
		English	72	3.7778	.98184	-1.092	138.680	
15	I am not always afraid of forgetting my speech.	MLT	72	3.7639	1.04130	1.365	142	.657
		English	72	3.5278	1.03423	1.365	141.993	
16	I feel confused when I miss words while speaking English.	MLT	72	3.4583	1.06066	-1.191	142	.058
		English	72	3.6528	.89064	-1.191	137.876	
Total		MLT	72	3.5624	1.09035	0.6795	142	0.195
		English	72	3.6771	0.95553	0.6795	138.875	

Table (4.7) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.5624 and English is 3.6771 that reflects that English students feel less fear of mistakes than MLT students. The standard deviation 0.95553, t-value 0.6795, df 138.875 and Sig 0.195 also supported.

Table 4.7 Anxiety

Independent Sample Test								
Levene's Test for Equality of variances				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig	
17	I feel nervous when someone is speaking English to me.	MLT	72	3.3750	1.14372	.366	142	.901
		English	72	3.3056	1.13384	.366	141.989	
18	I get nervous when speaking English during lectures.	MLT	72	3.4028	1.21794	.821	142	.032
		English	72	3.2500	1.00351	.821	136.989	
19	I feel relaxed when speaking English.	MLT	72	3.4306	1.05918	-.617	142	.592
		English	72	3.5417	1.09978	-.617	141.800	
20	I avoid answering questions in English because of anxiety.	MLT	72	3.3750	1.08040	-1.302	142	.758
		English	72	3.6111	1.09487	-1.302	141.975	

Total	MLT	72	3.3958	1.1253	-0.183	142	0.570
	English	72	3.4271	1.083	-0.183	140.688	

Table (4.7) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.3958 and English is 3.4271 that reflects that English students feel less anxiety than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.083, t-value -0.183, df 140.688 and Sig 0.570 also supported.

Table 4.8 Vocabulary

Independent Sample Test								
Levene's Test for Equality of variances			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
#	Statement		N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
21	I often struggle to find the right English words while speaking in class.	MLT	72	3.4583	1.12510	-633	142	.117
		English	72	3.5694	.97614	-633	139.229	
22	Vocabulary limitations make it difficult for me to understand lecture content delivered in English.	MLT	72	3.6111	1.04215	.239	142	.828
		English	72	3.5694	1.04580	.239	141.998	
23	I avoid asking questions in English during lectures because I fear using incorrect vocabulary.	MLT	72	3.3333	1.07468	-2.044	142	.014
		English	72	3.6667	.87210	-2.044	136.226	
24	My limited Vocabulary affects my ability to express my thoughts clearly in English.	MLT	72	3.5278	.93405	-173	142	.692
		English	72	3.5556	.99136	-173	141.500	
Total		MLT	72	3.4826	1.0439	-201.951	142	0.412
		English	72	3.5902	0.9713	-201.951	139.738	

Table (4.8) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.4826 and English is 3.5902 that reflects that English students have better vocabulary than MLT students. The standard deviation 0.9713, t-value -201.951 df 139.739 and Sig 0.412 also supported.

Table 4.9 Pronunciation

Independent Sample Test								
#	Statement		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
			N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
25	I avoid speaking in English because of fear of incorrect pronunciation.	MLT	72	3.3750	.91062	-562	142	.013
		English	72	3.4722	1.15029	-562	134.896	
26	I often face difficulties pronouncing certain English words.	MLT	72	3.5139	1.02081	-1.043	142	.714
		English	72	3.6944	1.05669	-1.043	141.831	
27	I find it difficult to pronounce complex English words.	MLT	72	3.4444	1.09915	-534	142	.962
		English	72	3.5417	1.08689	-534	141.982	
28	I feel embarrassed when someone corrects my pronunciation in public.	MLT	72	3.4306	1.01851	-1.084	142	.202
		English	72	3.6250	1.13134	-1.084	140.461	
Total		MLT	72	3.4409	1.0122	-274.531	142	0.472
		English	72	3.5833	1.1063	-274.531	139.792	

Table (4.9) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.4409 and English is 3.5833 that reflects that English students have better pronunciation than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.1063, t-value -274.531, df 139.792 and Sig 0.472 also supported.

Table 4.10 Grammar

Independent Sample Test								
#	Statement		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
			N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
29	I often make grammar mistakes while speaking English.	MLT	72	3.4306	1.07240	-1.762	142	.112
		English	72	3.7222	.90728	-1.762	138.207	
30	I understand grammar rules but struggle to apply them while speaking.	MLT	72	3.4861	1.02081	-1.982	142	.595
		English	72	3.8194	.99755	-1.982	141.925	
31	I feel anxious about making grammar mistake when I speak English.	MLT	72	3.5417	.88711	-1.790	142	.563
		English	72	3.8056	.88236	-1.790	141.996	
32	I find it difficult to form correct sentence structures.	MLT	72	3.4306	1.11110	-1.638	142	.226
		English	72	3.7222	1.02397	-1.638	141.063	
Total		MLT	72	3.4722	1.02285	-1.793	142	0.374

	English	72	3.7673	0.95279	-1.793	140.797	
--	---------	----	--------	---------	--------	---------	--

Table (4.10) analysis reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.4722 and English is 3.7673 that reflects that English students better in grammar than MLT students. The standard deviation 0.95279, t-value -1.793, df 140.797 and Sig 0.374 also supported.

➤ **Observation sheet Analysis (Department based Analysis through T-Test)**

Table 4.11 Motivation

Independent Sample Test							
Levene's Test for Equality of variances			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	t	df
1	Students appeared uninterested in speaking activities.	MLT	2	1.5000	.70711	-4.243	2
		English	2	4.5000	.70711	-4.243	2.000
2	Low participation in English communication tasks.	MLT	2	2.0000	.00000	-.500	2
		English	2	3.0000	2.82843	-.500	1.000
Total		MLT	2	1.75	0.3535	-2.3715	2
		English	2	3.75	1.7677	-2.3715	1.5

Table (4.11) reflects that mean value of MLT is 1.75 and English is 3.75 suggest that English students are observed more motivated. The standard deviation 1.7677, t-value -2.3715 and df 1.5 also supported.

Table 4.12 Fear of Making Mistakes

Independent Sample Test							
Levene's Test for Equality of variances			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	t	df
3	Avoidance of English conversations due to fear of mistakes.	MLT	2	3.0000	.00000	-.333	2
		English	2	3.5000	2.12132	-.333	1.000
4	Students were hesitant to respond or participate.	MLT	2	4.5000	.70711	1.000	2
		English	2	4.0000	.00000	1.000	1.000
Total		MLT	2	3.75	0.3535	0.3335	2
		English	2	3.75	1.0606	0.3335	1.0

Table (4.12) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.75 and English is 3.75 suggest that students of both departments have equal level of fear of making mistakes during conversation.

Table 4.13 Shyness

Independent Sample Test							
Levene's Test for Equality of variances			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	t	df



5	Avoidance of eye contact and group discussions.	MLT	2	4.0000	1.4142	.000	2
		English	2	4.0000	.00000	.000	1.000
6	Refusal to speak unless specifically called upon.	MLT	2	1.0000	.00000	-7.000	2
		English	2	4.5000	.70711	-7.000	1.000
Total		MLT	2	2.5	0.7071	-3.5	2
		English	2	4.25	0.3535	-3.5	1.0

Table (4.13) reflects that mean value of MLT is 2.5 and English is 4.25 suggest that English students are observed to be shy. The standard deviation 0.3535, t-value -3.5 and df 1.0 also supported.

Table 4.14 Confidence

Independent Sample Test							
Levene's Test for Equality of variances				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	t	df
7	Speaking in very low voice or with visible hesitation.	MLT	2	2.5000	.70711	.447	2
		English	2	2.0000	1.4142	.447	1.471
8	Required repeated encouragement to express thoughts.	MLT	2	1.5000	.70711	-1.414	2
		English	2	2.5000	.70711	-1.414	2.000
Total		MLT	2	2.0	0.7071	-0.4835	2
		English	2	2.25	1.0606	-0.4835	1.735

Table (4.14) reflects that mean value of MLT is 2.0 and English is 2.25 suggest that English students are observed more confident. The standard deviation 1.0606, t-value -0.4835 and df 1.735 also supported.

Table 4.15 Anxiety

Independent Sample Test							
Levene's Test for Equality of variances				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	t	df
9	Nervous behaviors like fidgeting or sweating when speaking.	MLT	2	4.0000	.00000	.000	2
		English	2	4.0000	1.41421	.000	1.000
10	Overwhelmed during presentations or speaking tasks.	MLT	2	3.5000	2.12132	.471	2
		English	2	2.5000	2.12132	.471	2.000
Total		MLT	2	3.75	1.76776	-0.157	2
		English	2	3.25	1.06066	-0.157	1.5

Table (4.15) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.75 and English is 3.25 suggest that English students experience high level of anxiety as compare to MLT students. The standard deviation 1.76776, t-value -0.157 and df 2 also supported.

Table 4.16 Vocabulary

Independent Sample Test							
Levene's Test for Equality of variances				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	t	df
11	Difficulty expressing ideas clearly in English.	MLT	2	2.0000	.00000	-1.000	2
		English	2	3.0000	1.41421	-1.000	1.000
12	Frequent pauses or switching to native language.	MLT	2	3.5000	2.12132	-.227	2
		English	2	4.0000	1.4142	-.277	1.742
Total		MLT	2	2.75	1.0606	-0.6135	2
		English	2	3.5	1.4142	-0.6135	1.371

Table (4.16) reflects that mean value of MLT is 2.75 and English is 3.5 suggest that English students are observed to have a strong Vocabulary than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.4142, t-value -0.6135 and df 1.371 also supported.

Table 4.17 Pronunciation

Independent Sample Test							
Levene's Test for Equality of variances				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	T	df
13	Frequent mispronunciation of words.	MLT	2	4.0000	.00000	3.000	2
		English	2	2.5000	.70711	3.000	1.000
14	Difficulty being understood by peers or instructor.	MLT	2	4.0000	1.41421	2.236	2
		English	2	1.5000	.70711	2.236	1.471
Total		MLT	2	4.0	0.7071	2.618	2
		English	2	2.0	0.7071	2.618	1.235

Table (4.17) analysis reflects that mean value of MLT is 4.0 and English is 2.0 suggest that MLT students are observed to have better pronunciation skill than English students. The standard deviation 0.7071, t-value 2.618 and df 2 also supported.

Table 4.18 Grammar

Independent Sample Test							
Levene's Test for Equality of variances				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
#	Statement	Department	N	Mean	SD	T	df
15	Use of incorrect sentence structures and tenses.	MLT	2	3.0000	1.41421	-.707	2
		English	2	4.0000	1.41421	-.707	2.000
16	Repeated grammar mistakes during speaking activities.	MLT	2	1.5000	.70711	-1.414	2
		English	2	2.5000	.70711	-1.414	2.000
Total		MLT	2	2.25	1.0606	-1.0605	2

	English	2	3.25	1.0606	-1.0605	2.000
--	---------	---	------	--------	---------	-------

Table (4.18) reflects that mean value of MLT is 2.25 and English is 3.25 suggest that English students are observed better in grammar than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.0606, t-value -1.0605 and df 2.000 also supported.

5 Results

Questionnaire Departments-based Analysis through T-test

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.4) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.5069 and English is 3.7673 that reflects that English students have more confidence than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.08277, t-value -1.419, df 141.484 and Sig 0.7505 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.5) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.6319 and English is 3.9548 that reflects that English students are more motivated than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.03547, t-value -1.7727, df 139.566 and Sig 0.113 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.6) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.4722 and English is 3.7118 that reflects that English students feel less shy than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.06082, t-value -1.322, df 140.438 and Sig 0.445 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.7) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.5624 and English is 3.6771 that reflects that English students feel less fear of mistakes than MLT students. The standard deviation 0.95553, t-value 0.6795, df 138.875 and Sig 0.195 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.8) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.3958 and English is 3.4271 that reflects that English students feel less anxiety than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.083, t-value -0.183, df 140.688 and Sig 0.570 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.9) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.4826 and English is 3.5902 that reflects that English students have better vocabulary than MLT students. The standard deviation 0.9713, t-value -201.951 df 139.739 and Sig 0.412 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.10) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.4409 and English is 3.5833 that reflects that English students have better pronunciation than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.1063, t-value -274.531, df 139.792 and Sig 0.472 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.11) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.4722 and English is 3.7673 that reflects that English students better in grammar than MLT students. The standard deviation 0.95279, t-value -1.793, df 140.797 and Sig 0.374 also supported.

This study compared English communication challenges faced by ESL students in Allied Health Sciences (MLT) and Humanities (English) at KFUEIT. Descriptive statistics and independent-samples t-tests were used to examine differences across affective factors and linguistic competencies. Overall, English students consistently reported higher mean scores than MLT students across all variables, indicating comparatively greater confidence, motivation, and language competence. However, none of the observed differences reached statistical significance. English students demonstrated higher confidence in English communication (M = 3.77) than MLT students (M = 3.51), though the difference was not statistically significant (p > .05). A similar trend was observed for motivation, with English students showing higher motivation levels (M = 3.95) compared to MLT students (M = 3.63). With respect to affective factors, English students reported lower levels of shyness, fear of making mistakes, and anxiety than MLT students. Mean scores consistently favored English students, yet t-test results indicated no significant differences between

the two groups. In terms of linguistic competence, English students outperformed MLT students in vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. While mean differences suggest stronger language proficiency among English students, these differences were also statistically insignificant ($p > .05$).

Taken together, the results suggest that although disciplinary background influences students' perceived English communication ability, ESL students in both Allied Health Sciences and Humanities face broadly similar challenges at KFUEIT.

Observation sheet Analysis through T-test

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.20) reflects that mean value of MLT is 1.75 and English is 3.75 suggest that English students are observed more motivated. The standard deviation 1.7677, t-value -2.3715 and df 1.5 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.21) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.75 and English is 3.75 suggest that students of both departments have equal level of fear of making mistakes during conversation.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.22) reflects that mean value of MLT is 2.5 and English is 4.25 suggest that English students are observed to be shy. The standard deviation 0.3535, t-value -3.5 and df 1.0 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.23) reflects that mean value of MLT is 2.0 and English is 2.25 suggest that English students are observed more confident. The standard deviation 1.0606, t-value -0.4835 and df 1.735 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.24) reflects that mean value of MLT is 3.75 and English is 3.25 suggest that English students experience high level of anxiety as compare to MLT students. The standard deviation 1.76776, t-value -0.157 and df 2 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.25) reflects that mean value of MLT is 2.75 and English is 3.5 suggest that English students are observed to have a strong Vocabulary than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.4142, t-value -0.6135 and df 1.371 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.26) reflects that mean value of MLT is 4.0 and English is 2.0 suggest that MLT students are observed to have better pronunciation skill than English students. The standard deviation 0.7071, t-value 2.618 and df 2 also supported.

Collectively, data analysis (Table 4.27) reflects that mean value of MLT is 2.25 and English is 3.25 suggest that English students are observed better in grammar than MLT students. The standard deviation 1.0606, t-value -1.0605 and df 2.000 also supported.

To complement the self-reported questionnaire data, classroom observations were analyzed using independent-samples t-tests to compare English communication behaviors of MLT and English students. The results indicate notable disciplinary differences in observed motivation, affective factors, and linguistic performance. As shown in Table 4.20, English students were observed to be more motivated ($M = 3.75$) than MLT students ($M = 1.75$). The difference is supported by the t-test results ($t = -2.37$), suggesting a clear behavioral distinction in classroom engagement. Table 4.21 shows that both groups exhibited an equal level of fear of making mistakes during conversation ($M = 3.75$), indicating that error-related apprehension is a shared challenge across disciplines. Interestingly, Table 4.22 reveals that English students were observed to be significantly shy ($M = 4.25$) than MLT students ($M = 2.50$), a finding supported by the t-value (-3.50). This contrasts with the self-reported data, where English students perceived themselves as less shy. Regarding confidence, Table 4.23 indicates that English students were slightly more confident (M

= 2.25) than MLT students ($M = 2.00$), though the observed difference is minimal. In contrast, Table 4.24 shows that English students displayed higher observable anxiety ($M = 3.25$) compared to MLT students ($M = 3.75$), suggesting greater performance-related tension among English students during actual communicative tasks. In terms of linguistic competence, English students demonstrated stronger vocabulary use ($M = 3.50$) than MLT students ($M = 2.75$), as presented in Table 4.25. However, pronunciation skills favored MLT students ($M = 4.00$) over English students ($M = 2.00$), as shown in Table 4.26. Finally, grammar usage was observed to be better among English students ($M = 3.25$) compared to MLT students ($M = 2.25$), as reflected in Table 4.27. Overall, the observation data reveal a more nuanced picture of English communication challenges, highlighting discrepancies between perceived competence and actual classroom behavior.

6 Discussion

This study examined English communication challenges among ESL students in Allied Health Sciences (MLT) and Humanities (English) at KFUEIT using questionnaire and observation data. Taken together, the findings reveal modest disciplinary differences and highlight a clear gap between students' perceived competence and their actual communicative behavior.

Questionnaire results show that English students consistently rated themselves higher in confidence, motivation, and linguistic competence, and lower in shyness, anxiety, and fear of making mistakes. This pattern aligns with earlier research indicating that sustained exposure to English in Humanities programs strengthens learners' self-perception and language awareness (Hyland, 2006; Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001). However, the lack of statistically significant differences suggests that English communication challenges remain widespread across disciplines. Observation data present a more complex picture. Although English students were more motivated and demonstrated stronger vocabulary and grammatical control, they also displayed higher levels of shyness and anxiety during real-time interaction. This discrepancy supports the distinction between perceived competence and situated performance proposed by Dörnyei (2005) and MacIntyre (1999). Increased linguistic awareness among English students may intensify self-monitoring and fear of evaluation, leading to observable hesitation despite higher proficiency.

Fear of making mistakes was observed at similar levels in both groups, reinforcing findings by Horwitz et al. (1986) that language anxiety is a pervasive ESL phenomenon shaped by classroom norms rather than disciplinary background alone. For MLT students, lower confidence and weaker vocabulary and grammar align with ESP research showing limited communicative exposure in science and health-related programs (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Basturkmen, 2010). Their stronger observed pronunciation, however, likely reflects repeated oral use of technical and medical terminology.

The contrast between self-reported and observed data underscores the value of triangulation and points to broader pedagogical constraints within Pakistani higher education. As noted by Shamim (2011) and Rahman (2002), accuracy-focused instruction and limited communicative practice restrict effective language use across disciplines.

Overall, the findings suggest that English students' linguistic advantage does not automatically translate into confident communication, while MLT students face both linguistic and affective barriers. Addressing these challenges requires discipline-sensitive EAP and ESP support that prioritizes communicative use of English alongside accuracy.

7 Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate and compare the English communication challenges faced by ESL students in the allied health science and humanities departments at KFUEIT. The objective of this study was to explore the English communication challenges across disciplines. The data clearly indicate that ESL students in both Allied health science and humanities face a range of challenges in English communication. In term of confidence, motivation, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, anxiety, fear of mistakes and shyness, students from the English department consistently scored higher in questionnaire analysis. The mean values for English students on measures such as confidence (3.7673), motivation (3.9548), shyness (3.7118), fear of mistakes (3.6771), anxiety (3.4271), vocabulary (3.5902), pronunciation (3.5833) and grammar (3.7673) and the mean values for MLT students on measures such as confidence (3.5069), motivation (3.6319), shyness (3.4722), fear of mistakes (3.5624), anxiety (3.3958), vocabulary (3.4826), pronunciation (3.4409) and grammar (3.4722). The observation analysis support English students were more active, confident and expressive in group discussion, class presentation and peer interaction. They were more likely to engage in dialogues, conversation and clarify misunderstanding during lessons. And MLT students were often hesitant, silent or struggled to formulate clear responses especially when communicating with teachers or in clinical role plays. Observations indicated that MLT students also faced difficulty when explaining lab procedures or using medical terms correctly. This shows that English students have better English communication skills, because they are more familiar with academic English through their studies. On the other hand, MLT students scored lower in these areas, showing that they face more problems with grammar, using correct sentences while speaking, and clearly saying medical technical terms. They need to speak clearly and accurately, this communication problem could affect their professional skills, especially when taking to patients or sharing lab results.

The second objective of this study was to compare the English communication challenges face by ESL students in Allied health sciences and Humanities at KFUEIT. The mean confidence value for English students is (3.7673), while for MLT students is (3.5069) suggest that English students are more confident in using English in academic settings. The mean motivation value for English students is (3.9548), while for MLT students is (3.6319) suggest that English students are more motivated and engaged in developing their language skills. The mean shyness value for English students is (3.7118), while for MLT students is (3.4722) suggest that English students are more actively participate in conversation. The mean fear of mistake value for English students is (3.6771), while for MLT students is (3.5624) suggest that English students feel less fear of mistakes than MLT students. The mean grammar value for English students is (3.7673), while for MLT students is (3.4722) suggest that English students have greater grammatical accuracy. The mean vocabulary value for English students is (3.5902), while for MLT students is (3.4826) suggest that English students were more effectively in expressing ideas. The mean pronunciation value for English students is (3.5833), while for MLT students is (3.4409) suggest that English students were pronounce words more clearly. The mean anxiety value for English students is (3.4271), while for MLT students is (3.3958) suggest that English students feel less anxiety. The observation analysis support English students were observed more motivated, confident and fluent especially in grammar and vocabulary and MLT students having better pronunciation but they struggle with grammar application, sentence structure. The comparative analysis shows that both departments face English communication challenges, MLT students face more problems with English

communication than students from the English departments. This means it is very important to help students improve their English in each department.

5.1 Recommendations

Institutions should develop English Language Support Centers to offer remedial classes, writing clinics, and speaking workshops. These centers can serve as a platform for peer tutoring, one-on-one support, and regular language practice. Educators should apply communicative and task-based teaching approaches that promote active use of English through discussions, simulations, and group projects. Role-playing medical scenarios for MLT students or academic debates for English students can enhance practical fluency and confidence. ESL instructors at KFUEIT should be offered professional training in current second-language acquisition methodologies, including Communicative language teaching (CLT), Task-based language learning, and Technology-enhanced language instruction. This will allow instructors to better address both psychological (e.g., anxiety, shyness) and linguistic barriers (e.g., grammar, vocabulary).

References

- Abbasi, F., Waheed Shahzad, D. F. A., & Farooq, M. A. (2025). LANGUAGE PLANNING AND POLICY IN PAKISTAN: STAKEHOLDERS' INCLUSIVITY IN LPP DEVELOPMENT. *Contemporary Journal of Social Science Review*, 3(4), 1091-1013.
- Ann, Q., Shahzad, W., Farooq, M. A., Ullah, N., & Urooj, S., (2023). EFFECTS OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES ON ESL LEARNERS ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILLS AT BS LEVEL. *Jahan-e-Tahqeeq*, 6(4), 190-202.
- Alsalihi, H. D. (2020). Main difficulties faced by EFL students in language learning. *Journal of the College of Education for Women*, 31(2), 19-34.
- Amaewhule, C. T., Eghujovwo, P. E., & Nnodim, J. (2023). Biostatistics in Medical Laboratory Science: Implications. *Acta Scientific Clinical Case Reports Volume*, 4(2).
- Barry, P. (2017). *Beginning theory: An introduction to literary and cultural theory*. Manchester university press.
- Braine, G. (Ed.). (2014). *Teaching English to the world: History, curriculum, and practice*. Routledge.
- Bunch, G. C., Schlaman, H., Lang, N., & Kenner, K. (2020). "Sometimes I do not understand exactly where the difficulties are for my students": Language, literacy, and the new mainstream in community colleges. *Community College Review*, 48(3), 303-329.
- Chang-Bacon, C. K., Hu, C., Vargas, I., & Montalvo, L. A. (2025). Language ideologies and access in a multilingual tutoring program. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 19(1), 36-52.
- Deeba, F., Pandey, J., Kumar, N., Singh, S. P., Sen, S., Purohit, D., ... & Mandal, S. (2024). The Role of Wireless Telemedicine and e-Health in Modern Healthcare: Challenges and Innovations. *International Journal of Communication Networks and Information Security*, 16(3), 313-322.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2006). Individual differences in second language acquisition. *AILA review*, 19(1), 42-68.
- Hashemi, M. (2011). Language stress and anxiety among the English language learners. *Procedia-social and behavioral sciences*, 30, 1811-1816.
- Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. *sociolinguistics*, 269293, 269-293.
- Henderson, S., Barker, M., & Mak, A. (2016). Strategies used by nurses, academics and students to overcome intercultural communication challenges. *Nurse Education in Practice*, 16(1), 71-78.

- Höl, D., & Kasımi, Y. (2022). A growing dilemma: English speaking anxiety-in-EFL classrooms: A review of research. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (28), 421-438.
- Juhana, J. (2012). Psychological factors that hinder students from speaking in English class (A case study in a senior high school in South Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia). *Journal of Education and Practice*, 3(12), 100-110.
- Khattak, Z. I., Jamshed, T., Ahmad, A., & Baig, M. N. (2011). An investigation into the causes of English language learning anxiety in students at AWKUM. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 15, 1600-1604.
- Krismanti, N., & Siregar, M. M. (2017). Students' psychological problems in speaking: A case study on speaking II class of STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin. *Lentera: Jurnal ilmiah kependidikan*, 12(2).
- Muhammad, S. (2013). Second language reading instruction in Pakistan. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 70, 1403-1412.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2016). Not for profit: why democracy needs the humanities-Updated edition.
- O'Dowd, R. (2018). From telecollaboration to virtual exchange: State-of-the-art and the role of UNICollaboration in moving forward. *Research-publishing.net*, 1, 1-23.
- O'Toole, G. (2024). *Communication-E-Book: Core Interpersonal Skills for Healthcare Professionals*. Elsevier Health Sciences.
- Rachdan, A. F. (2015). *Academic Achievement for ESL Learners in a Teaching Hospital's Training Program* (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University).
- Rogan, F., & San Miguel, C. (2013). Improving clinical communication of students with English as a second language (ESL) using online technology: A small scale evaluation study. *Nurse education in practice*, 13(5), 400-406.
- Rababah, G. (2005). Communication problems facing Arab learners of English. *Grazer Linguistische Studien*.
- Sarwat, S., Asghar, M., Shahzad, S. K., & Shahzad, W. (2024a). Impact of questioning strategies on reading comprehension of Pakistani O-Level students. *Spry Contemporary Educational Practices*, 3(1).
- Sarwat, S., Iftikhar, I., Sahito, J. K. M., & Shahzad, W. (2024b). Impact of student engagement in language support classes through cooperative learning: A study of Pakistani educational institutions. *Research Journal for Societal Issues*, 6(1), 199-210.
- Sarwat, S., Shahzad, W., Anees, M., & Shahzad, S. K. (2023). Willingness to communicate in English: Its influence on oral proficiency levels in ESL learners. *Qlantic Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(4), 232-246.
- Savignon, S. J. (2018). Communicative competence. *The TESOL encyclopedia of English language teaching*, 1-7.
- Trang, N. T. T., & Ha, N. T. Difficulties and Solutions to English Speaking Encountered by Secondary Students in Thai Nguyen Province, Vietnam. In *NATIONAL CONFERENCE* (p. 186).
- Tieu, M. (2022). *Self and identity: an exploration of the development, constitution and breakdown of human selfhood*. Routledge.
- Wood, J. (2002). The role, duties and responsibilities of technologists in the clinical laboratory. *Clinica chimica acta*, 319(2), 127-132.