



The Importance of English Language Skills for University Students

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Abstract. *English is now a key language used in learning, research, technology, and talking across the world. So, being good at English is a key skill that university students need to succeed in their studies and future careers. This article looks at and brings together past research on why having good English skills is important for university students, especially when it comes to their success in school, getting a job, and being able to work well with people from different parts of the world. This study used a qualitative method by reviewing existing literature. Data were gathered from academic sources like peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and other scholarly publications between 2020 and 2025. These sources were found in databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, ERIC, ScienceDirect, and SpringerLink. The results show that being good at English helps students do better in school, makes it easier to get a job, allows them to access scientific materials from around the world, and improves their ability to communicate and understand global issues. This review ends by saying that knowing the English language is an important skill that helps university students deal with the challenges of globalization and digital changes. So, colleges and universities need to focus more on teaching English to help students compete better in the global job market.*

Keywords: *English language skills, English proficiency, university students, academic achievement, employability, global competence.*

Abstrak. Bahasa Inggris kini menjadi bahasa utama dalam pembelajaran, penelitian, teknologi, dan komunikasi di seluruh dunia. Oleh karena itu, kemahiran berbahasa Inggris merupakan keterampilan kunci yang dibutuhkan mahasiswa untuk meraih kesuksesan dalam studi maupun karier masa depan mereka. Artikel ini mengkaji dan merangkum penelitian terdahulu mengenai pentingnya kemampuan bahasa Inggris bagi mahasiswa, khususnya terkait keberhasilan akademik, peluang kerja, serta kemampuan untuk bekerja sama secara efektif dengan orang-orang dari berbagai belahan dunia. Studi ini menggunakan metode kualitatif melalui tinjauan literatur yang ada. Data dikumpulkan dari berbagai sumber akademis—seperti artikel jurnal yang telah melalui telaah sejawat (peer-reviewed), buku, dan publikasi ilmiah lainnya—yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2020 dan 2025. Sumber-sumber tersebut diperoleh dari basis data seperti Google Scholar, Scopus, ERIC, ScienceDirect, dan SpringerLink. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa kemahiran berbahasa Inggris membantu mahasiswa meningkatkan prestasi akademik, mempermudah perolehan pekerjaan, memungkinkan akses terhadap materi ilmiah dari seluruh dunia, serta meningkatkan kemampuan komunikasi dan pemahaman mereka terhadap isu-isu global. Tinjauan ini menyimpulkan bahwa penguasaan bahasa Inggris merupakan keterampilan penting yang membantu mahasiswa menghadapi tantangan globalisasi dan perubahan digital. Dengan demikian, perguruan tinggi perlu lebih memprioritaskan pengajaran bahasa Inggris guna membantu mahasiswa agar lebih kompetitif di pasar kerja global.

Kata kunci: Keterampilan bahasa Inggris, kemahiran bahasa Inggris, mahasiswa, prestasi akademik, daya serap kerja (employability), kompetensi global.

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-growing global and technological world, the ability to speak English has become one of the most important skills for students. English is not only used as an international communication tool but also serves as the main language in many areas of science, research, technology, and the workplace. Most scientific journals, reference books, and digital learning platforms use English, so students need good language skills to access and understand information effectively. (Thariq et al., 2021; Sari, 2025)

Studies show that knowing English helps improve academic performance, makes it easier to get scientific information, and increases job opportunities after graduation. In addition, the ability to speak English helps students communicate with people around the world and take part in international academic activities. That is why it is important to study the role of English language skills for students in order to have a better understanding of how these skills support academic success and prepare them for the global job market. (Waluyo et al., 2021)

THEORETICAL REVIEW

English language skills refer to a person's ability to understand and use English effectively in different areas such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The four skills are connected and form the basis of the communication and learning process. For students, English language skills are important because they help understand scientific literature, keep up with scientific developments, and improve the quality of learning. According to the research studied in this article, students who have good English language skills tend to achieve higher academic results, have better access to international journals and digital learning materials, and are more competitive in the job market. In addition, English language skills also help build global competencies, such as the ability to communicate across cultures, think critically, and adapt to international developments. Therefore, mastering the English language is one of the key skills that students need to develop in order to support their academic, professional, and personal growth in the globalized era. (Waluyo et al., 2021)

RESEARCH METHOD

This research utilized a qualitative approach by implementing a method based on reviewing existing literature. The objective of this investigation was to consolidate and evaluate earlier findings regarding the significance of English proficiency for university students, specifically concerning academic success, job prospects, communication abilities, and global skill development. The information for this study was gathered from secondary references, which included peer-reviewed journal articles, academic conference papers, books, and other pertinent scholarly publications released between 2020 and 2025. The literature was sourced from credible academic databases, such as Google Scholar, Scopus, ERIC, ScienceDirect, and SpringerLink, utilizing search terms like English language abilities, English proficiency, university students, academic performance, employability, and global competence (Armea et al., 2022).

The chosen literature underwent analysis in several phases:

- (1) Pinpointing pertinent publications relevant to the research focus,
- (2) Filtering the literature based on set inclusion criteria,
- (3) Reviewing and extracting significant outcomes from each publication,
- (4) Comparing findings from prior research, and
- (5) Integrating the evidence to recognize shared themes, discrepancies, and research voids.

The results were subsequently presented in a descriptive format to offer a detailed perspective on the vital nature of English language skills for students in higher education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

English Language Skills Improve Academic Achievement

Studies show that being good at English helps students do better in their schoolwork. Students who have a better understanding of English are better able to read and comprehend textbooks, research papers, and other academic resources that are written in English. As a result, they can take part more in class conversations, write better academic papers, and get better results in their studies. (Snyder, 2019)

Waluyo and Panmei (2021) discovered that a student's ability in English has a big impact on their academic success. This is because being good at English helps them understand texts better and think more critically. Similarly, Isma et al. (2025) found that undergraduate students who had a higher level of English skills performed better academically compared to students with lower English skills. These results show that having good English language skills is important for helping students learn better in college. (Waluyo et al., 2021)

When looking at these studies, it's clear that both focus on academic performance. However, stress that English proficiency plays a key role in predicting academic success. On the other hand, Isma et al. (2025) point out that English skills have a bigger effect on students' overall learning results. So, being good at English should be one of the main skills needed for doing well in school. (Waluyo et al., 2021)

English Language Skills Enhance Employability. Another key point from the reviewed studies is how good English skills help graduates get jobs. In today's world, where work is connected across countries, employers are looking for graduates who can communicate well in English so they can work with people from different places and handle business with international customers. (Isma et al., 2025)

Hiew and others in 2021 found that being good at English greatly helps with getting a job, especially in companies that work with many countries. Ting and their team in 2017 discovered that employers see good English communication skills as signs of being professional, confident, working well with others, and being a good leader.

Both studies talk about employability, but Hiew et al. (2021) look at job opportunities, while Ting et al. (2017) focus on the skills and abilities needed for good English communication in a professional setting. These results show that knowing English well helps people get jobs and also helps them do well in their careers over time.

English Language Skills Facilitate Access to Global Information. English language skills make it easier to get access to information from around the world. Being able to read, write, and understand English helps people find and use resources, news, and knowledge shared globally. This ability connects individuals with different cultures and ideas, allowing them to learn and communicate effectively on an international level. (Barreto & Varona, 2026)

Being good at English helps students get access to scientific information from around the world and use digital learning materials. Most international journals, online courses, and academic databases are written in English, so knowing English well is very important for continuing to learn throughout life. Budiman (2023) said that being good at English helps students use international educational materials better. Similarly, Sengkey and others in 2024 discovered that students who use good language-learning techniques usually show better English skills, which helps them get more academic materials.

The comparison shows that Budiman (2023) talks about the advantages of English for getting information, while Sengkey et al. (2024) discuss how learning strategies help in improving English skills. These studies show that English acts as a bridge to access knowledge around the world.

English Language Skills Support Global Competence. Global competence is now a key skill that is needed in higher education. Besides being good at language, students are also expected to talk well with people from different cultures and take part in global academic events. Discovered that having a good environment, like interacting with peers and using school resources, has a big impact on how well students learn English. Meanwhile, Rojas Barreto (2026) found that university students see English as important for their academic growth and future jobs. (Kemampuan & Inggris, 2024)

Looking at these studies, it's clear that Lubis et al. (2024) look at the factors that affect English learning, while Rojas Barreto (2026) focus more on how students see English as a useful skill. These results show that universities need to build helpful learning spaces and also help students understand how good English skills can help them compete in the global world.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

This literature review concludes that English language skills play a crucial role in supporting university students' academic achievement, employability, communication competence, and global competence. The reviewed studies consistently demonstrate that English proficiency enables students to understand academic materials, access international scientific resources, participate actively in academic activities, and communicate effectively in multicultural environments. Furthermore, English language skills enhance graduates' employability by improving their professional communication abilities and competitiveness in the global labor market.

The comparative analysis of previous studies reveals that although researchers have investigated different aspects of English proficiency—including academic performance, employability, access to global information, and environmental factors influencing language learning—all findings indicate that English proficiency is a multidimensional competency that contributes significantly to students' personal, academic, and professional development. Therefore, universities should strengthen English language education by providing innovative learning strategies, practical communication opportunities, and supportive learning environments to prepare graduates for the challenges of globalization and digital transformation.

Future studies are recommended to complement this literature review by conducting empirical research involving university students from different educational contexts to further

examine the relationship between English language skills, academic achievement, and career readiness.

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