

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING ISSUES IN MALAYSIA: LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS VIA FACEBOOK DIALOGUE JOURNAL

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to gather English as a second language (ESL) learners perceptions pertaining to their experience in learning English language in secondary schools, colleges and local universities. The research methodology incorporated dialogue journal using Facebook. Dialogue journal is a written communication between a teacher and students or other writing partners, which provides a natural context for language development and a new channel of communication outside the classroom. The research incorporated Facebook as it is currently one of the most prominent online social networking sites among Malaysians. 46 respondents from public and private colleges and universities discussed various learning issues including impediments that they encountered during English lessons in secondary school, college and university; learners' views and comments on the issues pertaining to local English language teaching and learning; and suggestions to improve the teaching and learning of English. The discussion revealed varying viewpoints such as difficulties and reasons that students faced in learning the four language skills i.e. speaking, listening, reading and writing; and the lack of confidence which hampered their language improvement. This research hopes to enlighten educators of arduous challenges that students faced in learning the English language so that they may strive to improve and consolidate their teaching skills, thus, making language teaching and learning more effective and meaningful for both teachers and students.

Keywords: dialogue response journal, language proficiency, language skills.

INTRODUCTION:

The British colonial education system introduced the teaching of English in Malaysia in the 1960s and it is still entrenched in the current Malaysian educational system (Asmah Haji Omar, 1992). English is taught as a second language in all Malaysian schools which is also a compulsory subject in both primary and secondary schools. In the university level, local undergraduates are required to register a stipulated credit hour of English courses based on the result of their Malaysian University English Test (MUET), which is an English proficiency assessment course and a compulsory requirement for students who plan to pursue tertiary education at Malaysian universities (Malaysian Examination Council, 2006).

Studies by Griggs and Dunn (1984), Smith and Renzulli (1984) and Wallace and Oxford (1992) have shown that a match between teachers' teaching style and learners' preferred learning style will increase learners' motivation and learning. However, serious mismatches between both styles will result in students becoming bored, discouraged, becoming inattentive and performing rather poorly in tests and assessments (Felder & Henriques, 1995; Godleski, 1984; Oxford, Ehrman & Lavine, 1991).

There are various definitions of the term 'learning style'. According to Zou (2006) different researchers have their own understanding of what constitutes learning styles. Oxford, Hollaway and Horton-Murillo (1992) define learning styles as the general approaches (as opposed to specific strategies) that students resort to in learning a new subject. Honigsfeld and Dunn (2006) define it as a biological and developmental set of personal characteristics that make the same instruction effective for some learners and ineffective for others. Meanwhile, Peacock (2001) defines it as students' preferred mode of learning.

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Students spend between 11-13 years (6 years in primary school and between 5 – 7 years in secondary school) learning English, but a portion of students are still not able to master the language upon completing secondary school. There are various factors that could have contributed to this failure –learners' learning methods, motivation, perceptions, teachers' teaching methods and/or approach, syllabus and lesson plan, among others. Therefore, it is imperative to understand learners' views and experiences in learning a second language in order to identify the difficulties and impediments that they encounter in the classrooms.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of this research are:

1. To gather learners' experience and views pertaining to issues on English language learning problems in secondary school, college or university;
2. To gather learners' views on English language teaching and learning in secondary school, college and university;
3. To gather learners' suggestions on ways to enhance English language learning and teaching.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

Teachers need to know and understand the impediments that learners experience in learning the four skills viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing in order to prepare effective lessons and to guide learners in developing their language proficiency. Therefore, it is pertinent that learners need to be given the opportunity to express their views pertaining to their learning experience to ensure teaching and learning are effectively carried out in the classrooms.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

The research questions in this study are as follow:

1. What are the language learning problems did ESL learners encounter in secondary school, college or university namely speaking, listening, reading and writing?
2. What are ESL learners' views on the issues of English language teaching and learning?
3. What are ESL learners' suggestions to enhance the teaching and learning of English?

METHODOLOGY:

RESEARCH APPROACH:

A qualitative method was used to conduct the research by utilizing the content analysis of journal entries written by 46 private and public college and university students.

SAMPLING:

A purposive sampling was used to select the 46 respondents who were former students of a public secondary school in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. The respondents were first to fifth semester students from various courses who scored between Band 2 to Band 5 (Band 1 - limited user and Band 6 - highly proficient user) in their Malaysian University English Test (MUET).

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS:**DESCRIPTION OF THE FACEBOOK GROUP AND DIALOGUE JOURNAL:**

By utilising Facebook, a closed-group was created to gather the 46 samples. Other Facebook users who were not registered in the group were not able to read the respondents' comments nor post their views.

The Note feature on the Facebook account was used as an alternative form of a journal. It was a mean to ensure that all respondents contributed their opinions and suggestions pertaining to a question posted by the researcher. The respondents must write in proper English i.e. complete and grammatically correct sentences and they were not allowed to use abbreviations such as LOL (Laugh Out loud), BTW (By The Way), IMHO (In My Humble Opinion), among others.

In the dialogue journals, the researcher posted three questions on the group's wall message and the respondents wrote their views and suggestions on their personal *Note*. The researcher responded and prompted questions when there were ambiguous responses. Other respondents were also allowed to contribute their views and suggestions on their group members' journal entries. This eventually evolved into a dialogue.

DATA ANALYSIS:

The journal entries were analysed using content analysis and categorised according to the learners' problems in learning the four language skills viz. speaking, listening, reading and writing; learners' classroom observations; and learner's suggestions to teachers and other learners on the teaching and learning of English. Frequency count was used to score the responses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

This section discusses the findings of the research namely i) the respondents' views pertaining to the problems they experienced in learning the four language skills; ii) respondents' general views, comments and observations on classroom teaching and learning experience; and iii) respondents' suggestions for teachers to enhance their teaching effectiveness and for other learners to improve their language skills based on the respondents' personal approaches.

LEARNERS' LANGUAGE LEARNING IMPEDIMENTS:

This section provides the finding on the respondents' views pertaining to language learning impediments that they experienced in learning the four skills namely speaking, listening, reading and writing.

SPEAKING IMPEDIMENTS ENCOUNTERED BY LEARNERS:**TABLE 1: SPEAKING PROBLEMS AND REASONS AMONG ESL LEARNERS**

Total Respondents	Problems	Reasons
18 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hesitated to speak English with their teachers and friends in and/or outside the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worried about making grammatical mistakes.• Felt embarrassed of their low language proficiency.• Received negative physical response (smirk).
16 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Felt self-conscious about their speaking proficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Negative preliminary presumptions about proficient speakers' views towards them e.g. not intelligent, incompetent, dull.
31 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty in speaking fluently.• Mixing other languages with English in their conversation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unfamiliar with certain English vocabulary.
6 respondents (Band 5 students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No difficulty in speaking.	

In Table 1, 18 respondents stated that they hesitated to speak English with their teachers and friends in or outside the classroom because they worried about making grammatical mistakes and felt embarrassed of their

low language proficiency. This is due to the negative physical response, such as a smirk, that they received from other more proficient speakers when learners spoke incorrectly.

Meanwhile, 16 respondents stated they felt self-conscious about their speaking proficiency because they have negative preliminary presumptions about proficient speakers' views towards them as being slow learners, incompetent and dull, among others. As a result, they were not fully involved in classroom activities even though they were constantly encouraged to speak freely by their teachers without being judgemental.

Therefore, these negative experiences and fear of negative judgement from others hindered effective language learning and development among the ESL learners. Learners need to be aware that making mistakes are parts and parcel of language learning and teachers need to constantly reassure and encourage them to continue learning. Krashen, in his interview by Young (1992), stated that one of the causes of speaking anxiety among students is due to teachers who expect them, usually beginners, to perform beyond their acquired competence. This can cause detrimental effects on learners' motivation and confidence.

The majority of Malaysian students are bilingual who speak Bahasa Malaysia, the national language, and English, the second language. Both languages are compulsory subjects in the Malaysian education syllabus. The uniqueness of the Malaysian multicultural society and mixed-marriages create multilingual individuals who either speak Tamil, Mandarin, various Chinese dialects such as Hakka, Cantonese, Hokkian, or other native languages such as Iban, Kadazan and Murut, among others, depending on their family and social backgrounds.

Due to these circumstances, 31 respondents experienced difficulty speaking fluently due to unfamiliarity with some English vocabulary. This caused the respondents to incorporate other local languages and dialects with English to ensure their meanings, intentions or thoughts are unambiguous. Unfortunately, the attempt hindered the respondents' speaking fluency. An example given by a respondent is as follow:

"I think you should try 'menyakinkan' (to convince) your parents to 'beri kebenaran' (give permission) for you to join us on the trip".

As a result, the respondents usually experience moderate anxiety and are reluctant to speak in English for fear of being judged negatively. However, moderate feelings of anxiety in second language learning could help students to build the desire to learn, to motivate or to get them to realise that they have to put more effort to acquire the target language (Hadley, 1992).

LISTENING IMPEDIMENTS ENCOUNTERED BY LEARNERS:

TABLE 2: LISTENING PROBLEMS, REASONS AND EFFECTS AMONG ESL LEARNERS

Total Respondents	Problems	Reasons	Effects
15 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to fully understand their teachers and lecturers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and lecturers spoke too fast. • Unsure of meaning of words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misunderstood their teachers and lecturers' intended meaning and instructions. • Replied or responded inaccurately.
11 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to keep up with parts of a conversation or discussion with their classmates and course mates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfamiliar with the topics of conversation or discussion. • Speakers spoke too fast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked speakers for clarification.
9 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfamiliar with meanings of certain words during conversation. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsure of responding or replying to the speakers. • Reluctant to request speakers to repeat or explain the particular word(s).
10 respondents (Band 4 and 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost no problem listening. 		

Table 2 shows that 15 respondents were unable to understand their teachers and lecturers because they spoke too fast during conversations, when giving instructions or explaining a topic. The second reason was due to uncertainty of meanings of words. As a result, the learners misunderstood their teacher's intended meaning of the conversation and instruction, thus replying or responding incorrectly.

Meanwhile, 11 other respondents wrote that they were unable to keep up with certain parts of a conversation or discussion in the classroom because they were either not familiar with the topic or the speakers spoke too fast. It resulted in them asking the speakers for clarification or temporarily putting aside the ambiguous topic and seeking clarification at a later period.

In addition, nine respondents related their experience about being unsure of meanings of certain words during a conversation which made them reluctant to respond or reply to the speakers. They feared the speakers would view them negatively as being incompetent in the language. 10 of the respondents who were satisfactory and proficient users (Band 4 and 5) had almost no problem in listening.

READING IMPEDIMENTS ENCOUNTERED BY LEARNERS:

TABLE 3: READING PROBLEMS, REASONS AND EFFECTS AMONG ESL LEARNERS

Total Respondents	Problems	Reasons	Effects
25 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to fully comprehend passages and articles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encountered many unfamiliar words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hampered reading comprehension and fluency.
21 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required longer duration to read passages and articles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encountered many unfamiliar words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constantly referred to English and bilingual dictionaries.
6 respondents (Band 5 students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally encountered unfamiliar words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referred to base forms, prefix or suffix to guess meanings of words.

Based on Table 3, 25 respondents claimed they experienced problem comprehending passages and articles while 21 respondents required longer duration to complete the reading materials. The aforementioned 46 respondents gave the same reason to their impediment whereby they encountered many unfamiliar words which hampered their reading comprehension and fluency. Besides, they had to constantly refer to English and bilingual dictionaries to look up for the meanings of the unfamiliar words. In these situations, learners need to be taught and reminded to skim and scan reading passages especially when a limited time frame is given e.g. during reading exercises or tests.

Meanwhile, six respondents who scored Band 5 said that they occasionally encountered unfamiliar words which hampered their reading comprehension but were able to make sense of the passages by referring to the base forms, prefix of suffix to guess the meanings of the words.

WRITING IMPEDIMENTS ENCOUNTERED BY LEARNERS:

TABLE 4: WRITING PROBLEMS AND REASONS AMONG ESL LEARNERS

Total Respondents	Problems	Reasons
32 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required longer period to write an essay. • Not familiar with the topics. 	<p>Pre-writing stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty procuring ideas to write essay outlines. <p>Writing stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentally construct sentences in mother-tongue before translating into English • Constantly referring to English and bilingual dictionaries, and online translator. <p>Revising stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure sentences were grammatically correct and comprehensible. • To ensure ideas, sentences and paragraphs were arranged coherently and cohesively.
11 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in writing academic essays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to synthesise, paraphrase and cite various sources. • Not exposed to academic writing in secondary school.

Writing is one of the most difficult skills to master in learning a language. The findings in Table 4 showed that

32 respondents stated they required longer period to write an essay as they experienced difficulty procuring ideas to plan their essay outlines in the pre-writing stage.

Another reason the respondents, specially low and average proficiency students, required longer time to write in the writing stage was because they had to mentally construct sentences in their first language or mother-tongue before translating into English. At the same time, the learners also spent a large amount of time looking up unfamiliar English words using bilingual dictionaries or online translator.

Finally in the revising stage, the respondents had to make sure that their sentences were grammatically correct and comprehensible in addition to ensuring that their ideas, sentences and paragraphs were arranged coherently and cohesively.

Meanwhile, 11 respondents who have taken academic reading and writing courses in college and university commented about the difficulty of writing academic essays compared to creative essays. The latter essay requires learners to synthesise, paraphrase and cite various sources, which the respondents were not familiar with because they were not exposed to academic writing in secondary school. Thus, it was difficult for them to master the writing style within a short semester.

LEARNERS' GENERAL VIEWS AND COMMENTS ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING:

This section provides the findings on the respondents' views and comments pertaining to two issues on English language teaching and learning namely their teachers and lecturers' teaching approach in school, college and university; and students' negative perceptions towards learning English.

TEACHER'S TEACHING APPROACH:

TABLE 5: ESL LEARNERS' VIEWS ON TEACHER'S TEACHING APPROACH

Total Respondents	Views
28 respondents	• Disagreed with teachers who were adamant about speaking only English in the classroom.
21 respondents	• Teachers and lecturers' lessons were non-interactive.

Based on Table 5, 28 respondents said they disagreed with teachers who were adamant about speaking only English in the classroom and also imposing similar practice upon the students. They opined that it was necessary for teachers to explain certain procedures and meanings in the students' mother-tongues so that they can fully comprehend the teachers' explanation. The respondents commended the teachers' intentions to ensure their students mastered the English language but they also needed to practice more flexibility and leniency in accommodating to the students' language limitations. By doing so, both teachers and students will be able to provide and obtain effective and meaningful language learning experience, respectively.

Meanwhile, 21 respondents thought some of their teachers and lecturers' lessons were non-interactive i.e. the lessons were textbook-based, lacked pair or group discussions and presentations.

REASONS FOR STUDENTS NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS LEARNING ENGLISH:

TABLE 6: ESL LEARNERS' REASONS FOR STUDENTS' NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS LEARNING ENGLISH

Total Respondents	Views
25 respondents	• Passive learners viewed English as just another subject to pass, has no necessity and practicality in their future.
21 respondents	• Passive learners have no intention to further their studies upon completing secondary school. • Passive learners intend to seek employment.

According to the respondents who were proactive in learning the English language as shown on Table 6, 25 respondents mentioned that their former secondary schoolmates who were passive learners viewed English as just a subject to pass and did not see the necessity and practicality of it in their future careers. This was supported by 21 respondents who said that low academic achievers did not intend to further their studies and planned to seek employment, usually as odd job workers, upon completing secondary school. Some of the reasons given were reasonable such as the students were not academically-inclined, they came from low-income families whose parents could not afford to provide financial support for them to further their studies, and some students had many siblings which required them to work and provide financial assistance to support their parents and families, among the reasons.

LEARNER'S SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH:

This section provides the findings of the respondents' suggestions for teachers and lecturers to improve their teaching approach in the classroom; and for students to improve their language skills based on the respondents' experience and personal approaches.

TEACHER'S TEACHING APPROACH :**TABLE 7: ESL LEARNERS' SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE TEACHER'S TEACHING APPROACH**

Total Respondents	Suggestions
5 respondents	• Be more patient in guiding and teaching students.
28 respondents	• Teachers and lecturers should be more creative in their lessons and not rely only on textbooks.
39 respondents	• Teachers and lecturers should use other mother –tongues to explain meanings of unfamiliar words.
22 respondents	• Teachers and lecturers should introduce new vocabulary during lessons.

In Table 7, five respondents suggested that teachers should be more patient in guiding and teaching especially the lower and average proficiency students. This will ensure students are more motivated and responsive towards the teachers and lessons. Meanwhile, 28 respondents preferred if teachers and lecturers incorporated more creative teaching approaches in their lessons such as using interactive online programmes and videos instead of the conventional 'chalk-and-talk', PowerPoint and textbook-based lessons.

39 respondents opined that educators should use their students' mother-tongues, depending on the educators' command of the language, to explain meanings of unfamiliar words. This is supported by Krashen's Input Hypothesis that teacher's language instruction should be full of rich input (both in spoken and written language) that is roughly tuned at the appropriate level for the learners in the class to provide meaningful language learning experience (Krashen, 1981).

Finally, 22 respondents suggested that teachers should introduce new words during lessons as a mean to guide students to comprehend and use the vocabulary correctly in proper contexts. In the Malaysian Curriculum Specifications for primary and secondary schools, it contains a word list which consists of high frequency words commonly used in the English language which learners will need even when reading simple texts and to understand them in the context of what they read. These are also the words that learners will use when going about their writing task. Teachers are encouraged to add to the word list according to the proficiency of their learners as well as when teaching a particular topic (Malaysian Curriculum Specification, 2003).

CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES :**TABLE 8: ESL LEARNERS' SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Total Respondents	Suggestions
6 respondents (Band 5 students)	• More extensive, interactive and comprehensive individual or group assignments and presentations.
18 respondents	• Teachers and lecturers should incorporate games in a fun and interactive way.

Six respondents in Table 8 suggested that lecturers should plan more extensive, interactive and comprehensive individual or group assignments and presentations which will be worthwhile and practical for them to be utilised in other courses. In addition to that, lecturers should ensure that the presentations are conducted in a serious and formal environment, similar to a conference, in order to expose students to a simulated conference. Besides, it is also to ensure students invest more effort in completing their assignments and delivering an excellent presentation.

Secondly, 18 respondents viewed that games are effective methods to assist students in language learning as students are able to learn the language in context through a fun and interactive way. The respondents who described their favourite English lessons in secondary school, college and university have similarly noted the use of games which made the lessons lively and memorable. On top of that, games gave opportunities to every student to shine especially shy learners who eventually became more outspoken and confident.

STUDENT'S LEARNING APPROACH:

In the dialogue response journal, the respondents offered their advice and suggestions on ways to improve language development and proficiency based on their personal experience which were effective in helping them become better learners.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS:

TABLE 9: ESL LEARNERS' SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS

Total Respondents	Suggestions
26 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Converse with friends who have good command of English or with English native speakers via Skype, Yahoo Messenger.• Watch English movies and documentaries.• Practice speaking in front of a small audience before a presentation.• Consistently practise speaking English with teachers, lecturers and friends.

Based on Table 9, one of the 26 respondents stated that watching English movies and documentaries such as *The National Geographic* and *Discovery* helped him in his pronunciation, sentence structure construction, usage of words in contexts and vocabulary range development. Another respondent suggested watching English movies without foreign subtitles as this will force learners to focus on the spoken words.

To improve one's speaking skill, three respondents suggested that learners should converse with friends, who have good command of English, and English native speakers via Skype, Yahoo Messenger or other forms of Internet voice services. The continuing rapid advancement of information technology and multimedia has turned the world into a borderless continent especially with notable ubiquitous social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Tweeter. Six respondents suggested that local English teachers should contact overseas native English teachers to form an educational network which allows students from both countries and/or continents to socialise and help local learners to improve their communication skills.

It is a norm to feel nervous before a presentation for both proficient and less proficient speakers. Ten respondents said these worries can be reduced by practicing before a presentation in front of a small audience whom the speaker is comfortable with. Preliminary feedbacks and comments from peers will help speakers improve their presentation skills and boost their confidence. One respondent of this research expressed his satisfaction participating in oratory presentations and competitions which helped to build his confidence and develop his speaking skill.

"My experience participating in oratory presentation and competitions such as public speaking and debates have helped elevate my confidence and honed my speaking skills. Even though I never won, the experiences have been priceless. (sic)"

WRITING SKILL:

TABLE 10: ESL LEARNERS' SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILL

Total Respondents	Suggestions	Benefits
18 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice writing daily. Be more patient in guiding and teaching students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Train students to put thoughts in to words.• Train students to use effective forms of expressions and suitable choices of words.• Learn new vocabulary and synonyms through dictionary and Thesaurus.

In Table 10, 18 respondents agreed that practice writing daily helped to improve their writing skills as it trained them to put their thoughts into words in addition to using effective forms of expressions and suitable choices of words. Writing practice also helped the ESL learners learn new vocabulary and synonyms via English and bilingual dictionaries, Thesaurus and reading newspapers, magazines and books.

READING SKILL:

TABLE 11: ESL LEARNERS' SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE READING SKILL

Total Respondents	Suggestions	Benefits
13 respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read English news reports and articles, story books and magazines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper covers general and specific topics and issues. • Provide materials for speaking activities and writing assignments.

13 respondents suggested, and acceded by others, that reading newspaper reports and articles help to improve their reading skill in addition to improving their speaking and writing skills, grammar proficiency, and expanding their vocabulary range as shown on Table 11. Newspapers are one of the cheapest reading sources available that cover general and specific topics and issues such as education, environment, health, social issues, science and technology which are suitable for students with average and below language proficiencies. The materials are also imperative guides for students to improve their grammar skills by identifying tenses forms, sentence structures and learning new words to expand their vocabulary and applying them in speaking and writing. The respondents stated that they used these materials in their individual and/or speaking activities and writing assignments.

CONCLUSION:

Learners' perceptions towards the teaching and learning of English should be taken and reviewed seriously as it is a two-way process involving teachers and learners. Meanwhile, teachers should take the initiative to ensure their teaching plans are effective while students' learning becomes meaningful through a myriad and mixture of teaching methods to cater to a majority of the students' learning styles and preferences. An empathic teacher can motivate reluctant students to explore their maximum potential through consistent encouragement and self-assurance. Besides, average and low proficiency students need to be proactive and consistently strive to improve their English language proficiency until they are able to achieve their maximum ability. In the end, the results will be an equal achievement and success for both educators and learners.

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