



THE ROLE OF VERBAL LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE IN ESL LEARNER'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

KOPPULA UJWALA,

Lecturer, Department of
English TSWRDC(W),
L.B.Nagar, Telangana,India
ujwalashok@gmail.com

KESETTY MAMATHA

Lecturer, Department of
English TSWRDC(W),
L.B.Nagar, Telangana,India
keshettymamatha@gmail.com

GOPAGONI

PRASHANTHI
Lecturer, Department of
English TSWRDC(W),
Bhongir, Telangana,India
Prashanthi.sneha@gmail.com

Abstract: This study was aimed at identifying the effects of verbal- linguistic intelligence on the academic performance of Telangana social welfare undergraduate ESL Learners. The participants of this study were TSWRDC (Telangana social welfare residential degree college for women) 2nd year undergraduate ESL learners. A questionnaire and informal interviews were used and empirically analysed to assess learners academic achievement referred to the English verbal linguistic intelligence in subjects obtained from their academic classes. The data was analysed. The results revealed that there was a significant correlation between verbal linguistic intelligence and the academic performance of ESL learners. Moreover, it also indicated that verbal linguistic intelligence was a better predictor of their academic performance.

1. Introduction:

Language is a very important component of human intelligence because it is at the heart of individual and community existence. Many linguists around the world have recognized the power of language especially in academic-related work. Human ability to use language effectively depends on linguistic intelligence, by which is meant the ability to apply language creatively for the purposes of communication through speech, writing or gestures. In other words, any kind of expression, whether verbal or non-verbal, requires construction of meaning through language. As human beings we are meaning making creatures; the most prominent way of making meaning is through language-based intelligence. As linguistic creatures, human beings have to rely on language for their survival because we have to send and receive messages almost every day of our lives.

As one of the significant factors in learning a second language, intelligence itself has evolved through the centuries and languages have become more and more sophisticated and accurate. In previous studies, intelligence was defined as a single property of one's brain and was measured by the IQ test which focused on both linguistic and logical intelligence. This traditional notion of intelligence based on IQ test is however very limited (Gardner, 2011; Hoerr, 2000). Instead, Gardner (2011) proposed a theory of Multiple Intelligences consisting of nine types of intelligences, including linguistic intelligence, which deals with the ability to learn a language and the capacity to use the language to accomplish certain goals. It is defined specifically as the capacity to use language effectively in oral and written form (Armstrong, 2009; Gardner, 2011). Gardner's theory has brought a paradigm shift in all spheres of learning.

In the present global scenario, one cannot ignore the importance of learning and using English, specifically in academic life. Learning English language is considered as a challenging task for its learners because of the differences in intelligences in language. It is very important to know how students represent their thoughts in language. In learning a second language, especially English, the great deal of intelligence is involved. The



differences in linguistic intelligence, in the area of second language learning may lead to academic success or failure. There are multiple entry point and needs to be taken seriously because English language adds to the social and cultural identity of a person. English is a window through which we can see the globalized world in a new light and therefore extremely essential. to understanding, learning and mastering any academic subject (Gardner, 1993a). Linguistic intelligence is one such entry point. Hence, students' academic performance indirectly depends on their linguistic intelligence in English at the undergraduate level, which is a transition period between the intermediate stage and the stage of their higher education or future career, as is the case with students of professional courses such as engineering and medicine, who begin working immediately after the completion of their undergraduate course.

2.Hypothesis: Verbal linguistic intelligence of ESL learners play an important role in acquiring the knowledge related to the subject and to perform better in their subjects academically. Enhancing vocabulary as input, prior to the class will improve their academic performance in a major way. Some people believe that the verbal linguistic intelligence is nature. It means that it is a God's gift which is influenced by genetic inheritance and biological factors, and there is no intervention of human being. Meanwhile some other people believe that verbal intelligence is nurture. It means it can be taught. Learners who have low verbal linguistic intelligence possibly can develop this intelligence through nurture process with the help of teachers.

3. Aim of the project:

The aim of this project is to examine to know the role of verbal linguistic intelligence in the academic performance of undergraduate ESL learners of TSWRDC(W) in Hyderabad, Telangana.

4. Objectives of the project:

- To make students aware of their verbal linguistic intelligence
- To explore the role of verbal linguistic intelligence in English in academic performance at undergraduate level.
- To find out the connection between verbal linguistic intelligence as a significant tool in understanding the knowledge to perform better in academics.

5. Literature Review

5.1 Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence

Linguistic verbal intelligence is one of the nine multiple intelligences (MI) based on theory of MI developed by Gardner in 1983. Intelligence mostly regarded as a one-single trait and was usually measured based on the one-dimensional concept of intelligence (IQ). Gardner's theory of MI states that this theory does not refer to just one general human intelligence (Abbassi, Hassaskhah, &Tahriri, 2018). It addresses a group of multiple intelligences, including linguistic (verbal- linguistic), musical, logical, visual, kinaesthetic, intrapersonal or interpersonal intelligence and naturalist and existential intelligences. Verbal-linguistic intelligence is sometimes also called "word smart" (Armstrong, 2009). It is an intelligence that is usually used when we talk with others, whether in formal speech or



informal conversation. We use it when we put our thoughts down on paper, create poetry, or write a letter to a friend. Armstrong, (2009) describes that MI is the capacity of using words effectively, whether orally or in writing. It includes the ability to deal with different aspects of a language as well as to manipulate the syntax or structure of the language, the language, and the pragmatic dimensions or practical uses of language, And use it in different situations (Shero Malo Zebari, Ali Ahmed Allo, & Mohammedzadeh, 2018).

Halil (2017) describes that the characteristics of people who have the verbal-linguistic intelligence are sensitive, systematic, good at arguing, etc. They like listening, love reading and writing, easy to spell, love to play the words, good memories about trivial things, and being a reliable public speaker and debater. Therefore, verbal-linguistic intelligence includes language skills of listening, reading effectively, speech, and writing. People who quickly capture oral and written information can be considered to be linguistically intelligent, although they may be not good at talking or writing (producing language). Verbal-linguistic intelligence has several indicators or unique traits of intelligence. It consists of the ability to think words and to use language to express and appreciate complex meanings. It also involves understanding the order and meaning of words in both speech and writing and how to properly use the language. Gardner's theory states as well as cited in Rahimi, (2014) that Linguistic Intelligence is sensitivity to spoken and written word. Language use can accomplish specific goals, such as the ability to learn new languages.

His pleasure in activities generally characterized people who have high Verbal-linguistic intelligence. It related to the use of a language, such as reading, writing the essay, poetry, composing aphorisms, playing word games, telling jokes, debating, public speaking, discussions with other people, etc. They also tended to have a good memory for names, dates, and new terms (Armstrong, 2009). In terms of mastery of a new language, if it was linked to the linguistic intelligence's definition by Howard Gardner, people with high Verbal-linguistic intelligence generally have a higher capacity than the other people.

6. Methodology

6.1 Research procedure: The entire process of data collection was done through phone calls as we were in pandemic crisis. Respondents were selected randomly and given a brief explanation about the purpose of the research. Then the questionnaires were administered to them. The respondents were given ample time to complete it. If they face any problems, the respondents were allowed to ask for clarification.

6.2 Participants

The participants of this study were 20 ESL learners, divided into groups and 5 data collectors, pursuing 2nd year undergraduation in TSWRDC(w). They were selected randomly from B.com(g) class. The first group was made to attempt the questionnaire and made to attend the class without any explanation of the study. The second group was given orientation on the role of verbal linguistic intelligence and vocabulary related to the topic as input.

6.3 Instruments

A questionnaire was used as the instrument to collect the data. The questionnaire consisted of 5 questions related to marketing subject. It was to measure learners' level of verbal linguistic intelligence with or without verbal input.

Questionnaire 1

1. Do you give attention to the vocabulary used during the lecture?
2. Will you note down content words?
3. Will you make an attempt to know the meaning of content words prior to the class?
4. Is it useful to know the meaning of words in advance to know the subject in a better way?
5. Can you use the following content words in various contexts of marketing?
 - a. Bounce rate
 - b. A/B testing
 - c. Artificial intelligence
 - d. Blogging
 - e. Cold calling

7. Analysis of the data

Question No	Response in percentage
1	40%
2	34%
3	45%
4	49%
5	30%

The data was analyzed empirically by research students of the project. Data was analysed with an interactive model of data collection, data reduction, data display, and verification /conclusion. All the answers were put together and converted into percentages to arrive at conclusion and to analyse how far hypothesis was correct.

The questionnaire was used as a tool to understand students' verbal ability in understanding marketing subject .Mapping and converting the questionnaire responses into percentages asked for the first and second group strengthened with interview and observation is reported in TABLE 1 below.

Question No	The first group students responses in percentage	The second group responses in percentages
1	40%	90%
2	34%	85%
3	45%	95%
4	49%	90%
5	30%	95%



Based on the analysis of the above data, it is found that 40 %of the students' are studying marketing subject without any attempt to know the contextual meanings of marketing subject related words. It was indicated that 95%% have improvement in understanding the subject in a better way.

8. Findings of the research:

- Verbal linguistic intelligence plays an important role in academic performance of the students at undergraduate level
- By giving verbal knowledge as input prior to the class make the students learn the concept in a better way.
- Giving importance to the contextual meaning of the words make the students use those in various contexts too.

Conclusion:The present study explored the role of verbal linguistic intelligence in English in academic performance of undergraduate ESL Learners. Firstly, the learners are analysed in order to make them aware of their linguistic intelligence level. Secondly, the research seeks to find out the connection between verbal linguistic intelligence as a significant tool in understanding the knowledge to perform better in academics. Lastly, it is understood learning language is not nature of the students, it can be nurtured. Hence, the present study would definitely find ways to improve the ways by which one could enhance the verbal linguistic intelligence of ESL learners at the undergraduate level to perform better in academics.

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