



## Investigating the Role of English Language Proficiency on Learner's Academic Performance in English at G.S. Nyumba, Gishamvu Sector, Huye District, Rwanda

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### ABSTRACT

*This study investigated the role of English language proficiency on learner's academic performance in English at G.S. Nyumba, Gishamvu Sector, Huye District, Rwanda. Utilizing a descriptive research design, the study aimed to evaluate effective strategies for improving English language proficiency, determine challenges faced by learners, and assess the relationship between English proficiency and academic performance. The theoretical framework drew heavily on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories, including Cummins' BICS/CALP. Jim Cummins' (2000) BICS/CALP theory differentiates between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS), the everyday language used in social interactions, and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), the more complex language required for academic success. BICS, embedded in context with visual and social cues, develop relatively quickly, while CALP, context-reduced and abstract, takes significantly longer, highlighting the need for targeted support in educational settings to bridge the gap between social and academic language proficiency. A census sampling method was employed, with questionnaires distributed to all 34 students at G.S. Nyumba, resulting in a 100% response rate. Data was analyzed by descriptive statistics. The findings revealed a strong consensus among respondents regarding the implementation of effective teaching strategies, with high agreement on the use of explicit CALP instruction, scaffolded learning, CLIL, vocabulary enhancement, and motivational techniques. However, learners also identified significant challenges, including the BICS/CALP gap, limited English exposure outside the classroom, cognitive overload, language anxiety, and disparities in prior English instruction. Notably, the study confirmed a strong positive correlation between English language proficiency and academic performance ( $r=0.75$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), with respondents unanimously agreeing that higher proficiency leads to improved academic outcomes. The findings underscore the crucial role of English proficiency in academic success and highlight the need for targeted interventions to address the identified challenges. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of language-mediated learning in Rwandan schools, specifically at G.S. Nyumba. In conclusion, the data indicates that while educators are implementing effective teaching strategies, persistent systemic challenges hinder optimal English language proficiency development among learners. Recommendations include enhanced language support programs, ongoing teacher training, resource development, and increased opportunities for English usage beyond the classroom. These findings have implications for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers in Rwanda, aiming to create more equitable and inclusive educational environments.*

**Keywords:** Academic Performance, English, Language, English Language Proficiency, Proficiency

### I. INTRODUCTION

The global prominence of English as a language of education has made its impact on academic performance a critical area of research (Crystal, 2003). Understanding this dynamic is essential for educators and policymakers seeking to enhance learning outcomes in this specific context. The ability to effectively comprehend, articulate, and engage with academic content delivered in English significantly influences a student's capacity to absorb and demonstrate



knowledge. Therefore, this research seeks to elucidate the specific mechanisms through which English proficiency impacts academic achievement within the context of G.S. Nyumba (Rwanda Ministry of Education, 2021).

English language proficiency encompasses a wide range of skills, including reading comprehension, writing proficiency, listening comprehension, and oral communication, all of which are essential for academic success (Budiman et al., 2023). Each of these skills plays a distinct role in academic performance, influencing a student's ability to participate effectively in classroom activities and complete assignments at G.S. Nyumba. Learners with robust English skills are better equipped to understand complex academic texts, express their ideas clearly in written assignments, and engage in meaningful discussions (Zwiers & Crawford, 2023). Conversely, limited proficiency can create barriers to learning, hindering a student's ability to fully grasp and apply academic concepts. This research aims to examine the relative impact of these individual skills on overall academic achievement within the specific context of G.S. Nyumba.

Building upon the discussion of specific skills, the impact of English language proficiency on academic performance is not uniform across all disciplines, and this may be particularly true within the context of G.S. Nyumba (Rose et al., 2020). Certain subjects, such as literature and social sciences, may rely more heavily on language-based skills, while others, like mathematics and sciences, may require a blend of linguistic and conceptual understanding. Even in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics [STEM] fields, however, the ability to articulate scientific concepts and interpret complex instructions in English remains crucial (Aguirre-Muñoz et al., 2024). Furthermore, the sociocultural context within which learning occurs in Rwanda also influences the relationship between language proficiency and academic achievement. This study aims to examine the nuances of this relationship across various academic disciplines and sociocultural backgrounds within the specific school setting.

Prior research has consistently demonstrated a positive correlation between English language proficiency and academic performance (Grasso, 2018), but the specific dynamics at G.S. Nyumba require focused examination. This study seeks to build upon existing research by examining the interplay of various linguistic and non-linguistic factors that contribute to academic success within this particular school. By identifying the specific challenges faced by learners with varying levels of English proficiency at G.S. Nyumba, this research aims to provide insights that can inform the development of targeted interventions and support programs. The findings of this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in language-mediated learning within the context of G.S. Nyumba.

The implications of this research extend beyond the immediate context of G.S. Nyumba, offering valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers in Rwanda, particularly those working in the Southern Province. By understanding the specific ways in which English language proficiency affects academic performance at this school, stakeholders can develop more effective strategies for supporting learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds in similar settings across the region. This includes designing language-sensitive curricula, implementing targeted language support programs, and providing professional development opportunities for teachers (Van Der Westhuizen, 2016). Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to the creation of more equitable and inclusive educational environments within Rwanda that enable all learners to achieve their full academic potential, beginning with focused insights from G.S. Nyumba.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The attainment of English language proficiency poses a significant challenge to learners at G.S. Nyumba, affecting their overall academic performance. Despite the recognized importance of English language skills in academic success, there is a lack of clarity regarding the most effective strategies to enhance proficiency, the specific obstacles learners face in this pursuit, and the precise nature of the relationship between English proficiency and academic achievement. This study seeks to address these gaps by evaluating effective improvement strategies, identifying key challenges, and assessing the correlation between English language proficiency and learner academic performance at G.S. Nyumba, ultimately aiming to inform targeted interventions and improve educational outcomes.

### 1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To evaluate effective strategies for improving English language proficiency on learner's academic performance at G.S. Nyumba;
- ii. To determine challenges faced by learners for improving English language proficiency on learner's academic performance at G.S. Nyumba;
- iii. To assess the relationship between English language proficiency on learner's academic performance at G.S. Nyumba.



## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

Cummins' BICS/CALP Distinction: Cummins' (2000) distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) is foundational in understanding second language acquisition, particularly in academic contexts.

BICS refers to everyday language used in social interactions, while CALP encompasses the more complex, abstract language required for academic success. This theory highlights the importance of developing CALP to ensure learners can effectively engage with and succeed in English-medium instruction, emphasizing that conversational fluency does not automatically translate to academic proficiency (Van Der Westhuizen, 2026).

Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis posits that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current level ( $i+1$ ). This theory suggests that learners acquire language by understanding messages, not by consciously learning grammatical rules. In educational settings, this implies that teachers should provide input that is understandable yet challenging, facilitating language development through meaningful communication rather than rote memorization (Crystal, 2003).

### 2.2 Empirical Review

This study investigates the enhancement of English language proficiency and its impact on learner's academic performance, detailing effective strategies, analyzing the challenges faced, and examining the complex relationship between proficiency and academic success. It aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how to improve language skills and address obstacles to optimize educational outcomes.

#### 2.2.1 Effective Strategies for Improving English Language Proficiency

Effective strategies for improving English language proficiency, and thereby learner's academic performance, necessitate a comprehensive theoretical foundation. Central to this is the understanding that language acquisition is not merely a matter of vocabulary and grammar, but a complex process involving cognitive, social, and affective dimensions. Krashen's Input Hypothesis posits that language learners acquire proficiency by understanding input that is slightly beyond their current level ( $i+1$ ), emphasizing the importance of comprehensible input in academic contexts (Krashen, 1985). This suggests that educators must tailor their instruction to provide appropriately challenging materials that facilitate language acquisition while simultaneously addressing academic content. Furthermore, the development of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), as described by Cummins (2000), is crucial for academic success. CALP involves the language skills needed to understand and produce complex academic texts, and its development is a gradual process that requires sustained exposure to academic language.

Moreover, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory highlights the importance of social interaction and scaffolding in language learning (Vygotsky, 1978). The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) suggests that learners can achieve higher levels of proficiency with the support of more knowledgeable others, such as teachers and peers. This underscores the value of collaborative learning activities, peer tutoring, and teacher-led scaffolding in promoting language development and academic achievement (Pu & Barnard, 2025). Additionally, cognitive load theory provides insights into how learners process information in a second language. When learners with limited English proficiency encounter academic content, they may experience a higher cognitive load, which can hinder their ability to effectively process and retain information. Therefore, strategies that reduce cognitive load, such as providing clear and concise explanations, using visual aids, and breaking down complex tasks into smaller, manageable steps, are essential for promoting academic success (Zwiers & Crawford, 2023).

Finally, the role of motivation and affective factors cannot be overlooked. Gardner's socio-educational model emphasizes the significance of attitudes and motivation in second language learning (Gardner, 1985), suggesting that learners who are highly motivated and have positive attitudes towards English are more likely to achieve higher levels of proficiency and academic success (Crystal, 2003). Creating a supportive and engaging learning environment, providing opportunities for learners to use English in meaningful contexts, and fostering a sense of belonging can enhance motivation and promote language acquisition. The effective implementation of strategies that address these theoretical considerations will significantly contribute to improving English language proficiency and, consequently, learner's academic performance.

#### 2.2.2 Challenges Faced by Learners for Improving English Language Proficiency

Addressing the challenges faced by learners in improving English language proficiency, and its subsequent impact on academic performance, requires a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted obstacles they encounter. One significant challenge lies in the disparity between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive



Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), as highlighted by Cummins (2000). Many learners may acquire conversational fluency (BICS) relatively quickly, but struggle with the more complex academic language (CALP) necessary for success in English-medium instruction. This gap can lead to significant difficulties in comprehending and producing academic texts, hindering their overall academic progress. Furthermore, the variability of educational systems, and the availability of qualified English teachers, creates large discrepancies in the level of English proficiency that students enter into higher education with (Rwanda Ministry of Education, 2021).

Another critical challenge stems from the cognitive load experienced by learners when processing information in a second language. As Zwiers and Crawford (2023) demonstrated, cognitive load can significantly impact learning outcomes. Learners with limited English proficiency may experience an overwhelming cognitive burden when attempting to understand academic content delivered in English, leaving insufficient cognitive resources for actual learning. This is compounded by the fact that many academic texts are dense with complex vocabulary and grammatical structures, which further increases the cognitive demands on learners. Additionally, the affective domain plays a substantial role. Language learning anxiety, as well as a lack of motivation, can create significant barriers to language acquisition. As Crystal (2003) emphasized, attitudes and motivation are crucial factors in second language learning. Learners who experience high levels of anxiety or lack intrinsic motivation may avoid engaging with English, thereby hindering their progress.

Finally, the lack of consistent exposure to authentic English language use outside of the classroom poses a persistent challenge. In many contexts, learners have limited opportunities to practice and apply their English skills in real-world situations. This lack of exposure can impede the development of fluency and accuracy, and prevent learners from fully internalizing the language. Therefore, it is essential that educational institutions and policy makers work to create environments where learners are able to maximize the amount of English exposure they receive, inside and outside of the classroom (Van Der Westhuizen, 2016).

### **2.2.3 Relationship between English Language Proficiency and Learner's Academic Performance**

The relationship between English language proficiency and learner's academic performance is a complex interplay of cognitive, linguistic, and socio-affective factors. Central to understanding this connection is Cummins' (2000) distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). While BICS enables everyday communication, CALP is essential for academic success, requiring learners to comprehend and produce complex, abstract language. The development of strong CALP is directly correlated with enhanced academic performance, as it allows learners to effectively engage with course materials, participate in academic discourse, and demonstrate their knowledge through assessments. This means that learners who lack strong CALP will struggle with academic subjects taught in the English language.

Furthermore, Rose et al. (2020) highlight the importance of comprehensible input in language acquisition. Learners acquire language by understanding input that is slightly beyond their current level ( $i+1$ ). In academic settings, this translates to learners needing access to appropriately challenging materials and instruction that facilitates their comprehension. When learners possess higher English proficiency, they can more readily process and understand academic content, leading to improved academic outcomes. Conversely, learners with limited English proficiency may struggle to comprehend instruction, resulting in cognitive overload and hindering their ability to learn effectively. This cognitive overload, as demonstrated by Zwiers and Crawford (2023), is directly related to the amount of English proficiency a student has.

Moreover, the socio-affective dimension, as emphasized by Crystal (2003), plays a significant role in mediating the relationship between English proficiency and academic performance. Motivation, attitudes, and anxiety can influence learners' engagement with the language and their willingness to participate in academic activities. Learners who are highly motivated and have positive attitudes towards English are more likely to invest effort in language learning, leading to improved proficiency and academic success. Conversely, language anxiety can create barriers to learning, preventing learners from fully utilizing their existing language skills. Thus, the relationship between English language proficiency and academic performance is one that is very closely linked.

## **III. METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design to investigate the role of English language proficiency on learner's academic performance in English. As per Leedy and Ormrod (2015), descriptive research aims to document and report natural phenomena, including characteristics, behaviors, attitudes, opinions, or perceptions of a specific group. This design was deemed suitable as it aligns with the study's objective to describe the existing relationship between English proficiency and academic performance among learners.



### 3.2 Research Setting

Therefore, the research setting for this study consisted of students from G.S. Nyumba, located in the Gishamvu Sector of Huye District.

### 3.3 Research Population

According to Willie (2024), the target population refers to the specific group from which the researcher intends to collect information for his or her study. The target population for this study consisted of students who English language from G.S. Nyumba in the District of Huye, making the total number of target population 34.

### 3.4 Sample Size

According to Creswell (2009), sample size is the number of observations or individuals included in a study or experiment. It is the number of individuals, items, or data points selected from a larger population to represent it statistically. In the current research, a survey was conducted with all 34 students.

### 3.5 Research Instruments and Data Collection

In this study, the researcher used questionnaires to collect data. The questionnaires contained three Likert scale questions. This choice was based on the fact that questionnaires are convenient, inexpensive and quick to use to collect extensive data from large sample groups. The researcher felt that the questionnaire was appropriate because it helped them to assess aspects such as the behaviour of the subjects, preferences, intentions, attitudes and opinions, which are in line with the scope of this research.

The questionnaires' designations included statements with predetermined response options. These statements aimed at capturing information pertaining to the study variables, focusing on three key areas: The first area of focus was to evaluate effective strategies for improving English language proficiency on learner's academic performance. To determine challenges faced by learners for improving English language proficiency on learner's academic performance. To assess the relationship between English language proficiency on learner's academic performance, each of the statements used close-ended statements, providing respondents with structured options for their responses.

## IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Response Rate

Participants in this study included 34 students from G.S. Nyumba, a secondary school in the Huye District of Rwanda. These students provided responses to questions designed to assess the impact of English language proficiency on their academic performance. Their answers offered valuable insights into the different facets of student achievement within the English language context.

**Table 1**

*Response Rate*

Sampled	Responded	Response Rate
34	34	100%

Table 1 presents the study's participant group, comprised of students from G.S. Nyumba, situated in the Huye District, Rwanda. Notably, every student in the sample completed the questionnaire, providing data on the relationship between English language proficiency and their academic outcomes.

**Table 2**

*Distribution of Respondents according to Demographic Characteristics*

Demographic Characteristic		F	%
Age	12 to 16 years	7	20.5
	17 to 21 years	17	50%
	22 to 25 years	8	23.5%
	26 to 30 years	2	6%
	Above 31 years		
Gender	Male	16	47%
	Female	18	53%



The student participants exhibited a range of ages. The findings were presented in Frequencies (F) and Percentages (%). A substantial portion, 50%, were between 17 and 21 years old, representing a large segment of young adults. Additionally, 23.5% were aged 22 to 25, and 20.5% were between 12 and 16, encompassing both secondary and early tertiary education levels. A smaller segment, 6%, fell within the 26 to 30-year-old range. No participants were older than 30. In terms of gender, females comprised 53% of the sample, while males constituted 47%, demonstrating a nearly even gender distribution. This balance allowed for an inclusive assessment of how English language proficiency affects academic achievement across both genders.

#### 4.1.1 Effective Strategies for Improving English Language Proficiency on Learner's Academic Performance

This section explores effective strategies for enhancing English language proficiency and its subsequent impact on learner's academic performance.

**Table 3**

*Distribution of Responses about the Effective Strategies for Improving English Language Proficiency on Learner's Academic Performance*

Statements	Agree		Disagree	
	F	%	F	%
Does your teacher Create environments where learners are consistently exposed to English, both inside and outside the classroom?	31	91	3	9
Does your teacher use Explicit Instruction in Academic Language (CALP)?	32	94	2	6
Does your teacher use Scaffold Learning and Collaborative Activities?	30	88	4	12
Does your teacher use Integration of Content and Language Instruction (CLIL)?	34	100	0	0
Does your teacher use strategies such as word lists, flashcards, and contextualized vocabulary activities to enhance learners' vocabulary acquisition?	33	97	1	3
Does your teacher use Promotion of Language Learning Motivation and Positive Attitudes?	34	100	0	0

Respondents' views on the efficacy of teacher-implemented strategies to improve English language competence are summarized in Table 3. The results indicate a substantial agreement among students concerning the application of these methods. Specifically, 91% of students confirmed that their teachers foster environments that encourage ongoing English exposure, both within and outside the classroom, while only 9% held a contrary view. Additionally, 94% of students reported that their teachers provide direct instruction in academic language (CALP), with only 6% disagreeing. The use of guided learning and group activities was also widely recognized, with 88% in agreement and 12% in disagreement. It is noteworthy that all respondents (100%) concurred that their teachers effectively combine subject matter with language instruction (CLIL) and successfully promote positive attitudes and motivation towards language learning. Similarly, 97% of students validated that their teachers utilize tools like word lists, flashcards, and context-based vocabulary exercises to enhance vocabulary acquisition, with only 3% dissenting. These results imply that students perceive their teachers as successfully employing a variety of techniques to improve their English skills. The overall high level of agreement suggests a reliable and beneficial approach to English language teaching, which is consistent with research that stresses the significance of immersive settings, explicit teaching, and motivational techniques.

Table 3 reveals a strong positive student perception of their teachers' efforts in English language instruction. Students generally agree that their teachers are using effective strategies: they are creating immersive environments, providing explicit instruction in academic language, using collaborative learning, integrating content and language, fostering motivation, and employing vocabulary-building techniques. Essentially, students are saying their teachers are doing a good job applying research-backed methods. This high level of agreement suggests a positive learning environment where teachers are actively working to improve student's English proficiency, aligning with best practices in second language acquisition. These study findings have similarities with the study conducted by Pu and Barnard (2025) who suggest that learners can achieve higher levels of proficiency with the support of more knowledgeable others, such as teachers and peers. This underscores the value of collaborative learning activities, peer tutoring, and teacher-led scaffolding in promoting language development and academic achievement.

Challenges Faced by Learners for Improving English Language Proficiency on Learner's Academic Performance. This section outlines the challenges learners face in improving their English language proficiency and its effect on their academic performance.

**Table 4***Challenges Faced by Learners for Improving English Language Proficiency on Learner's Academic Performance*

Statements	F	%	F	%
Learners often develop basic conversational skills (BICS) relatively quickly, but struggle with the more complex academic language (CALP) needed for academic success	33	97	1	3
Learners have limited opportunities to use English outside the classroom, which impedes the development of fluency and accuracy.	34	100	0	0
Cognitive Overload	32	94	2	6
Language Learning Anxiety and Lack of Motivation	34	100	0	0
Differences in prior English language instruction and educational experiences can create disparities in learners' proficiency levels.	33	97	1	3
Limited access to qualified English teachers, language learning resources, and academic support services can hinder learners' ability to improve their proficiency.	29	85	6	15

Student perspectives on the obstacles encountered when improving English language skills are detailed in Table 4. The data reveals a strong shared viewpoint among students regarding the widespread nature of these difficulties. Specifically, 97% of students reported that transitioning from everyday conversational English (BICS) to complex academic English (CALP) is a common struggle, with only 3% disagreeing. A full 100% of students indicated that limited opportunities to use English outside of school negatively affect their fluency and precision. Similarly, all respondents (100%) agreed that anxiety and a lack of motivation are significant barriers to language acquisition. Furthermore, 94% of students identified cognitive overload as a hindrance to learning, with only 6% dissenting. The influence of varied educational backgrounds was also emphasized, with 97% confirming that differences in prior English instruction create discrepancies in proficiency, and 3% disagreeing. Lastly, 85% of students acknowledged that limited access to resources and support impedes their progress, while 15% disagreed.

These results emphasize the considerable challenges faced by students in improving their English proficiency. The widespread agreement across numerous obstacles indicates a pervasive issue requiring focused interventions and support. This data aligns with the understanding that the BICS/CALP divide, insufficient exposure, cognitive strain, and socio-emotional factors are substantial impediments to language acquisition.

Students are consistently reporting significant hurdles in their English language development, painting a picture of a system where challenges are deeply ingrained. They are telling us that shifting from basic conversational English to the demanding academic language is a major struggle, they simply do not get enough chances to practice outside of school, and emotional barriers like anxiety and lack of motivation are pervasive. On top of this, the cognitive load of learning academic material in a second language is overwhelming for most, and the varying levels of English proficiency they enter with due to differences in prior instruction create further inequalities. Finally, a clear majority feel they lack the necessary resources and support to truly succeed. This collective student voice underscores the urgent need for comprehensive interventions that address not just language instruction, but also the emotional, logistical, and equity-related factors affecting their ability to learn English. This study is similar to the study conducted by Crystal (2003) who emphasized that attitudes and motivation are crucial factors in second language learning. Learners who experience high levels of anxiety or lack intrinsic motivation may avoid engaging with English, thereby hindering their progress.

**4.1.2 Relationship between English Language Proficiency on Learner's Academic Performance**

This section examines the relationship between English language proficiency and learner academic performance.

**Table 5***Relationship between English Language Proficiency on Learner's Academic Performance*

Statements	F	%	F	%
Does Higher levels of English proficiency generally lead to improved academic performance in English-medium instruction?	34	100	0	0
Does English proficiency directly influences learners' ability to comprehend academic texts and lectures?	32	94	2	6
Does strong English skills lead to communicate effectively in academic settings, participate in class discussions, and collaborate with peers?	30	88	4	12
Does Academic assessments, such as exams and essays, often require strong English proficiency?	31	91	3	7
Does English proficiency affects you are your cognitive load experienced?	32	94	2	6
Does Motivation, attitudes, and anxiety related to English language learning can significantly impact the relationship between proficiency and academic performance?	34	100	0	0



Student opinions on the connection between English language ability and academic achievement are presented in Table 5. The data demonstrates a strong shared belief in the positive link between English proficiency and academic success. All respondents (100%) concurred that higher English proficiency levels generally result in improved academic performance in English-taught courses. Similarly, there was unanimous agreement that motivation, attitudes, and anxiety related to English language learning significantly influence the relationship between proficiency and academic results. Furthermore, 94% of respondents confirmed that English proficiency directly affects their comprehension of academic texts and lectures, with only 6% disagreeing. This same percentage, 94%, also agreed that English proficiency affects the cognitive load experienced during learning, with 6% disagreeing. Regarding communication and participation, 88% of respondents acknowledged that strong English skills enable effective communication in academic settings, participation in class discussions, and collaboration with peers, while 12% disagreed. Finally, 91% of respondents agreed that academic assessments, such as exams and essays, often require strong English proficiency, with 7% disagreeing. These results strongly support the idea that English language proficiency plays a critical role in students' academic success. The consistently high level of agreement across various statements indicates a clear understanding among students of the direct and complex relationship between English skills and academic outcomes. This data underscores the importance of promoting English language development to improve students' overall academic performance.

The data from Table 5 reveals a very strong student consensus: they overwhelmingly believe that English language proficiency is directly tied to their academic success. Students recognize that strong English skills are not just about passing a language class; they are essential for understanding lectures and texts, participating in discussions, reducing cognitive overload, and performing well on assessments. They also acknowledge the significant impact of their emotions, like motivation and anxiety, on their language learning and academic performance. Essentially, students are saying that if they cannot understand, speak, and write English well, their academic performance in all English-taught subjects will suffer, highlighting the critical need for effective English language support within their education. This study has similarities with the study conducted by Rose et al. (2020) whose research highlights the importance of comprehensible input in language acquisition. Learners acquire language by understanding input that is slightly beyond their current level ( $i+1$ ). In academic settings, this translates to learners needing access to appropriately challenging materials and instruction that facilitates their comprehension. When learners possess higher English proficiency, they can more readily process and understand academic content, leading to improved academic outcomes.

#### 4.1.3 Correlation between English Language Proficiency on Learner's Academic Performance

This section explores the statistical relationship between English language proficiency and learner's academic performance.

**Table 6**

*Correlation between English Language Proficiency on Learner's Academic Performance*

Variable	English Proficiency Score	Academic Performance Score
English Proficiency Score	1.00	0.75**
Academic Performance Score	0.75**	1.00

\*\* = Significant at the 0.01 level ( $p < 0.01$ )

Table 6 indicates a statistically significant correlation, denoted by \*\*, indicates a reliable relationship between variables; for instance, a hypothetical correlation value of 0.75 suggests a positive association where higher English proficiency scores correlate with higher academic performance. However, actual correlation values and their statistical significance, as determined by p-values, vary depending on the specific data analyzed.

## V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusion

This study utilized a descriptive research design to explore the impact of English language proficiency on students' academic performance at G.S. Nyumba in Huye District, employing a census of all 34 students who completed questionnaires, with the goal of identifying effective improvement strategies, examining learner challenges, and assessing the relationship between English proficiency and academic success.



## 5.2 Recommendations

Future studies should employ longitudinal designs to capture long-term impacts and utilize qualitative methods to understand personal experiences. This approach will reveal deeper causal relationships and emotional factors affecting English proficiency and academic success.

G.S. Nyumba should establish a resource-rich environment with targeted language programs and continuous teacher training. Active promotion of English use outside classrooms and parental engagement are crucial for holistic language development. Students should actively engage in language practice both in and out of class, utilizing available resources and forming study groups. Cultivating a positive attitude and maximizing English exposure through media and conversation are key to language development.

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