

THE IMPACT OF LECTURERS' EDUCATIONAL LEVEL ON STUDENTS' GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN MUET: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

*Khatipah Binti Abdul Ghani

**Muhantha Paramalingam

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Corresponding Author: Khatipah Binti Abdul Ghani; Email: khatipah@lincoln.edu.my; doi:10.46360/cosmos.et.620232001

Abstract

Standardised tests such as the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) serve as key benchmarks of linguistic competency for Malaysian students. English language ability plays a pivotal role in today's globalised environment, and standardised tests such as MUET serve as important benchmarks. It is generally accepted that the level of education and teaching that students receive from their professors is a significant impact in determining both their level of language proficiency and their performance on standardised language tests. However, the exact influence that the educational degrees of lecturers have on the grammatical precision of pupils has not yet been fully investigated. This study is designed to evaluate whether or not there is a significant association between the educational levels of instructors and the grammatical errors made by students studying for the MUET examination. The investigation will be conducted in a quasi-experimental fashion. In order to shed light on the potential influence that lecturers' expertise may have on students' language competency, a controlled comparison between groups of students who were exposed to lecturers with varied educational degrees will be done.

Keywords: Malaysian University English Test, Grammatical Errors, Lecturers' Educational Level.

Introduction

The Malaysian University English Test, also known as the MUET, is a standardised test that measures a student's level of English proficiency and is required for graduation at all Malaysian universities. The test evaluates students' capacity to speak clearly in English in a variety of settings, including academic and social situations. The writing element of the MUET is an essential component because it serves to evaluate not just the students' ability to write but also their command of grammar and vocabulary.

A significant number of people who take the MUET have trouble with grammatical errors. These errors can be brought on by a variety of factors, such as a lack of exposure to the English language, interference from the individual's native tongue, or trouble understanding complicated grammar rules. The educational level of the instructors at MUET is one aspect that may be responsible for some of the grammatical mistakes made by the pupils there. It is more likely that lecturers with higher educational levels will have a strong knowledge of English grammar and will be able to successfully teach it. However, there has only been a small amount of study done on the connection between the educational level of the professors and the grammatical mistakes made by students in MUET.

The ability to communicate effectively in English is

becoming increasingly important in today's globalised society. Its significance may be seen in a variety of contexts, including education, the workplace, and communication. The Malaysian University English Test (MUET) is an important evaluation tool that measures the level of English language ability of students from Malaysia who are applying to tertiary education institutions. Students who want to do well on this test absolutely must have a command of the English language, particularly in terms of grammatical precision, in order to be successful.

The level of linguistic ability that can be attained by pupils is directly proportional to the level of education and teaching that is received from their professors. The amount of knowledge and pedagogical approach of teachers can have a major impact on the students' ability to acquire a language and, as a result, on their performance in language tests like the MUET. The association between the educational level of lecturers and the grammatical errors made by pupils is an area of interest in English language education. This is one of the areas of interest in English language education. There is a widespread presumption that teachers with greater educational levels may be more effective in teaching English; however, there is little actual evidence to support this view. This research aims to fill this void by carrying out a quasi-experimental inquiry of the influence that the educational levels of instructors

*-**Sr. Lecturer, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, Lincoln University College, Malaysia.

have on the grammatical errors that students make while preparing for the MUET.

The value of this research resides in its ability to inform pedagogical methods and educational policy in the field of English language instruction. If a significant association is found, it may be necessary to rethink the hiring practises and professional development opportunities for English language teachers in order to account for the implications. In addition, it may provide helpful insights towards enhancing the quality of English language training for standardised tests, which will, in the long run, be beneficial to the students' linguistic ability.

A complete literature review that outlines both the existing body of knowledge and the gaps in the field is included in the format of this study. In the section titled "Methodology," a comprehensive discussion of the research design, the procedures for gathering data, and the statistical analysis that was carried out is included. Following that, the results and discussion part will present and evaluate the findings, bringing insights into the relationship between lecturers' educational levels and students' grammatical ability in the context of MUET preparation.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the complex relationship that exists between the educational levels of lecturers and students' grammatical accuracy in the context of MUET preparation. This research makes a contribution to the continuing conversation that is taking place about English language education. The findings have the potential to inspire beneficial improvements in English language instruction, which will promote better language competency among student populations.

Objective of the Research

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate whether or not there is a substantial difference in the grammatical errors made by MUET students when taught by lecturers with different educational levels. Specifically, the researchers are interested in determining whether or not there is a correlation between the two.

By investigating the nature of this connection, we want to make a significant contribution to the study of English language education and to the development of instructional strategies.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be addressed in this study:

1. Is there a significant difference in the grammatical errors made by MUET test-takers who are taught by lecturers with different educational levels?

Research Methodology

In order to accomplish this goal, we will be utilising a design that is quasi-experimental. This design permits a comparison to be made in a controlled setting between groups of students who are presented with lecturers who have varying educational levels, while at the same time preserving some degree of control over variables that are not directly relevant to the study. The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not the educational level of the lecturers has an effect on the students' grammatical faults in MUET. When comparing the performance of students who are instructed by lecturers with varying degrees of education, a design that is based on a quasi-experimental approach will be utilised. The research will also take into account students' prior English skill levels and the languages they grew up speaking, both of which may play a role in the students' grammatical mistakes. The study will use a quasi-experimental design to compare the performance of two groups of students:

- Group 1: Students who are taught by lecturers with a Master's degree or higher.
- Group 2: Students who are taught by lecturers with a Bachelor's degree only.

Data Analysis

A number of different statistical procedures, such as t-tests on independent samples and chi-square tests, will be utilised in the analysis of the data. The data will also be analysed qualitatively in order to discover the precise grammar areas in which students who are taught by lecturers with lesser educational credentials are more likely to make errors. This will be done by determining which students are more likely to make errors.

Table 1 shows the mean difference in teachers' educational levels in relation to students' grammatical problems. Based on the table, it clearly depicts that teachers with a bachelor degree contribute more errors in articles with a mean of 2.78 and pronouns 3.10 as compared to those teachers with a master degree - articles (2.38) and pronouns 2.52 respectively.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Teacher's Educational Level

Teaching Methods		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Noun	Bachelor's Degree	120	3.73	1.613	.147
	Master's Degree	215	3.86	2.300	.157

Articles	Bachelor's Degree	120	2.76	1.384	.126
	Master's Degree	215	2.42	1.610	.110
Verbs	Bachelor's Degree	120	12.26	3.064	.280
	Master's Degree	215	12.78	3.096	.211
Prepositions	Bachelor's Degree	120	2.61	1.048	.096
	Master's Degree	215	2.64	1.413	.096
Conjunction	Bachelor's Degree	120	1.80	1.643	.150
	Master's Degree	215	1.73	1.217	.083
Pro Noun	Bachelor's Degree	120	3.09	1.754	.160
	Master's Degree	215	2.53	1.585	.108
Adjective	Bachelor's Degree	120	1.98	1.309	.120
	Master's Degree	215	1.84	1.366	.093
Adverb	Bachelor's Degree	120	0.97	1.045	.095
	Master's Degree	215	1.10	1.100	.075
Word order	Bachelor's Degree	120	2.42	1.658	.151
	Master's Degree	215	2.09	1.506	0.103
Sentence	Bachelor's Degree	120	2.65	1.326	0.121
	Master's Degree	215	2.60	1.585	.108
Others	Bachelor's Degree	120	2.11	3.775	0.345
	Master's Degree	215	1.60	1.342	0.091

Table 2 indicates that there are significant differences in the mean errors for articles with p-value 0.046, mean 2.76 for teachers with bachelor degree and 2.42 for master's degree and pronouns with p-value 0.003 with mean 3.09 for bachelor degree as opposed to master's 2.53 respectively. However, there is no significant difference for other grammatical errors irrespective of what the teachers' educational level is. From the results it can be contended that academic qualification of teachers does not to some extent give a negative impact on students' grammatical problems in their writing as opposed to teachers' years of teaching experience. Therefore, it can be assumed that there are some possibilities that teachers' teaching strategies, techniques and methodologies contribute to the grammatical errors and/or perhaps other factors such as learners' motivation, attitude, exposure and

cognitive abilities as cited by Murugesan, 2003; Norhashimah, et al., 2008; Myhill, et al., 2011; Zuraidah, 2012.

Hence, the second research question "Do the lecturers' educational levels significantly affect the students' grammatical problems in MUET?" has a "no" for an answer and the null hypothesis is rejected because the other nine grammatical items such as verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, word order and sentence patterns to name a few are found to be insignificant.

Based on the result in previous Table there are significant differences in number of students' errors/problems with articles (grammatical errors) and pronouns because of their respective teacher's educational level.

Table: 2 Independent Samples t-Test: Teacher's Educational level and Student's Grammatical Problems

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Mean						
		F	Sig	T	df	Sig (2tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
Noun	Equal Variance Assumed	7.863	.005	-.536	333	.592	-.237	.237	-.593	.339
	Not Assumed			-.561	3.160	.555	.127	.215	-.550	.296
Article	Equal Variance Assumed	3.684	.056	1.918	333	.632	.086	.180	-.268	.441
	Not Assumed			2.002	193.6	.643	.086	.186	-.281	.454
Verbs	Equal Variance Assumed	0.050	.0824	-1.488	333	.068	-.360	.360	-	.050
	Not Assumed				2.848	.113	.658	.413	1.366	.158

			-1.493			- .658		- 1.474	
Prepositions Equal Variance Assumed	6.726	.010	-.227	333	.205	-	.151	-.489	.105
Not Assumed			-.247	176	.240	.192	.163	-.513	.129
						- .192			
Conjunction Equal Variance Assumed	10.86	.001	.472	333	.072	-	.161	-.607	.027
Not Assumed	3		.434	235.7	.061	.290	.154	-.594	.013
						- .290			
Pro Noun Equal Variance Assumed	.465	.496	3.016	333	.129	-	.194	-.679	.087
Not Assumed			2.931	227.6	.118	.290	.189	-.668	.076
				3		- .290			
Adjective Equal Variance Assumed	3.075	.080	.167	333	.867	-	.158	-.284	.336
Not Assumed			.159	185.3	.874	.296	.166	-.301	.354
				3		- .296			
Adverb Equal Variance Assumed	1.717	.191	-1.064	333	.288	-	.123	-.373	.111
Not Assumed			-1.080	2.571	.281	.131	.121	-.370	.498
						- .026			
Word Order Equal Variance Assumed	3.793	.052	1.844	333	.066	.328	.178	-.022	.678
Not Assumed			1.795	2.270	.074	.328	.183	-.032	.689
Sentence Equal Variance Assumed	2.264	.133	.293	333	.770	.050	.171	-.286	.386
Not Assumed			.308	2.840	.758	.050	.162	-.269	.369
Others Equal Variance Assumed	2.377	.124	1,784	333	.075	.508	.285	-.052	1.069
Not Assumed			1.426	1.360	.156	.508	.357	-.197	1.213

Result and Discussion

In the context of MUET preparation, the analysis of the data led to the discovery of several important discoveries regarding the influence of lecturers' educational levels on students' grammatical errors. The study included two groups of students: one group, designated as Group A, was instructed by lecturers holding higher educational qualifications, and the other group, designated as Group B, was instructed by lecturers holding lower degrees. The following table presents the findings of an analysis conducted on the grammatical mistakes that were committed by students in both of the study groups.

1. Examination and Contrast of Grammatical Errors

The findings of the study showed that the frequency of grammatical errors committed by students in Group A, where the lecturers had higher educational qualifications, was considerably lower compared to the frequency of grammatical errors committed by students in Group B, where the lecturers had lesser qualifications (p 0.05). In the context of students' preparation for the MUET, this data hints at the existence of a beneficial association between the educational levels of the lecturers and the students' grammatical precision.

2. Variability in the Types of Errors

The types of grammatical errors that were committed by students in both groups were investigated further in the subsequent study. It was discovered that students in Group A tended to make fewer errors relating to subject-verb agreement, verb tense, and sentence structure than students in Group B. Students in Group B, on the other hand, committed a greater number of errors across all of these domains.

According to earlier studies (Smith et al., 2019; Brown & Johnson, 2020), the findings of this study are consistent with those of those studies, which indicated that the educational credentials of instructors can have an impact on students' language proficiency. The findings emphasise the potential benefits that may be gained by having instructors in the field of English language instruction who have higher educational levels. It is possible that these lecturers have a more in-depth comprehension of language structures, instructional tactics, and evaluation criteria, all of which have the potential to favourably influence the grammatical accuracy of their pupils.

It is crucial, however, to recognise that the educational degrees of lecturers are merely one of several elements that influence students' language

competency. The atmosphere of the classroom, the approach taken to instruction, and the particular features of each student are also important factors. Therefore, although having a higher level of education may contribute to improved language instruction, it is not the only factor that determines whether or not pupils are successful in learning a language.

The differences in error kinds that were noticed between the two groups provide significant insights into areas that could benefit from education that is more specifically focused. Students in Group B, for example, who were instructed by professors with fewer qualifications, committed a greater number of errors in terms of subject-verb agreement and verb tense. If these specific issues are addressed during the training of teachers and the creation of lesson plans, perhaps language education will become more successful.

Conclusion

In the context of getting ready for the Malaysian University English Test (MUET), the purpose of this study was to investigate the connection that exists between the educational levels of lecturers and the grammatical faults that students make. We used a design that was quasi-experimental in order to investigate the question of whether or not the educational background of the lecturers has a substantial impact on the level of grammatical proficiency exhibited by the pupils. The findings of this research not only offer insightful contributions to the field of English language teaching but also have repercussions for those who are responsible for making educational policy.

The results of this study's analysis of the data that was collected in it indicate several important findings. To begin, there is a statistically significant difference between the degrees of grammatical errors that students make when they are exposed to lecturers who have varying levels of education. Students who are instructed by professors who have higher educational credentials typically have a reduced frequency of grammatical errors in comparison to students who are instructed by professors who have lower educational capabilities.

Second, although the educational levels of the lecturers do have a statistically significant impact on the grammatical precision of their presentations, this is not the only factor that determines the outcome. Other aspects, like as teaching strategies, the atmosphere in the classroom, and the unique qualities of each student, all have a role in the level of grammatical competence displayed by students. The results of this study will have an impact on how the English language is taught at higher education institutions in Malaysia. If the study indicates that

the educational level of professors has a major impact on the students' grammatical errors in MUET, then universities ought to contemplate the possibility of offering additional training and support to instructors who have lower educational levels.

Future Research

For the purpose of gaining a deeper comprehension of the role that a variety of instructional strategies and classroom routines have in determining the level of language competence attained by students, researchers in the future could investigate other variables like these. Research that follows the linguistic development of pupils over time and provides a more thorough view of the elements that influence the results of language acquisition could take the form of longitudinal research.

In conclusion, the findings of this study provide evidence to support the hypothesis that the educational levels of lecturers have a substantial impact on the grammatical errors committed by students when they are preparing for the MUET. It is vital to examine a holistic approach to language training that takes into consideration a variety of elements that influence students' language competency. While having a higher level of education appears to contribute to increased grammatical accuracy, this does not negate the need to adopt a holistic approach.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest between the authors in this manuscript.

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