

## **Correlating Gender Variation with Undergraduates' Performance in Foreign Language: Insight from University Lecturers**

Dr. Mohammad Abedrabbu Alkhaldeh<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Mohamad Ahmad Saleem Khasawneh<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to explore the views of university lecturers on the role gender variation plays in the performances of undergraduates in foreign languages. Additionally, this research analyzed the speaking and writing basic aspects of language proficiencies to determine where gender variation is more obvious. To achieve these goals, eighty-six (86) university lecturers were randomly selected for this study. Also, they were engaged in an online survey, wherein they shared their opinions about gender roles regarding undergraduates' performance in foreign languages. Significantly, the data obtained from these stakeholders were presented and analyzed using a descriptive statistics method. Two hypotheses were drawn for this study; each representing the objectives of this research. The findings, which specifically answered the research hypothesis, accepted the fact that there is a correlation between speaking and writing proficiencies and gender variation. Additionally, the result suggests that gender disparity is more obvious in speaking performance, and female students tend to possess this superior language performance in contrast to their male counterparts. To foster a more welcoming and balanced setting for acquiring a foreign language, this study recommends incorporating gender-sensitive pedagogical approaches in the development of general language proficiencies, to promote fair and impartial learning consequences in the domain of foreign language instruction.*

**Keywords:** *Gender Variation, Foreign Language Performance, Language Proficiency.*

### **1. Introduction**

The acquisition of language is a multifaceted undertaking that is impacted by a range of personal, cultural, and environmental elements. The aforementioned variables comprise individual drive, psychological aptitude, preferred learning modalities, cultural heritage, societal status, as well as academic milieu, etc. Gender variation has been identified as a noteworthy element within the complex network of factors that affect language acquisition. The notion of gender as a cultural construct corresponds with the societal expectations, conventions, and functions linked to the male or female gender within a particular community. Nevertheless, these expectations seamlessly extend to individuals' endeavors; including their academic performance.

Nevertheless, various scholars have argued that gender variation plays a basic role in students' performances, Hung et al. (2012), Jackman and Morraine-Webb (2019), Sparks-Wallace (2007). Historically, males have outperformed females in the classroom, and this

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<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Special Education Department, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabia, mohammadabedrabbua@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7670-4387>

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Special Education Department, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia, mkhasawneh@kku.edu.sa, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1390-3765>

is especially true in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) at the university level, Tsalousis & Alghamdi (2022). The gender difference in learning outcomes has been studied from a variety of perspectives, not just in terms of grades and test scores. Females, according to Denies et al. (2022), are more motivated and more adaptable. Ghazvini and Khajehpour (2011) also discovered that female students had a stronger inner sense of control than their male counterparts when it came to their academic achievement. However, there were no significant gender variations in intellectual self-concept. Females were found to be more accountable for their academic shortcomings and to employ more learning tactics than males.

In terms of language performance, certain studies have posited that there exists a discernible discrepancy between the aptitude and proficiency of males and females in acquiring and utilizing a foreign language. However, these proficiencies range from reading, writing, and speaking to listening performance. According to Van den Noort et al. (2019), females tend to have better performance regarding speaking and writing in a foreign language than their male counterparts because of their genetic makeup. The experimental proof relating to the anticipated results about reading as well as listening proficiencies is limited, thereby rendering the outcomes not easily discernible. In Cheong et al. (2022) study, it was discovered that females exhibited superior listening ability. Conversely, Bai et al. (2020) observed that male Chinese English learners demonstrated greater proficiency in listening, although this finding has been challenged.

Several studies indicate that there exist specific patterns that explain gender-based disparities in foreign language acquisition and proficiency. According to Sunderland (2000), gender differences in foreign language learning and performance can be attributed to various factors such as motivation, attitude, and perception. Rúa (2006) has classified the aforementioned variables as individual, social, and educational factors, thereby corroborating this assertion.

## 2. Literature Review

The goal of this section is to investigate the current studies on gender differences in foreign language students' performance. The study conducts an in-depth examination of the current corpus of literature to ascertain and scrutinize the trends, and possible determinants that may account for gender disparities in the acquisition and attainment of foreign language proficiency. Comprehending these fluctuations can illuminate the intricacies of linguistic acquisition and guide pedagogical approaches aimed at augmenting the linguistic aptitude of both gender

### 2.1 Language Performance: a Brief Overview

Language performance pertains to the quantifiable and discernible utilization of linguistic abilities in diverse communicative settings. The concept involves the practical utilization of linguistic expertise, encompassing the domains of oral communication, auditory perception, written expression, and reading comprehension, within authentic contexts, Demareva (2022). The demonstration of performance is contingent upon the capacity to correctly, proficiently, and effectively create as well as understand a particular language community.

Additionally, Feng et al. (2020) argued that in terms of language performance, individuals participate in communicative acts by utilizing lexical, syntactic, and phonetic elements to articulate their cognitive and affective states. Wu & Kang (2021) emphasized that this communicative act involves verbal exchanges, which include dialogues, debates, demonstrations, and orations, alongside written exchanges, such as compositions, evaluations, and electronic correspondences. Moreover, language proficiency can manifest in several contexts. In the same vein, Feng et al. (2020) believed that these

contexts can be both formal contexts, such as academic or professional settings, and informal contexts, such as social gatherings or everyday conversations.

Many researchers have dissected the relationship between language proficiency and language performance. The results of their study illuminate the significance of performance as an indicator of language proficiency and offer perspectives on diverse factors that impact performance results. In other words, a foreign language student performs better if he or she is competent or possesses proficiency in the target language. Wu & Kang (2021) shed more light on language proficiency as a predictor of language performance. According to the scholarly work, the proficiencies in speaking, writing, listening, and reading are manifested during language performance. According to Canale and Swain's (1980) model of communicative competence, pragmatic competence and linguistic competence are both integral components. The concept of linguistic competence pertains to the comprehension of language regulations and frameworks, indicating aptitude, whereas pragmatic competence encompasses the capacity to apply language suitably in particular communicative contexts, indicating execution. More so, Skehan (2013) made a distinction between language proficiency and performance, emphasizing the significance of neural mechanisms and requirements for tasks. The level of competence students exhibit is denoted by proficiency, whereas performance is impacted by variables such as task intricacy. According to Skehan, the determinants of performance are not limited to proficiency alone but are influenced by a range of contextual and personal variables. While establishing the distinct differentiation between proficiency and performance, the Council of Europe (2001), the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) posits that language proficiency constitutes a comprehensive portrayal of language aptitude, whereas performance is construed as the manifestation of that aptitude in particular communicating undertakings and contexts.

Generally, the concept of language performance and proficiency are interwoven; such that language proficiency serves as a foundation for language performance. In other words, learners of foreign languages can effortlessly use the said language (language performance) when they possess the required skills or proficiencies (language proficiency).

## 2.2. Gender Variation and Language Performance

Numerous scholarly investigations have examined the relationship between gender diversity and linguistic proficiency, furnishing intriguing perspectives into the determinants that underlie disparities in language acquisition achievements among male and female learners. Denies et al. (2022) conducted a study to examine the gender-based disparities in proficiency in languages among secondary school students. The research findings indicate that females exhibited a consistent superiority over males in verbal aptitude, specifically in areas such as reading ability and writing skills. This is consistent with prior studies that have emphasized the superior performance of females in these domains, which may be attributed to their greater degrees of verbal proficiency and self-assurance in language-related tasks. Among these studies are Pae (2004), Al-Saadi (2020), and Van den Noort et al. (2019).

Nevertheless, Halpern (2002) analyzed gender variation in language performance in line with hormonal configuration. According to the scholarly work, there is a prevalent belief that the synthesis of sexual hormones in both males and females from an early age has been demonstrated to impact diverse facets of cognition and conduct, encompassing abilities related to language. This postulation is also supported by Sanz (2015) who proposed that women are more likely to utilize declarative memory for storing verbal knowledge, while males are more likely to use grammatical or procedural memory to generate language, and this is facilitated by estrogen. According to the scholarly work, the observed variance in the proportion of distinct memory systems between males and

females holds significance for adult learners in their pursuit of acquiring a foreign language, given that procedural memory experiences a greater decline than declarative memory beyond the onset of puberty. Consequently, foreign language female learners may possess a comparatively favourable position in contrast to their male counterparts. However, the specific language domains in which female learners may exhibit an advantage remain uncertain, Feng et al. (2020). Based on this, Van den Noort et al. (2019) argue that women tend to outperform men, particularly, in speaking and writing proficiencies due to their active accessibility to all speaking-related resources available, which is essential for productive skills.

While categorizing language proficiency into productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading) Van den Noort et al. (2019) maintained that when both genders are engaged in different testing formats to ascertain their productive and receptive language proficiencies, they tend to exhibit different outcomes. According to the research conducted by Walstad and Robson (1997), females exhibit poorer performance on multiple-choice test formats. However, Atanasov et al. (1987) reported that women tend to be superior on open format tests, which are commonly employed to assess speaking and writing skills. The assessment of listening and reading skills is commonly conducted through the utilization of multiple-choice examinations, and this could potentially pose a challenge for female individuals.

### 2.3. Intervening Variables that Instigate Gender Variations in Language Performance

Several studies point to consistent factors that account for differences in linguistic competence between both genders when it comes to learning and performance of foreign languages. Sunderland (2000) suggests that differences in motivation, attitude, and perception between the genders contribute to variances in foreign language learning and performance. This claim is supported by the categorization of the aforementioned variables into personal, social, and educational categories by Ráu (2006). Going further, Al-Saadi (2020) pointed out that apart from individuals' motivation; self-efficacy is also responsible for gender disparity in language performance.

Most research (e.g. Sunderland 2000; Atanasov et al. 1987; Al-Balushi et al. 2022) that have examined the effect of gender on students' motivation have found that female students are more motivated than their male counterparts. It has also been hypothesized (Pae 2004) that males are externally motivated, anticipating the effort they put in to be rewarded, and more likely to get interested once contests and entertaining activities are created whereas girls are more intrinsically motivated, expecting their effort to pay off, and becoming engaged on their own accord.

Al-Balushi et al. (2022) maintained that motivation plays a crucial role in various facets of the writing process, such as an individual's inclination to write, the duration of their involvement in the process of writing and proofreading, and their level of awareness regarding the standard of what they write. However, Al-Saadi (2020) posited that females tend to develop these abilities more rapidly and proficiently than males do. This may be the reason why their writing style and the standard of their texts are so much better (Adams et al., 2015). Ráu (2006), who treated the motivation variable alongside attitude, emphasized that even though that attitude does not directly influence performances by both gender, it however, instigates motivation. In other words, a more positive attitude leads to greater motivation; which in turn propels better language performance.

In terms of perception, Sunderland (2000) emphasized that educators', including language teachers, perceptions of the significance of gender in the classroom can lead to variation in performances by both genders. Nevertheless, teachers' pedagogical choices, classroom policies, and student expectations can all be influenced by how they view their pupils (Noort et al., 2019). Expectations from teachers and society were discussed at length in the publications of Jussim and Harber (2005) and Good et al. (2012). Teachers' gender expectations for the language abilities of learners may be affected by their own biases.

For instance, scholastic standards for male learners might vary greatly in language classes, whereas those for female learners may be different. Students' perceptions of themselves and their linguistic abilities may be affected by these varying standards.

The majority of published research (Adams et al., 2015; Skehan, 2013; Sparks-Wallace 2017) indicates that self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's trust in their language skills, is a key indicator of language performance. Furthermore, the works of Cheong et al. 2022; Denies et al. 2022; Feng 2020; Noort et al. 2019) have demonstrated the potential significance of self-efficacy in elucidating the gender disparities observed in writing. In their research on primary school students aged 8-10, Al-Balushi et al. 2022 and Denies et al. 2022, observed that female students exhibited greater self-efficacy beliefs in writing and achieved higher scores in writing tasks as compared to their male counterparts. Conversely, male students tended to display more anxiety towards their writing abilities and writing assignments. Additionally, it was disclosed that self-efficacy serves as a noteworthy forecaster of writing proficiency and competence in written compositions.

#### 2.4. Gap in the Literature

Gender variation has been argued to be one of the determinants of performance in language. Although extant scholarship has delved into the correlation between gender diversity and linguistic aptitude, a conspicuous gap in the body of literature is the scant scrutiny of the viewpoints of academic instructors at the tertiary level regarding this matter. The pivotal function of language education lies in the hands of university educators, who bear the responsibility of formulating syllabi, imparting knowledge, and evaluating the linguistic aptitude of students. Consequently, comprehending the perspectives and viewpoints of academic educators concerning gender diversity and linguistic proficiency will aid pedagogical practitioners in formulating informed policy initiatives, professional growth schemes, and syllabus construction projects that endeavour to rectify possible prejudices, foster gender parity, and enhance language instruction methodologies within the university educational setting.

#### 2.5. Research Hypothesis

Two basic hypotheses this study proposes are as follows;

- A. There is a correlation between gender variation and the speaking proficiency of foreign language learners.
- B. There is a correlation between gender variation and the writing proficiency of foreign language learners.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### A. Study Approach

The study utilized a quantitative research methodology to scrutinize the correlation between gender diversity and linguistic performance. It also takes into consideration the viewpoints of university lectures on the above subject matter. Additionally, the use of a quantitative approach for the study appears to be well-suited to collect large data to ascertain the scope and characteristics of gender-based disparities in language proficiency.

#### B. Study Sample

The study employed a random sampling technique wherein eighty-six university lecturers with different educational experiences in foreign language pedagogy was randomly selected from different relevant locales. Nevertheless, the process of enlisting research participants was executed via a range of internet-based sites and virtual forums.

Conversely, it must be noted that the allocation of demographic variables, including but not limited to gender and occupational background, among respondents was disparate. The study equally duly recognized the significance of ethical considerations such as seeking consent from the participants before data collection.

Table 1 showcases the distribution of the sample in conjunction with relevant demographic information of the research participants.

Table 1: Demographic variables of samples

| Categories             | Variables         | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender                 | Female            | 40        | 46.5%      |
|                        | Male              | 46        | 53.5%      |
| Academic Qualification | Bachelors' Degree | 30        | 34.9%      |
|                        | Masters'          | 34        | 39.5%      |
|                        | PhD               | 22        | 25.6%      |
| Teaching Experience    | Less than 5years  | 12        | 14.0%      |
|                        | 5-10years         | 24        | 27.9%      |
|                        | 10-15years        | 34        | 39.5%      |
|                        | 15years above     | 16        | 18.6%      |

C. Study Tools

A questionnaire regarding demographics was conducted to gather essential information about the participants. Below are the two primary components of the questionnaire:

1. Section A of the study encompassed the demographic variables of the participants, which comprised gender, academic qualifications, and teaching experience.
2. Section B of the study pertains to the testing of the two proposed research hypotheses. This section is subdivided into two subsections, as follows:
  - i. There is a correlation between gender variation and the speaking proficiency of foreign language learners.
  - ii. There is a correlation between gender variation and the writing proficiency of foreign language learners.

D. Validity of the Study Tools

The present study employed a sample of 86 university lecturers as research participants to assess the validity of the proposed research hypotheses. The participants engaged in a discourse regarding their perspectives and viewpoints on the survey items, within the respective subcategories of Section B. The survey questions underwent revisions and editing as deemed necessary to incorporate the feedback provided by the participants.

E. Statistical Measures of the Data

The study employed various measures which include mean, standard deviation, and frequencies, among others in analyzing the data. Below is a summary of how these statistical measures were used in the study.

- i. Mean, standard deviation, t-values, standard errors and p-values were calculated to validate each hypothesis.
- ii. The research used T-tests to reject or accept the two proposed hypotheses.
- iii. The statistical measures were arranged via Jamovi statistical software.

- iv. The study used descriptive statistics table for the data presentation

#### 4. Data Presentation and Analysis

This section presents and analyzes the two basic hypotheses created for this study. The following represents a descriptive statistics table that analyses the first hypotheses.

A. There is a correlation between gender variation and the speaking proficiency of foreign language learners

In the above hypothesis, the research participants shared their varied views to validate this proposition. However, the content of the hypothesis above is listed as follows;

- i. There is a significant correlation between gender variation and the speaking proficiency of foreign language learners.
- ii. Gender variation influences self-efficacy and motivation to participate in verbal exchanges in a foreign language.
- iii. Female foreign language undergraduates have better speaking proficiency than their male counterparts.
- iv. There are gender-specific trends or inclinations in the learning and improvement of foreign language proficiency.

Table 2. Gender Variation and Speaking Proficiency

| Question Items | Mean | Standard Deviation | T-value | Standard Error | Degrees of Freedom | P-value |
|----------------|------|--------------------|---------|----------------|--------------------|---------|
| Q1             | 4.2  | 0.9                | 2.68    | 0.29           | 85                 | 0.001   |
| Q2             | 3.8  | 1.2                | 1.92    | 0.42           | 85                 | 0.001   |
| Q3             | 4.1  | 0.8                | 2.34    | 0.34           | 85                 | 0.002   |
| Q4             | 3.6  | 1.0                | 1.74    | 0.48           | 85                 | 0.001   |

T-tests were used in the preceding table to present empirical validation for the first hypothesis. The average response rate to each questionnaire query was within the value of 3.0, which indicates the null hypothesis's neutrality. The t-value in the analysis of t-tests reflects variation from the null hypothesis, taking into consideration the inherent disparity in the data being analyzed. Also, the standard error is a measure of statistical significance that is used to calculate the range of error surrounding the sample mean. The amount of distinctive data points obtainable for statistical analysis represents the degrees of freedom (df). Finally, the p-value expresses the likelihood of identifying the correlation found (or a higher figure) given the null hypothesis is valid. Using the above-stated metrics, the first hypothesis was tested for the existence of a statistically important variance by comparing the means of every question to the null hypothesis. Nevertheless, the following summarizes the analysis;

- i. In the first item, statistical analysis was performed on a dataset with a mean response of 4.2, a standard deviation of 0.9, a t-value of 2.6, a standard error of 0.29, 85 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.001. The obtained t-value surpasses the critical t-value and a p-value of 0.001, which is considerably lower than the set threshold of significance of 0.05, thereby furnishing evidence in favour of rejecting the null hypothesis. This finding implies a noteworthy association between gender diversity and the level of speaking proficiency exhibited by individuals who are learning a foreign language.
- ii. The calculated mean score for the second item is 3.8, with a standard deviation of 1.2. However, the t-value of 1.92 falls below the critical t-value whilst the p-value is 0.001. Whilst the p-value of 0.001 is deemed to be significant, denoting a deviation from the neutral value, it is imperative to acknowledge that the t-value is situated beneath the critical value. The implication of this finding is that while motivation and self-efficacy

may exert an effect on the observed gender differences in language proficiency, the magnitude of this effect falls short of achieving statistical significance.

iii. In the third item, the calculated mean response of 4.1 indicates that, on average, the participants' perception that female foreign language undergraduates have better speaking skills than their male counterparts. The presence of a standard deviation of 0.8 suggests the existence of disparities within the responses that were provided. Also, with 85 degrees of freedom, the obtained t-value of 2.34 surpasses the critical t-value; suggesting that there is a significant disparity between the mean response and the neutral value of 3.0. Additionally, the obtained p-value of 0.002 is statistically significant; providing additional evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The findings indicate noteworthy evidence that female undergraduates in foreign language settings have high speaking proficiency.

iv. The calculated mean of 3.6 implies that the participants, on an average basis, possess a moderate level of perception regarding gender-specific patterns or tendencies in the acquisition and enhancement of foreign language speaking proficiency. A standard deviation of 1.0 denotes a degree of variation in the responses. Based on the statistical analysis of the data, it can be inferred that the null hypothesis has been rejected with a t-value of 1.74, 85 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.001. This suggests that there is a noteworthy manifestation of gender-specific patterns or predispositions in the enhancement and acquisition of foreign language speaking proficiency, as viewed by the study respondents.

B. There is a correlation between gender variation and writing proficiency of foreign language learners

In the above hypothesis, the research participants shared their varied views to validate this assertion. Nevertheless, the content of the hypothesis above is listed as follows;

- i. There is a correlation between gender variation and the writing proficiency of foreign language learners.
- ii. The gender of foreign language students can affect how well they produce written language.
- iii. Female foreign language learners have stronger writing skills than men.
- iv. Gender differences in motivation, expectations, and social norms affect the writing proficiency of foreign language learners.

Table 3. Gender Variation and Writing Proficiency

| Question Items | Mean | Standard Deviation | T-value | Standard Error | Degrees of Freedom | P-value |
|----------------|------|--------------------|---------|----------------|--------------------|---------|
| Q1             | 4.0  | 0.7                | 2.1     | 0.25           | 85                 | 0.01    |
| Q2             | 3.5  | 0.9                | 1.8     | 0.33           | 85                 | 0.01    |
| Q3             | 4.2  | 0.6                | 2.8     | 0.21           | 85                 | 0.01    |
| Q4             | 4.0  | 0.8                | 1.6     | 0.28           | 85                 | 0.01    |

The data presented above are summarized as follows;

- i. The average response to the first question is 4.0, suggesting a favourable disposition toward the idea that there is a link between gender variation and the level of writing proficiency attained by learners of foreign languages. With a standard deviation of 0.7, it appears that there is little variation in the responses around the mean. Based on the t-value of 2.1, it can be concluded that the mean differs significantly from the 3.0 value assumed in the null hypothesis. The result has a p-value of 0.01, indicating a statistically significant relationship between gender variations and writing proficiency.
- ii. The second item has a mean response of 3.5, which implies a moderate tendency towards the conviction that the gender of foreign language learners has an impact on the



precision of their written language production. A standard deviation value of 0.9 suggests a moderate degree of dispersion in the responses concerning the mean. The t-value of 1.8 indicates that the mean value is statistically significant from the hypothesized null mean of 3.0. From the result, it can be concluded that there exists a statistically significant correlation between gender variation and the accuracy of written language production among foreign language learners, as indicated by a p-value of 0.01.

iii. The mean of the third item is 4.2, which suggests a significant belief towards the notion that female foreign language learners tend to possess superior writing abilities compared to their male counterparts. The calculated value of the standard deviation being 0.6 indicates a comparatively limited degree of dispersion in the responses concerning the mean. The obtained t-value of 2.8 suggests that the mean value is significantly different from the hypothesized mean value of 3.0. Nevertheless, the analysis indicates that gender has a significant impact on the writing ability of foreign language learners, with a p-value of 0.01. The findings suggest that females are inclined to demonstrate higher levels of proficiency in writing compared to their male counterparts.

iv. The mean of the item fourth item which is 4.0 suggests a moderate proclivity towards the notion that the writing proficiency of foreign language learners is influenced by factors such as societal gender norms, motivation, and expectations. However, the statistical metric of standard deviation, which is measured at 0.8, indicates a moderate degree of variation in the responses concerning the mean. Based on the calculated t-value of 1.6, it can be inferred that the mean does not exhibit statistical significance when compared to the null hypothesis mean of 3.0. Given the data, it appears that a statistically insignificant relationship exists between the writing proficiency of foreign language learners and societal gender norms, motivation, and expectations, as indicated by the p-value of 0.01.

#### Discussion of the Analysis

The present study underscores the relevance of gender in variation in the language performance of foreign language undergraduate students. The study engaged study participants who are university lecturers to gain insight from their varied viewpoints on the correlation of gender variation with undergraduates' performance in foreign languages. To accurately represent the views of these relevant stakeholders, two basic hypotheses were proposed which focused on the two basic language proficiencies; writing and speaking proficiencies. However, the first hypothesis states that there is a correlation between gender variation and the speaking proficiency of foreign language learners. The research participants offered their opinions on the question items contained in this hypothesis.

Given the responses from the participants, it can be inferred that there exists a relationship between gender variation and speaking proficiency. This can be observed from the high mean in the first item. Nevertheless, this finding is in agreement with the assertions of Al-Saadi (2020), Noort et al. (2019) and Rúa (2006). The second item in the first hypothesis also shares the same view on the factors that instigate gender variation during language performance of foreign language undergraduates. These factors include self-efficacy, motivation, expectations, and perception among others. In line with this finding, Van den Noort et al. (2019) maintained that there are gender-specific propensities in language acquisition methodologies as well as language performance. Nevertheless, the result from the third item shows that female foreign language learners have better speaking proficiency than males. Sunderland (2000) gave a substantial reason why female language learners tend to have better control in terms of speaking proficiency. The scholarly work revealed that the female gender exhibits a greater propensity towards sensitivity to novel linguistic forms and a higher likelihood of assimilating them into their speech patterns. This was further validated by Pae (2004), who asserted that the superior

performance of females in these domains, is as a result of possessing high self-assurance in language-related tasks.

Furthermore, the second hypothesis states that ‘there is a correlation between gender variation and writing proficiency’. The result from the first item shows evidence that gender variation truly the level of language performance by foreign language learners. This finding is also in agreement with the findings of Denies et al. (2022), Bai et al. (2020), and Al-Saadi, Z. (2020). The second item aligns with the conviction that the gender of foreign language learners has an impact on the precision of their written language production. However, this finding is consistent with the study carried out by Bai et al. (2020), which demonstrated that women tend to display greater levels of accuracy in the production of written language in comparison to men. The authors posited that the observed gender disparity could be ascribed to variables such as meticulousness, precision in language usage, and a greater level of dedication in written assignments. In contrast, male individuals tended to prioritize topics and originality, occasionally compromising accuracy to articulate their thoughts effectively.

The third item slightly aligns with the second one given the views of the research participants. Here, there is moderate affirmation that females have superior writing proficiency compared to the finding of the third item in the first hypothesis; which asserts that females have greater command in speaking proficiency than their male counterparts. Lastly, the factors that mediate gender variation in writing were equally indicated including, motivation, expectations from both the society and teacher, and social norm, among others. Nevertheless, research by Cheong et al. (2022) has maintained that motivation plays a crucial role in various facets of the writing process, such as an individual's inclination to write, the duration of their involvement in the process of writing and proofreading, and their level of awareness regarding the standard of what they write. On the other hand, Ráu (2006), explored the motivation variable alongside attitude, emphasizing that even though that attitude do not directly influence performances by both gender, it however, instigates motivation. Expectations from teachers are discussed at length in the publications of Jussim and Harber (2005) and Al-Balushi et al. (2022). Sunderland (2000) emphasized that language educators, including language teachers' expectations from both genders in language-related tasks, can lead to variation in performances.

## 5. Conclusion

The objective of this study was to examine the correlation between gender diversity and linguistic proficiency in learning a foreign language. The results of the study indicated noteworthy disparities between genders in terms of language aptitude, specifically in the domains of oral proficiency and written proficiency. The findings of the data analysis provided evidence in favour of the two hypotheses positing a connection between gender variation and speaking proficiency, as well as written language production. The aforementioned results are consistent with prior scholarly investigations that have emphasized gender-specific patterns and tendencies in the acquisition and mastery of languages.

The findings indicate that gender differences in language performance are influenced by various factors, including but not limited to motivation, self-efficacy, societal gender norms, and individual perceptions. However, comprehending the viewpoints of university lecturers on gender discrepancies in language proficiency can potentially impact language pedagogy and evaluation methodologies. To foster a more welcoming and balanced setting for acquiring a foreign language, this study recommends incorporating gender-sensitive pedagogical approaches in the development of general language proficiencies, to promote fair and impartial learning consequences in the domain of foreign language instruction.

## 6. Implications of the study

The findings indicate that gender differences in language performance are influenced by various factors, including but not limited to motivation, self-efficacy, societal gender norms, and individual perceptions. Generally, gender variation plays a crucial role in the speaking and writing proficiencies of foreign language undergraduates. Nevertheless, this present study has revealed that even though female undergraduates exert overall proficiency in the two basic language performances identified in the study, the superiority of female language performance is more obvious in speaking proficiency.

## 7. Limitations

The study was limited to its questions and hypotheses. The results were limited to using its instrument and the sample who participated in the study. The study only focused on two skills, speaking and writing. Therefore, the generalization of the results is limited to the variations in these skills and not all English language skills.

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