

معوقات اكتساب اللغة الإنجليزية لدى الموظفين الأكبر سنًا في حكومة إقليم كردستان

محمد قادر محمد

جامعة السليمانية التقنية، معهد علوم الحاسوب
السليمانية، إقليم كردستان، العراق

البريد الإلكتروني Email : m.mohammedqadir12@gmail.com
mohammed.q.mohammed@spu.edu.iq

الكلمات المفتاحية: اكتساب اللغة الإنجليزية، المتعلمون الأكبر سنًا، الموظفون الأكبر، حكومة إقليم كردستان، الدعم المؤسسي، التعليم في مكان العمل، العوائق المعرفية المرتبطة بالعمر.

كيفية اقتباس البحث

محمد ، محمد قادر، معوقات اكتساب اللغة الإنجليزية لدى الموظفين الأكبر سنًا في حكومة إقليم كردستان ،مجلة مركز بابل للدراسات الانسانية، آب 2026،المجلد:16،العدد:8.

هذا البحث من نوع الوصول المفتوح مرخص بموجب رخصة المشاع الإبداعي لحقوق التأليف والنشر (Creative Commons Attribution) تتيح فقط للآخرين تحميل البحث ومشاركته مع الآخرين بشرط نسب العمل الأصلي للمؤلف، ودون القيام بأي تعديل أو استخدامه لأغراض تجارية.

Registered مسجلة في
ROAD

Indexed مفهارة في
IASJ



Barriers in English Language Acquisition Among Older Kurdish Employees in the Kurdistan Regional Government

Mohammed Qadir Mohammed

Sulaimani Polytechnic University (SPU), Computer Science Institute,
Sulaimaniyah, Kurdistan Region, Iraq

Keywords : English language acquisition, older learners, Kurdish employees, KRG, institutional support, workplace education, age-related cognitive barriers.

How To Cite This Article

Mohammed, Mohammed Qadir, Barriers in English Language Acquisition Among Older Kurdish Employees in the Kurdistan Regional Government, Journal Of Babylon Center For Humanities Studies, Auguts 2026, Volume:16, Issue8.



This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license
(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

المخلص

تناقش هذه الدراسة المشكلات التي يواجهها الموظفون الأكبر سنًا المنتمون إلى المجموعة العرقية الكردية في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية ضمن إطار القطاع العام. وتعتمد الدراسة الحالية على وجه التحديد على منهج الاستبانة لفحص أثر العوامل المرتبطة بالعمر، وبيئة العمل، والتعليم على تطوير المهارات اللغوية لدى عينة مختارة مكونة من 148 موظفًا تتراوح أعمارهم بين 42 و 60 عامًا، ويعملون في أقسام مختلفة بحكومة إقليم كردستان. وتُظهر نتائج الدراسة الحالية أن الموظفين الأكبر سنًا يواجهون صعوبات أكبر بكثير مقارنة بزملائهم الأصغر سنًا، وذلك بسبب التأثير السلبي للتقدم في السن على الذاكرة، فضلًا عن نقص فرص التدريب المتاحة على المستوى المؤسسي. وعلى النقيض من ذلك، فإن الحصول على تعليم عالٍ يساعد في التغلب على هذه العوائق، كما تبين وجود ارتباط وثيق بين متطلبات اللغة الإنجليزية ودوافع



الموظفين ($P < 0.001$, $r_s = 0.72$). كحلول لهذه المشكلات، تقترح هذه الدراسة استراتيجيات تشمل استثمارات مؤسسية في برامج تدريبية ملائمة، وفترات دراسية، وتقديم تعليم متميز. وبهذه الطريقة، ستمكن حكومة إقليم كردستان من تعزيز مستوى كفاءة اللغة الإنجليزية لدى قوتها العاملة المتقدمة في السن، وبالتالي التغلب على العوائق المعرفية وبناء قطاع عام عالي الكفاءة. يتفاقم هذا التحدي المعرفي بسبب وجود أوجه قصور في النظام التعليمي بالمنطقة. فعلى سبيل المثال، لطالما اتسم تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في كردستان بعدم الانتظام وضعف الدعم، ويتجلى ذلك في تدني مستوى التحصيل الدراسي لطلاب المدارس الحكومية، حيث يرسب نحو ثلثهم في اختبارات اللغة الإنجليزية. وقد تم إعداد كبار المسؤولين الحكوميين في حكومة إقليم كردستان في حقبة اتسمت بنقص المعلمين المؤهلين، ومحدودية الموارد التعليمية، ومناهج دراسية لم تكن ملائمة لاحتياجات الطلاب الأكراد التعليمية. وبالتالي، يلتحق هؤلاء الموظفون الأكبر سناً بالخدمة العامة الحديثة وهم يفتقرون إلى إتقان اللغة الإنجليزية مقارنةً بالشباب.

Abstract

In this investigation, the problems experienced by older employees belonging to the Kurdish ethnic group in learning the English language within the framework of the public sector are discussed. In particular, the current research employs a questionnaire survey to examine the effect of age-related factors, the environment of the working place, and education on the development of language skills among a selected sample of 148 employees ranging in age from 42 to 60 years old employed in different divisions of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The results of the current study demonstrate that older employees encounter much more difficulties than their younger colleagues because of the negative impact of aging on memory and the lack of training opportunities provided at an organizational level. On the contrary, having higher education facilitates overcoming these barriers, and there is a significant correlation between the requirements in terms of English and employees' motivation ($r_s = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$). As solutions to these problems, this research suggests the following strategies involving institution-based investments in adequate training programs, study periods, and differentiated instruction. In this way, the KRG will be able to enhance the level of English proficiency among its aging workforce and thereby overcome cognitive barriers and create a highly competent public sector.



1. Introduction

In the ever-growing globalized world that is now more connected than ever before, English has become the leading language of international communication, being spoken by 1.5 billion people across the globe. English is a key language used in international business, scientific research, diplomacy, and technological progress [1]. In the context of government bodies, competence in English has become not just an additional skill but the top priority; English becomes the key tool which allows government representatives to take part in international politics, enter into international negotiations and conduct cross-border cooperation. As a result, English has become essential for academic and technological endeavors as well as international communications [2]. English became established in many places as a result of the British Empire's colonization of different geographical areas [3], and after World War II, the United States became a superpower [4]. Motivated by geopolitical transformations and driven by the digital revolution, English language proficiency becomes the gate to innovative information.

In light of the fact that these dynamics have become realities in the international arena, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) of Iraq has been taking deliberate measures to increase its international footprint and improve its diplomatic relations. These diplomatic endeavors are facilitated by the efforts of the Kurdistan Regional Government's Department of Foreign Relations (DFR), which seeks to increase the international prestige of the region, form strategic partnerships, and gain foreign investments. Currently, the KRG has opened representative offices in 14 countries, while 31 foreign diplomatic missions are stationed in Erbil, the capital of the KRG [5]. Despite this impressive growth in regional and international economic and security diplomacy, there is an evident problem with the internal capacity of the KRG that needs to be addressed [6].

At present, many civil servants employed by the KRG fall within the age range of 42-60 years and provide a lot of institutional memory but lack proficiency in the English language. The workers find themselves in a tough situation where they need to learn a complicated second language at their older age while carrying out numerous work and home duties. Literature on second language acquisition shows that learning a new language for adults becomes especially difficult owing to some age-specific features, like decrease in the size of the hippocampus and associative memory. Despite the scientific evidence which proves that



learning a foreign language by adults remains feasible, it still demands much greater efforts and appropriate environment.

This cognitive challenge is further compounded by the existence of deficiencies within the educational system of the region. For one, the teaching of the English language in Kurdistan has traditionally been inconsistent and poorly supported, as evidenced by poor academic performance of public-school students, with around a third failing English tests. The education of senior public officials of the KRG was done in an era marked by a lack of well-trained teachers, limited educational resources, and curriculum that has not been attuned to the learning needs of Kurdish students. Thus, these older employees join the modern public service with little English proficiency as compared to the young.

As a result, a deep problematic gap has been created in KRG whereby the employees aged between 42 and 60 years, who play very significant roles in the different ministries, have major problems with the English language, which acts as a major bottleneck for the process of governance. They cannot be able to communicate with their foreign counterparts, use best practices around the world or participate in international meetings and special trainings due to the complex obstacles that hinder them from achieving what is expected of them.

At present, however, there is a crucial lack of empirical evidence regarding this highly specific junction where age, language learning, and public administration in the Kurdistan Region converge. Absent a full-fledged, empirically grounded knowledge about the interaction between the individual-specific cognitive barriers, existing education and the motivating environment at the place of work, the KRG would not be able to develop an effective intervention program. The existence of such a research gap will likely result in extremely poor use of senior human capital and hinder the KRG's capability to conduct international diplomatic negotiations. By contrast, systematic identification and removal of these particular barriers will enable the KRG to maximize its administrative system and international communication skills.

research questions are intended to be answered:

1. What are the principal challenges facing older Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) staff members, making them less capable of acquiring English language skills?
2. How do the age-related aspects influence the problems faced by the older Kurdish employees in terms of English language learning?



3. To what extent does the institutional support affect the learning process of the older Kurdish employees within the framework of their work environment?

4. To what extent does the need to know English on a professional level correlate with English language motivation of the older Kurdish employees?

The principal purpose of the current research lies in the comprehensive examination of the multiple obstacles to the English language learning experienced by the older Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) staff members aged 42-60 years old, analysis of the interactions between the relevant individual age-related cognitive variables, formative educational background and professional challenges. Moreover, the researcher plans to explore the effects of the institutional support systems or lack thereof on language acquisition in the work environment and the correlation between the professional requirements related to English language skills and motivational levels of the employees.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the present literature on English language learning among the elderly, their characteristics based on age factors, facilities in the institution, their educational level, and the impact of these characteristics on the context of Kurdish education. The literature not only serves as the theoretical background but also presents practical information regarding the difficulties experienced by the elderly Kurdish government officials in achieving proficiency in English language. In KRG, elderly government officials, who entered into public services under politically unstable and educationally challenging conditions, had their own set of problems regarding English language proficiency.

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks of Second Language Acquisition

2.1.1 The Critical Period Hypothesis and Age Effects

The Critical Period Hypothesis, initially proposed by Penfield & Lenneberg, implies that the critical period for acquiring the language skills ends when the brain begins losing its plasticity after the first decade of life [10]. Although younger individuals usually have no difficulties achieving near-native proficiency in second languages, there is evidence indicating that some older learners also have the capacity to acquire a high level of proficiency [11].

Recent empirical studies indicate that acquiring an extra language as an adult is more difficult and requires much more effort than previous language acquisition. The Unified Competition Model postulates that age differences in the achievements of second language acquisition depend on the cognitive constraints and facilitative conditions, which vary

throughout the course of life [12]. In case of older employees of the Kurdistan Regional Government having formal education in Kurdish and Arabic languages, cognitive constraints associated with the later stage of language acquisition are additionally complicated by the lack of English language exposure at the initial stages of education.

2.1.2 Cognitive Aging and Language Learning

The impact of age-related changes on the capacity to learn a language is immense. The fact that age-related shrinkage of the hippocampus and associative memory impairments negatively influence second language acquisition in older people [8] is quite clear. The standardized effect size of age-related reduction in recall of episodic memory is 0.89; the effect size of age-related reduction in episodic memory recognition is 0.54 [13]. Still, modern research indicates that although the absolute level of second language acquisition becomes challenging for an adult, second language learning at a functional level is quite possible in adults [7]. When talking about the KRG employees who are from 40 to 60 years old, the mentioned age-related changes become even more obvious as the challenge of learning English in addition to working and family life.

2.2 Age-Related Barriers and Advantages

2.2.1 Cognitive

Research indicates that the influence of age is still significant among elderly people, as it has been found that people who have lower age of acquisition and less exposure to the language acquire more proficiency levels [11]. It has been found through the neurocognitive research that before learning, the size of the hippocampus and associative memory play a role in predicting the vocabulary proficiency level after the completion of training [14]. As for the elderly generation of KRG workers, where English courses have not been taught from the 1970s to 1990s, the existence of two issues, namely age-related cognitive limits and English knowledge at optimal age, becomes an issue.

2.2.2 Advantages of Despite the challenges Despite this fact, research shows that older students are better at learning than their younger counterparts, with the only exception being pronunciation, and adults have better organizing skills and are more motivated and responsible, making the whole process of learning easier [15]. The experienced officials from the government of the KRG will be able to cope with the problems that arise because of their age owing to their experience and organizational abilities, especially when the English lessons concern their profession.



2.3 Institutional Support and Workplace Language Learning

Institutional support is very important when it comes to the influence on the process of English language learning by adults. As was found out empirically, providing the English training in the workplace shows to the employees speaking non-native English their value and importance in the eyes of the organization and this attitude correlates with higher employee retention rates, higher productivity and sustainable development of organizations [16]. Nevertheless, the management and employees often have illusions regarding the time necessary to become proficient in English and this leads to the insufficient length of the program [17]. These training programs are very integrated into the language and profession-related training because vocation schools provide the opportunity of developing certain skills under less stressful conditions than the workplace [18]. The adult education programs should continue their development through Integrated Education and Training with the emphasis on multilingual students [19]. In the context of the Kurdistan Regional Government of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the English language training at workplaces reflects the commitment of the organization to the development of its employees due to increasing need of English language proficiency at governmental level.

2.4 Educational Background and Language Learning

The acquisition of higher education ensures that one attains skills in cognition that he or she will use in the process of learning like metacognition skills, studying skills, and confidence in learning process. Those individuals with higher education are literate and skilled in dealing with complicated information, and this leads to more learning of the language even by older individuals, who may face problems related to their aging. In the case of older workers at the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), there is a high level of diversity in terms of education. Some of them have acquired higher education through university education under the previous Iraqi educational system, whereas others have no much higher education exposure due to political instability.

2.5 The Kurdish Context

2.5.1 English Education Challenges in the KRG

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the results demonstrate that although much attention has been paid to education since 1991, only a few graduates of public secondary schools have the necessary level of English skills for effective communication. In terms of national examinations, it

can be mentioned that about a third of all students perform poorly in English tests (their performance does not reach the required 50% pass rate), and only less than 5% of the students manage to receive the score above the level of 85% [9]. In terms of the literature, it can be mentioned that the poor teaching of English skills among students is caused by insufficient teaching materials, lack of qualified teachers of English, and curriculum not matching the needs of Kurdish students [9]. The results also reveal that older employees of KRG, having completed their secondary education decades ago, lacked more than basic English skills when entering the labor market.

2.5.2 Barriers for Kurdish Learners

Several psychological and instructional problems associated with learning the English language are reported by research, including low self-esteem, poor vocabulary, reluctance to engage in communication, hesitance during speaking, fear of being wrong, inadequate practice of the English language, and low instructor motivation [20]. In a university environment, Kurdish students have challenges in speaking English and consider oral communication the most challenging aspect of language learning [21]. Psychological and instructional barriers that older KRG staff face are even more complex because they need not only to master the English language but also meet their professional demands.

2.5.3 Systemic Issues

Nevertheless, there are still some systemic problems that exist, with the main problem being that university lecturers have not been trained properly in how to teach, and problems that relate to classroom environment, teaching aids, and teaching methods, where theoretical education is emphasized using outdated textbooks [22]. Moreover, one can observe the effects of language policy on learning English, where Arabic language in the Kurdish region of Iraq was not revived following the autonomy of this region from Saddam Hussein regime in 1991. At present, Arabic language is taught at schools as a second language, where the emphasis of teaching is on grammar and neglects communicative competence, and also a significant number of students is interested in learning English [23]. Systemic problems that might appear in adult education of senior KRG officials, who would like to learn English, can be seen through previously experienced educational problems.

2.6 Motivation and Workplace Language Needs

Instrumental motivation, or the need to learn the language in order to achieve career objectives, is especially relevant to the selected audience. The moment when the direct relationship between the language skills and work becomes apparent, the results for motivation and involvement



become significantly better. Among the older staff of KRG government, the instrumental motivation is very common because of the fact that the English language skills have become the key factor for career success and participation in capacity building programs.

2.7 Synthesis, Conceptual Framework, and Gaps in the Literature

A review of the current literature shows a multi-dimensional gap pertaining to adult language learners in developing administrative structures. Second language acquisition (SLA) literature overwhelmingly focuses on children and young adults, rendering the age group 42-60 highly understudied in regard to institutional support and past education experience in relation to cognitive aging in localized governmental administrations such as the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). In order to bridge the gap and develop appropriate policies, this study will propose an integrated theoretical framework that considers both individual cognitive factors, such as inherent memory deterioration and previous formative education experiences, and system-related environmental conditions, which include opportunities for training provided by institutions and language requirements at work. The framework rests on the assumption that difficulties in language learning are the result of complicated interactions between individual learner traits and institutional environment. In short, while aging does provide certain neurocognitive and mnemonic barriers to effective language learning, the literature shows that these barriers are not insurmountable and can be substantially addressed through appropriate pedagogical approaches, sufficient learning time and adequate institutional support. In the case of the KRG, adult education programs unrelated to grammar-translation approach become a matter of administrative priority.

2.8 Related Studies

To contextualize this research within the broader academic landscape, several empirical studies highlight the intersection of adult language acquisition, cognitive aging, and institutional workplace education:

•Cognitive Aging and SLA (Service & Craik, 1993; Birdsong, 2006):

There are well-known studies in cognitive gerontology where it was proven that working memory and associative memory capacity reduce with age, which directly affects the ability to learn new words among seniors. Nevertheless, these scientists have proven that senior learners often surpass their younger peers in terms of syntax and meta-language skills by using sophisticated learning techniques.

•**Workplace Language Training and Institutional Support (Berti, 2011; Long, 2015):** Studies involving the teaching of English in the public and corporate sectors reveal that there is a direct relationship between organizational support and the success of the program. It is evident from research that whenever employees view the acquisition of the new language as a mandatory part of their professional training instead of something extracurricular, then the results are quite positive.

•**The Kurdish EFL Context and Systemic Barriers (Rahman, 2019; Verner, 2021):** A number of recent studies conducted in the local area regarding the teaching of English as a foreign language in the Kurdistan region of Iraq have found major deficiencies within the system. These studies support the view that the past emphasis on grammar translation and lack of competent communicative language teachers in public schools towards the end of the last century have led to a generation of Kurdish professionals who are highly anxious communicatively.

3.METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This research work employs a quantitative research approach and a cross-sectional survey design to examine the various dimensions of barriers to learning the English language among senior Kurdish civil servants working in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The cross-sectional design was chosen for this research since it enables the examination of various interconnected factors such as aging effects, institutional setup, and education background at one particular moment in time.

3.2 Participants

The target population of this research is made up of senior Kurdish public servants aged between 42 years and 60 years working in the KRG administration. These individuals were selected deliberately for this research since they underwent their formative education under periods of high political tension in the region that brought about inconsistent teaching of the English language.

A sample size of 148 individuals was used in this study and these individuals were selected using stratified random sampling technique. Stratification was done based on four urban areas in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq including Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Duhok, and Halabja. The respondents were further selected from seven different KRG ministries, including administration, public services, security, and education:



Barriers in English Language Acquisition Among Older Kurdish Employees in the Kurdistan Regional Government

- Ministry of Finance and Economy
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs
- Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
- Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism

The stratification matrix covered equal distribution across specific age categories (42-45, 46-50, 51-55, and 56-60 years old), different ministries, cities, and educational backgrounds (from secondary school certificate holders up to doctoral degree recipients). The number of 148 respondents is larger than the minimal statistical requirement of 30 cases per variable needed for conducting both bivariate correlation and multiple regression analyses.

No.	Ministries	Age clusters				employees
		42-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	
1.	Finance and Economy	6	6	5	5	22
2.	Education	7	6	6	6	25
3.	Health	6	5	5	5	21
4.	Interior	6	6	6	6	24
5.	Peshmerga Affairs	5	5	5	5	20
6.	Higher Education and Scientific Research	5	5	4	4	18
7.	Municipalities and Tourism	4	4	5	5	18
Total		39	37	36	36	148

3.3 Research Instruments

•The first data gathering instrument created for use in this research is a three-part structured survey aimed at analyzing personal and systemic barriers to language learning:

•**Section A: Demographic Profiling:** Demographics: Gathers basic demographic data, such as age range, gender, city of employment, church affiliation, education level, and experience in civil service.

•**Section B: Barrier Metric Assessment:** Barrier Measurement Survey: Consists of 8 thematic questions rated on a 5-point Likert scale, which includes:

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree



Questions are specifically designed to address the issues of age-related cognitive barriers (Q1, Q2), institutional support availability (Q3, Q4), effects of educational background (Q5), and the impact of language requirements in the workplace as compared to motivation (Q6, Q7), followed by a comprehensive barrier index (Q8).

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

•Data collection took place through a well-designed, multi-staged administrative process in order to ensure data validity:
[

•**Administrative Clearance:** Appropriate clearance and ethical approval was granted from the directors of the selected ministries before the implementation of the study in the field:

1. **Field Implementation:** Questionnaire was administered through physical distribution during work hours with full logistical support of the human resources department in each of the selected ministries in order to achieve adherence to the stratified sampling criteria.

2. **Informed Consent Administration:** Prior to the administration of the instrument, the participants were provided with full verbal and written information concerning the scientific goals of the study and that participation is strictly voluntary with full rights to withdrawal without any penalties from the administration.

3. **Collection Method:** Questionnaire was collected immediately after its completion. This manual method resulted in 100% participation rate whereby 148 completed instruments were collected successfully.

3.5 Content Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure academic validity of the research process, the following procedures were implemented:

•**Content Validity:** Items of the questionnaire were assessed by the expert panel of applied linguistics and adult education experts. This review confirmed that items measure the concepts accurately.





•**Reliability Analysis:** Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the Likert scale. Although 0.70 alpha value is considered the minimum requirement to be deemed reliable academically, the research tool used in this study showed high internal consistency having obtained the alpha value of 0.84.

3.6 Data Analysis

•Analysis of the quantitative data was done through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.6.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics provided an overview of the characteristics of the cohort. Demographic data, categorical variables (age, gender, city, ministry, level of education, and length of experience), were expressed in terms of frequency and percentages. The average values (M) and the standard deviations (SD) of the responses on the Likert scale were used to determine the level of significance of specific barriers.

3.6.2 Inferential Statistics

To investigate the research questions and explore relationships between variables, two primary inferential tests were applied:

1.**Chi-Square Test of Independence:** Employed to assess the existence of associations between categorical variables (age groups and educational levels) and certain language acquisition difficulties. Significance value alpha was 0.05, with the assumption of independent data points and a minimum frequency of 5 for each cell.

2.**Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient (rs):** Applied to determine the magnitude and direction of association between ordinal variables based on the Likert scale. Such an assessment was performed to determine the association between institutional support systems (Q3 and Q4) and total learning barriers (Q8) and the correlation between the language requirements at work (Q6) and employee motivation (Q7). Magnitude of the coefficient of correlation was interpreted according to the following guidelines:

- oPlus or Minus 0.19: Very weak
- oPlus or Minus 0.20 to 0.39: Weak
- oPlus or Minus 0.40 to 0.59: Moderate
- oPlus or Minus 0.60 to 0.79: Strong

oPlus or Minus 0.80 to 1.00: Very Strong

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The research followed ethical practices as per international norms for research ethics. Informed written consent from all the subjects was acquired before data collection. In order to ensure professional confidentiality of the civil servants, absolute anonymity was preserved; neither signatures nor personal identifiers or departmental codes were gathered.

All the raw data files were kept strictly confidential, analyzed solely for the purpose of academic research and were saved on password-encrypted local computers that were going to be erased permanently after completion of the research. This research is guided by the ethic of beneficence and thus directly benefits the aging population of the Kurdistan Region through evidence-based interventions.

3.8 Methodological Limitations

Several inherent methodological limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings:

1. **Effect of Self-Assessment:** The data depend on subjective assessment by the respondents concerning cognitive and linguistic issues which may be different from objective measures of the same parameters.
2. **Time Constraints for Cross-Sections:** Being cross-sectional in nature, the study can only show correlations between variables at hand and not any causative trends.
3. **Geographical and Organizational Limitations:** Although the sample covered 7 ministries in four major cities of the KRG, the conclusions may not reflect the work reality of all senior civil servants working in the other smaller municipalities and/or outside organizations of the KRG.
4. **Social Desirability Bias:** It is possible that the respondents may have systematically underestimated their linguistic problems or exaggerated their motivational level due to the desire to be seen well at the workplace.
5. **Semantic Divergence in Language Translations:** Despite the translation of the survey into the local language, there might have been semantic divergences in some questions depending on the regional sub-dialects of the language used.



4. RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter concludes its findings based on analysis of data that were carried out through responses gathered from 148 Kurdish senior employees within the age bracket of 42-60 working in the seven ministries of Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The findings of this chapter have been classified into three categories: (a) Demographic descriptive statistics (b) Barrier response descriptive statistics (c) Inferential statistics.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 148)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Group	42-45 years	42	28.4%
	46-50 years	45	30.4%
	51-55 years	38	25.7%
	56-60 years	23	15.5%
Gender	Male	96	64.9%
	Female	52	35.1%
City	Erbil	52	35.1%
	Sulaimaniyah	48	32.4%
	Duhok	32	21.6%
	Halabja	16	10.8%
Education Level	High School	18	12.2%
	Diploma	35	23.6%
	Bachelor's	68	45.9%
	Master's	23	15.5%



Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	PhD	4	2.7%

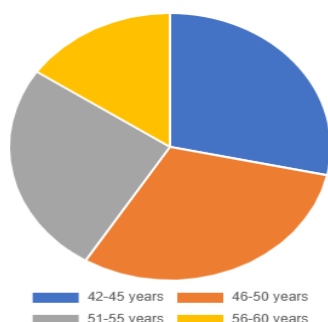


Figure 4.1: Age Distribution of Participants

4.1.1 Demographic Narrative

According to the data given in Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1, the largest group is that of individuals aged 46-50 (30.4%, n = 45) and 42-45 (28.4%, n = 42), followed by those who are 51-55 (25.7%, n = 38) and 56-60 (15.5%, n = 23). There are more males (64.9%, n = 96) than females (35.1%, n = 52) in the sample

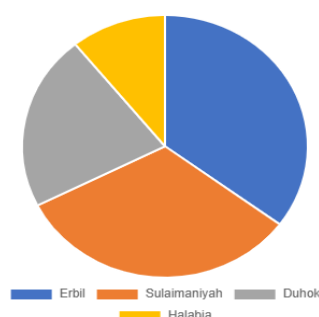


Figure 4.2: Distribution of Participants by City

In terms of geographical distribution (see Figure 4.2), Erbil was the most represented area with 35.1% (n=52), while Sulaimaniyah came second at 32.4% (n=48), followed by Duhok 21.6%



Barriers in English Language Acquisition Among Older Kurdish Employees in the Kurdistan Regional Government

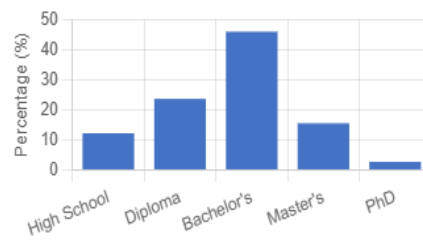


Figure 4.3: Educational Level Distribution

With respect to the level of education (Figure 4.3), Bachelor's degrees were most common among the subjects (45.9%, $n=68$), with Diploma (23.6%, $n=35$), Master's degree (15.5%, $n=23$), high school education (12.2%, $n=18$), and Doctoral degree (2.7%, $n=4$) being the other groups represented.

4.1.2 Ministry Distribution

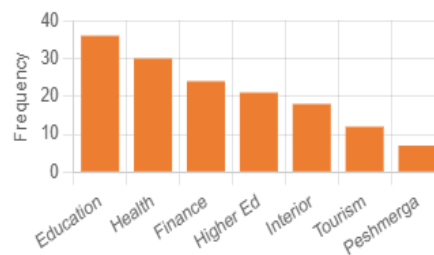


Figure 4.4: Distribution of Participants by Ministry

The respondents were spread among the seven ministries (Fig. 4.4), ensuring that there is an equal representation from each ministry: Ministry of Education (24.3%, $n = 36$), Ministry of Health (20.3%, $n = 30$), Ministry of Finance and Economy (16.2%, $n = 24$), Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (14.2%, $n = 21$), Ministry of Interior (12.2%, $n = 18$), Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism (8.1%, $n = 12$), and Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs (4.7%, $n = 7$).



4.2 Descriptive Analysis of Barrier Responses

4.2.1 Reliability Analysis

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was measured by calculating Cronbach's alpha. The reliability value was $\alpha = 0.84$. It shows high internal consistency and proves that the items in the questionnaire are reliable to measure the construct of obstacles to acquiring English.

4.2.2 Overall Barrier Assessment

Table 4.2 provides information on the means and standard deviations of the eight items assessing language learning barriers.

Table 4.2: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Barrier Questions

Question	Mean	SD	Ranking
Q1: Age makes learning more difficult	3.82	1.12	2
Q2: Challenging to memorize due to age	3.91	1.08	1
Q3: Adequate training programs provided	2.34	1.15	8
Q4: Sufficient time for learning	2.47	1.21	7
Q5: Educational background prepared me well	2.89	1.18	5
Q6: Job requires English regularly	3.45	1.24	4
Q7: Work needs motivate improvement	3.67	1.16	3
Q8: Face significant barriers overall	3.76	1.09	-

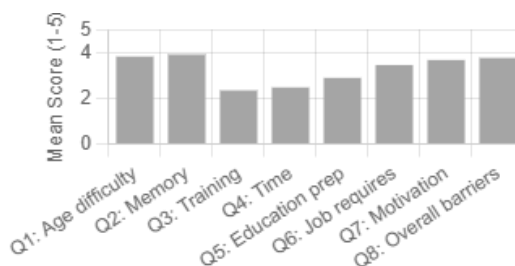


Figure 4.5: Mean Scores for All Barrier Questions

From the information given in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.5, it is clear that the major barriers are those relating to memory problems due to aging (Mean = 3.91, SD = 1.08), which come very close to the second major barrier, which is the learning problem related to age (Mean = 3.82, SD = 1.12). Generally, the older employees have major challenges in learning English (Mean = 3.76, SD = 1.09).

On the other hand, there is low mean score for the availability of organizational support. Those categories scoring the lowest are the provision of proper training programs (Mean = 2.34, SD = 1.15) and having enough time to learn (Mean = 2.47, SD = 1.21). This indicates clearly that lack of organizational facilitation constitutes a significant barrier.

4.2.3 Frequency Distribution of Responses

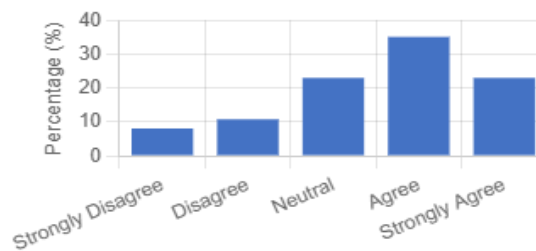


Figure 4.6: Response Distribution for Q1 (Age makes learning more difficult)

According to Figure 4.6, a study of responses shows that 58.1% of respondents (n = 86) agreed or strongly agreed that age poses an impediment to learning English, whereas only 18.9% (n = 28) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

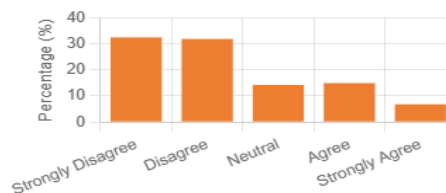


Figure 4.7: Response Distribution for Q3 (Adequate training programs provided)

Concerning the institutional level, 64.2% of the sample (n=95) disagreed or strongly disagreed about whether their ministry had enough training

programs, while only 21.6% (n=32) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

The analysis of the responses to each item separately demonstrates the following:

•**Age Factors (Q1 / Figure 4.6):** 58.1% of respondents (n = 86) agreed or strongly agreed that age is an element which increases the difficulty of learning English language, whereas 18.9% (n = 28) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

•**Institutional Support (Q3 / Figure 4.7):** 64.2% of respondents (n = 95) were disagree or strongly disagree on this question about whether their ministry provides enough training programs, but only 21.6% (n = 32) agreed or strongly agreed.

•4.3 Inferential Statistics Analysis

4.3.1 Analysis of Age-Related Factors (Answering RQ1 & RQ2)

In order to find out the connection between age and the difficulties related to language learning, the Chi-Square Test of Independence was conducted. It showed that there is a significant connection between employee age categories and barriers of English language learning (Chi-Square = 24.67, df = 9, p = 0.003).

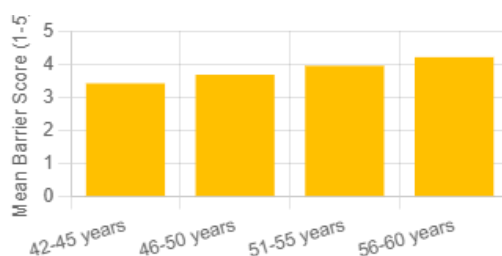


Figure 4.8: Mean Barrier Scores by Age Group





As illustrated in Figure 4.8, barrier scores on average show a linear rise through the age groups: increasing from an average score of 3.42 for the youngest group (42–45 years) to an average score of 4.21 for the oldest group (56–60 years). These results show that higher age is a significant predictor of perceived barriers related to language learning.

4.3.2 Analysis of Institutional Support (Answering RQ3)

To examine the relationship between institutional support (Q3 + Q4) and language learning barriers (Q8), a Spearman's rank-order correlation analysis was done.

The results showed that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between lack of institutional support and increased learning barriers ($r_s = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$, $N = 148$). That is, the lower the provisions of the institution (e.g., training programs and learning time), the higher the perception of barriers to English language acquisition among KRG employees.

4.3.3 Analysis of Educational Background Factors

Furthermore, Spearman's correlation revealed a significant negative relationship between the two variables ($r_s = -0.38$, $p < 0.001$, $N = 148$). As illustrated in Figure 4.9, overall learning barrier scores were highest among employees who only completed high school and lowest among those holding doctoral degrees, indicating that higher prior educational attainment acts as a mitigating factor against modern language acquisition challenges.

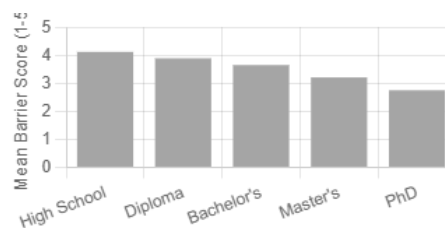


Figure 4.9: Mean Barrier Scores by Education Level

In addition, the result of Spearman's correlation test indicates that there is a significant negative correlation between the two variables ($r_s = -0.38$, $p < 0.001$, $N = 148$). As can be seen in Figure 4.9, total learning barrier scores of the participants have been found to be the highest for the

employees having high school education and lowest for those having a doctorate degree.

4.3.4 Workplace Demands and Learner Motivation (Answering RQ4)
Another type of analysis was done based on Spearman's correlation to determine the association between active linguistic needs at work (Q6) and motivation of employees (Q7).

As a result of this test, a positive and significant correlation between professional needs and learner motivation was found ($r_s = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$, $N = 148$). In such a way, this question is answered directly as employees who work in an environment where English is used show greater internal motivation.

4.4 Summary of Findings

The empirical data obtained from 148 Kurdish workers aged over 55 in the seven KRG ministries yield definite answers to the main research questions:

- **Cognitive and Age-Associated Limitations:** Age represents an obvious obstacle for the language acquisition process. Workers aged from 56 to 60 have more problems compared to their younger colleagues. The biggest obstacles are associated with the decline of memory with age (Mean = 3.91) and other cognitive processes typical of this age period (Mean = 3.82).
- **Systemic and Organizational Obstacles:** Lack of systems represents a significant factor leading to the difficulties in acquiring new knowledge. The biggest problem in the opinion of a vast majority of respondents is associated with the insufficient number of training sessions provided by the ministries (Mean = 2.34), and insufficient time allocated for studying within working hours (Mean = 2.47).
- **Educational Compensators:** Previous educational experiences represent a valuable compensating factor. The more education levels the civil servant has, the fewer obstacles he/she will face when trying to learn a new language.
- **Motivating Environmental Factors:** A positive correlation ($r_s = 0.72$) between the necessity of using English at work and participants' motivation.

5. Discussion

Results from this research, which is based on the analysis of 148 senior level Kurdish employees ranging in age from 42 to 60 years in seven different government ministries within the KRG, reveal three major





Barriers in English Language Acquisition Among Older Kurdish Employees in the Kurdistan Regional Government

issues that affect learning English: institutional support, educational background, and aging.

Looking at the age-specific barriers, the results indicate that the older employees have considerably higher barriers than the younger employees ($\chi^2 = 24.67$, $p = 0.003$). The average level of the barriers starts growing gradually from $M = 3.42$ for employees aged 42–45 years up to $M = 4.21$ for 56–60 year old workers, where difficulty in remembering due to aging is the most frequent barrier ($M = 3.91$). The findings correspond to the existing theories related to cognitive aging and Critical Period Hypothesis according to which there is a decrease in working memory and processing speed. However, it should be noted that while the limitations caused by age can be noticed, the literature underlines the fact that age is not the reason why learning process cannot be carried out effectively; older people are fully able to achieve the level of functional competence while using pedagogic approaches that are appropriate for their age, analytic skills, and professional experience.

There is also an evident strong positive association between learning barriers and lack of institutional support ($r_s = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$). Low ratings regarding institutional support have been found mostly among perceptions of training programs' adequacy ($M = 2.34$) and learning time sufficiency ($M = 2.47$), where 64.2% of the respondents indicated that there is not enough training. This highlights a crucial shortcoming in the human resource development system of the KRG, which does not take into account the needs of older employees even though they clearly require the ability to speak English in order to operate globally. Workplace education literature suggests that adult learners need age-specific training, adequate time allocation, and linkage between language proficiency and work performance. Given that the institutional support factor is totally under the organization's control unlike age-related variables, it becomes an extremely leverageable way of overcoming barriers.

Moreover, educational background is the factor that determines how these difficulties are perceived. The higher level of educational attainment contributes to transferable cognitive skills, effective learning strategies and metalinguistic awareness that together act as barriers to changes in cognition due to aging. People who possess more substantial educational background demonstrate higher academic self-efficacy and metacognitive development. Therefore, policies in regard to language acquisition should



be individualized by considering educational background and provide people who had less formal education with necessary help in terms of learning strategy development and building up confidence.

Moreover, motivation and the necessity for certain job is strongly associated ($r_s = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the effect of instrumental motivation. People have strong motivation to acquire language skills because language skills are necessary for their professional performance. At the same time, the mentioned process can lead to the development of workplace anxiety when the professional demand exceeds current skills of employees. The mentioned problem causes high stress levels, especially among older workers; therefore, the mentioned intervention should involve not only linguistic training but also anxiety management.

The combination of these aspects creates an intricate and multi-multiplying relationship whereby the cognitive changes due to aging, poor institutional environment, and different educational experiences multiply each other. The most extreme handicaps are found at the intersection of the older age, lack of institutional support, and poorer formal education. On the other hand, changing the structure of the environment is the means through which these personal limitations can be overcome. Although the study of cognitive aging may have mainly concentrated on irreversible losses, this evidence has contributed to the theory of second language acquisition.

As far as these observations go, some actions need to be implemented in various administrative structures. On the part of the policy makers, the first step would be to treat the English language courses as a necessary element of HR development and provide financial resources for their financing. In order to address issues related to the timetable, companies have to ensure that there are special learning hours during normal working days, three to five hours a week. As for curriculum design, it should follow the basic principles of adult education with regard to instructional pace, review periods and stress management practices. There needs to be differentiation between training groups based on education level, as well as some form of rewards.

In terms of designing training programs, the emphasis has to shift to the use of task-based approaches, involving real-life ministerial resources and communication situations. The pace of the teaching has to be adjusted for adult learners, using multimodal teaching, consolidation periods, and





Barriers in English Language Acquisition Among Older Kurdish Employees in the Kurdistan Regional Government



Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 8



appropriate formative feedback. In addition, the technology has to be integrated into training programs appropriately, offering explicit scaffolding to address any lack of digital literacy among adults, but gradually increasing their self-confidence through the achievement of short-term goals. Finally, the acquisition of English has to be seen as an ongoing development process.

As far as administrators of the ministry are concerned, they have to conduct systematic evaluations to determine precisely what linguistic skills are necessary for different administrative positions. They have to strive to create linguistically-friendly work environment to provide practical experience in using the language. Moreover, they have to establish peer learning groups within the organization to allow staff members to practice English in a stress-free environment. Finally, the managers have to carefully follow the progress of the training programs, changing the support structures accordingly, and integrating the improvement of linguistic competence into annual performance reviews.

However, while these findings clearly point to the way forward, there are some limitations of methodology that need to be considered. The study makes use of subjective information as opposed to objective information to measure the level of language proficiency, which brings about response bias. The cross-sectional design of the data limits any definitive cause-and-effect statement since experimental research is necessary to prove cause-and-effect relationships. The focus of this paper is limited to only seven ministries from four cities, and the entire population of the higher ranks of the KRG's administration cannot be covered.

These boundaries provide opportunities for many important avenues of future inquiry. For one, future studies must attempt experimental approaches, such as conducting randomized controlled trials, in order to evaluate the performance of age-specific language training courses relative to regular instruction techniques. Another essential avenue is the development of longitudinal courses to follow older civil servants during multiyear language training processes. Comparisons can be conducted beyond the geographic boundaries of the KRG by comparing the barriers in the KRG region with central Iraq or even the private versus public sectors. In addition, qualitative deep dives with focus groups and semi-structured interviews as well as neuro-cognitive experiments to identify the plasticity of the older adult brain in order to develop pedagogic structures are both essential. Finally, organization-based impact analysis

and cost-benefit formulations must be conducted in order to determine ROI relative to ministry processing capacity and cross-border diplomacy.

The research findings reveal that age-based cognitive changes, lack of institutional support, and different levels of education are the major challenges to learning English in senior KRG administrative staff. The significant association between institutional support and learning challenges ($r_s = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$) suggests that through institutional intervention, these barriers can be systematically overcome, thus eliminating the natural barriers brought by aging. In summary, the central issue is not whether or not the senior administrative staff have the ability to learn English; rather, it is about whether or not the institutions can build the required environments for the success of the learners. Through proper planning, protection of adequate time, and the right pedagogic approach, older civil servants can learn English.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the learning problems of senior Kurdish officials aged 42 to 60 regarding their learning of the English language in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Employing a quantitative approach through a structured questionnaire, a high-response rate of 100% from 148 civil servants in seven ministries in Erbil, Sulaimaniyah, Duhok, and Halabja was successfully obtained. This study extensively analyzed the interaction between age, institutional support, and education in English language acquisition at work, which fills a gap in second language acquisition research by studying a neglected demographic of older workers in the public sector in a Middle Eastern country.

Empirically, the findings revealed a positive linear relationship between learning problems and age ($\chi^2 = 24.67$, $p = 0.003$), where over 58% of the participants indicated age-related problems with their memory as their main problem ($M = 3.91$). More importantly, there exists a significantly strong positive correlation between learning problems and the absence of institutional support ($r_s = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$). The structural problem was illustrated through low ratings of training adequacy ($M = 2.34$) and time allocation ($M = 2.47$) and 64.2% of respondents indicating lack of institutional training.

Empirical findings proved the existence of an increasing trend of perceived learning barriers with increasing age ($\chi^2 = 24.67$, $p = 0.003$),





where more than 58% of the participants pointed out age-related memory problems as the main barrier to learning ($M = 3.91$). It is important to note that there was a high positive correlation between learning barriers and lack of institutional support ($r_s = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$). The structural issue was also revealed by low levels of training adequacy ($M = 2.34$) and time allocation ($M = 2.47$) and by 64.2% of respondents who claimed inadequacy of institutional training. Formal education appeared to be an effective barrier protection instrument which was correlated negatively with learning barriers ($r_s = -0.38$, $p < 0.001$); high school graduates faced 50% more barriers compared to PhD holders because of the different learning strategies used by those two categories. Lastly, the high correlation between learning motivation and work requirements concerning English language ($r_s = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$) revealed the importance of aligning language training with professional demands.

In terms of practicality and sociability, this research gives the KRG sufficient empirical data on how to upgrade its human resource skills. The demonstration that an enabling environment will help even senior employees to flourish regardless of their age helps the research prove how the KRG will effectively take care of its most experienced employees in a globalization era. The research therefore reorients the language acquisition issue from personal responsibility of the employee to an institutional one for optimizing the global reach ability of the region.

Looking ahead, making language training a priority within the organization means that there is a need for specific changes at several levels. First of all, the Kurdistan Regional Government must formulate one common language policy, create its own Language Training Center based on adult learning (andragogy) and provide employees with three to five hours of study time per week during regular working hours. The ministry supervisors need to perform exact needs analysis according to roles, create linguistically diversified environment and initiate peer learning circles. At the same time, the program developers should change the pace of instruction, use strategies of reducing learners' anxiety, apply task-based learning related to work in the ministry and provide metacognitive assistance to less educated workers.

At the end of the day, the key issue that the KRG is faced with is one of strategy. The government can either create a target-based environment where it will be possible for their mature, seasoned employees to prosper or else lose important institutional knowledge through simple language

issues. Since the research has shown that structural help effectively reduces individual problems of age and education, institutional intervention is capable of turning English learning into a manageable goal for the employees.

REFERENCES

Rewritten text:

- [1] Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a Global Language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- [2] Graddol, D. (2006). *English Next: Why Global English May Mean the End of 'English as a Foreign Language'*. British Council.
- [3] Jenkins, J. (2015). Repositioning English and Multilingualism in English as a Lingua Franca. *Englishes in Practice*, 2(3), 49
- [4] Kachru, B. B. "World Englishes: Approaches, Issues and Resources." *Language Teaching*, vol. 25, no
- [5] Kurdistan Regional Government. (2024). Department of Foreign Relations. Retrieved from <http://dfr.gov.k>
- [6] Kurdistan Regional Government. (2024). International Relations and Diplomatic Presence. Official Government Portal.
- [7] Hartshorne, J. K., Tenenbaum, J. B., & Pinker, S. (2018). A Critical Period for Second Language Acquisition: Evidence from 2/3 Million English Speakers. *Cognition*, 177, 263-
- [8] Naveh-Benjamin, M. (2000). Adult age differences in memory performance: Tests of an associative deficit hypothesis. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 26(5), 1170-1187
- [9] Vernez, G., Culbertson, S., & Constant, L. (2014). Strategic Priorities for Improving Access to Quality Education in the Kurdistan Region—Iraq. RAND Corporation. doi: 10.
- [10] Singleton, D., & Leśniewska, J. (2021). The Critical Period Hypothesis for L2 Acquisition: An Unfalsifiable Embarrassment? *Second Language Research*, 37
- [11] Major, R. C. (2014). The developmental pattern of English L2 pronunciation: Theoretical, methodological, and practical considerations. *Journal of Second Language Pronunciation*, 2(1), 3–18. <https>
- [12] MacWhinney, B. (2017). A Unified Model of Language Acquisition. In J. F. Kroll & A. M. B. De Groot (Eds.), *Handbook of Bilingualism: Psycholinguistic Approaches* (pp. 49-67).
- [13] Rhodes, M. G. (2004). Age-related differences in performance on the Wisconsin Card Sorting Test: A meta-analytic review. *Psychology and Aging*, 19(3), 482-494. doi:
- [14] Nilsson, L.-G. (2003). Memory function in normal aging. *Acta Neurologica Scandinavica*,
- [15] Spinner, P., & Gass, S. M. (2019). *The use of judgments in second language acquisition research*. Routledge.
- [16] Gerdes, B. and L. Wilberschied. "Workplace ESL instruction: Facilitating effective programs." *TESOL Journal*, 12(
- [17] Mikulecky, B. S., & Lloyd, P. The impact of workplace literacy programs: A new model for evaluating their effects. National Center on Adult Literacy Technical Report TR97-08, 1997.
- [18] Katz, J. (2000). Problem-based learning and mathematical problem solving. Mathematics Teaching Research Center, ERIC Digest.
- [19] U.S. Department of Education. (2024). Integrated Education and Training. Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education.





Barriers in English Language Acquisition Among Older Kurdish Employees in the Kurdistan Regional Government

- [20] Ghafar, S. A., & Mohamedamin, P. (2022). Speaking difficulties and strategies employed by Kurdish EFL learners. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, 4(2), 142-160.
- [21] Ghafar, S. A., & Yaseen, K. R. (2022). An investigation of speaking anxiety among Kurdish EFL learners. *Journal of Language and Education*, 8(3), 83-98
- [22] Ghafar, S. A., & Mohamedamin, P. (2023). Perceptions of EFL teachers regarding challenges in English instruction in the Kurdistan Region. *International Journal of Instruction*, 16(2), 523-542.
- [23] Center for Strategic and International Studies. (2023). "Language policy and education in Iraq's Kurdistan Region," CSIS Middle East Program.

APPENDIX: RESEARCH

Questionnaire: Barriers in English Language Acquisition Among Older Kurdish Employees in the KRG

Demographic Information:

- Age: ☐ 40-45 ☐ 46-50 ☐ 51-55 ☐ 56-60 ☐ 61+
- Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
- City: ☐ Sulaimaniyah ☐ Erbil ☐ Duhok ☐ Halabja
- Ministry/Department: _____
- Education Level: ☐ High School ☐ Diploma ☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ PhD
- Years of Employment: ☐ 5-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21+

Instructions: Please rate each statement using the following scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

Core Questions:

Question1. Effects of Age on Learning (Test H1 and RQ2) I feel that aging impacts my learning and remembering of the English language in comparison to when I was young. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Question2. Memory & Learning Capability (Test H1, RQ2) It is difficult to remember English vocabulary and rules due to effects of aging. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Question3. Training Support by the Institution (Test H2, Answering RQ3) Ministry has allocated funds adequately for training of English language to the staff members. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Question4. Time and Schedule Support (Test H2 and RQ3)

The work place has provided enough time during work schedule for learning the English language.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Question 5. Educational Background Effect (H3 & RQ1) My previous education background would be enough for me to learn English language as an additional language. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Question 6. Workplace English Skills Requirement (Answering to RQ4) English language skills requirement for my work is quite frequent. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Question 7. Motivation and Work Environment Requirement (Answer to RQ4) The requirement of using English language skills at the workplace is one of the motivations for improving my English language skills. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Question 8. Overall Barriers Evaluation (Answer to RQ1) In general, I encounter rather difficult barriers in my attempt to effectively learn English language skills. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

