

## GRAMMATOPHOBIA AMONG THE ENGLISH UNDERGRADUATES IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

By

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### Abstract

*The grammar plays a vital role in equipping the students to communicate in English without any flaw. Many students find certain level of difficulties to learn grammar and suffer from grammatophobia. Though grammar is hard to learn it plays a predominant role in excelling in the English language. The aversion towards the grammar can be mitigated by taking some efforts. The present study focuses on the measurement of grammatophobia among the Undergraduate students of English Literature in Tirunelveli District. The sample consists of 202 students. The random sample technique was adopted to select the sample of the study. The tool ShWi's Scale on Grammatophobia (SWSG) was constructed, standardized, and used. For the analysis of the data, statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard Deviation, 't' test, and Mann Whitney test were used. The investigator analysed seven studies that discussed various problems and difficulties that were faced by the teachers and students while teaching and learning English grammar.*

**Keywords:** *grammatophobia, english, undergraduates, tirunelveli*

### Introduction

Education is a purposeful activity directed at achieving certain aims, such as transmitting the knowledge or fostering skills and character traits. "Education is the development of all those capacities in the individual which will enable him to control his

environment and fulfil his responsibility" (Dewey, 1916). In Education, English plays a major league as "English is a West Germanic language which belongs to an Indo European Family" (Wardhaugh, 2010). English is an official language of 59 countries among the 195 countries.

There are 360-400 million people who speak English as their first language and around 700 million people speak English as their second language. (Crystal, 2006). It is the third most widely spoken language in the World. English plays a vital role as it is taught in over 118 countries among 195 countries. English is not only a communicative language it is also a combination of Phonology, Grammar, Vocabulary, Writing System, Dialect, Intonation, accent and varieties. In this case, many students find difficulties in learning grammar and their rules and lack in the communicative skills, as modern English grammar is the result of a gradual change from a typical Indo-European dependent, marking pattern, with a rich inflectional morphology and relatively free word order to a mostly analytic pattern by a fixed subject-verb-object order. (Konig, 1994). English is not only a global language but a diplomat language. So the students must excel in all the seven elements of English language which includes Vocabulary, grammar,

functions, reading, listening, speaking and writing.

### **Need for the Study**

The students find many difficulties to communicate in English. The main reason for their fear is Grammar. Grammar means “the rules in a language for changing the form of words and joining them into sentences” (Hornby, 2010). The students of English Literature too find it difficult to understand and to learn and to teach the proper English. The students are thinking that Grammar is not so important to write and to communicate in English. They consider grammar as a boring topic and the students find difficulties in understanding the grammar rules and the exceptional for the set of rules. Because of the lack of proper grammatical skills, many students were not able to achieve great heights in life. They were not able to achieve in academics and hence the employment opportunities. Though they have strong subjective knowledge because of the lack of proper grammar they struggle a lot to up-come in life. Many students omit the grammar part in the

examination with some kind of fear. The grammar skills are essential to communicate and it is important in every aspects of one's life. So, this study is taken to analyse the difficulties and the fear that the students have in learning grammar and to find out the solution to make learning grammar as an easy task.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study is unique and very essential in the field of education. The result of this study will help us to know the difficulties in learning and teaching of grammar and it will bring forth the fear that the students have in learning grammar. The result of this study would help us in knowing the students' perspective towards learning grammar. The result of this study would help us in measuring the level of fear in learning grammar and it would reveal the efforts taken by the students in learning grammar. This also bring forth the mitigation measures towards the aversion of grammar. Through this result, one can take all possible measures to make grammar an easy one.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The investigator selected the title "Grammatophobia among the English Under-Graduates in Tirunelveli District" for investigation. The present study attempts to investigate the level of grammar fear among the Undergraduate students of English Literature. Many students commit lot of grammar mistakes due to lack of basic knowledge about the grammar, the fear of committing mistakes, the fear of imperfection, lack of vocabulary, lack of usage of words and practices. Another common problem arose in grammar is between the incorrect word choice and wrong tense that leads to very awkward construction of the statement. When the fear and the problem of learning grammar are not rectified, it causes severe issues in their career. Poor grammar will end up in inappropriate sentence that gives meaningless sentence and changes the whole meaning or the information that has to be conveyed with everyone. Because of their poor performance, the students

feel overwhelmed and hopeless. The grammar fear will lead to lose one's self-confidence. The fear of grammar will suppress one from reaching their destination in life and will make them to sit behind those stumbling blocks and tend to do some unsatisfactory works.

### **Operational Definition of the Key Terms**

*Grammatophobia*: It refers to the fear of the students in learning the English grammar.

*English undergraduates*: By this, the researcher means, the students who are undergoing B.A., degree program in English studying in the Arts and Science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University located in Tirunelveli District.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following are the main objectives of the present study:

1. To find out the level of fear of grammar among the B.A English literature Students.
2. To find out the level of difficulties in learning grammar among the English Under-graduate.
3. To find whether the under graduates differ in the level of difficulties in Learning grammar with regard to personal variables namely gender and age; institutional variables namely type of Institution, locale of institution and type of Management; and familial variables namely, family income, educational qualifications and occupation of parents.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

1. There will be no significant difference in having fear of learning grammar with regard to personal variables.
2. There will be no significant difference in having fear of learning grammar with regard to institutional variables.
3. There will be no significant difference in having fear of learning grammar with regard to familial variables.

## **Methodology**

### **Sample**

The sample was chosen by random sampling technique and the sample for the present study consisted of 202 students, who are pursuing their undergraduate degree in English Literature in various colleges of Tirunelveli district.

### **Variable**

The variable of the present study is Grammatophobia. The background variables of the present study includes personal variables namely age and gender, institutional variables namely type of Institution, locale of institution and type of Management and familial variables namely educational qualification of the parents, occupation of the parents and family income.

### **Tool Used**

For this present study, the investigator has constructed a tool with the help of the Supervisor. The constructed tool was standardized by getting the

opinion of experts, by measuring the validity and reliability of the tool. The tool constructed by the investigator is ShWi's Scale on Grammatophobia (SWSG). It is a five point Likert scale. The tool has four dimensions namely Errors, Aversion towards the grammar, Fear and Efforts. In each dimension, there is a certain number of questions that measures grammatophobia. The tool includes both positive and negative items.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

The investigator visited various Arts and Science College located at Tirunelveli District and meet the sample in person and gave them the tool and made them to fill in individual and has collected the data.

### **Statistical Techniques Used**

For the analysis of data, the following statistical techniques were used,

1. Descriptive Analysis: Mean, Standard Deviation, Sum of Rank
2. Differential Analysis: 't' test and Mann Whitney test.

**Data analysis**

**Table 1. Grammatophobia among the English Undergraduates with regard to personal variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>
Age	19-20	139	281.61	4.404	0.035
	21-22	63	256.65		
Gender	Male	49	256.08	3.194	0.007
	Female	153	279.51		

In the Table 1, since the p-value is lesser than 0.05, the null hypothesis is non-accepted. It shows that there is a significant difference in

grammatophobia among the English undergraduates concerning the personal variables namely age and gender.

**Table 2. Grammatophobia among the English Undergraduates with regard to institutional variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>
Type of College	Government	156	274.79	0.568	0.119
	Non-government	46	270.54		
Locality of College	Urban	96	266.34	2.618	0.017
	Rural	106	280.60		

In the Table 2, since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis

is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in

Grammatophobia among the English Undergraduates concerning type of college. Same way, in the Table 2, since the p-value is lesser than 0.05, the null hypothesis is not accepted. It shows

that there is a significant difference in Grammatophobia among the English Undergraduates concerning locality of college.

**Table 3. Grammatophobia among the English Undergraduates with regard to familial variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>
Family Type	Nuclear	150	279.61	1.825	0.076
	Joint	52	265.81		
Father's Educational Qualification	School Education	166	270.08	2.437	0.001
	Higher Education	36	291.08		
Father's Occupation	Government	36	295.81	2.980	0.000
	Non-Government	166	269.06		
Mother's Educational Qualification	School Education	183	99.86	-1.235	0.217
	Higher Education	19	117.26		
Mother's Occupation	Government	22	67.73	-2.871	0.004
	Non-Government	180	105.63		
Family Income	Below 15000	138	272.77	0.532	0.239
	Above 15000	64	276.11		

In the table 3, since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in Grammatophobia among the English Undergraduates concerning the familial variables namely family type, Mother's Educational qualifications and family income. Same way, in the Table 3, since the p-value is lesser than 0.05, the null hypothesis is non-accepted. It shows that there is a significant difference in Grammatophobia among the English Undergraduates concerning the familial variables namely father's educational qualification, father's occupation and mother's occupation.

### **Findings of the Study**

1. There is no significant difference in grammatophobia among the Undergraduates (UGs) of English Literature with regard to the institutional variable namely type of college.
2. There is no significant difference in Grammatophobia among the UGs of English Literature with regard to the familial variable namely family type, Mother's Educational Qualification and family income.
3. The students of age group 19-20 among the UGs of English Literature have more Grammatophobia compared to the students of age group 21-22.
4. The female UGs of English Literature have more Grammatophobia rather than the male UGs of English Literature.
5. The UGs of English Literature from rural area have more Grammatophobia when compared to the students of urban area.
6. The UGs of English Literature of whose father had pursued higher education have more Grammatophobia compared to the students' father who had pursued school education.
7. The UGs of English Literature of whose father works in government organizations have more Grammatophobia compared to the students of whose father work in non-governmental organizations.



8. The UGs of English Literature of whose mothers' work in non-government organizations have more Grammatophobia compared to the students of whose mothers' work in non-governmental organizations.
9. The UGs of English Literature who are pursuing their degree in non-government institutions have more Grammatophobia than the students who are pursuing their education in government organizations concerning the type of institution in the dimension fear.
10. The Undergraduates students of English Literature who are living in a nuclear family have more Grammatophobia than the students who are living in the join family concerning type of family in the dimension efforts.

### **Recommendations**

Grammar is very essential to be a proficient person in language. The good grammar develops our self-confidence and it develops a person in all aspects including personal development and Cognition. Better

grammar provides advancement in opportunities and widens the scope. So certain measures has to be taken to mitigate the Grammatophobia among the students of English Literature. Grammar has been taught in the traditional method. Instead of teaching grammar in the traditional method of learning, grammar classes should to be taught using modern technologies like virtual reality classes and augmented reality classes. And opportunities should be made to the students to communicate with the native speakers. The students has to be provided with necessary assistive technologies to develop their grammatical skill and communicative skill. Teachers should provide the students with better practice that tend to better retention. Teacher must encourage the students to write on their own and encourage them to communicate in English so that the fear of imperfection will get reduced and the students will gain some confidence, that will help them in improving their grammatical knowledge. The teachers ought to motivate the students to learn grammar as it is the backbone of English language. Continuous

assessment needs must be fulfilled by the teachers by conducting tests. The tests can be done in both printed and digital formats.

The teaching of grammar must be developed. Grammar should not be taught in the Lecture method or through direct instructions; instead, it has to be taught in a hands-on method or through an activity-based learning method. Grammar should not be taught explicitly instead it has to be taught and it has to be learned with accurate examples and in a detailed form. Grammar rules must be explained in charts in a clear and highly visual way, which will help the students to remember and to understand the grammar points easily. Adequate teaching materials has to be used to teach the grammar. The teachers must facilitate the students with effective learning resources like digital presentations. The students has to

equip themselves by learning through e-resources. The teachers must encourage them to read a lot of books and develop the habit of reading English newspaper and magazines. The students should also watch the English news, broadcasting and movies, they will help them to improve their grammar and through this they will learn of how to form the sentence and how to use the tense at various places. The teachers has to take all possible measures to teach grammar with in-depth aspect, as it will help them to recognize the rules of the grammar and its exceptional. Same way, grammar ought to be taught in an Inductive teaching method that involves presenting specific concepts with several examples. In this method, no explanation is given to the students instead, the students are expected to discover grammar by visualizing the rules.

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