



# Prospective Role of the Remedial Programs to Improve the Performance of Low Achievers in English Language Courses

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## Abstract

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of remedial programs on the performance of low achievers in English language departments at Yanbu English Language Institute and Preparatory Year Program (YELI-PYP). The purpose of the current paper seeks to highlight the key elements of the role of remedial programs and subsequently aims to develop a conceptual framework that guides how these classes should be planned and implemented at YELI-PYP. To achieve the objective of the study, the researcher used the experimental method. In this, a test was prepared to measure the L2 students' basic skills in English prior to attending the remedial programs (a pre-test). Once the students had attended the remedial programs, the test was again administered (post-test), which allowed the researcher to explore the effectiveness of the remedial programs on the students' overall performance. The study was conducted at the end of the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. The population of the study was YELI-PYP students, with a sample of 198 that were chosen at random. The sample represented all the low achievers of YELI and the pre-test and post-test were prepared as the instrument of the study. The findings of the study were as follows: The effectiveness of the remedial programs on the performance of low achievers at YELI-PYP was significant. The study provided evidence that showed the use of remedial programs improve the performance of low achievers in English language courses. In light of these results, the researcher offered a number of recommendations and suggestions.

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**Keywords:** Prospective Role, Remedial Programs, Performance, Students' Low Achievement.

## Introduction

English Language Institute and Preparatory Year Program in a Saudi university are strongly committed to achieving a vision, which is to become a supplementary institution in enhancing English proficiency and academic skills of students aspiring for degree programs in management, engineering, mathematics and sciences. As a part of this dedication, these institutions strive to offer academic assistance and opportunities to students who struggle with English language proficiency through a range of remedial programs designed specifically for this group of learners. These remedial programs address deficiencies in basic academic skills such as vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing. [Besaña & Gabunilas \(2020\)](#) emphasize that implementing remedial programs is important to help learners catch up with their peers. However, teachers can often commit mistakes if they do decide to implement these classes, by not identifying or listing the basic skills deficient of their students.

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In addition, these remedial programs often require a lot of effort to be made by the faculty members, as it increases the teaching tasks and may also have a high financial cost. An example of this is given by Breneman & Haarlow (1998), who pointed out that the cost of educational remedial classes in all US states amounted to one billion annually, which is considered a large sum of money to be spent from the budget for higher education. That said, although efforts or cost could be seen as obstacles to have such programs, it is often regarded as a necessity by governing bodies in higher education.

There are many factors or drawbacks that may affect students in developing their ability to learn the English language. One of these factors is the lack of exposure to English outside of schools or colleges. This has been a significant issue in recent times, whereby school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic have further impacted learning loss. Furthermore, students' hesitation, which is where students are afraid to participate or speak during class, has also contributed to this issue. Researchers in the field of teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL) have considered this a crucial issue that needs to be addressed and are keen to identify the weaknesses of second language learners (L2). For instance, Al-Qahtani (2018) mentioned that some of the reasons for this is due to the educational system, attitudinal factors, social factors and cultural factors.

English Language Department at Yanbu English Language Institute and Preparatory Year Program (YELI-PYP) has many remedial programs implemented within the department to address students' weaknesses, but these programs are not prepared according to a robust needs analysis or via scientific methods; rather, they are improvised expectations or opinions from the faculty members themselves. This can be detrimental to the learning process of L2 learners, as these efforts lose significant impact on improving the students' levels. Additionally, every semester, efforts are intensified by faculty members to bridge the gap that is caused by learning loss through the delivery of remedial classes at YELI-PYP. Remedial programs are usually implemented after the first quiz or midterm exam in each English Language course, as well as according to the opinions of faculty members, who advise on which students would need these programs. However, the issue with the first quiz is that it does not measure the basic skills of English but it covers the learning outcomes of the course. For this reason, the researcher sought to investigate the remedial programs by preparing a pre-test that will diagnose the students early in the semester, as well as to make the test comprehensive for measuring basic English skills.

Investigating the effectiveness of these remedial programs for low achievers is crucial for the YELI-PYP, as it allows for informed decision-making, program improvement, and enhanced learning outcomes. By conducting evaluations, the institute can transparently communicate the outcomes of these programs to students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders. It fosters trust, builds confidence in the institute's efforts, and encourages collaboration and feedback from all those involved, creating a sense of shared responsibility for the success of low achievers in the YELI-PYP.

In light of these challenges faced by students in developing their English language proficiency, it is imperative to address these issues and explore potential solutions. In light of this, the researcher decided to prepare a diagnostic test and use this test to identify the missing skills for the targeted students in order to help improve standards within the English Language Department. The study ultimately aims to assess the effectiveness of remedial classes offered at YELI-PYP. The focus is specifically on investigating how these classes can contribute to improving the performance of low achievers in English language courses. Additionally, the study aims to provide recommendations to faculty members and various committees within YELI, such as the Academic Support Committee, Learning Outcomes Committee, Planning Committee, Quality Committee, and Department Affairs Committee. These recommendations will guide faculty members and these committees in adhering to the same procedures when diagnosing and treating similar problems, and to measure their effectiveness.

Specifically, this study framed a question: What is the prospective role of the remedial programs on the performance of low achievers in English language courses at YELI-PYP? To answer this, the study addressed a sub-question: Is there any statistical difference ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the performance of students' achievement in the English Language at YELI-PYP on the pre- and post-test after completing the remedial programs?

## Literature Review

- *Remedial Classes*

Remedial classes are one of the solutions that schools or colleges resort to as a means of bridging the gap or solving the problem faced by students due to learning loss. Zhao, Wang, & Liu (2022) defined remedial education as the programs provided by education institutions to help unprepared students reinforce their basic skills. In terms of the effectiveness of remedial programs, Lovett & Steinbach (1997) noted that there is a clear and great effect of having these programs made available. In their study, a sample of 122 children with special needs were randomly selected and provided with remedial programs in the phonological analysis, as well as in blending skills. The findings of the study revealed that children at each grade level made equivalent gains with remediation.

Ljusberg's (2009) study aimed to increase understanding of enrolling students in remedial classes. This study revealed a number of important findings from different perspectives:

— *From the parents' perspective:* the parents were happy to have their children join the remedial classes for two reasons: 1) they were confident that the achievements of their children will improve and 2) it will have positive effects on the behavior of their children.

— *From the teachers' perspective:* many teachers indicated that the teachers of regular classes do not have a strong relationship with the students' families, and that the relationship between the school and the family is often a negative one. The remedial classes helped to change this, as the teachers were working closer with the families to improve their students' ability.

— *From the students' perspective:* the goal of the students is to move from the remedial classes to the regular classes after they achieve and improve their abilities.

Jarrar (2014) further pointed out that there is a significant impact of remedial classes in improving students' levels of learning English, specifically in their listening skills. This finding was confirmed by teachers during their interviews. In addition, according to a study by Siddiqui & Alghamdi (2017), the students achieved higher scores in the post-test as a result of the remedial programs; the difference between the score of the pre-test and the post-test was ( $T=10.746$ ,  $P. >0,05$ ). Zhao et al. (2022) aimed to understand how to make remedial programs effective in changing students' attitudes, as well as improving their academic achievement and learning. The study had the following results: remedial programs have indeed enhanced and developed students' achievement, and good quality remedial programs affects students' satisfactions and academic achievement.

Conversely, Al Othman & Shuqair (2013) mentioned that the remedial programs have no effect on improving students' levels or in the performance of the English language for Arab-speaking L2 students. It should however be noted that, aside from this study, there seems to be a unanimous consensus within the existing literature that remedial classes do have a positive effect on the achievement of students. In relation to ensuring remedial programs are effective, the nature and quality of such programs are often cited as important factors for this, which can ultimately influence students' achievement. In addition to this, students' attitudes and satisfactions towards the programs offered is also a factor, as well as the appropriate timing for implementing these programs.

- *Low Achievers Students*

A lot of effort has been made and many studies have been conducted to find out the reasons that impact academic achievement. Based on the literature review, the following reasons have been outlined:

— *Lack of Diagnosing in Learning and Teaching:*

Diagnosing any problem, whether it relates to education or not, is very important to prescribe precisely the best solutions. Within the context of this study, Alderson (2005) confirmed that it is not surprising for assessment in language learning and teaching to be extremely vital. That is, teachers conduct the assessment in order to find out what their students have learned during a certain period (whether that period is short or long), as well as knowing their strengths and weaknesses, and thus, getting a clearer picture of their students' abilities so they can better plan what the students need. Jarrar (2014) also mentioned the importance of the diagnostic test to determine the weaknesses and strengths of students, as well as to help determine which objectives are needed and the level of progress in learning.

Sang (2022) highlights one of the defects of the diagnostic tests, which was the lacks of a theoretical guide and update. There is also a lack of scientific and reasonable methods to quantify and deal with the problems. Moreover, the diagnosis in the field of English language tests is still in the discovery stage and lacks validity. In general, there is controversy among researchers regarding the definition and contributions of diagnosis.

— *Lack of Motivation*

One of the most important factors that affect L2 learners from learning the English language is motivation. Motivation is often divided into two categories: intrinsic and extrinsic. Extrinsic motivation is defined as doing something to achieve external goals (i.e. qualifications) or to meet some external imposed bands or limits. Alaga (2016) explains that there is a positive correlation between students who are motivated extrinsically to learn English and their academic achievement. Zaitolakma Abdul Samad et al. (2018) explained that one of the indicators of the presence of internal motivation is the student's feeling of self-motivation to develop their English language, and that they feel happy and have the conviction to learn the language. In light of this, Amoah & Yeboah (2021) recommended lecturers and teachers to provide an ideal environment for students to reduce their anxiety and shyness, by applying some methods or strategies that encourage their student to overcome these problems, including giving them the opportunity to speak in front of their colleagues periodically.

— *COVID-19 Pandemic*

The COVID-19 global pandemic left a great impact on economic, psychological, housing, and educational systems, as well as many other fields. The crisis affected the education system as a result of

the lockdown, where schools were suspended and distance learning via online classes was implemented instead. Many efforts were made by the educational governing bodies throughout the world to fill the gaps caused by the absence of physical interaction between students and teachers. Although every effort was made to ensure learning continued, there was still a significant learning loss due to school closures. Hartshorn & McMurry (2020) aimed to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on ESL learners and TESOL practitioners in the United States. The results revealed that the impact of the crisis increased the stress for both students and teachers. In addition, the challenges faced by students were greater than those faced by the teachers during distance learning, and more notably, the area that students suffered the most was in their speaking skills. According to Engzell, Frey, & Verhagen (2021), the students did not progress when learning via distance learning, and learning loss was up to 60 % larger among students from less-educated homes.

#### — Lack of Exposure

Many students miss opportunities for continuous exposure of the English language, especially those who live in small towns and remote villages. The majority of students do not practice their English language outside school or college. According to Gotseva (2015), the length of exposure to the English language in the environment when it is used as a native is one of the most important factors that affects student learning. Al Zoubi (2018) studied the effect of exposure to the English language in relation to language acquisition and revealed the following results: Travelling to countries where English is spoken as a native language reached the highest mean (4.11), followed by using social media (a mean of 4.04). In addition, the following statements also reached a high mean: “*having more exposure to English language, encouraging myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake, exposure to the English language assists me to get a good chance of a good job or high mark in exam and watching English TV programs, videos, or movies and surfing the internet facilitates English language acquisition*”.

#### — Lack of Qualitative Remedial Classes

Remedial classes should be planned and carried out according to certain procedures. One such procedure should be to conduct a diagnostic exam. Gajewski & Mather (2015) pointed out that remedial classes should be student-centered and planned according to the needs of the students, which would be identified from the diagnostic pre-test. Moreover, Kennedy et al. (2022) explained that the measures of learning outcomes should be valid and reliable, and should seek to measure the efficiency and the effectiveness of the remedial programs immediately after completing the treatments. In addition, Selvarajan (2022) mentioned several reasons that would impact remedial teaching with regards to improving the competencies of low achieving students in the Mannar district of Sri Lanka. These reasons included a low interest or attitude of parents towards education, the low literacy level of parents, as well as the poverty which affected 37% of the students. Another important reason that was cited was absences from school, causing students to miss lessons. Many of these absences were due to illness, which was another reason related to impacting remedial teaching due to less immunity for diseases. Moreover, separated parents also affected students, as well as some students being affected by the fact that they were away from their family (i.e. homesickness).

## Methodology

### • Research Design

The current study adopted a quantitative approach, which is defined as “a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures” (Creswell, 2009). In addition to this, a quasi-experiment was employed for this study because the researcher did not have true control over the independent variable (the remedial programs).

### • Sampling and Population

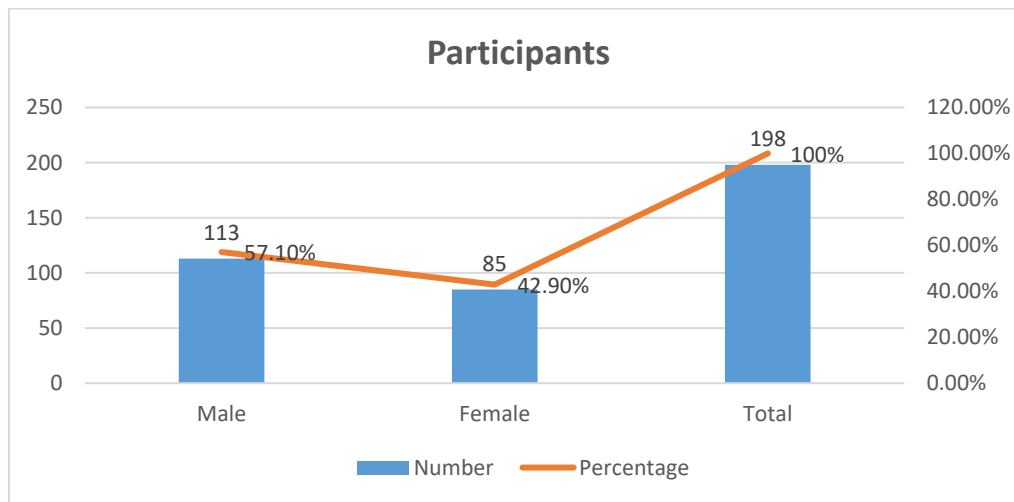
The participants of this study were randomly selected but not randomly assigned; this was to ensure the validity of the research instrument. According to Creswell (2009), when the participants are selected randomly but not randomly assigned, this method is referred to as a quasi-experiment. A population (or the sampling frame) is “a group of individuals (or a group of organizations) with some common defining characteristic that the researcher can identify and study” (Creswell, 2012). The population of the study comprised students of the preparatory year at Yanbu English Language Institute and Preparatory Year (YELI-PYP) in the first semester during the 2022-2023 academic year. The total number of students that attended in this academic year were 1227, and all held similar characteristics in terms of background and grades, as these students had graduated from secondary school and were now enrolled on the PYP at YELI. Out of 1227 students, 442 students voluntarily participated in both of the pre and post-tests. The participants represented 36% of the targeted population.

To finalize the sample size, the score of the pre-test study of the YELI-PYP male and female low achievers, whose scores in the pre-test were classified as *very low* (i.e. lower than 60%) according to the diagnostic test, were chosen. The number of low achievers was 243 students and 198 of those (113 male and 85 female) were chosen randomly to be the study sample. Table 1 gives an overview of the study participants.

**Table 1:** Study Participants.

| Participants | Number | Percentage |
|--------------|--------|------------|
| Male         | 113    | 57.1%      |
| Female       | 85     | 42.9%      |
| Total        | 198    | 100%       |

Based on this data, Figure 1 shows the distribution of the participants according to gender.



**Figure 1:** The Distribution of Participants According to Gender.

- *Instruments and Research Procedure*

A diagnostic / pre-test was used to measure the students' English language basic skills. This test consisted of 45 questions that evaluated the students' comprehension in three skills and components: reading comprehension, grammar and vocabulary. The researcher prepared the test and examined its validity and reliability. A link for the test was created in Google Forms and sent to the faculty members to conduct inside their classrooms. The independent variable in this study was the remedial programs and the dependent variable was the achievement of the students. The researcher applied a pre-experimental design, in which there was only one experimental group. As mentioned previously, the researcher conducted two tests: a pre-test before implementing the remedial programs, and then a post-test to measure the size of impact after students completed the programs.

- *Data Analysis*

Various steps for analyzing the data were taken. First, the results of the diagnostic test were analyzed to determine the students' missing skills or any learning loss. This test had aimed to assess students' level in vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. This analysis was made to ensure the validity and reliability of the test. After calculating the results of the tests, the students that failed to achieve the passing grade of 60% were placed in the list eligible for attending the remedial programs. The missing skills were also identified and sent to the relevant committees that were concerned with implementing the remedial programs, (in this instance, the Academic Standing Committee and Academic Advising Committee). Based on the numbers of students attending, more than 20 remedial programs were implemented. Lastly, the post-test was conducted at the end of the academic semester, with students who did not attend being excluded from the study. The results were analyzed using SPSS.

- *Research Ethics*

The current research was planned and implemented in accordance with laws and regularity standards that protects the research participant and preserves his or her right to privacy and anonymity. According to Page & Nyeboer (2017), the significance of research ethics is to protect the rights and welfare of the participants. The current study took into account the random selection of the sample and the participants' right to opt in/out of taking the test, refusal, and to start/stop the completion of the test at any time. Reassurance was also given to the respondent that his/her response would be confidential and only used for research purposes. They were also informed that the results would be sent to them if they wished.

## Results

When conducting the implementing and evaluation of the remedial programs for the purpose of this study, it was ensured that the faculty adhered to the scientific procedures. It was designed based on the results of the pretest, with a focus on the targeted skills assessed in the test, namely vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension, in which students did not achieve the desired score. Those programs varied between in-person and online. These programs were announced at the beginning of each academic semester with the purpose of addressing any weaknesses in the course of the English language. The responsibility of implementing these programs lied with the Academic Standing Committee, whose roles was to announce these programs to students via Blackboard, Telegram and WhatsApp.

The remedial classes offered at Yanbu English Language Institute and Preparatory Year Program were delivered by volunteer teachers for students whose scores were low based upon the observation and judgment of their teachers, as well as utilizing the diagnostics test as a baseline. In the current study's context, the remedial classes were delivered for lower achievers, whose scores in the pre-test (diagnostic test) were classified as *very low* (i.e. lower than 60%) and for those that have difficulties that may hinder their learning. The programs took place during the free time or the staff breaks of the teachers. Some of them conducted the classes online while others preferred face-to-face. The announcements of those programs are posted on the Blackboard learning software and also sent via emails to all the targeted students, with the following details highlighted in [Table 2](#).

**Table 2: The Announcement of The Remedial Programs.**

| Online class: | Face to face class |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Topic         | Topic              |
| Day/Date      | Day/Date           |
| Time          | Time               |
| Link          | Venue              |
| Title         | Title              |
| Presenter     | Presenter          |

### — Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

To determine the psychometric properties of the research instrument, validity and reliability measurements were examined. Validity and reliability of the research instrument is fundamental in the data collection stage, where these two measurements ensure the process of obtaining accurate and consistent data and results. In quantitative studies, validity examines whether the instrument is valid by testing if the instrument is set to measure what it is intended to measure (Heale & Twycross, 2015). The validity of research instrument was also verified by conducting a test to evaluate the internal consistency, which refer to how an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. Further, both of face and construct validity were established through experts' opinions. The measure was shared with four experts who reviewed the test items to ensure that all items measure the intended construct: English proficiency.

It is a measure of reliability, but the researcher can assume that because the instrument is reliable, the result can be highly confident. The internal consistency can be calculated using either Pearson correlations between items or the total score of each domain (N=45). The researcher obtained the results of the internal consistency for the research instruments using Pearson correlations (Landau, 2004) as shown in [Table 3](#).

**Table 3: The Measure Key of Pearson Correlation Between Variables.**

| N          | Type of Relationship   |
|------------|--|
| 0.0        | Variables are unrelated  |
| + or - 0.1 | Correlation is considered low  |
| + or - 0.3 | Correlation is considered medium   |
| + or - 0.5 | Correlation is considered high   |
| + or - 1   | Highest possible correlation   |
| +          | Positive relationship (if one variable goes up, the other goes up as well)   |
| -          | Inverse/Negative relationship (if one variable goes up, the other goes down) |

It can be noticed from [Table 3](#) that the research instrument (test) had good validity, wherein the correlations of all of the inter-items of the constructs as seen in [Table 4](#) are more than 0.5, thus, significant at the level of 0.01. This gives a strong indication that the test is reliable and has good psychometric properties for the sample of the current study. The researcher also made sure of the correlation between the total score of the test's domains with the total score of the test as shown in [Table 4](#).

**Table 4:** Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Every Domain of The Test with The Total Score of The Test (N = 45).

| Sig. level | Pearson Correlation | N. Items | Domain                |
|------------|---------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| 0.01       | 0.894               | 22       | Grammar               |
| 0.01       | 0.777               | 17       | Vocabulary            |
| 0.01       | 0.644               | 6        | Comprehension Reading |

As shown in Table 5, there is a correlation between the domains and the total score at sig. level (0.01). This shows a high internal consistency of the test, which reinforces the validity of the test.

**Table 5:** Correlation Between the Domains and The Total Score.

| Grammar               |              |      |              |      |              |      |              |
|-----------------------|--------------|------|--------------|------|--------------|------|--------------|
| Item                  | Correlations | Item | Correlations | Item | Correlations | Item | Correlations |
| 1                     | 0.654**      | 11   | 0.835**      | 23   | 0.845**      | 31   | 0.854**      |
| 2                     | 0.924**      | 12   | 0.885**      | 24   | 0.885**      | 42   | 0.898**      |
| 3                     | 0.670**      | 13   | 0.874**      | 25   | 0.795**      | 43   | 0.885**      |
| 4                     | 0.655**      | 14   | 0.837**      | 26   | 0.871**      | 44   | 0.851**      |
| 8                     | 0.735**      | 15   | 0.647***     | 30   | 0.905**      | 45   | 0.874**      |
| 9                     | 0.762**      | 16   | 0.841**      |      |              |      |              |
| Vocabulary            |              |      |              |      |              |      |              |
| 5                     | 0.847**      | 18   | 0.596**      | 27   | 0.626**      | 40   | 0.741**      |
| 6                     | 0.893**      | 19   | 0.665**      | 28   | 0.624**      | 41   | 0.687**      |
| 7                     | 0.783**      | 20   | 0.617**      | 29   | 0.659**      |      |              |
| 10                    | 0.822**      | 21   | 0.676**      | 38   | 0.776**      |      |              |
| 17                    | 0.834**      | 22   | 0.774**      | 39   | 0.873**      |      |              |
| Reading Comprehension |              |      |              |      |              |      |              |
| 32                    | 0.845**      | 34   | 0.821**      | 36   | 0.894**      | 37   | 0.794**      |
| 33                    | 0.857**      | 35   | 0.951**      |      |              |      |              |

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Reliability is concerned with whether the same result can be consistently achieved by using the same method under the same circumstances. The reliability of the test has also been checked using Alpha Cronbach coefficient and Split-half coefficients (including Spearman-Brown and Guttman coefficients).

Alpha Cronbach coefficient has been commonly used to investigate the reliability of research instruments (Orfanou, Tselios, & Katsanos, 2015). The values of Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient are usually between 0 and 1. Table 6 shows that the Cronbach's alpha value for the research instrument is ranged between 0.808 and 0.939 for the Test's Domains, it was 0.920 for the total test, which indicates an average high reliability of the research instrument, as the reliability of research instruments is considered high when Cronbach's alpha value is greater than 0.7 and very high when it is greater than 0.9 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Likewise, the split-half reliability method requires dividing up the variables' items into two parts and calculating correlations between the first half and the second half of each variable's items. The split-half reliability coefficient was estimated using the Spearman correlation test as seen in Table 6 (Alharbi & Drew, 2014; Binyamin, Rutter, & Smith, 2017).

**Table 6:** Alpha Cronbach and Split-Half Coefficients.

| Test's Domains | Cronbach's Alpha | Split-half Reliability Coefficients |                            |                     |
|----------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
|                |                  | Correlation Coefficient             | Length Corrections         |                     |
|                |                  |                                     | Spearman-Brown Coefficient | Guttman Coefficient |
| Grammar        | 0.939            | 0.852                               | 0.920                      | 0.891               |
| Vocabulary     | 0.812            | 0.665                               | 0.799                      | 0.773               |
| Comprehension  | 0.808            | 0.726                               | 0.841                      | 0.811               |
| Total Test     | 0.920            | 0.831                               | 0.907                      | 0.907               |

Table 6 shows that the Spearman's correlation coefficients of the Test's Domains were in the range of 0.726 to 0.852, indicating very strong reliability of these items, wherein their correlations were statistically significant at 0.01.

Difficulty coefficient gives the percentage of the wrong responses of the students to the total number of the students who answered the test. This can be calculated using the following equation:

$$\text{Difficulty Coefficient} = \frac{\text{No. of Wrong Responses to an Item}}{\text{The Total Responses to the Items}} \times 100$$

Table 7 shows that the difficulty coefficient fluctuates between (0.22- 0.51), which means each item is acceptable or in the normal limit of difficulty according to the viewpoint of assessment and evaluation specialists.

**Table 7: Difficulty Coefficient for Each Item of The Test.**

| Difficulty Coefficient | No. | Difficulty Coefficient | No.  | Difficulty Coefficient | No.  | Difficulty Coefficient | No.  |
|------------------------|-----|------------------------|------|------------------------|------|------------------------|------|
| 0.44                   | 37  | 0.31                   | 25   | 0.29                   | 13   | 0.33                   | 1    |
| 0.31                   | 38  | 0.29                   | 26   | 0.31                   | 14   | 0.27                   | 2    |
| 0.38                   | 39  | 0.31                   | 27   | 0.38                   | 15   | 0.31                   | 3    |
| 0.40                   | 40  | 0.24                   | 28   | 0.22                   | 16   | 0.38                   | 4    |
| 0.42                   | 41  | 0.27                   | 29   | 0.33                   | 17   | 0.31                   | 5    |
| 0.44                   | 42  | 0.29                   | 30   | 0.38                   | 18   | 0.42                   | 6    |
| 0.47                   | 43  | 0.22                   | 31   | 0.27                   | 19   | 0.33                   | 7    |
| 0.49                   | 44  | 0.33                   | 32   | 0.44                   | 20   | 0.38                   | 8    |
| 0.51                   | 45  | 0.27                   | 33   | 0.42                   | 21   | 0.29                   | 9    |
|                        |     |                        | 0.31 | 34                     | 0.40 | 22                     | 0.40 |
|                        |     |                        | 0.44 | 35                     | 0.38 | 23                     | 0.31 |
|                        |     |                        | 0.47 | 36                     | 0.36 | 24                     | 0.27 |

Discrimination coefficient means that the test is able to discriminate between the high achievers and the low achievers. The discrimination coefficient of a test was computed according to the following equation (O'dah, 2002):

$$\text{Discrimination Coefficient} = \frac{\text{no. of Correct Answers From the High Achievers} - \text{no. of Correct Answers From the Low Achievers}}{\text{no. of Students in One Group}} \times 100$$

Table 8 shows the discrimination coefficient for each item of the test:

**Table 8: Discrimination Coefficient for Each Item of The Test.**

| Discrimination coefficient | No. | Discrimination coefficient | No. | Discrimination coefficient | No. |
|----------------------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|
| 0.77                       | 31  | 0.69                       | 16  | 0.77                       | 1   |
| 0.54                       | 32  | 0.77                       | 17  | 0.62                       | 2   |
| 0.38                       | 33  | 0.46                       | 18  | 0.46                       | 3   |
| 0.31                       | 34  | 0.31                       | 19  | 0.23                       | 4   |
| 0.38                       | 35  | 0.38                       | 20  | 0.38                       | 5   |
| 0.54                       | 36  | 0.54                       | 21  | 0.46                       | 6   |
| 0.38                       | 37  | 0.54                       | 22  | 0.62                       | 7   |
| 0.31                       | 38  | 0.23                       | 23  | 0.54                       | 8   |
| 0.54                       | 39  | 0.62                       | 24  | 0.54                       | 9   |
| 0.31                       | 40  | 0.62                       | 25  | 0.23                       | 10  |
| 0.46                       | 41  | 0.54                       | 26  | 0.31                       | 11  |
| 0.69                       | 42  | 0.31                       | 27  | 0.54                       | 12  |
| 0.62                       | 43  | 0.38                       | 28  | 0.23                       | 13  |
| 0.54                       | 44  | 0.54                       | 29  | 0.69                       | 14  |
| 0.46                       | 45  | 0.54                       | 30  | 0.69                       | 15  |

Table 8 shows that the discrimination coefficient fluctuates between (0.23-0.77), which means each item is acceptable or in the normal limit of discrimination according to the viewpoint of assessment and evaluation specialists.

• *Answer to the Research Question*

The research aimed to answer the following question: "What is the prospective role of the remedial programs on the performance of low achievers in the English language at YELI-PYP?" it was hypothesized that "there are no statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the performance level in the three skills: (Grammar, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension) between the mean scores of the experimental group students on the pre and post-performance test". To test this hypothesis, the mean and standard deviations of the experimental group students were computed in the pre and post-performance test. (Paired Samples T. Test) was used to measure the significance of these differences. Table 9 presents the results of the differences between the experimental group students in the pre- and post-performance tests.

**Table 9: T-Test Paired Sample Results of The Differences Between The Experimental Group Students in The Pre- and Post-Performance Tests.**

| Sig.level    | T-value | Std. Deviation | Mean  | N   | Test      | Test Domains          |
|--------------|---------|----------------|-------|-----|-----------|-----------------------|
| sig. at 0.01 | 90.92   | 1.53           | 7.43  | 198 | Pre-test  | Grammar               |
|              |         | 0.71           | 18.00 | 198 | Post-test |                       |
| sig. at 0.01 | 68.31   | 1.56           | 7.03  | 198 | Pre-test  | Vocabulary            |
|              |         | 0.86           | 15.92 | 198 | Post-test |                       |
| sig. at 0.01 | 51.68   | 0.68           | 2.59  | 198 | Pre-test  | Reading Comprehension |
|              |         | 0.49           | 5.58  | 198 | Post-test |                       |
| sig. at 0.01 | 124.41  | 2.35           | 17.05 | 198 | Pre-test  | Total                 |
|              |         | 1.04           | 39.51 | 198 | Post-test |                       |



As illustrated in Table 9, the T-value of the differences between the mean scores of measurements from the pre- and post-test experimental group were statistically significant at the level of significance (0.01) for all domains and for the total test score. This indicates the presence of significant differences between the mean score measurements for the pre and post-test experimental group in the total score, and when considering Table 9, the researcher found that the average post measurement degrees were higher than the average scores of the pre-test measuring and the differences were in favor of the post-test measurement. Figure 2 illustrates these differences as well.

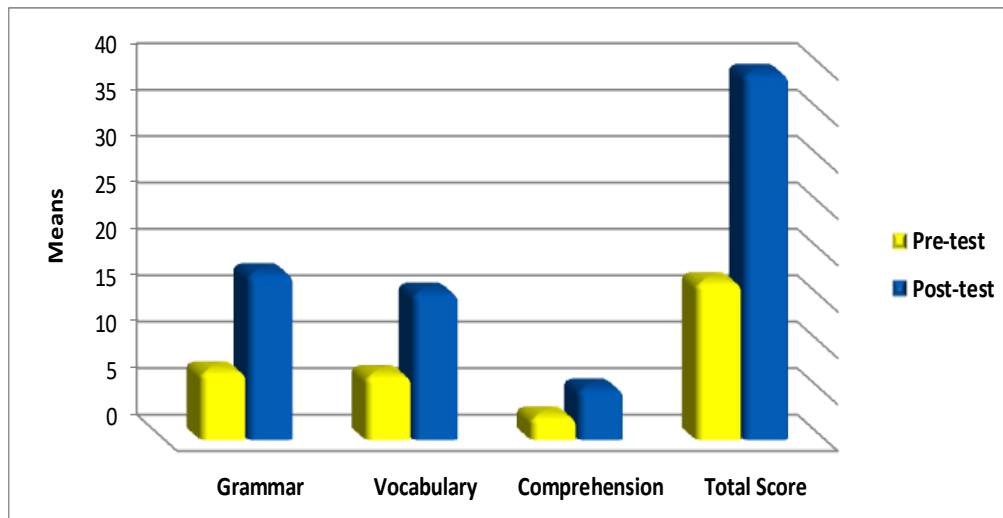


Figure 2: The Differences Between the Average Students in The Experimental Group in The Pre- and Post-Test Performance.

To verify the role of the remedial programs on the performance of low achievers in English, the researcher calculated the equation "Black" for the results of the differences between the post test for the experimental groups of all domains and of the total score of the test. The role of the program can be judged when the gain ratio exceeds (1.2). The results are as shown in the Table 10.

Table 10: Results of The Differences Between the Post Test for Experimental Group for All Domains and The Total Score of The Test.

| Test Domains  | Test      | Mean  | Total degree | Black gain |
|---------------|-----------|-------|--------------|------------|
| Grammar       | Pre-test  | 7.43  | 22           | 1.21       |
|               | Post-test | 18.00 |              |            |
| Vocabulary    | Pre-test  | 7.03  | 17           | 1.42       |
|               | Post-test | 15.92 |              |            |
| Comprehension | Pre-test  | 2.59  | 6            | 1.38       |
|               | Post-test | 5.58  |              |            |
| Total         | Pre-test  | 17.05 | 45           | 1.30       |
|               | Post-test | 39.51 |              |            |

Table 10 shows that the values of the Black equation were (1.21), (1.42), (1.38), (1.30), which confirms that the experimental treatment is effective for the performance of low achievers in English within the experimental group. The following equation, according to Afanah (2000), can be used to calculate the effect size:

$$\eta^2 = \frac{t^2}{t^2 + df}$$

In addition, the researcher calculated the "d" value using the following equation from Afanah, (2000):

$$d = \frac{2\sqrt{\eta^2}}{\sqrt{1 - \eta^2}}$$

The results of the "η²" and "d" values, shown in Table 11, indicate a large impact of the remedial programs on the performance of low achievers in English across all the test domains.

Table 11: The Level of Effect Size (H2) and (D) on The Test Domains.

| Test | Effect size |        |       |
|------|-------------|--------|-------|
|      | Small       | Medium | Large |
| η²   | 0.01        | 0.06   | 0.14  |
| D    | 0.2         | 0.5    | 0.8   |

**Table 12:** *The Total Score (T) Value, Eta Square (H2), And (D) Of Each Domain.*

| Test Domains          | T-value | $\eta^2$ | D     | Effect volume |
|-----------------------|---------|----------|-------|---------------|
| Grammar               | 90.92   | 0.976    | 12.95 | Large         |
| Vocabulary            | 68.31   | 0.959    | 9.73  | Large         |
| Reading Comprehension | 51.68   | 0.931    | 7.36  | Large         |
| Total                 | 124.41  | 0.987    | 17.72 | Large         |

As shown in Table 12 and according to the effect size equation, the effect size of the remedial programs on the performance of low achievers in the English language, as shown in Table 12, is large. Through the previous results, the study therefore provides evidence that using remedial programs can improve the performance of low achievers in learning English.

Thus, with reference to the hypothesis statement, “there are no statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the performance level in the three skills: (Grammar, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension) between the mean scores of the experimental group students on the pre and post-performance test”, the results show that the average post measurement degrees were higher than the average scores of the pre-test measuring and the differences were in favor of the post-test measurement.

## Conclusion

The current study investigated the prospective role of the remedial programs on the performance of low achievers in English language courses at YELI-PYP. The study sampled one group of students and conducted a pre-test to diagnose their skill level of the English language. After the remedial classes were delivered for two months, a post-test was conducted with the same group of students and the result of that test were analyzed. From this, the list of low achievers was identified, as well as the weaknesses in their English skills. Based on the results, the remedial programs were prepared, with the cooperation of the Academic Support Committee. At the end of the first semester of the academic year (in 2022), the post-test was conducted in order to investigate the role of those remedial programs by comparing the results from the pre- and post-tests.

The result revealed a clear impact on the performance of the students. It aligned with the results of several research studies (Jarrar, 2014; Ljusberg, 2009; Lovett & Steinbach, 1997; Siddiqui & Alghamdi, 2017; Zhao et al., 2022), which showed the impact of the remedial class on the performance of low achievers in the English language. However, the finding of this study disagrees with the study of Al Othman & Shuqair (2013), which asserts that remedial classes have no effect on improving students' levels or performance in English for Arab L2 students.

This study would be useful to YELI-PYP as a way of improving the remedial classes. Moreover, it would help faculty members at YELI-PYP, by providing recommendations how on to tackle the identified weaknesses of their students from the diagnostic exams that were conducted before and after the students attended the remedial classes. Furthermore, it should compel high schools to pay more attention to the basic skills of the English language before their students' progress to higher levels of academia. Moreover, it measures the role of the remedial programs offered at the Yanbu English Language Institute and in the Preparatory Year Program. Therefore, this study can be used to improve and develop these programs, which will positively reflect on the levels of achievement from the students. The study may also contribute towards saving a great deal of effort in diagnosing the problem of students' weaknesses through the diagnostic test or in the quality of the remedial programs by measuring them from the pre- and post-tests. It may also contribute in helping reduce student dropout. Finally, the study may benefit the Curriculum Department at YELI, as well as the Learning Outcomes Unit, by providing them with the necessary support and assistance in developing useful solutions to improve students' levels.

The study faced a few limitations. Firstly, the objective limitation of this study was that the role of remedial programs was limited to the performance of students' low achievement in the English Language. Secondly, there was the location limitation as the study was confined to Yanbu English Language Institute and Preparatory Year Program (YELI-PYP), specifically the Department of English Language. Thirdly, the temporal limitation was that the study focused only on the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. Finally, the human limitation was the sample size of this study, which consisted of 198 students.

Based on the findings of this study, there are a number of implications and recommendations that can be ascertained. Firstly, remedial classes should be more student-centered, which means that students should be involved in each step of their development and implementation. Furthermore, a significant implication that came from this study was that the contents taught in the remedial classes should be shaped in accordance to the diagnostic test, and not based on the opinions of the teachers. The diagnostics test should help guide the teachers in knowing what areas the students are strong in, but also, where they need further help and support. There should also be high levels of students' engagement whilst conducting these sessions.

In addition, teachers should take into account the ideal times for students when planning and implementing remedial programs. To avoid any potential conflict with the students' schedules, online and in-person classes should be conducted. Moreover, the continuous evaluation of the remedial programs should be implemented in order to investigate their impact to the students' development. According to the results of this study, which revealed a high positive role for the remedial programs, the researcher recommends following the same procedures referred to in the current study (i.e.

conducting a diagnostic test, identifying learning loss from their students' answers, and then preparing the remedial programs based on the results of the diagnostic test). It is then necessary to measure the levels of improvement during and at the end of the remedial programs to determine whether or not the desired goals and objectives have been met (i.e. students' improved performance in the areas identified from learning loss). The same process should be applied every academic year, as well as with other courses.

Finally, the researcher recommends further study in this area to measure the role of the remedial programs in all the courses for the preparatory year. Moreover, a similar study in different stages of academia should also be conducted, namely in public schools at secondary, intermediate and primary stages, in order to discover the weaknesses of the students in the English language and to overcome these difficulties prematurely.

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