A Linguistic Approach to Evaluation of Technical Words among UG Third Year Students of Government Arts College in Coimbatore District, Tamilnadu

Shanmugam. P, Ph.D. Scholar & Dr. V. M. Subramanian

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Abstract

Technical writing requires clarity of expression and therefore simplicity of language. Technical words are an integral part of a discipline. The knowledge about them enriches and helps one to distinguish it among various disciplines of language. Writing, in a clear and concise manner makes not only understanding the text easier for the reader, but also makes his life as a writer of technical documentation easier .One of the good things about technical writing is that one really can learn to improve. This study is designed to investigate the perfection in usage of technical words like Native words, jargon words, business words, and scientific words among EFL learners' writing comprehension from a scheme of theoretical perspective. The sample consisted of 40 students studying in government arts college of Coimbatore. This article aims to provide a linguistic approach in technical words to improve writing skills of students.

Keywords: Technical words, elucidate, crumcy, production, disseminate, bestow , applied linguistics

Introduction

Writing is one of the language skills, which is considered a powerful mode of communication. Like speech, writing helps to produce the language. It is assumed that learners can express their thoughts through writing in an organized way. When we write, we go through a mental process which is more complex. We have to think, organize the idea, write, revise and edit to get a perfect writing and thus we can concentrate on language use more precisely. However, writing is considered much more challenging language skill to learn like speaking rather than listening and reading. Most of the learners need more time to acquire writing skill successfully.

There are some different approaches to teaching writing, which focus on writing from different perspectives. Among these methods, product and process oriented approaches are used

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extensively in teaching writing skill. However, these are genre approaches which have gained popularity in the last ten years. Creative writing is another method in teaching writing which is used in most of the English language classrooms in recent times. Good writing conveys a meaningful message and uses English well, but the message is more important than correct presentation. Technical words is a major concern for learners who have special purposes in language learning, surprisingly little is known about such vocabulary, largely because there are no well-established approaches for deciding. Which words are technical terms and which are not, and there are virtually no studies that compare the effectiveness of approaches, the major difficulty is that technical is a functional aspect of a word and thus the particular use of a word must be taken into account when deciding whether it is a technical term or not? But this research is to compare various approaches to identifying technical words. If we can say what words are technical in a particular discipline reliably, we can then begin to look at the role these words play in technical text and the demands they place on learners of English for special purposes. We can calculate how significant technical words might be, how often and with what density these words occur in the text, and how teachers and learners should deal with them.

Technical words are subject related, occur in specialist domains, and are part of a system of subject knowledge. Each of these features can provide a basis for the deliberate identification of terms.

The subject related aspect of technical words goes to the heart of what technical words are. The meanings of technical terms are closely associated with the particular subject area. The best way to determine this for any word is to use a rating scale to classify the words, according to how closely related they are to a particular subject area. (Baker, 1988; Farrell, 1990; Sutarsyah, 1994)

Aim and Objective

The aim of the study is to analyse the problems of writing English at the college level with particular reference to technical words in linguistics approaches.

Statement of the Problem

The study of student's errors is the part of the systematic study of the students' language. This is essential for pedagogical purposes. In error analysis, errors have a positive impact on evaluating the strategies adopted by the students. It is not indicative of their failure in mastering the

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language, but it reflects the drawbacks in the teaching-learning process. It also offers the teachers feedback on the effectiveness of the teaching materials as well as the teaching techniques. To the researcher, however, it is an evidence of (1) how language is learned (2) what strategies or procedure the students are employing in their learning process of the language.

Significance of the Study

The present study attempts to compare various approaches to identifying technical words. It calculates how large a technical word might be, how often and with what density these words occur in the text, and how teachers and learners should deal with them. The analysis is different from the previous studies which concentrate mainly on identification of errors, explanation of their sources and suggestions for pedagogy. It is felt that error analysis should have a more positive approach and suggest some specific programme for the teachers in the classroom. The analysis of errors of all types is linguistically significant, but for pedagogic purposes, one needs to be selective. Hence this investigation concentrates on specific areas of technical words in linguistics, which cause the greatest difficulty to the learners.

Methodology

The field of linguistics offers researchers with an adequate, good number of research methods out of which one can choose a method which suits his requirements in accordance with the nature of his study. The major goal of descriptive research is to describe events, phenomena and situations for analysing the complete data and identifying their technical words' values. The data have been used for describing the syntax. Since this is a brief study, only four categories of technical words have been taken for the analysis.

Technical words were collected as follows
1. **Business words**
   1. **Production**
   2. **Support**
2. **Native words**
   1. **Aptycock**
   2. **Clomph**
   3. **Crumpsy**
   4. **Crum-a-gracle**

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3. **Jargon words**

   1. **Cease**
   2. **Elucidate**
   3. **Envisage**
   4. **Boil the ocean**
   5. **Evince**
   6. **Think outside of the box**
   7. **Blue sky thinking**
   8. **In the near future**
   9. **Effect modification**
   10. **Disseminate**
   11. **Bestow**

4. **Scientific words**

   1. **Chemical**
   2. **Elomph**
   3. **Crumpsy**
   4. **Crum- a- gracle**

Limitation of the Study

The present study analyses the titles of technical words in English with limited samples. However, with the available sample the present study tries to understand the common pattern prevailing among different technical words.

Data Collection

This study chose 40 students of the third year English non-major students from Government Arts College at Coimbatore. The task given to the students was to write 20 technical words. It was scientific, jargon, native, and business words.

This study has been carried out in the following sequences

- Preparation of the questionnaire
- Selection of Informants
- Collection of data

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- Data analysis and processing

Data Analysis

Here the investigator analysed the errors collected from the learners. Sorted out various kinds of errors and explained the causes of such errors. Learners also commit errors when they pulled up predictions from their limited experience. Those are the common interlingual and developmental errors committed by the college students. The aim of teaching English at the end of the college courses expects that the learners should have sufficient knowledge of technical words, their uses and usage ways of expressing in the future time and their use in everyday real life situations.

To master any second language like English and to speak it meaningfully, grammatically and efficiently, originally and creatively a learner should have a clear knowledge of technical words and their uses and usage. Learners who wish to speak and write like educated and refined gentlemen should be willing to strain, learn, and acquire the knowledge of technical words. Their uses and usage discuss the sample of wrong answers. It would be appropriate, useful, and worth mentioning to have bird's eye view of the above mentioned aspects of the words and their usage.

Among the various category of words used in the evaluation, jargon words were eleven and maximum in number, native words and science words come next in number, i.e. four each and business words were the least among them, two only.

It was observed that both boys and girls did well with the business words. As boys stood on the middle level, the girls were in high level. The boys who gave correct business words and those who gave incorrect words, were almost equal in number coming to girls they showed high level, i.e. those who gave correct words were greater in number than those who gave incorrect words.

If taken the case of jargon words among the eleven of them, three of them showed average status or middle level among the students while two of them showed high and five of them showed low level of correctness. In the four native words, only one showed high level correctness while two were of middle and one very low level. Science words were almost responded to in a better level, i.e. two in middle and the other two in high level.

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Business Words

MIDDLE LEVEL					
S NO	BUSINESS WORDS				
		BOYS		GIRLS	
		C	IC	C	IC
1	PRODUCTION	7	8	10	5
2	SUPPORT	9	6	14	1
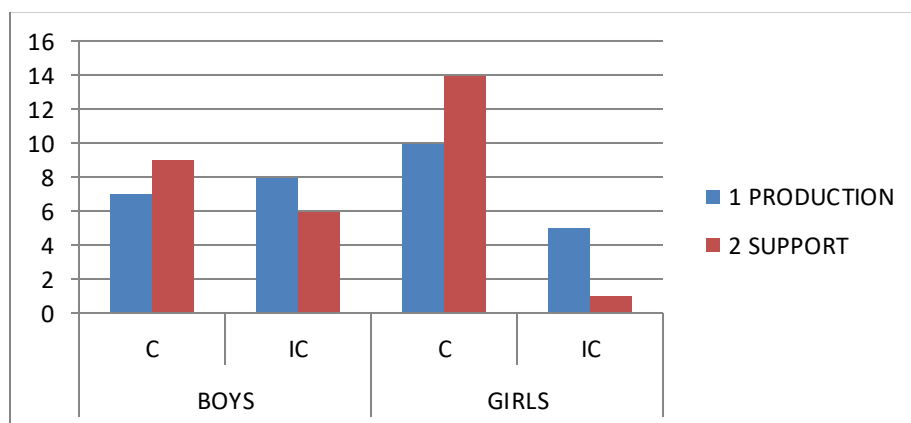
In the study conducted here, as we observe, the graphical representation of the business words shows that girls show higher percentage of correctness in both the words than that of boys. Almost half of the boys understood the word "production" and around that much of them went wrong. Among girls more than half, a higher number of them, understood the word, while only five of them made it incorrect. The next word "support" was better understood by boys than the previous word and a little more made it correct. Coming to girls all of them except one made it correct. So these two words stand in middle level.

Jargon Words

MIDDLE LEVEL					
S NO	JARGON WORDS				
		BOYS		GIRLS	
		C	IC	C	IC

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1	ENVISAGE	6	9	5	10	
2	EFFECT MODIFICATION	8	7	9	6	
3	DISSIMINATE	7	8	11	4	
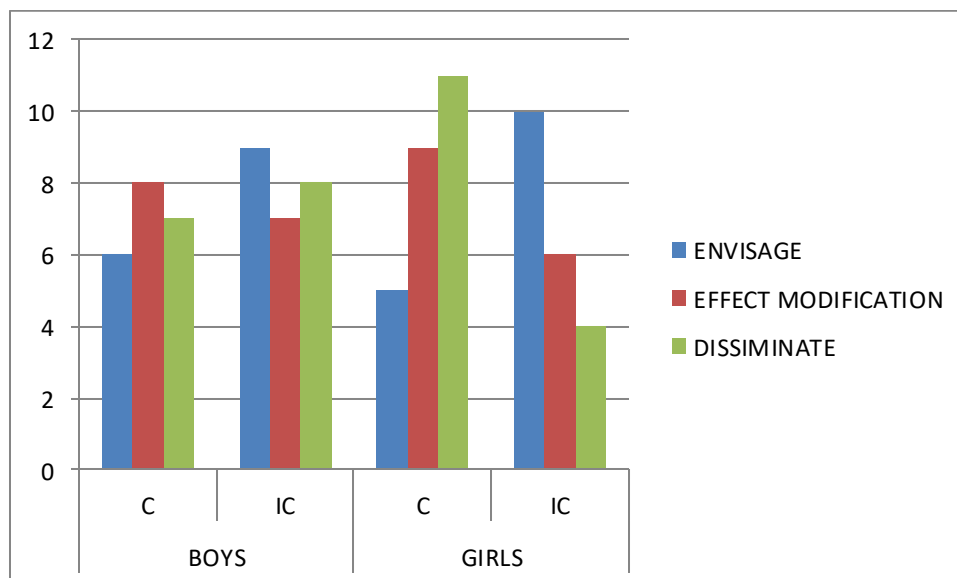
The jargon words showed a different status the word "Envisage" stand at a below average level for both boys and girls. The next "Effect modification" shows an average result, as almost half of the boys and also girls made it correct. "Disseminate" the third one show slight differences, while half of the boys made it incorrect, above an average number of girls made it correct. Thus generally these words stand in middle level.

Jargon Words

HIGH LEVEL					
S NO	JARGON WORDS				
		BOYS		GIRLS	
		C	IC	C	IC
1	BESTOW	13	2	12	3
2	IN THE NEAR OF THE FUTURE	11	4	13	2

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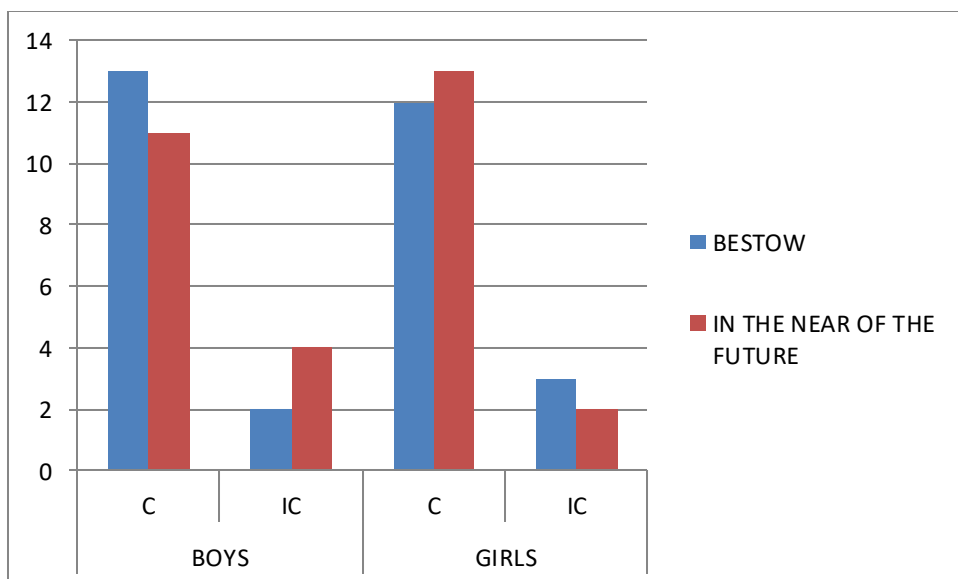Government Arts College in Coimbatore District, Tamilnadu   165

The graph shows a good result in the two jargon words "Bestow" and "in the near of the future," for more than half of both the boys and girls made them correct and these words show a higher level.

Jargon Words

LOW LEVEL					
S NO	JARGON WORDS				
		BOYS		GIRLS	
		C	IC	C	IC
1	CEASE	3	12	5	10
2	ELUCIDATE	2	13	2	13
3	BOIL THE OCEAN	1	14	0	15
4	EVINCE	4	11	2	13
5	THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX	0	15	2	13

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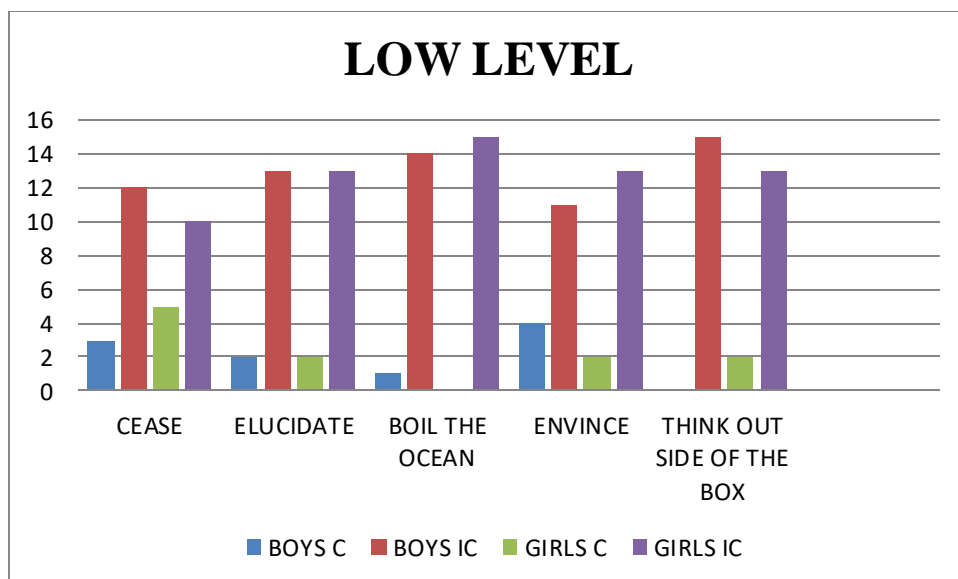
LOW LEVEL

The graph shows that five of the jargon words are in a low level, because all the boys and girls showed a low level of performance. A few of them below the average number made it correct.

Native Words

HIGH LEVEL					
S NO	NATIVE WORDS				
		BOYS		GIRLS	
		C	IC	C	IC
1	APTYCOCK	14	1	15	0

HIGH LEVEL

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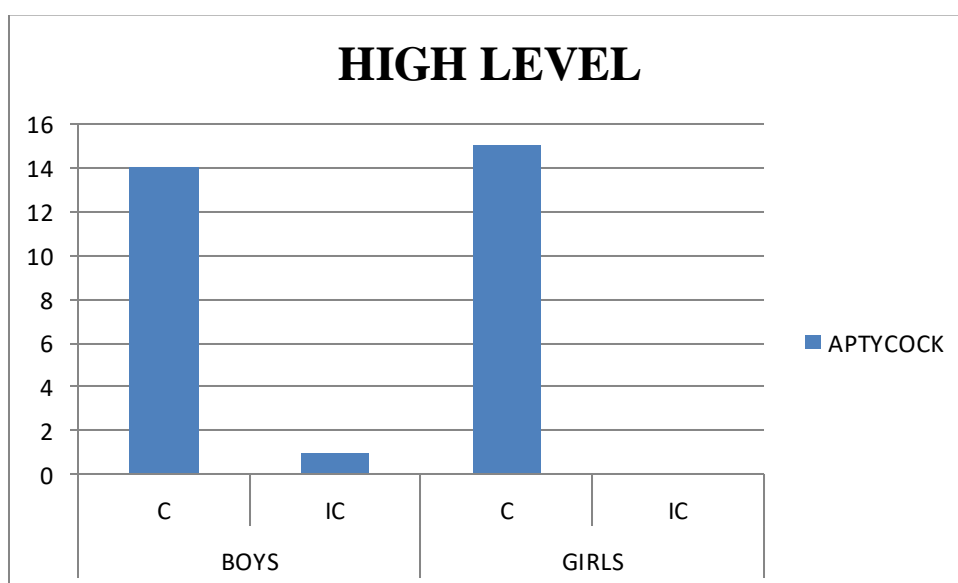
The graph shows a high level in the native word "Aptycock" for all the girls and boys except one made it correct.

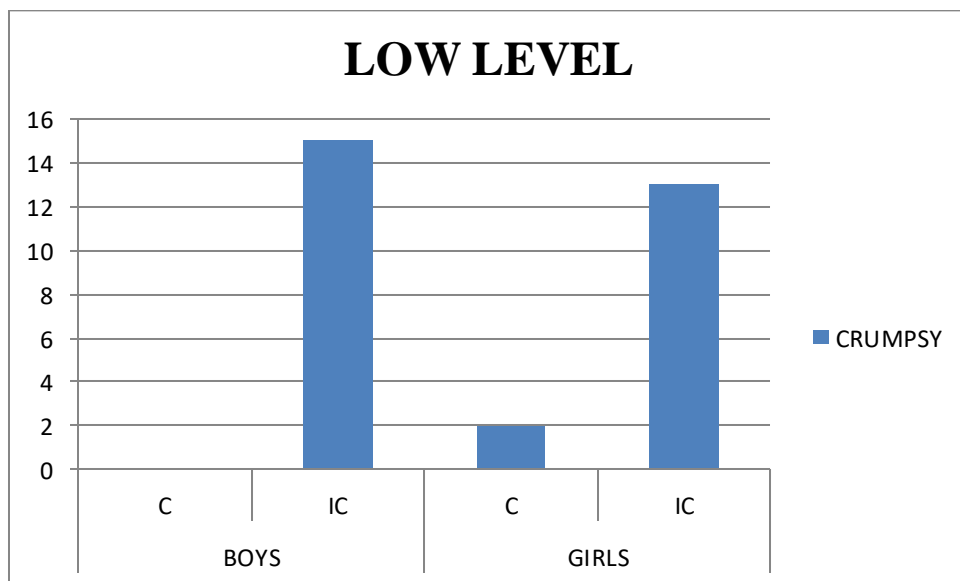**Native Words**

MIDDLE LEVEL					
S NO	NATIVE WORDS				
		BOYS		GIRLS	
		C	IC	C	IC
1	CLOMPH	7	8	9	6
2	CRUM A GRACLE	7	8	7	8
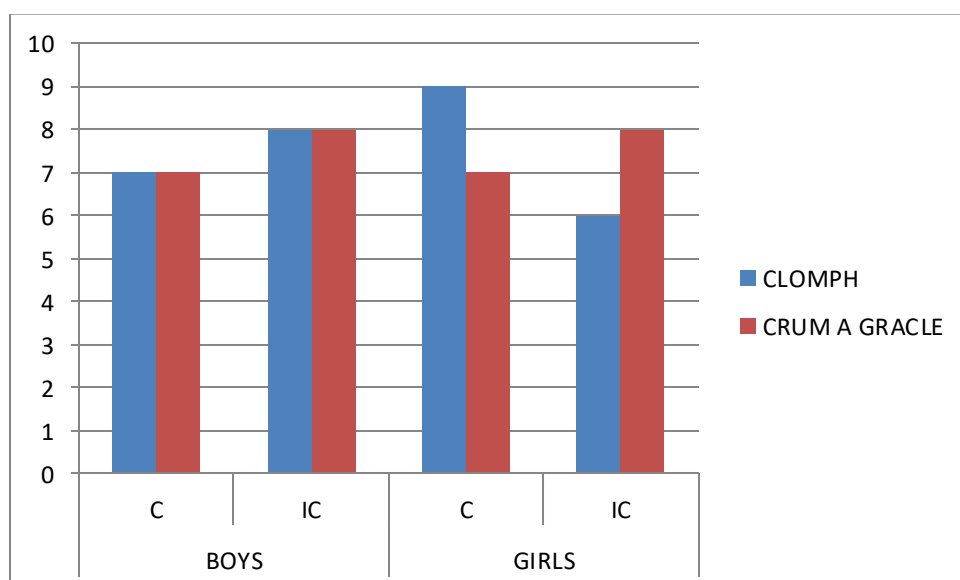
Both the boys and the girls made an average level of performance in the two native words "Clomph" and "Crum a gracle". Half of the boys and girls made it correct and these native words stand in a middle level.

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Native Words

LOW LEVEL					
S NO	NATIVE WORDS				
		BOYS		GIRLS	
		C	IC	C	IC
1	CRUMPSY	0	15	2	13

A very low level is shown in the graph for the native word "Crumpsy". All the boys and girls except two made it incorrect.

Scientific Words

MIDDLE LEVEL					
S NO	SCIENTIFIC WORDS				
		BOYS		GIRLS	
		C	IC	C	IC
1	CHEMICAL	11	4	13	2
2	EXPRIEMENT	10	5	12	3

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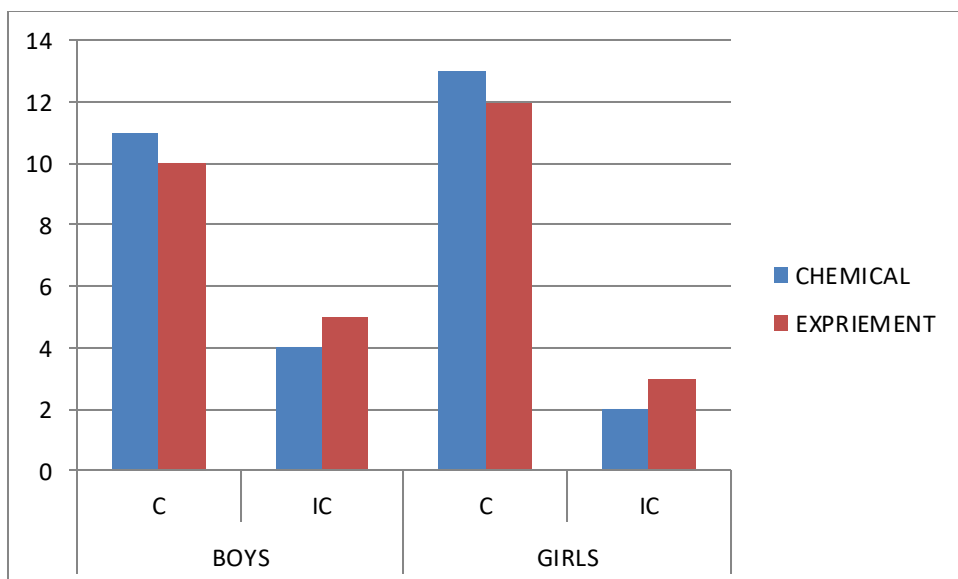
More than half of the boys and girls made the science words "Chemical" and "Experiment" correct and then these stands in a middle level.

Scientific Words

HIGH LEVEL					
S NO	SCIENTIFIC WORDS				
		BOYS		GIRLS	
		C	IC	C	IC
1	ENGERY	14	1	15	0
2	INNOVATIVE	13	2	12	3

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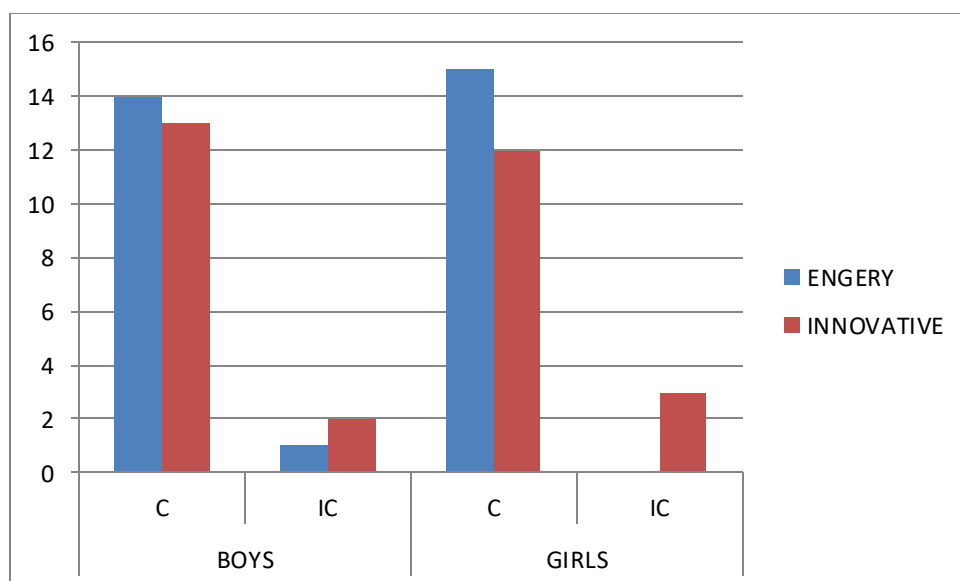
The two science words "Energy" and "Innovative" shows high level, as all the girls and boys except one made the word "Energy" correct. Two of the boys and three of the girls made the word "Innovative" incorrect. Percentage level of correctness is high for both the words.

Consolidated Table

This study chose 40 students of the third year English non-major students. The task given to the students was to write 20 technical words. It included scientific words, jargon words, native words and business words.

Technical words were collected as follows

S.No	TECHNICAL WORDS	BOYS		GIRLS	
	BUSINESS WORDS				
		C	IC	C	IC
1	PRODUCTION	7	8	10	5
2	SUPPORT	9	6	14	1
	CEASE	3	12	5	10
	JARGON WORDS				
3	ELUCIDATE	2	13	2	13
4	ENVISAGE	6	9	5	10

5	BOIL THE OCEAN	1	14	0	15
6	EVINCE	4	11	2	13
7	THIN OUTSIDE OF THE BOX	0	15	2	13
8	BLUE SKY THINKING	5	10	6	9
9	Soon	11	4	13	2
10	EFFECT MODIFICATION	8	7	9	6
11	DISSEMINATE	7	8	11	4
12	BESTOW	13	2	12	3
NATIVE WORDS					
13	APTYCOCK	14	1	15	0
14	CLOMPH	7	8	9	6
15	CRUMPSY	0	15	2	13
16	CRUM A GRACLE	7	8	7	8
SCIENTIFIC WORDS					
17	CHEMICAL	11	4	13	2
18	EXPERIMENT	10	5	12	3
19	ENERGY	14	1	15	0
20	INNOVATIVE	13	2	12	3

Conclusion

In the study conducted with the students of Government Arts College in Coimbatore district, it was observed that even though the students seemed to understand and often use words related to their studies, they showed a poor understanding of the majority of the jargon words. As an overall view, the students are almost on an average level. As the chosen students are from non-major English section, they are less exposed to such vocabulary and so they have to acquire sufficient knowledge of technical words. Undergoing proper training, vocabulary exercises and vast reading would help them to improve their performance.

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