

ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

BOSNIAN AND JAPANESE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on differences in teaching and learning EFL between Japanese and Bosnian students. Language learners struggle to learn a foreign language. The paper reports which part of the learning process students find the most difficult. The purpose of this study is to find out the main differences between Bosnian and Japanese students when acquiring the English language. To achieve this, a survey was conducted among 120 students from both countries using the questionnaire employed in Tragant, Thompson and Victori (2013), and the data were collected and analyzed. All students adopt the language individually, but there are many factors that may differentiate them from each other. Besides motivation, the education system and culture may affect the learning process. The paper discusses the basic learning elements such as grammar, reading, vocabulary, writing and speaking. Therefore, this study attempts to highlight the problems of students' language incompetence. The results indicate that Japanese students are devoted to grammar, more than Bosnian students. Bosnian students pay more attention to pronunciation while Japanese students speak slowly and are dedicated to memorizing new words.

Keywords: Japanese students, Bosnian students, education system, cross-cultural differences, Japanese English, EFL, Second Language acquisition

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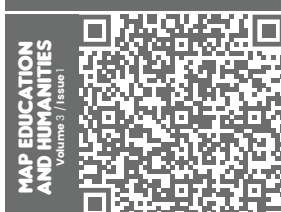
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INTRODUCTION

The English language is one of the most important languages in the world. Nowadays, in the age of informatization and globalization, knowledge of the English language is crucial for doing almost any job. Our attitudes to the language, and the way it is instructed, reflect cultural biases and convictions about how we ought to communicate and how we should educate each other. Our language capacity and the use of language both depend on attitudes towards the language, as well as individual behavior. Language is acquired in different ways among different individuals, who live in different countries. Japanese and Bosnian students differ when it comes to learning and acquiring a new language. This distinction can be found in the education system and culture as well. Besides educational problems, students face problems with cross-cultural differences as well. Some people may learn the language randomly by collecting utterances while others would focus on learning grammar constructions as well. Other distinctions can be found in how someone can acquire the language, like language school learning, or pupils' first language. Culture is one of the issues to be considered in learning a foreign language. Because of the diverse culture, teachers should apply appropriate teaching strategies. There are differences in language aptitudes as well such as: grammar, vocabulary, reading, and speaking skills or ability to use general English. Some learners focus on grammar first, whereas for others, speaking skills are the most consequential. Some learners may find it difficult to learn a new language while others are unable to see any challenges at all. Language is shaped by people who use it, it is the main means of communication. In this paper, two groups of people with diverse nationalities are compared and differences in acquiring the English language are well described.

The research problem involves the attitude and competencies of two different groups of pupils and students towards learning English. The basic significance of the research is reflected in the application of knowledge from students in different societies, i.e. the application of practice that is present. Comparing their experiences, they will be able to learn a lot. Based on knowledge and science, even its content will be expanded, and new practices for learning English in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be generated. The paper refers to the specificities associated with the way English is learned in Japan. Certain words are presented, and special emphasis is placed on how the English language is implemented in Japanese culture.

The benefits of learning a foreign language at any age are numerous: increasing brain size, improving memory, fighting dementia, strengthening attention, as well as many, many others. Learning foreign languages, in its development, had had different phases. There were times when learning foreign languages was not viewed favorably. Some authors argued that learning a language other than the mother tongue created a kind of schizophrenia or divided personality. Also, it may have had a negative effect since bilingualism „causes cognitive, social and emotional damage to children“ (Hakuta, 1986, p. 5). These claims about the positive or negative effects of bilingualism are often discussed because „language is a central part of cognitive ability“ (Hakuta, 1986, p. 5). These myths and prejudices have recently been swept away by a storm of scientific research that proves the unimaginable psychological benefits of learning a foreign language. Of all the foreign languages taught in the world, English has the most (both native and non-native) speakers. And the more people speak it now, the more people will learn it in the future – creating an infinite circle, so it is unlikely that another language will soon become lingua franca. Many people struggle to keep up with work, life, and changes in the world because they are not proficient in English, and therefore learning English should be supported and taken seriously as it is vital for progress. English is the basic language for popular music, television movies, the internet, „aviation, computers, diplomacy and tourism“ (Ilyosovna, 2020, p. 22). The majority of websites are in English, and the required internet resources and literature are also in English. Realizing the significance of English, many people agree learning English with native speakers and through various courses is accepted as natural as learning their mother tongue, and even those who do not really like it still take it as a second language, which means almost as important as the first they speak. Politics is one of the areas in which the English language is extremely important, „They can better grasp the vessel and nuance of international diplomacy and global affairs“ (Reddy & Mahavidyalaya, 2016, p. 180). For countries to cooperate, their representatives need to know the same language, and as for the large use of English, it becomes an ideal language for communication. In addition, countries where English is the official language are an important part of the global economy and its launch, so other politicians from other countries or country leaders need to know the language in order to get in touch with these Great Powers. If politicians do not know the language, they have to have someone to interpret it, but doing so through intermediaries is considered bad manners, and political

leaders tend to avoid it and learn English, in order to discuss crucial tasks and issues along with others devoid of feeling inadequate for the job and so they can easily „communicate with other countries people“ (Reddy & Mahavidyalaya 2016, p. 183). The research of diverse learning approaches among students in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Japan provides insight into distinct learning methods, attitudes and perceptions of the English language. In this way, it is possible to compare domestic and foreign methods, thus expanding knowledge. In this way, it is possible to apply foreign learning methods in BiH, i.e. those methods that have given better results in a foreign environment than those currently applied in BiH.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language is the main tool used by humans for exchanging opinions and communication. Language is a “natural, biological phenomena” (Chomsky, 2006, p. 61). All people need language to communicate and convey messages as well as “to inform or mislead” (Chomsky, 2006, p. 61). Language is a “human possession” according to Chomsky and “we find a command of language that is totally unattainable by an ape that may in other respects surpass a human imbecile in problem-solving ability and other adaptive behavior” (Chomsky, 2006, p. 9). While learning a language, people need to acquire all sounds and rules of that language, in order to be understood, and “the person who has acquired knowledge of a language has internalized a system of rules that relate sound and meaning in a particular way” (Chomsky, 2006, p. 23). Foreign language learners have a habit of translating their thoughts in their head into a foreign language, and then saying those thoughts out loud. The transfer of thoughts from one language to another can lead to a significant reduction in the quality of what they want to say. Learning the second language can be done naturally, while listening to native speakers, and adopting the language forms. There are a lot of things that learners should be aware of, like the positive environment, as well as a series of mental actions. These actions include readiness as well as the input into linguistic knowledge. The learners of a second language should be seen rather as successful L2 learners than failed native speakers (Dubiner, 2019). L2 learners may find it difficult to communicate successfully because their vocabulary seems insufficient, and it needs constant improvement. Japanese students prefer to learn English with native or near-native English teachers rather than with non-native instructors in the classroom.

The situation is similar to the traditional way of education. It can often be heard that the traditional way of education does not prepare pupils and students for life, but only for exams at school and college. Students may have difficulties with speaking English because their English teachers are mainly Japanese (Egitim & Garcia, 2021). There are two major issues with Japanese English classes, which are: the teachers’ inability to use English as the language of instruction coupled with insufficient time for OC practice in the classroom (Yanagi & Baker, 2016). Teachers in Japan tend to “create a perception of English classes as a leisure pursuit rather than an opportunity to develop language skills” (Egitim & Garcia, 2021, p. 14). Japanese students may find more difficulties while learning the English language because of the alphabet and grammar structures which are completely different from English structures „i.e., Japanese uses SOV order, while English uses SVO“ (Akbarov & Đapo, 2016, p. 63). On the other hand, Bosnian students use almost the same alphabet and sentences that follow the same grammatical order as the one in a target language. When it comes to addressing someone, in the Bosnian language you can easily call someone by his/her name, but for Japanese people when you are calling someone’s name „you have to put ‘san’ after his/her name“ (Aziz, Daud, & Yuridar, 2019, p. 165). However, in B&H English holds the status of the first foreign language and many studies explore its use in different domains (Ahmetović & Dubravac, 2021; Bećirović & Podojak, 2018; Bećirović, Brdarević-Čeljo, & Polz, 2021; Brdarević-Čeljo, Ahmetović, & Bajić, 2021; Brdarević-Čeljo & Dubravac, 2022; Dedović- Atilla & Dubravac, 2017, 2022; Dubravac, 2016; Ribo & Dubravac, 2021; Rizvić & Bećirović, 2017; Skopljak & Dubravac, 2019)

1.1. Research on language competence in the Bosnian and Japanese context

Teaching English as a foreign language and learning English as a second language can be considered from different aspects. 4 basic skills should be acquired in order to communicate and understand a foreign language. These skills are: listening, reading, speaking and writing skills, and they are the initial part of every language. They are an essential part of foreign language speaking. This paper revealed how Bosnian and Japanese students approach these skills. It is important to know how students master these four basic skills. According to some researchers like Fujita (2002), listening competencies are among the weak skills of Japanese English learners, and these skills have become crit-

ical for them. He states that reading skills are more developed than speaking or listening skills and they prefer a reading-oriented teaching style. Since Japan is a monolingual country, they don't see the purpose of developing a communicative English competence. Japanese teachers place more emphasis on grammar learning rather than speaking. Therefore, teachers need to find an appropriate teaching method to motivate students and to find the purpose of practicing speaking skills (Fujita, 2002). In Japan some reforms have been made, so the government decided on the TOEFL tests, which is the international four skills test. The test is more counter-productive which can help students to develop these skills, and it is a path which can lead them to the best career opportunities (Green, 2016). Yashima (2002) did a survey on the topic of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) and used a questionnaire among 297 Japanese English learners. He concluded that a lower level of anxiety and perception of L2 communication competence led to a higher level of WTC, and therefore motivated students studied harder and achieved greater results than less motivated students. Lower motivation will lead to less desire to communicate in English. He concluded that studying gives learners confidence in communication (Yashima, 2002). According to other surveys in BiH, English fluency should be more developed when it comes to English assessment (Bećirović, DeliĆ & Brdarević-Ćeljo, 2019; Brdarević-Ćeljo, Bećirović & Bureković, 2018; Habibić & Dubravac, 2016; Kovačević, Brdarević-Ćeljo & Bećirović, 2018; Tankosić & Dubravac, 2016). Teachers used to prepare students for writing tests in a way that those tests should be learned by heart instead, to be more communicatively-oriented, more spontaneous language should be incorporated while metalanguage should be limited (Dubravac, 2022). Self-desire to communicate in a target language should be high, followed by motivation which will lead to giving a speech in the target language. Comparing the other research results (Latić & Dubravac, 2019) among Bosnian university students in the fields of humanities and medicine, the results revealed that the majority of Bosnian students believe that younger children acquire languages easier than older people, and they believe that anyone can learn a foreign language.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

120 participants took part in this survey. 47 participants (39,2%) are male, while 73 (60,8%) are

female. 113 (94,2%) participants are between 20 and 40 years old while only 7 (5,8%) are aged between 40 and 60, with the average age 22.06. 18 participants (15%) are high-school graduates, 74 participants (61,7%) are university students, while 28 participants (23,3%) are in post-graduate studies. Bosnian and Japanese students were equally represented in the sample. The study's participants were selected randomly. The descriptive results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Descriptive analysis of the research sample

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age				
20-40 years	113	94.2	94.2	94.2
40-60 years	7	5.8	5.8	100.0
Country				
B&H	60	50	50	50
Japan	60	50	50	100.0
Gender				
Male	47	39.2	39.2	39.2
Female	73	60.8	60.8	100.0
Educational Background				
High School	18	15	15	15
University	74	61.7	61.7	76.7
Post – Graduate	28	23.3	23.3	100.0
Total	120	100	100	

Instruments and procedures

The participants voluntarily answered the questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine if there are any variations in learning English between students in Japan and students in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The questionnaire was developed and validated by Tragant et al. The questionnaire was updated by the University of Barcelona. Participants were asked to rate each strategy statement on an 8- point Likert frequency scale (Always or almost always, often, sometimes, rarely, very rarely, never or hardly ever). The questionnaire included the demographic part at the beginning (Age, grade, gender, English level, origin).

The questionnaire consists of 6 parts:

- The general level of English,
- Vocabulary learning,
- Studying grammar,
- Reading in English,
- Writing in English,
- Speaking in English.

the respondents' responses.

RESULTS

General level of English

When it comes to the amount of effort required to learn English, it is evident that Japanese students put more effort in. They make their own evaluations of their knowledge ($M=3.56$, $SD=1.52$), and pay greater attention to new words and new concepts ($M=3.80$, $SD=1.33$). In addition, Japanese students use more informal learning resources ($M=3.65$, $SD=1.21$), to improve their level of English proficiency. On the other hand, Bosnian students work harder when it comes to pronunciation, and find it easier to participate in English-language debates and activities. They often read aloud ($M=4.26$, $SD=0.63$) and engage in a variety of speaking activities ($M=4.50$, $SD=0.50$). The hypotheses are tested using the Mann - Whitney test, which examines whether there are differences in the responses of

The instrument showed the overall consistency reliability, the general level of English $\alpha = .674$ vocabulary learning $\alpha = .783$, studying grammar $\alpha = .847$ reading in English $\alpha = .600$, writing in English $\alpha = .782$, and speaking in English $\alpha = .695$. The distribution normality test is presented below.

Table 2.
Test of normality

	N	Mean	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
GenKnowEL	120	3.30	.72	.22	-.28	.43
VocabLearnEL	120	2.59	1.62	.22	2.21	.43
StudyGramEL	120	3.38	.41	.22	-.72	.43
ReadingEL	120	4.09	-.07	.22	-.48	.43
WritingEL	120	3.19	.73	.22	-1.03	.43
SpeakingEL	120	3.31	.06	.22	-.33	.43
Valid N (listwise)	120					

Data analysis

The research results were analyzed using the data processing programs MS Excel and SPSS. The results of the research are presented in tables and graphs.

First of all, the results recorded on the scales are presented through the elements of descriptive statistics. This review was performed for all six examined variables, followed by the analysis of normality through standardized skewness and kurtosis. Reliability analysis was made as well.

In the part related to hypothesis proving, the Mann - Whitney test was used, according to which it was possible to examine whether there are statistically significant differences between two different independent samples, which would be recorded in

the respondents in two independent samples. The Mann - Whitney test is a test used when comparing two samples. Based on the above, the following hypothesis H1 was developed: „There are significant differences among Bosnian- Japanese students at learning EFL, these differences can be found in General level of knowing the English language“. The results of testing the hypothesis 1 are clearly explained below in Table 3.

Table 3.

Differences in General level of knowing English language

Test Statistics^a

	GenKnowEL
Mann-Whitney U	665.50
Wilcoxon W	2495.50
Z	-5.97
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.00

a. Grouping Variable: Country

The value of the test is $U=665.50$, $W=2495.50$; $z=-5.97$; $p < 0.05$, indicating no differences in the context of general knowledge of English between Japanese and Bosnian students is rejected and the H1 hypothesis is accepted, which determines that there are significant differences between Bosnian and Japanese students in the context of general knowledge of English. The arithmetic means rank (Bosnian students = 41, Japanese students = 79), indicates that Japanese students express a higher level of general knowledge of English than Bosnian students.

Vocabulary learning

According to the results of this survey, neither Bosnian nor Japanese students are too committed to learning new words. Japanese students make a list of new words more often ($M=2.35$, $SD=0.97$), search for and find new words and translate them ($M=2.65$, $SD=1.08$), and are more diligent in writing than Bosnian students. Japanese students are more likely to make a list of new words in their own dictionary ($M=3.45$, $SD=1.51$), and correlate new words with pictures from the environment ($M=2.95$, $SD=1.26$). Bosnian students pay more attention to pronunciation, hence they repeat new words aloud more often than Japanese students ($M=4.81$, $SD=0.39$).

Vocabulary learning is expected to be different among students from Japan and students in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on the above, the H2 hypothesis was developed: „There are significant differences between Bosnian- Japanese students in Vocabulary learning of EFL learners.“ The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.

The differences in Vocabulary learning

Test Statistics^a

	VocabLearnEL
Mann-Whitney U	1495.00
Wilcoxon W	3325.00
Z	-1.61
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.106

a. Grouping Variable: Country

When it comes to hypothesis number 2, it is found that there are no significant differences in Vocabulary Learning between Bosnian and Japanese students because the Mann-Whitney test showed $U=1495.00$; $W=3325.00$; $z=-1.61$; $p > 0.05$ ($p = 0.10$). Thus, in the context of the variable Vocabulary Learning, approximately equal results are shown between Japanese and Bosnian students. The arithmetic mean rank (BiH students= 19, Japanese students= 20) indicates there is no statistically significant difference between them. So, it can be concluded that there are no significant differences in EFL acquisition between Bosnian- Japanese students, however those differences can be found in Vocabulary learning.

Studying grammar

Grammar is also one of the variables that is specifically measured. In this section, it is clear that Japanese students are far more conscientious than Bosnian ones. Japanese students are more likely to write essays ($M=4.20$, $SD=0.81$), more likely to review what they have learned ($M=4.200$, $SD=0.81926$), and more likely to do translations ($M=4.20$, $SD=0.81$). Japanese students are more devoted to grammar, new words and phrases ($M=2.95$, $SD=0.66$). Learning grammar is a highly distinct process, which is expected to be different for students from Bosnia and Herzegovina and students from Japan. The next hypothesis is H3, which states that: „There are significant differences between Bosnian- Japanese students in Studying grammar of EFL learners“. The results of these differences are presented in Table 5.

Table 5.

The difference in Studying grammar

Test Statistics^a

	StudyGramEL
Mann-Whitney U	1111.50
Wilcoxon W	2941.50
Z	-3.69
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.00

a. Grouping Variable: Country

The results of the research show that in the context of the variable Studying grammar there is a statistically significant difference between Bosnian and Japanese students (Mann-Whitney U = 1111.50; W= 2941.50; Z=-3.69; $p < 0.05$; $p = 0.000$). Arithmetic means rank (BiH students= 16, Japanese students= 20) which indicates that there is a significant difference in Studying grammar of the English language between Bosnian and Japanese students.

Reading in English

When it comes to reading in English, there are certain segments where Japanese students are better and others where Bosnian students are better. Japanese students reflect more about what they have read or said, and connect their own knowledge with what they have read (M=4.61, SD=1.02). Japanese students like to ask for the meaning of the word (M=4.80, SD= 0.75). Also, they attempt to comprehend the sentence's structure (M=3.90, SD=1.65). Bosnian students pay more attention to reading sentences correctly, and using their own intuition while reading content in English (M=4.91, SD=0.27).

Reading English is a skill that takes a long time to master. Given the various approaches to learning, it is expected that in this context there will be some differences between students from Bosnia and Herzegovina and students from Japan. The hypothesis is, H4: „There are significant differences between Bosnian- Japanese students in Reading in the English language of EFL learners.“ The differences in Reading in the English language are given in Table 6.

Table 6.

The differences in Reading in English language

Test Statistics^a

	ReadingEL
Mann-Whitney U	1455.00
Wilcoxon W	3285.00
Z	-1.81
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.06

a. Grouping Variable: Country

When it comes to reading English words, the research shows that there are no significant differences in the reading context between Bosnian and Japanese students (Mann-Whitney U = 1455.00; W= 3285.00; Z=-1.81; $p > 0.05$; $p = 0.06$). The arithmetic mean rank (BiH students= 53, Japanese students= 54) indicates that the ability to read English between Bosnian and Japanese students does not differ statistically significantly.

Writing in English

When writing in English, there are certain segments where Japanese students are better and some segments where Bosnian students are better. Japanese students are more dedicated to understanding the text (M=4.20, SD=0.81), translating, and exploring new words (M=3.60, SD=1.50), but also memorizing. Bosnian students are more committed to mastering reading (M=3.80, SD=1.03), and rely more on intuition (M=4.10, SD=0.85). On the other hand, Japanese students focus more on grammar (M=4.10, SD=0.85). It is expected that in the context of writing English words, there will be some differences between students from Bosnia and Herzegovina and students from Japan. So, the following hypothesis is, H5: „There are significant differences between Bosnian- Japanese students in Writing in English of EFL learners.“ The differences in Writing in English are clearly explained in Table 7. below.

Table 7.

The differences in Writing in English

Test Statistics^a

	WritingEL
Mann-Whitney U	1262.50
Wilcoxon W	3092.50
Z	-2.83
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.00

a. Grouping Variable: Country

The results of the research indicate that there is statistically significant difference between Bosnian and Japanese students in the context of writing English words (Mann – Whitney U = 1262.50; W= 3092.50; Z=-2.83; $p < 0.05$; $p = 0.03$). The arithmetic mean rank shows the following results: BiH students= 37, Japanese students= 47).

Speaking in English (Outside class)

When it comes to speech, i.e. pronunciation of words in English, the previous chart shows that in certain segments Japanese students are in the lead, while Bosnian students are better in other segments. Japanese students translate words into their mother tongue more often and pronounce them more than Bosnian students do (M=3.50, SD=1.35). Bosnian students pay attention to intonation much more often than Japanese students (M=4.81, SD=0.62). Also, in speech, Japanese students speak more slowly than Bosnian students (M=3.50, SD=1.35). Japanese students are more aware of gestures that are made while pronouncing certain words (M=4.61, SD=0.88). It is expected that in the context of pronouncing English words, there will be some differences between students from Bosnia and Herzegovina and students from Japan. The hypothesis is, H6: „There are significant differences between Bosnian- Japanese students in Speaking in English (Outside class) of EFL learners.“ The results are presented below in Table 8. the differences in Speaking in English (Outside class).

Table 8.

The differences in Speaking in English (Outside class)

Test Statistics^a

	SpeakingEL
Mann-Whitney U	1641.00
Wilcoxon W	3471.00
Z	-.83
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.40

a. Grouping Variable: Country

The results of the research indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between Bosnian and Japanese students in the context of pronunciation of English words (Mann – Whitney U = 1641.00; W=3471.00; Z=-0.83; $p > 0.05$; $p = 0.40$). The arithmetic mean rank shows the following results: BiH students= 60, Japanese students= 58. It is concluded that no statistically significant differences exist.

DISCUSSION

In the research process there were 120 participants, half of whom were students from Japan, while the other half were students from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The research process tried to determine whether there are differences in English language learning between students in Japan and students in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Six variables were examined, namely: general knowledge of English, vocabulary learning, studying grammar, reading in English, writing in English and speaking in English – outside class. These variables were examined among both Bosnian and Japanese students, and in the research part an attempt was made to compare the results. Thus, the research part tried to point out the differences between Bosnian students and Japanese students, in the context of learning English. General knowledge of English is examined separately. When it comes to the effort invested to learn English, it is evident that Japanese students work harder. On the other hand, Bosnian students work harder when it comes to pronunciation, and find it easier to take part in various debates and activities in English.

Both groups of respondents have less difficulty learning new words, i.e. acquiring new vocabulary. Japanese students more often make a list of new words, search for and find new words and

translate them, and are more diligent in writing than Bosnian students. Japanese students make lists of new words in their own dictionary, and associate new words with pictures from the environment. Bosnian students pay more attention to pronunciation, so they repeat new words aloud more often than Japanese students. Japanese students are more devoted to grammar, new words and phrases, to the extent that they sometimes memorize whole sentences in order to better adopt the rules of grammar. Bosnian students pay more attention to reading sentences correctly, and using their own intuition while reading content in English. And when writing in English, there are certain segments where Japanese students are better, and some segments where Bosnian students are better. Japanese students are more dedicated to understanding the text, translating, memorizing, and exploring new words. Bosnian students are more committed to mastering reading, and rely more on intuition. The first auxiliary hypothesis, which refers to Vocabulary learning, was rejected. Research shows that there are no significant differences among Bosnian- Japanese students at learning EFL in context of Vocabulary learning. On the other hand, the second auxiliary hypothesis is confirmed. So, there is a significant difference in Studying grammar of the English language. The importance of Vocabulary learning was discussed in Mašić and Tarabar's (2021) as well as in Laličić, Dubravac and Bećirović's (2018) articles, where authors emphasize the importance of vocabulary learning, which is becoming increasingly present today through online challenges (such as online games). Vocabulary learning of Japanese students is specifically addressed in the paper of Wakamoto and Kitao (2012). The results showed that 22 of 33 Japanese students used a vocabulary learning notebook for learning new words, and most of the students used an English-English dictionary to learn the vocabulary because they think in Japanese- English dictionary words are incorrectly written (Wakamoto & Kitao, 2012).

The third auxiliary hypothesis was rejected. The ability to read English between Bosnian and Japanese students does not differ statistically significantly. So, this aspect of learning English is very similar for Bosnian and Japanese students. However, when it comes to writing English words, there are significant differences between Bosnian and Japanese students. Thus, auxiliary hypothesis number four is confirmed. There is a statistically significant difference between Bosnian and Japanese students in the context of writing English words. This

was also discussed in Izzo (1999). On the other hand, the results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between Bosnian and Japanese students in the context of pronunciation of English words. This means that the auxiliary hypothesis number five is rejected. The research process had certain limitations. First of all, this refers to the data collection process. It was very difficult to collect data from as many as 60 Japanese and 60 Bosnian students, who were willing to participate in the research. Another limitation is the possibility of subjective inference in some segments of research. The basic recommendations for future research refer to research on a larger and wider sample, in order to obtain more relevant results.

CONCLUSION

At the very end of the paper, it is necessary to give certain concluding remarks. The paper tries to give an overview of the basic elements of learning English, and the differences in learning and knowledge of English among Bosnian and Japanese students. These two categories of students participated in the survey, on the basis of which certain conclusions were reached.

First of all, it is important to emphasize that Bosnia and Herzegovina and Japan are two countries that are geographically and culturally very distant. Japan is a country that has a separate culture, rules, behaviors, traditions and norms, which differ in all respects from those in B&H. However, through globalization, rapid technological and economic development, there are certain connections between these countries. Given that Japan is one of the economic Great Powers, Bosnia and Herzegovina can learn a lot from this country, as it applies positive experiences in its example.

The results of the research indicate that there are certain specifics on both sides. While Japanese students are more focused on learning, learning new words, and adhering to grammar rules, Bosnian students are more focused on pronunciation. Proper pronunciation is a priority for Bosnian students. Japanese students are more likely to make their own dictionaries with new words, more likely to explore new words and try to understand them, while Bosnian students are more likely to rely on improvisation and intuition.

So, it can be concluded that there are some points where there exist some differences in learning the English language between Bosnian and

Japanese students, but also there are some points that indicate that there are no differences. When it comes to learning and reading, it can be concluded that there are no major differences between Bosnian and Japanese students. Also, the same can be concluded when it comes to pronunciation. On the other hand, there are significant differences between Bosnian and Japanese students in the context of writing and studying the grammar of the English language.

It is interesting to point out that, although there is a significant difference in monetary investment in the education systems of B&H and Japan, the results in self-assessment are not very different. This is primarily reflected in the part of reading and pronouncing English words. This confirms the diligence of B&H students, who, despite numerous difficulties on the path of their own development, still manage to achieve notable results, which will be a great success.

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