

# Pilot Study: An Investigating Proficiency Learners' Attitudes Towards English Language Learning

Dr. Ozge Razy, Nadia Mohamed Ben Amer

**Abstract:** This study attempted to investigate foreign students' feeling and behaviour towards learning English and different other languages. The study found out that there is any significant difference in the students' aspects attitudes positive and negative towards learning English language inside and outside the school based on their response to 25 items. A total of participants were 18 took a questionnaire as an instrument to qualify their attitudes. The participants showed positive attitudes in the high level towards foreign languages such as English. The study presented recommendation to improve other languages in the future as English.

**Keywords:** EFL learner, aspects of Attitudes, Language learning.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Positive or negative attitudes appears on people's behaviours and emotions who have two or three different languages and used in different countries or are learning a language (Smit, 1996). He also argued that North and South Africa people are interested in using English in learning and teaching as a second language. They used to speak English in minor group. Attitude means students' think or emotions towards learning a second languages. Learning English and teaching in the classroom become important parts in education.

## 2 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to investigate foreign students' attitudes towards learning the English language as a foreign language. This study aims to develop a questionnaire on behaviour and emotions aspects of the learners in the English language learning.

## 3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- A. Do EFL learners have different psychological aspects to learning a second language?
- B. What are their attitudes towards learning a second language?

## 4 REASONS FOR DEVELOPING A QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire will help me as a researcher, and others to investigate students' behaviour and emotional attitude towards English language at prep-school.

The questionnaire was adopted from both recent two studies. The importance of using questionnaire as follows:

- 1) Affording is the primary advantage of a written questionnaire because it is the least expensive means of data gathering.
- 2) Permitting of anonymity. If it is arranged such that responses are given anonymously, the researcher's chances of receiving responses which genuinely represent a person's beliefs, feelings, opinions or perceptions would increase.
- 3) Permitting respondents a sufficient amount of time to consider answers before responding.
- 4) Providing greater uniformity across measurement situations than interviews. Each person responds to exactly the same questions because standard instructions are given to respondents.
- 5) Providing solves the problem of non-contact "when the researcher calls". When the target population to be covered is widely and thinly spread, the mail questionnaire is the only possible solution.

## 5 LITERATURE REVIWE

Baker (1992) defined attitude as the mental of human that influences on emotions and behaviours for targets. Gardner and Lambert (1972) stated that there are two main roles of attitudes: (1) receiving in social status, (2) integrating in foreign language community. These roles related to the behaviour of students who interested towards learning a foreign languages. They learn a foreign languages for their future in personality, moreover, they also integrate to the community with groups when they are learning to speak English. Shohamy and Donitsa-Schmidt (1998) explained that reflection of other language on social status such as politics, social interaction, and economics. The main important learning is language which it can help people in communication and interaction. It can support people to intergrade together; therefore, language becomes officially using in some multilingual society. Karahan (2007, p.84) argued attitudes as positive aspect help students to have good orientation when they learn English. This kind of positive attitude plays an important role in learning as appears on students' results. Padwick (2010) stated that learning any second language has social and psychological effects on the learners' aspects towards the target language. Gardner and Lambert (1972) found out students' ability to learn a second language is effected by their attitudes, competence and skills. They also concluded that

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the process of language learning influenced on learners' beliefs and behaviour towards the target language. The culture in society impose them to learn that language where they live. De Bot et al. (2005) stated that providing high motivation, increasing positive attitude should be done by teachers and student together as facilities in learning. Whereas a learner who has not tendency and desire in learning any target language, this learner have negative attitude and cannot be enthusiastic or motivated in acquiring language. Therefore, attitudes of learners may incorporate because it could promote them in acquiring a second language.

## 6 ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE ATTITUDE

A positive attitude is process in learning in the feeling, psychological as cognitive aspect., when learner interest to learn a specific subject, he or she thinks in a different behave and beliefs (Kara, 2009). Furthermore, a second language learning has psychological aspects as social besides the cognitive aspect. Attitude appears on the three factors and each factor has different feature to view language result. Regarding the attitude aspects has two components: affective and behavioral. These aspects are concentrate on behaviour approach and theoretical. **Behavioral Aspect of Attitude:** this type of aspect deals with the react and behave in situations. Language learning identify learners who speak with the native speakers to acquire different behaviours in specific community. Kara (2009) stated that "attitudes lead the positive behaviours to exhibit courses and participants themselves to learn more languages. Learners are viewed to solve issues, to get more knowledge, to acquire skills for their daily life and also to engage emotionally with others.

**Emotional Aspect of Attitude:** Feng and Chen (2009) stated that, "emotional aspect towards learning language is process and affected by different components. Teachers and her student communicate with using various emotional techniques." Because communication activities help the learners to show their desires whether they like or not surrounding the objects. The inner emotions of learners may influence them prospectively towards a second language.(Choy & Troudi, 2006).

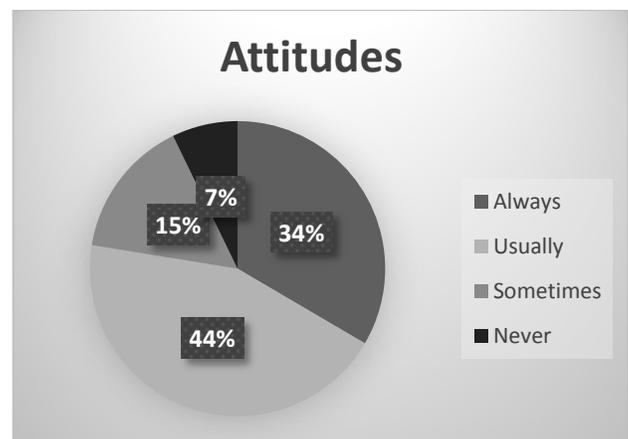
## 7 METHOD

A questionnaire was designed regarding age, level of students. It has been designed to ask students' feelings and behaviours in English learning or other languages. The questionnaire was clear to avoid any further complexity. The questionnaire was possibility of giving more than one answer. Each item is followed by four options, which is always, sometimes, usually, never. The questionnaire consisted of 25 items representing different types of attitudes including emotions and behaviour aspects whether negative or positive.

## 8 DATA ANALYSIS

Students from different countries Arabic, Turkey, Africa were asked to say if they have positive or negative attitudes regarding feelings and behaviour towards learning English as a foreign language. The categories were complete A=Always, U= Usually, S= Sometimes, N= Never. These responses calculated according to the scale are (4.5) of this

study.  $18 * 25 = 450$  totally score. This study found that the high scale was 4.5 of 0.5 in the second category (usually), followed by 3.07 in the first category (always), while the lowest were 1.4, and .66 in the third and the fourth categories. Students' answers showed that they feel positive attitudes towards learning English and other languages. It is more interesting to look to their behaviour from their responses. They have a positive attitudes to learning English in and outside the school. I will show their high expressed on the categories. In six items, (3, 13, 14, 15, 22, 25) students' behaviour were high that they prefer to be bilingual people, regarding their first language. They sometimes prefer to speak English more than their first language with friends, they always feel happy when they speak English. They feel always proud when they learn English, they always prefer to encourage their families to learn English at home. All these positive attitudes towards English as a foreign language showed that learning any second language help students to be bilingual in the society. They are bilingualism that bilingualism does not present any negative attitudes for students. They feel confidence in the development of abilities. They feel that they have a rich level of English and seem convinced that their own experience of bilingualism in the society was superior to anything offered.



## 9 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings in chart show that the majority of the subjects (44%) had usually a great desires towards speaking English and challenging process. In addition, the subjects about like studying English in schools, and feeling confident when they communicate outside the class was always clear as 34%, 15% were respond to items 4,6,10,11,21 and 18; and 7% of them responded actively to items 6, 9,12,and 20 respectively. Regarding the degree of always among the students to the idea that English help them to be educated people, who could speak more than two languages, and getting chance to get a better job. Their feelings were positive towards people who speak English well were very high. In contrast, the least percentage (7%) was about studying English only to pass exam. Finally, in responding positively to the item "They feel happy when they speak English, and they like to encourage their families learning English", more than half (55.5%) of the subjects, 5.5% responded negatively and 15% gave lower responses. Comparing to the findings of related studies that they found learners have attitudes in learning English. In Japan, Baker

(1992) conducted a surveyed study over 300 freshmen to evaluate their motivation. The results were indicated the personal objectives in motivation among students was one of the reasons to learn English A related study conducted by Lambert (1972) that he found out the attitudes of students among 12 years and final year towards learning English in contexts were positive attitude. Data were used 50 % a questionnaire in two groups. Another study in Iran was conducted by Padwick (2010) that he investigated students' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language who entered the first year of university. The subjects were 45 students. A questionnaire were administrated as the sample for their level. He discovered at the end that the students have positive attitude towards English. Karahan (2007) conducted study in the Turkish EFL context. He found out that there is a relation between learning and attitudes of students. He identified that this relation based on age and the place of learning language. He used a questionnaire that he adapted from other studies. The subjects were from both male 96 and female 94 in Adana schools. The results were that the students have high positive attitude in learning English at public schools, where female was higher in learning.

## 10 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The researcher concluded that process and challenging are important to add in learning English. This study found that learners in North Cyprus University have positive aspects as feelings and behaviour towards speaking English more than first language outside the class. The findings showed that learning English for pass the exam were negative. The findings revealed that participants have positive attitudes, they encourage their family learning English as a language. They have given argument that English international language and other languages cross the world help them to find better a job everywhere. The findings of the study showed that prep-school students are challenged and process. Therefore, English language proficiency courses are important. Teachers should teach English courses everywhere which enable learners to achieve their targets. In the fact, students have high positive attitudes to learn the English language and other languages for developing personality and academic reasons, therefore, learning English for occupational targets and for academic purposes should be considered. Regarding the questionnaire, students prefer to learn another foreign languages courses. The number of the English and other languages courses should be offered and increased that English is an essential course (s) at the Cyprus University.

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