

A Systematic Literature Review on Attitude of Students' Towards English Language

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Abstract

English language is a global language all over the world. The attitude of student towards English language may varied in terms of contextual, ability, cognitive and behavioral aspects. Therefore, there is need to study the existing works to find gaps systematically towards English language. A systematic literature is conducted to find the various aspects of attitudes of students towards English language. The results of the study provides the aspects of cognitives, emotional, behavioural, skills related attitudes and other factors towards English language. Understanding these dimensions helps educators design effective teaching strategies that foster positive attitudes among students. Moreover, it contributes to improving language proficiency and motivation in diverse educational settings.

Keywords: English language, attitudes, students, teaching strategies

INTRODUCTION

English study increasingly recognizes students' attitudes toward learning as a crucial factor for achievement and proficiency in the current international language franca (Ronel et al 2025; Rifai, 2010). Perceptions, beliefs, and behavioral tendencies that students hold toward English constitute the foreign/second language teaching, which, in turn, has a tremendous effect on students' motivation and involvement in the English language across different educational contexts (Fenyi & Morrison, 2022; Moskovsky et al., 2012). A positive attitude results in enthusiasm and self-worth, making a firm foundation for learning; however, a negative attitude will serve as a barrier to the students through undermining better performance (Fenyi & Morrison, 2022). This current review engages in synthesizing the other works done on students' attitudes toward English, analyzing the various factors affecting these attitudes and their impact on learning outcomes.

Understanding the attitude of students is relevant, given that English occupies an all-pervasive place in the modern society, an aspect that is not only academic but technical as well (Ronel et al 2025; Rifai, 2010). English is indeed the most significant means for global communication, with many technological and academic resources developed in the English language (RONEL et al 2025). An attractive disposition towards learning English is then said to be in conjunction with higher achievement and proficiency (Moskovsky et al 2012). All researchers have noted the prime importance of attitude as a variable influencing success in tasks of language learning (Rifai, 2010). Students' attitude in any curriculum design and teaching methodology, especially in the case of college students expecting engaging and versatile content comparatively, catering to their educational needs should be an important precursor to the change advanced into the curricula (Moskovsky et al 2012).

For the reasons given above, it is imperative to carry out a systematic synthesis of the present research on the phenomenon because of their significant relationship with learning outcomes. Many studies have explored different aspects of student attitudes towards English, but there isn't any consolidated review mapping the different factors influencing the attitudes and their consequences on learning (Moskovsky et al 2012). A review of this nature can unveil patterns of consistency and discrepancies, as well as areas in dire need of further investigation, all of which could provide the impetus for shaping more targeted and effective educational strategies.

Research questions

What are the attitudes of the students towards English language?

Method

Study Design

The preparation of a systematic literature review was detailed through thorough and comprehensive reviews of relevant literature, and the application of a strict, predefined search protocol. Firm objectives that came out of the study and research questions directed the writing and selection of search terms and further a preliminary search to assess the useful literature available; such were other preliminary activities. The protocol was also useful for a systematic review, which, of course, was extremely repetitive for segments in the study, but in the parts where it needed evaluation on a basis pretty much different from the classification of the originals. PT had done extensive searching with different keywords such as student attitudes to English language learning, motivation in ELL, engagement in English, English proficiency, factors affecting English learning, etc., and then went into various academic databases. Preliminarily searched large databases such as Google Scholar, ERIC, ProQuest, and Science Direct, really attending to relevant journals there are focusing on language education, language, and psychology. This broad search has resulted in a diverse and comprehensive series of studies. Qualitative research datasets have also been scouted for incorporation to gain a wider understanding of the student perspective concerning English.

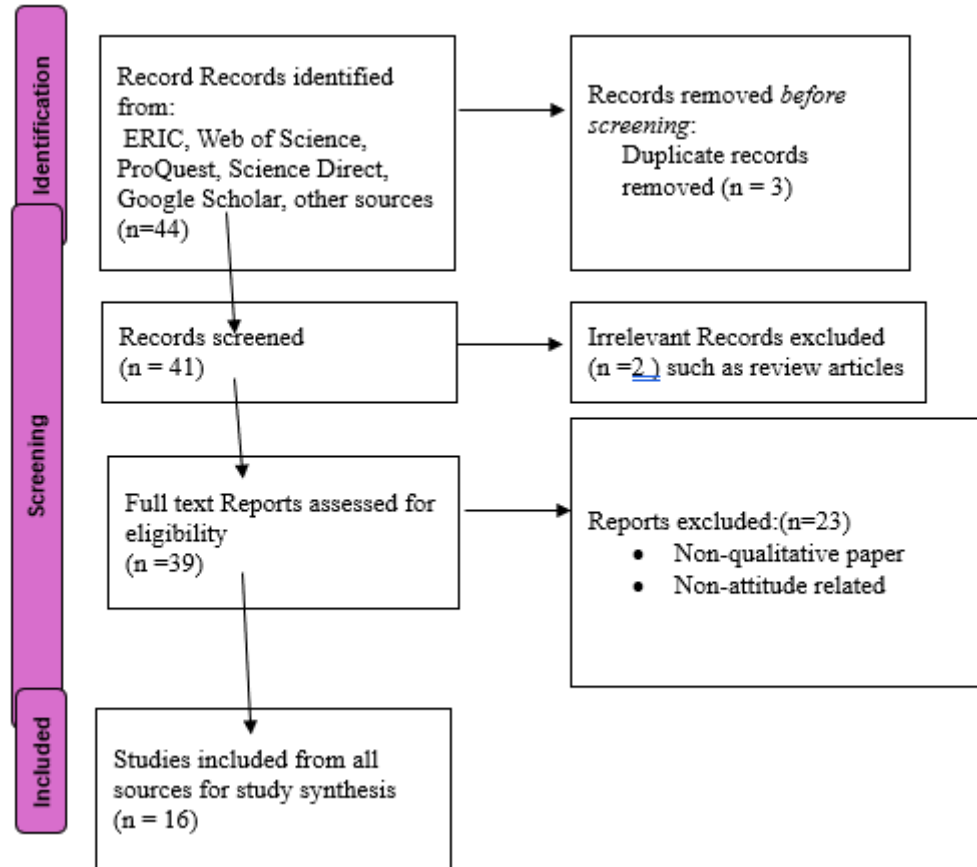
Criteria for Article Selection

Selection of articles for systematic review relied on criteria defining appropriateness and focus on students' attitudes toward learning English. The following comprise main criteria for inclusion of studies:

- Student Attitudes: Focus on attitude, perception, belief, or other factors regarding the study of English among students.
- Conditions then of English Language Learning: These articles also talk about phenomena concerning English in contexts of EFL or ESL.
- Period of Publication: The research was published from year 2000 to 2024, thus, covering contemporary and significant seminal work.
- Language of Publication: This review even narrowed down those articles published in the English language.

This is an important clarification. Many studies have given attention to specific facets of English education; this review, however, is concerned with such studies which provide strong insights into attitudes and the strategies or factors that influence such attitudes. Initially, a total of $N = 44$ records surfaced through Google Scholar search. After an extensive and thorough process regarding screening title, title and abstract, full texts, $N = 16$ articles were finally selected for the final review. Such selection studies were comprehensively found to meet defined criteria and contributed to the meeting of the core objectives

of the systematic literature review. Many studies do exist under the broader umbrella of English language education, but the scholar painstakingly narrowed the lens down to the studies that address the specific standards concerning student attitudes.



Result

What are the attitudes of students towards English language?

From the review of previous studies, it was evident that there are various aspects of students' attitudes towards English language learning and teaching at different levels. These different attitudes occurred based on the different environments of practices and learning preferences of students. Based on the review of the selected papers, a concise tabular explanation has been given below.

Table -2: Attitude of students towards English language

Sl No		Attitude of students towards English language	
1.	Cognitive Attitude	1. reason for learning English 2. level of English competence 3. thinking towards learning English	Zulfikar et al, 2019; Zulkefly & Razali, 2019; Alamsyah, 2019; Ahmed, 2015; Bhaskar & Soundiraraj, 2013; Ghavamnia & Ketabi, 2015; Tran, 2020; Yuliani et al., 2023; Zayed & Razeq, 2021

2.	Emotional Attitude	1. interest in learning English 2. feeling in learning English 3. preference in learning English 4. enjoyment in learning English 5. feelings or fear regarding classroom instructions	Zulfikar et al, 2019; Zulkefly & Razali, 2019; Alamsyah, 2019; Ahmed, 2015; Ghavamnia & Ketabi, 2015; Tran, 2020; Yuliani et al., 2023; Zayed & Razeq, 2021
3.	Behavioral Attitude	1. attention during learning English 2. positive participation during the English learning	Zulfikar et al, 2019; Alamsyah, 2019; Ahmed, 2015; Ghavamnia & Ketabi, 2015; Tran, 2020; Yuliani et al., 2023; Zayed & Razeq, 2021
4.	Factors Related to Attitude	1. internal factors: self-confidence, risk-taking willingness, anxiety, curiosity, and awareness of the importance of English 2. external factors: teaching quality and learning materials, content, curriculum design, and teacher-related factors, including teacher personalities, professional knowledge, classroom environment, home environment, teacher communication, and teacher attitudes	Adamson, 2004; Bhaskar & Soundiraraj, 2013; Isti, 2018; Zulkefly & Razali, 2019; Massri, 2017; Alharbi, 2022; Utami et al., 2020; Luo, 2018
5.	Skills Related Attitude	1. writing as difficult, and stressful as well as interesting and challenging 2. strong interests in English-speaking people and desire to spend time in English-speaking places 3. local variation of English concerning accents and word use	Zulkefly & Razali, 2019; Chung & Huang, 2010; Yuliani et al., 2023

Discussion

Cognitive Attitudes

Students' cognitive attitudes toward the English language are manic with their relationship and results in terms of their learning in a language (Tahimic & Tagadiad, 2022; Hagenkötter et al., 2024). This cognitive dimension specifically refers to beliefs, perceptions and thought processes concerning language and its acquisition (Kaymakamoglu, 2017; Voica et al., 2020). The positive cognitive attitude often comes across with notions about the utility of English and its important role for future academic, social, and professional goals embodied in skills (Delfia et al., 2025; Liu, 2023; Cho et al., 2020). On the contrary, a negative cognitive attitude may stem from beliefs that English is too difficult, irrelevant to his/her immediate needs, or that the individual lacks an innate language-learning skill (Namaziandost et al., 2024; Wu et al., 2022). These cognitive frameworks influence the motivation of the students, the persistence level as they face

challenges of language, and the willingness to engage in activities that require the learners to communicate in English (Delfia et al., 2025; Kasuma et al., 2021).

Generally, the perceptions of students regarding their competencies in the English language greatly affect the cognitive domain (Ngoc Truong & Wang, 2019; Lee & Lee, 2018). One extremely powerful type of belief is that of self-efficacy-the belief an individual possesses in their ability to successfully accomplish an undertaking (Zhang, 2025; Lin et al., 2024). Those who demonstrate a high self-efficacy in terms of English usually have a more confident approach towards learning and utilizing effective strategies in the learning process-and less affected by errors (Teng et al., 2023). Models indicate self-efficacy influencing, in turn, motivation and English reading behavior and comprehension (Anggia et al., 2023). Enhancement of the perceived self-efficacy will also be a strong predictor of increased behavioral intention - such intention is predicted to occur in readiness to participate in learning activities in a particular language (Tamilmani et al., 2020). On the other hand, those already being low in self-efficacy may also crave pre-solutions to evasions from English-related tasks, anxiety and difficulties in comprehension and production, notwithstanding their actual abilities. This phenomenon is observable in those contexts where anxiety in the use of the English medium affects one's academic performance. Thus, a conducive cognitive environment for positive beliefs in English and building self-efficacy among students is of cardinal importance in language acquisition and academic achievement in general (Ayati, 2018).

Emotional Attitude

Students' emotional attitudes greatly contribute to their engagement or persistence in learning the English language: through emotions, anxieties, enjoyments, and motivations . Positive emotions such as enthusiasm and enjoyment usually correlate closely with an increased rise in intrinsic motivation, prompting students to give more effort and time in undertaking language-learning activities (Delfia et al., 2025). Such involvement makes students active participants, who seek other avenues for learning and pin their interest in the language, because they enjoy and take pleasure from their English classes.

On the contrary, adverse emotions like anxiety, fear of errors, or boredom hold mostly negative impacts in the process of acquiring languages (Wu et al., 2022). For example, too much anxiety about learning English can lead to avoidance behavior, less participation in spoken tasks, and failure to process information even when students have the proper knowledge. Therefore, a classroom must be supportive and emotionally safe to adopt good emotional perspectives. Such can be reached through implementing engaging activities, giving constructive feedback, recognizing achievements, and promoting a nonjudgmental atmosphere under which mistakes are seen as a part of learning (Kasuma et al., 2021). Handling and preparing emotional responses of students to learning the English language is quite necessary to increase motivation, emphasizing effective learning achievements (Ayati (2018).

Behavioral Attitude

Effective engagement of students and performance in English learning can be influenced by their behavior attitudes, which include observable actions, selections, and the level of involvement in learning language activities (Arndt, 2019). Evidence of good behavioral attitude includes active participation in discussions, volunteering for presentations, and looking for possible English practice inside and outside the classroom (Rezai et al., 2025). Negative behavioral attitude, on the other hand, reveals itself through resistance towards speaking, avoidance of English-related tasks or indulging in undisciplined behaviours during lessons (Alishah, 2015). Investigating the previous learning experiences as well as the perceived difficulty of the language and the teaching methodologies employed helped shaped these attitudes. Students tend to have a more positive behavioral attitude, thus exhibiting more effort and persistence when it comes to

studying English. The perceiving influence of peers and teachers also bears a critical aspect; a supportive and encouraging learning environment could foster positive behavioral engagement. Therefore, understanding the behavioral attitudes of students and catering for those will be an important aspect that teachers need to emphasize when improving and developing effective practices in learning English as a second language. Activities that promote participation and provide opportunities for successful communication could create positive behavioral attitudes with learners.

Factors Related Attitude

Attitude formation and the use of English are components of multiple interrelated factors (Nurraida et al., 2024). Teaching quality is a critical determinant because good pedagogical methods tend to create students who have a better attitude (Panmanivong, 2019). Classroom scenarios, including how interaction is done and instructional activities, tend to influence perceptions as well as engagement by students. Also, a supportive and encouraging classroom environment is essential in developing positive attitudes toward learning the English language.

Self-belief on language ability has a tendency to lead to a more optimistic attitude which favors engagement (Narzillayevna, 2024). Willingness to communicate by risk-taking, such as speaking not being scared of failing, implies a good attitude toward learning a language (Flores et al., 2024). For instance, high anxiety levels tend to inhibit the growth of a positive attitude towards learning (Rezai et al., 2025). Curiosity for the English language and its cultures also creates a strong motivating factor and builds real interest as well as involvement. Finally, the role of English in future academic or professional progress strongly colors the attitudes of students toward the subject and makes them receptive to studying it.

In addition to these external factors, internal ones come into play within the learner. A person's self-confidence about language ability seems closely related to a generally more favourable attitude and often more participation (Narzillayevna, 2024). A number of factors, such as the ability to take chances in communicating by speaking without fear of errors, denote healthy attitudes toward language acquisition (Flores et al., 2024). In contrast to this, highly anxious students do not often develop positive attitudes and do not learn well (Rezai et al., 2025). Interests in the English language and its cultures act as a potent motivator for genuine interest and involvement. English remains highly important to students' academic and future career success, and such awareness greatly influences their attitude toward it, making them more open to learning it.

External factors embrace the resources and the framework for learning experience. Good and relevant teaching and learning materials can give wings to a student and also clip his wings. The interest and relevance of all the content taught and the overall design of the curriculum are critical in making English language learning exciting and worthwhile. Moreover, teacher-related factors have their impact-most significant is personality-how personal may have significance on classroom rapport and student comfort (Wang & Wang, 2025). A teacher's professional knowledge guarantees effective instruction, and clear and empathetic teacher communication builds trust and understanding. In the end, a teacher's attitude toward the English language, as well as their students, molds students' attitudes in return.

Skills Related Attitude

One of the major determining influences on student proficiency and engagement, of the language skills, is attitude towards English writing and speaking. A positive attitude towards English writing invites practice, revision, and consideration for the complex matters of grammar and syntax (Myhill et al., 2012) more than a negative one. Such negative attitudes tend to initiate avoidance behavior toward writing tasks, with an appreciation that the task itself requires scrappy or superficial engagement towards improvement

in the written expression. Such an attitude could be influenced by perception of the difficulty of writing, past experience with feedback, and perceived relevance of the writing task.

Similarly, attitudes toward speaking English leave a huge mark on oral communication development. Good-natured students will probably be the first to initiate contact, talk actively in discussion groups, and take verbal expression risks, fully realizing that they may make a mistake. On the contrary, ill attitudes can arise for fear of error-making, performance anxiety, and lack of confidence, leading to students staying silent or practicing less (Pysarchyk et al., 2025). An encouraging classroom reflects an environment where classroom errors are accepted as learning, with such acceptance serving to reduce the anxiety that discourages students from speaking. Through providing constructive feedback and creating low-stakes speaking opportunities, teachers can nurture more positive attitudes toward both writing and speaking. Ultimately, positive attitudes toward these productive skills are crucial for balanced development in the English language.

Conclusion

The review takes into account the student's different points of view concerning the English language. The research looks at these attitudes through behavioral, cognitive, and affective perspectives, as well as by examining some of the important internal and external factors that could influence their development. Attitudes are being considered in terms of such factors as the quality of instruction and classroom environment, self-efficacy, anxiety, and teacher-related factors. These play a role in determining the students' attitudes and their readiness to participate. Other factors to consider are the lasting effect of certain interventions on attitudes, the complex nature of internal factors, and the applicability of attitude-change strategies in different cultural and socioeconomic settings. Nonetheless, all this must be considered when trying to foster a more favorable attitude towards English among students. In addition, such thinking could result in the development of models that specify the best ways to enhance and raise student attitudes according to the mentioned factors. An intriguing research that not only brings about a positive outcome but also gives the teachers more incentive to promote and develop the students' English attitudes positively, thereby setting high standards for teaching practice and creating very fascinating yet nurturing learning environments.

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