RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY ON ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENGLISH LANGUAGE OF HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT

This research examined the effects of first year higher secondary students of Cuddalore town on Attitude towards English Language. The sample of the study consists of 236 male and 264 female students of fourteen higher secondary schools. Stratified Random Sampling technique is adopted to select the sample. The researcher used the Likert's (1932) procedure for the construction of the Attitude Scale. The Normative Survey Method is adopted to study the Attitude towards English Language of Higher Secondary Students of first year and a Personal Data Sheet. Results showed that the Attitude towards English Language score of the higher secondary first year students is high and there is no significant mean difference between the sub-samples namely Gender, Residence, Medium of Instruction, Personal Tuition, Personal Help for Reading, Parental Education, Parental Occupation, Family Monthly Income, Number of Siblings, Order of Birth, Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course and Nature of Institution.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the complete development of the individuality of the child so that he can make an original contribution to human life according to the best of his capacity. Education is a process which begins at birth and continues throughout life. So it is a never-ending process of development, beginning from infancy to maturity, from womb to tomb. So everything which influences human behavior and personality is education. Education helps a lot in transforming man into human, social, moral and spiritual being. Hence education is a continuous and dynamic process. The aim of education is the development of an integrated personality of an individual. A truly educated person is cultured and fearless and has a scientific attitude.

Attitude is the success of the students in learning the second language. Learning English is a complex process. Attitudes are cognitive and affective; that they are related to thoughts as well as to feelings and emotions. Attitudes govern how one approaches learning, which in the case of language requires exposure to a different culture and also to the difficult task of mastering a second language. Attitudes begin developing early and are influenced by many things, including parents, peers, and interactions with people who have social and cultural differences. Therefore, attitudes form a part of one's perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living. (Brown, 2000)

Need for the study

The language learning is regarded as the cornerstone of human existence. Knowing the language can help us to express our opinions, hopes, and even our dreams (Tavil, 2009). In learning a foreign language , there are various factors that influence the learning process such as motivation, attitudes, anxiety, learning achievements, aptitudes, intelligence, age, personalities, etc. (Gardner, 1960; Lehmann, 2006, cited in Shams, 2008). The matter of learner's attitude is acknowledged as one of the most important factors that impact on learning language (Fakeye, 2010). This study looks into the concept of attitude as one of the major affective factors for success in learning a foreign language. Therefore the present research is taken to study the Attitude towards English Language of the Higher Secondary Students, since they are in the stage of adolescents.

Objectives of the study

The Objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study the Attitude towards English Language of the Higher Secondary Students.
2. To find out the significant mean difference if any, in the sub-samples of Gender, Residence, Medium of Instruction, Personal Tuition, Personal Help for Reading, Parental Education, Parental Occupation, Family Monthly Income, Number of Siblings, Order of Birth, Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course and Nature of Institution in the Attitude towards English Language of Higher Secondary Students.

Hypotheses of the study

The Hypotheses of the study are as follows

1. The Attitude towards English Language score of the Higher Secondary Students is not high.
2. There is no significant mean difference between the sub-samples of Gender, Residence, Medium of Instruction, Personal Tuition, Personal Help for Reading, Parental Education, Parental Occupation, Family Monthly Income, Number of Siblings, Order of Birth, Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course and Nature of Institution in the Attitude towards English Language scores of Higher Secondary Students.

Design of the study

This research is taken to study the Attitude towards English Language of Higher Secondary Students. The Normative

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Survey Method is adopted to study the Attitude towards English Language of Higher Secondary Students. *Attitude* is a dispositional readiness to respond to certain situations, persons, objects or ideas in a consistent manner, which has been learned and has become one's typical mode of response. *Attitude towards English Language* is a dispositional readiness to respond to certain statements of learning English in a consistent manner, which has become an individual's mode of response.

In addition, the other variables namely, Gender, Residence, Medium of Instruction, Personal Tuition, Personal Help for Reading, Parental Education, Parental Occupation, Family Monthly Income, Number of Siblings, Order of Birth, Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course and Nature of Institution of the respondents are also taken into account with a view to find out their effect on the Attitude towards English Language of the Higher Secondary Students.

In order to study the Attitude towards English Language of Higher Secondary Students, the researcher chooses the Higher Secondary Schools in Cuddalore town as the Population. The population consists of fourteen Higher Secondary Schools, in which four are Government, three are Government Aided and seven are Private. *Stratified Random Sampling* method was adopted for choosing the sample for the present study. The strata specified were *Nature of Institution – Government - Government Aided - Private* schools. Two Government schools, three Government Aided schools and two Private schools for *Government - Government Aided - Private* strata, and hence the sample selection is made on these seven selected schools. The selected sample constitutes 50.00% (Seven schools out of fourteen schools) of the Population. *Random Sampling* method was used to select the sample from the selected schools. There are 500 samples from the selected schools for the present study.

Tools used in the study

The tools used in the study are

Attitude towards English Language Scale (ATES): Attitude towards English Language is a dispositional readiness to respond to certain statements of learning English in a consistent manner, which has become an individual's mode of response. The researcher is intended to find out the Attitude towards English of the Higher Secondary Students. To measure the Attitude towards English Language of Higher Secondary Students, the researcher Constructed and validated the Attitude towards English Language Scale (ATES) on the population of Higher Secondary Students. The researcher used the Likert's (1932) procedure for the construction of the Attitude Scale. The Attitude towards English Language Scale (ATES) is a generalized attitude towards the learning of English being measured in terms of its *'absolute agreeableness'* to *'don't agree'*. There are 44 statements in the whole scale. Every item is in the statement form with five response categories, namely, Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SDA) for responding. Subject is required to select the most appropriate response category. All are positive statements with weighed score of 4 for Strongly Agree (SA), 3 for Agree (A), 2 for Undecided (U), 1 for Disagree (D) and 0 for Strongly Disagree (SDA). Test – Retest method of Reliability was used to find out the Reliability of the Attitude towards English Language

Scale (ATES). Two administrations of the same test with a gap of fifteen days, gives the correlation coefficients of the two tests as 0.84 and the Reliability Coefficient was obtained as 0.91 for 30 Boys and 30 Girls.(N=60).The tool possesses face validity. The maximum time for filling up the Attitude towards English is twenty minutes. All statements are compulsory. The total marks of all responses will indicate the obtained score of the respondent in the Attitude towards English Language Scale (ATES). The scores of Attitude towards English Language Scale (ATES) lie in the range of 0 to 176. The high score of Attitude towards English Language Scale (ATES) indicates a High Attitude and the low score shows a Low Attitude of the Higher Secondary Students towards English.

Personal Data Sheet: In addition to the above tool, the researcher uses a Personal Data Sheet to obtain the General Information of the respondent. The general information required are Gender (Boy/Girl), Name of the Institution, Residence (Urban/Rural), Medium of Instruction (English/Tamil), Personal Tuition (Yes/No), Personal Help for Reading (Yes/No), Parental Education (Father, Mother), Parental Occupation (Father, Mother), Family Monthly Income (in Rupees), Number of Siblings, Order of Birth, Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology (MPCB group), Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Computer Science (MPCCs group) and History, Economics, Commerce and Accountancy (HECA group)).

Analysis and interpretation

Distribution of attitude towards english language score of the higher secondary students

Null Hypothesis: The Attitude towards English Language score of the Higher Secondary Students is not high.

Table-1 Distribution of attitude towards English language score of the higher secondary students

Variable (1)	N (2)	Mean (3)	Median (4)	Mode (5)	SD (6)
Attitude towards EnglishLanguage score	500	123.94	125.00	132.00	21.40

The Mean and Standard Deviation of Attitude towards English Language score of the Higher Secondary Students (N=500) is found that 123.94 and 21.40 respectively. The Median is obtained as 125.00 and there are 8 Higher Secondary Students with the same Attitude towards English Language scores. There are 248 Higher Secondary Students with Attitude towards English Language scores below median and 244 Higher Secondary Students with scores above median. The Mode is obtained as 132.00. The Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students (N= 500) is obtained in the range of 62 to 169 whereas the actual range is 0 to 176. The obtained mean of Attitude towards English Language scores (M = 123.94) of the Higher Secondary Students is above the scale average (Scale average = 88.00), the null hypothesis is rejected.

It is concluded that the Attitude towards English Language of the Higher Secondary Students is high.

Significant difference in attitude towards English language scores for variables with two sub-samplesThe background variables namely Gender, Residence, Medium of Instruction,

Personal Tuition, Personal Help for Reading, Parental Education, Parental Occupation, Family Monthly Income, Number of Siblings and Order of Birth are with two sub-samples and are analyzed by means of t-test.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant mean difference between the sub-samples of Gender, Residence, Medium of Instruction, Personal Tuition, Personal Help for Reading, Parental Education, Parental Occupation, Family Monthly Income, Number of Siblings and Order of Birth in the Attitude towards English Language scores of Higher Secondary Students.

t-value 4.57 is found to be significant at 0.01 levels for 498 dfs. Since the calculated t-value 4.57, is greater than the table value 2.58, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded with 95 per cent confidence that the Higher Secondary Students who's *medium of instruction is English and Tamil* differ significantly in their Attitude towards English Language scores. The mean difference is in favour of Higher Secondary Students whose medium of instruction is *English.*

The mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students caused by the variable,

Table-2 significant difference in attitude towards English language scores for variables with two sub-samples

Variable(1)	Sub-sample(2)	N(3)	Mean(4)	SD(5)	Md.(6)	t-value(7)	Df.(8)	Level of Sig.(9)
Gender	Boys	236	120.47	19.53	8.58	3.47	498	0.01
	Girls	264	127.04	22.53				
Residence	Urban	316	125.38	22.00	3.91	1.98	498	0.05
	Rural	184	121.47	20.14				
Medium of Instruction	English	423	125.77	21.03	11.87	4.57	498	0.01
	Tamil	77	113.90	20.76				
Personal Tuition	Getting	150	128.86	21.93	4.17	2.01	498	0.05
	Not Getting	350	122.69	21.08				
Personal help for reading	Getting	128	132.57	18.75	11.60	5.44	498	0.01
	Not Getting	372	120.97	21.47				
Parental Education	Below 12th Std.	283	120.51	21.58	7.91	4.16	498	0.01
	12th Std. and above	217	128.42	20.36				
Parental Occupation	Government	231	126.01	21.47	3.86	2.01	498	0.05
	Private	269	122.16	21.22				
Family Monthly Income	Below Rs.8800/-	339	122.30	21.57	5.08	2.50	498	0.01
	Rs. 8800.- and above	161	127.39	20.68				
Number of Siblings	One and Only one	236	120.44	21.45	6.63	3.50	498	0.01
	Above One	264	127.07	20.90				
Order of Birth	First	363	122.34	21.41	5.83	2.73	498	0.01
	Others	137	128.17	20.86				

The mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students caused by the variable, *Gender* is 8.58 and the corresponding t-value 3.47 is found to be significant at 0.01 levels for 498 dfs. Since the calculated t-value 3.47, is greater than the table value 2.58, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded with 95 per cent confidence that the Higher Secondary *Boys and Girls* differ significantly in their Attitude towards English Language scores. The mean difference is in favour of Higher Secondary *Girls.*

Personal Tuition is 4.17 and the corresponding t-value 2.01 is found to be significant at 0.05 levels for 498 dfs. Since the calculated t-value 2.01, is greater than the table value 1.96, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded with 95 per cent confidence that the Higher Secondary Students who are *getting and not getting the Personal Tuition* differ significantly in their Attitude towards English Language scores. The mean difference is in favour of Higher Secondary Students who are *getting Personal Tuition.*

Table-3 Mean and standard deviation of variables with three sub-samples in attitude towards English language scores

Variable(1)	Sub-sample(2)	N(3)	Mean(4)	S.D(5)
Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course	MPCB	202	121.50	20.81
	MPCCs	267	124.11	21.45
	HECA	31	138.32	19.52
Nature of Institution	Government	143	123.94	22.78
	Government Aided	230	118.82	18.55
	Private	127	133.20	21.66

The mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students caused by the variable, *Residence* is 3.91 and the corresponding t-value 1.98 is found to be significant at 0.05 levels for 498 dfs. Since the calculated t-value 1.98, is greater than the table value 1.96, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded with 95 per cent confidence that the Higher Secondary Students who are *residing in Urban and Rural* differ significantly in their Attitude towards English Language scores. The mean difference is in favour of Higher Secondary Students who are residing in *Urban.*

The mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students caused by the variable, *Medium of Instruction* is 11.87 and the corresponding

The mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students caused by the variable, *Personal Help for Reading* is 11.60 and the corresponding t-value 5.44 is found to be significant at 0.01 levels for 498 dfs. Since the calculated t-value 5.44, is greater than the table value 2.58, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded with 95 per cent confidence that the Higher Secondary Students who are *getting and not getting the Personal Help for Reading* differ significantly in their Attitude towards English Language scores. The mean difference is in favour of Higher Secondary Students who are *getting Personal Help for Reading.*

The mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students caused by the

variable, *Parental Education* is 7.91 and the corresponding t-value 4.16 is found to be significant at 0.01 levels for 498 dfs. Since the calculated t-value 4.16, is greater than the table value 2.58, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded with 95 per cent confidence that the Higher Secondary Students who's *Parental Education is Below 12th Standard and 12th Standard and above* differ significantly in their Attitude towards English Language scores. The mean difference is in favour of Higher Secondary Students whose Parental Education is *12th Standard and Above.* .

favour of Higher Secondary Students whose Order of Birth is *others.*

Significant difference in attitude towards English language scores for variables with three sub-samples

The background variables namely Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course and Nature of Institution are with three sub-samples and are analyzed by means of F-test.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant mean difference

Table-4 Significant difference in attitude towards English language scores for variables with three sub-samples

Variable(1)	Source of variation(2)	Sum of Squares(3)	Df.(4)	Mean Sum of Square(5)	F-value(6)	Level of Sig.(7)
Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course	Between the groups	7623.18	2	3811.59		
	Within the groups	220893.90	497	444.46	8.58	0.01
	Total	228517.10	499			
Nature of Institution	Between the groups	16907.76	2	8453.88		
	Within the groups	211609.30	497	425.77	19.86	0.01
	Total	228517.10	499			

The mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students caused by the variable, *Parental Occupation* is 3.86 and the corresponding t-value 2.01 is found to be significant at 0.05 levels for 498 dfs. Since the calculated t-value 2.01, is greater than the table value 1.96, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded with 95 per cent confidence that the Higher Secondary Students who's *Parental Occupation is Government* and *Private* differ significantly in their Attitude towards English Language scores. The mean difference is in favour of Higher Secondary Students whose Parental Occupation is *Government.*

The mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students caused by the variable, *Family Monthly Income* is 5.08 and the corresponding t-value 2.50 is found to be significant at 0.05 levels for 498 dfs. Since the calculated t-value 2.50, is greater than the table value 1.96, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded with 95 per cent confidence that the Higher Secondary Students whose *Family Monthly Income is Below Rs. 8800/- and Rs. 8800/- and above* differ significantly in their Attitude towards English Language scores. The mean difference is in favour of Higher Secondary Students whose Family Monthly Income is *Rs. 8800/- and above.*

The mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students caused by the variable, *Number of Siblings* is 6.63 and the corresponding t-value 3.50 is found to be significant at 0.01 levels for 498 dfs. Since the calculated t-value 3.50, is greater than the table value 2.58, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded with 95 per cent confidence that the Higher Secondary Students who has *Siblings One and only one and above one* differ significantly in their Attitude towards English Language scores. The mean difference is in favour of Higher Secondary Students who has Siblings *above one.*

The mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students caused by the variable, *Order of Birth* is 5.83 and the corresponding t-value 2.73 is found to be significant at 0.01 levels for 498 dfs. Since the calculated t-value 2.73, is greater than the table value 2.58, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded with 95 per cent confidence that the Higher Secondary Students who's *Order of Birth is First and Others* differ significantly in their Attitude towards English Language scores. The mean difference is in

between the sub-samples of Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course and Nature of Institution in the Attitude towards English Language scores of Higher Secondary Students.

There exists a mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students in **Group chosen in Higher Secondary Course** for the respective F-value, 8.58 which is found to be significant at 0.01 levels for its (2, 497) dfs. Since the calculated F-value (8.58) is greater than the tabulated F-value (4.61) at 0.01 levels, the null hypothesis is rejected for (2, 497) dfs.

It is concluded that there is a significant mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students in the sub-samples of *Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course.*

There exists a mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students in **Nature of Institution** for the respective F-value, 19.86 which is found to be significant at 0.01 levels for its (2, 497) dfs. Since the calculated F-value (19.86) is greater than the tabulated F-value (4.61) at 0.01 levels, the null hypothesis is rejected for (2, 497) dfs.

It is concluded that there is a significant mean difference in the Attitude towards English Language scores of the Higher Secondary Students in the sub-samples of *Nature of Institution.*

CONCLUSIONS

1. The Attitude towards English Language score of the Higher Secondary Students is high.
2. There is a significant mean difference between the sub-samples of Gender, Residence, Medium of Instruction, Personal Tuition, Personal Help for Reading, Parental Education, Parental Occupation, Family Monthly Income, Number of Siblings, Order of Birth, Group chosen in the Higher Secondary Course and Nature of Institution in the Attitude towards English Language scores of Higher Secondary Students.

Recommendations of the study

The present study recommends for the sustenance and improvement of the attitude towards English Language of the Higher Secondary Students.

1. The attitude towards English Language of the Higher Secondary Students should be improved through various programmes and workshops in order to upgrade their learning skills.
2. Curriculum Planners should provide rooms for the younger generation to develop the attitude towards English and hence in turn in their process of language learning and also in English.
3. Cultural programmes have to be conducted in order to improve their creative arts.
4. Exhibitions have to be conducted so as to improve the creative skills and debates should be organized to develop the attitude towards English Language.

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