

**Attitude of undergraduate students towards English Teaching as a Foreign Language:
A Case Study of BE Students at Emerson University Multan**

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Abstract:

The present research is an examination of the attitudes of university students conducted by a university lecturer at Emerson University Multan. The study provides insight into the level of motivation these students have for their English language class, their expectations for the course, their responses to the material being taught, and their general mindset regarding English as a foreign language. The instructors interviewed classmates from different programmes with open-ended questions to obtain in-depth qualitative responses and with a questionnaire of closed-ended questions for quantitative analysis as well. According to the research questions, the responses of the students were categorised and analysed to determine the most common responses and the essence of students' feedback in order to improve our educational content and policy on English as a required subject in undergraduate programmes. The analysis of their responses revealed that the majority of students desired to learn English, but found the course material, teaching methods, and classroom instructions somewhat tedious. The majority of students anticipated instruction in grammar and spoken abilities. Very few students believed that subject-specific English might need to be taught to them in ESP courses. This study's findings are restricted to Emerson University Multan students.

Keywords: Language learning, Language attitude, ELT, English as a second language

Introduction:

The objective of this study is to examine many issues pertaining to the approach of teaching English as a second language, specifically when the first language of the learners is German (Abdufattoyevna, 2023). The procedure under investigation involves a series of sequential phases. It is important to consider the language proficiency level shown by the students. Furthermore, the foundation for this method should be established by the results of a comparative-contrastive analysis conducted on the contact languages, namely English, German, and Russian, which are the native languages of the students. This phenomenon is

often known as educational multilingual development, whereby interference and transference are recognised as two key distinguishing traits. The undertaking of comparative study on language phenomena is crucial in order to address the aforementioned difficulty and improve the overall quality of the educational system. By doing an analysis of the commonalities and distinctions between the two languages, an educator will be more proficient in facilitating the process of acquiring the desired language.

Since the beginning of the postmodern period, the English language has been acknowledged and used as a lingua franca, which is another name for an international language. English has become the language most often used in fields related to science and technology. It is also a vernacular that is often used for communication between firms and social media plates. In addition to this, it is widely used in the role of the medium of instruction at educational institutions of a higher level. It has developed into a source of prestige as well as a status symbol in a lot of different nations. It has evolved into an instrument that cannot be neglected if one wishes to achieve success in any field or walk of life.

However, we are unable to instruct someone who is reluctant to take in new information. Having the drive to study is a very necessary component. The creation, review, and modification of a great number of policies are ongoing processes. At universities in Pakistan, separate departments are being formed under the term 'ELC,' which is an abbreviation that stands for English Language Centre. These activities are being taken with the intention of enhancing the English language abilities of our university students in order to better prepare them for the difficulties they will face in both their academic and professional careers. On the other side, we notice that the majority of our students are unable to speak or write more than a few phrases in English. This is a problem for us since we teach English. Professionals in the field of English language teaching (ELT), including teachers, professors, and researchers, have discussed and presented a variety of viewpoints addressing this issue. The present investigation zeroes in on one facet of this question: to what extent are students interested in and eager to improve these abilities? And do they feel that the nature of the curriculum that is being presented to them meets their needs? The study is premised on the idea that having a drive to learn is essential in order to be successful in the acquisition of any language. Students will not get the results that are wanted or desired when they are forced to take topics against their will in any learning setting. Coercion refers to the act of forcing students to participate in activities or acquire knowledge even when they do not voluntarily

want to do so. When we make a young student do anything against his will, we not only make the learning process pointless for him but we also lead him to feel a great deal of aggravation.

According to Hall (2009), a language teacher's responsibility includes taking into consideration the students' mentality while developing lesson plans and teaching strategies for pupils learning a foreign language. An attitude is a mental state that represents a person's thoughts and feelings towards a certain topic, as defined by Latchana and Dagnev (2009). According to Lennartsson (2008), students' views and attitudes that it would be difficult for them to learn a language might be a barrier for language learning. According to Crystal (1997), the term "language attitude" refers to a person's attitudes towards his or her native language as well as any other language. The way in which one thinks about language might influence their conduct while learning a language. According to Baker (1992), the mentality of persons towards a particular language is the most important factor in determining whether or not that language will continue to exist. According to Ellis (1994), having a negative attitude towards a language might make it more difficult to teach that language. Altering the attitudes of language learners towards a language and converting their negative attitudes into positive ones is one way to improve the outcomes of language learning. (2008). (2008) According to Lennartsson. According to Kramsch (2006), "language learners are not only communicators and problem-solvers, but also whole persons with hearts, bodies, and minds, with memories, fantasies, loyalties, and identities" (emphasis added). According to Lennartsson (2008), a good mental attitude and the desire to learn a new language are substantially more important than social elements that might have an impact on language learning.

Objectives of the study:

- ❖ To know the likeness and motivations of EUM students of other disciplines in Pakistan towards English language as foreign language
- ❖ To know the general attitude of EUM students towards English as a second language

Literature Review:

Baker (1992) published a comprehensive book titled "Attitudes and Languages" in which he discussed how a person's attitude can affect the process of acquiring any language. He discussed possible shifts in language and attitudes, as well as attitudes towards bilingualism. This book not only provided an in-depth examination of the attitude that impacts language acquisition, but it also explored numerous aspects and perspectives of research into this topic, as well as the evaluation of attitude.

Gomleksiz (2010) investigated a number of factors associated with students' attitudes towards English language acquisition. Turkey's Forat University students were hand-selected as research subjects. This study investigates the attitudes of these pupils in relation to a number of variables, including gender, age, and department. In addition, some beneficial suggestions were provided at the end of this article to encourage students to adopt a positive attitude towards the English-learning process.

Viet (2017) investigated the perspectives of undergraduate students on the English language through a study. There were 649 students enrolled at Vietnam's Nong Lam University who participated in this study. The quantitative approach of the study, which consisted of a questionnaire, led to the discovery of the conclusion that the students had a positive attitude towards acquiring English as a second language.

At a Malaysian public university, Ahmed (2015) surveyed 238 undergraduates majoring in a variety of disciplines. This was a qualitative research investigation. The results of the survey indicated that students majoring in various disciplines had divergent perspectives on the significance of English. According to the study's findings, there is no singular curriculum or teaching method that is appropriate for teaching English to all undergraduate students.

In addition to conducting a quantitative study, Herwiana and Laili (2019) investigated the attitudes of Indonesian elementary school students qualitatively. According to the study's findings, the student had a positive attitude towards the English language. However, their English proficiency was quite limited. In addition, the study provided the government with a number of suggestions for how they can increase their level of expertise.

Research methodology:

The current investigation is a qualitative descriptive research that gathers data via the use of a survey questionnaire and roughly five months of classroom observations. A total of almost..... students took part in this research. Classroom observation and a questionnaire were the two methods that were used to obtain the data. Undergraduate students from Minhaj University in Lahore were the intended members of the audience. However, in order to conduct the interview, we used realistic sampling approaches, and we chose one hundred fifty students from the different department of EUM. The researcher, who had a teaching job in these departments as a Lecturer in English Language, used it as the primary criteria for selecting these departments.

During the survey, students were asked a total of six questions that did not allow for open-ended responses and were given a choice between three possible answers: positive, negative, or neutral. In addition, each student was presented with a single open-ended question that was intended to stimulate descriptive replies in order to get insight into the students' viewpoints and feelings. The information was subjected to statistical analysis, which included, amongst other things, the calculation of the percentage of answers.

The inquiry was carried out over the course of a whole semester rather than being completed in a single day. Therefore, the foundation of this study is not exclusively comprised of replies to questionnaires; rather, it takes into account the whole of the semester that the researcher was enrolled in these courses. The researcher took regular notes consisting of short jottings expressing his musings on these findings with the purpose of using them later in the data analysis. This aspect of the research takes a retrospective approach. (2014) Christensen, R., and R., In light of the fact that this was a descriptive research rather than an experimental one, the interpretative and descriptive analysis took into account not just classroom conduct but also average attendance in English lessons and other classroom observations.

Discussion and Analysis:

Students provided negative responses because they assume they have no reason to learn English. A small number of students stated that they lacked interest in the English subject, so they decided to pursue other fields of study, such as software engineering, law, etc. One student believed that learning English was not a priority at the moment and that we should instead focus on our more vital subjects. The majority of students found the curriculum or the material to be tedious and repetitive, and the majority of what they are being taught had already been taught to them multiple times before they entered university. Few students had heard of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) and believed they needed to be taught subject-specific or field-relevant English, which is what we call ESP. The acronym ESP refers to English for Specific Purposes.

The vast majority of replies to this qualitative open-ended question focused on grammatical and linguistic errors that are present in English. The students were left feeling exhausted by the realisation that while they had been instructed in English during the course of their previous 12 years of academic study, they had never gotten any practical instruction in the grammar and spoken abilities of English. Consequently, they were unable to communicate effectively in English. Because of this, students have the misconception that the

structure of this course at the college level will remain the same, and that they will not get any training in the practical use of the English language. Only a minority of students explored aspects of English relevant to their fields of study. Only a few of the students were of the opinion that we are being forced to learn English as a second language.

The vast majority of pupils had unfavourable opinions of the English lesson. They showed far less excitement about it. It's possible that there are other issues that need to be looked at as well. In addition to this, we need to pay closer attention to the demands that are placed by the pupils. We need to build a more optimistic mindset in addition to increasing the amount of time we spend training our spoken and written English. The uninteresting academic components of the topic are emphasised more heavily in our course outlines and directions than they should be. This in-depth analysis also uncovered the fact that law students and software engineering students are significantly distinct from one another. Because every division has its own set of academic and professional needs for English Skills, we are going to need to develop subject-specific curricula as well as different kinds of teaching methods.

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