



# ATTITUDE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS TOWARDS ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

**Dr. D. Nagaraja Kumari<sup>1</sup>, M. Nimisha<sup>2</sup> and Prof R. Ranganathan<sup>3</sup>**

## ABSTRACT

Language is a specialized skill, which can be developed in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction; and is deployed without awareness of its underlying logic. Language is a system of arbitrary conventionalized vocal, written or gestural symbols that enable learners to communicate intelligibly with one another. Language Learning is a conscious study of learning the rules and the grammar of a language. Second Language Learning (SLL) refers to the learning of any language in addition to the learning of one's first language/mother tongue. The attitude of students towards English language learning plays a significant role in acquiring the skills of English language learning. The present study is an attempt to explore the attitude of secondary school students towards English language learning in school curriculum. The researchers used Descriptive Survey method for the present investigation. The data were collected using a well developed and standardized questionnaire from a sample of 1200 students (650 from class 9 and 550 from class 10) studying in the regional medium Secondary Schools located in the Rural as well as Urban areas in the three coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, viz., Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam. The sample was selected using Stratified Random Sampling technique. Mean score values, standard deviations, t-tests and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used for analysis of data. The findings of the study revealed that the demographic variables – gender, grade, type of school management and location of the institution have no influence on the attitude of secondary school students towards English language learning.

**Key words:** Attitude, Secondary School Students, English Language Learning, School curriculum

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<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, IASE; Chairperson, BOS in Education (PG)  
Department of Education, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam-530003, A.P., India

<sup>2</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Education, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam-530003, Andhra Pradesh, India.

<sup>3</sup>Retired Professor, Department of Education, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam-530003, Andhra Pradesh, India.

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## INTRODUCTION

English plays a very crucial role in the Indian context. It is not simply because of its status as a link language, a language of trade and commerce, administration and management; but because of its association with the life of people. The social, cultural and educational exchanges in every walk of life have been taking place through English language. English is an International language, a library language and a language of scientific advancement. It is a language which is rich in literature – humanistic, scientific and technical. English in India is used not only for communicating with the outsideworld, but also for inter-state and intra-state communication. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) throws light on the importance of English. According to the Commission's report, "English is no more a foreign language to us; it is a second language. It is a language of instruction in schools and colleges. It continues to be the *lingua-franca* of India. It is a living language". The Commission recommended that English should be given a right place in our school curriculum.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

English is a widely spoken language today. It has often been referred to as 'global language', the language most often taught as a second language across the globe. Because of the great ethnic and linguistic diversity found within our nation, English acts as an indispensable 'link' language. With the revolution in Information Technology, most software and operating systems are being developed in the English language. English is said to be the world's most important language having communicative and educative value. In higher education, the use of English is inevitable while teaching subjects like medicine, engineering and technology, education, law etc. A teacher, who is good at English, alone, can deliver the goods properly to the students while teaching these subjects. Teaching of English and teaching of other subjects should go hand-in-hand in the school program. Language is a specialized skill, which can be developed in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction; and is deployed without awareness of its underlying logic. It is a system of arbitrary conventionalized vocal, written or gestural symbols that enable learners to communicate intelligibly with one another. Language education is the process and practice of teaching a language; and is primarily a branch of applied linguistics. There are four main learning categories for language education. These categories include communicative competencies, proficiencies,

cross-cultural experiences and development of multiple literacy skills.

## SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING IN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

English as a second or foreign language is the use of English by speakers with different native languages. People, whose native language is not English, learn English language under different contexts, viz., 'English as a second language' (ESL), 'English as a foreign language' (EFL), or 'English as an additional language' (EAL).

Language Learning is a conscious study of learning the rules and the grammar of a language. Second Language Learning (SLL) refers to the learning of any language in addition to the learning of one's first language/mother tongue. SLL is not meant to juxtapose either with the learner's first language/mother tongue or with foreign language. It includes naturalistic/untutored acquisition and classroom/tutored acquisition. In SLL, the language plays an established and shared role in the community, the members of which speak some other language as their mother tongue. Learning a second language necessarily involves comparison with the learner's first language, but the latter is generally perceived as causing 'interference' in the learning of additional one(s). Language basically involves training students through practicing patterns to form 'habits'. It is a habit forming process. Teachers should work with these pre-conceptions in order to facilitate learning. The characteristic of 'meta-cognition' or awareness about how people learn is essential in the process of learning. Students need to understand how they learn. They need to continuously reflect on their learning and develop self-awareness of themselves as learners. Learners need to negotiate constantly who they are and how they should be with the culture of the language they are learning. Then only, they will be able to learn the language effectively and efficiently.

## NEED FOR THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

The teaching and learning of English today is characterized by the diversity of schools and linguistic environments, and by systematically pervasive classroom procedures of teaching a textbook for success in an examination. This does not really serve the purpose of English language learning. Every student, by the time he/she comes out of a secondary school successfully, should be able to converse in English freely with the same ease as how he/she converses in mother tongue. The attitude of students towards English language learning plays a significant role in acquiring

English language besides providing a congenial learning environment in the school, good physical facilities, provision to study under the guidance of a professionally competent teacher and exposure to a lot of teaching-learning material. In this context, the researchers felt the need to explore the attitude of students towards English language learning at secondary level. The present investigation is an attempt in this direction.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the present study is to find out the attitude of secondary school students towards English language learning in school curriculum.

The following are the other specific objectives of the present investigation.

- (i) To study the differences existing, if any in the attitude of Boys and Girls towards English language learning at secondary level.
- (ii) To study the differences existing, if any in the attitude of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> class students towards English language learning at secondary level.
- (iii) To study the differences existing, if any in the attitude of students studying in schools under different managements towards English language learning at secondary level.
- (iv) To study the differences existing, if any in the attitude of students studying in Rural and Urban areas towards English language learning at secondary level.

### HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in the attitude of Boys and Girls studying in secondary schools towards English language learning in school curriculum.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> class students studying in secondary schools towards English language learning in school curriculum.
3. There is no significant difference in the attitude of students studying in secondary schools under different managements, viz., the Government, the Local Body and the Private towards English language learning in school curriculum.
4. There is no significant difference in the attitude of students studying in secondary schools located in Rural and Urban areas towards English language learning in school curriculum.

### SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is intended to know the influence of different demographic variables, viz., gender, *Eur. Chem. Bull.* 2023,12(Special Issue 5), 01 –08

class/grade, type of school management and location of the institution on the attitude of secondary school students towards English language learning in school curriculum.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to find out the attitude of students studying in the 'Regional medium Secondary Schools' (Schools in which the medium of instruction is 'Telugu') located in the three coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, viz., Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam towards English language learning in school curriculum. These students include both boys and girls of classes 9 and 10 studying in Government, Local Body and Private schools located in rural as well as urban areas.

### METHODOLOGY

**(a) Method:** Since the study is intended to know the attitude of students studying in secondary schools, the researchers used **Descriptive Survey method** for the present investigation.

**(b) Sample:** The sample of the study consisting of 1200 students (650 from class 9 and 550 from class 10) has been taken from theselected secondary schools located in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts of Andhra Pradesh using **Stratified Random Sampling technique**.

### (c) Research Tool

The researchers used a well and standardized **questionnaire** consisting of 40 items as the tool of research for the present investigation.

### (d) Administration of the Tool

The tool was initially administered to 100 students (50 students from 9<sup>th</sup> class and 50 students from 10<sup>th</sup> class) under Pilot study. The measures of reliability, validity and objectivity of the tool have been calculated. Further, the researchers conducted item analysis for the items included in the tool. Out of 48 items selected for the tool, the discriminating power of 40 items has been found positive and is negative in respect of 8 items. The items whose discriminating power is negative have been removed; and the final tool consists of 40 items, which are fool proof in all respects. The final tool has been administered to 1200 students (650 from class 9 and 550 from class 10) from the selected secondary schools in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts of Andhra Pradesh.

**(e) Statistical interpretation of data**

The data collected has been analyzed using different statistical techniques such as Mean score values, Standard Deviations, t-ratios and one-way

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA); and are presented in the following table.

**Table showing t-values of different variables relating to the Perceptions of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students towards learning Mathematics and English in secondary schools**

S. No.	Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio/ F-value	Result	
1	Gender	Boys	560	236.50	27.01	1.73*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Girls	640	239.31	29.16		
2	Class/Grade	Class 9	650	239.57	28.35	0.69*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Class 10	550	238.46	27.18		
3	Type of school management	Government	140	244.93	25.86	0.04*	* Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Local Body	770	246.74	28.06		
		Private	290	241.88	30.56		
4	Location of the school	Rural	720	247.12	22.40	0.26*	* Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Urban	480	246.75	24.82		

**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

1. There is no significant difference in the attitude of Boys and Girls studying in secondary schools towards English language learning in school curriculum.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> class students studying in secondary schools towards English language learning in school curriculum.
3. There is no significant difference in the attitude of students studying in secondary schools under different managements, viz., the Government, the Local Body and the Private towards English language learning in school curriculum.
4. There is no significant difference in the attitude of students studying in secondary schools located in Rural and Urban areas towards English language learning in school curriculum.

**EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

1. The study helps the students understand their difficulties in different aspects of learning English language; and suggests measures to overcome these deficiencies.
2. The study helps the teachers to bring about necessary changes in the Pedagogy of English suitable to the learning needs of the students.
3. The study helps the teachers take up remedial teaching on the basis of the learning difficulties of students.
4. The study helps the school managements to provide necessary infrastructural and instructional facilities in the school for effective learning of English language by the students.

5. The study helps the administration organize in-service training for working teachers on the latest developments in teaching English.

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