



Research Article

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING: ATTITUDES, MOTIVATION, READING COMPREHENSION, AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

This research focused on the students' attitudes, motivation, and reading comprehension and how these relate to their academic performance. The first set of respondents composed of forty-four (44) Senior High School students under Humanities, Education and Social Sciences (HESS) strand answered Gardner's (2001) Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The second set of respondents composed of thirty-eight (38) Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies (ABELS) students answered a reading comprehension test designed by Johan H. F. and Anne Juwita (2009). The study followed the descriptive survey design and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was also used to determine relationships among the variables. Among Senior High School students, the study revealed that the students are "Somewhat satisfied" when it comes to attitude toward English teaching and learning and majority of them think that they should have a greater say in the content and method of English course. Overall, pertaining to the attitudes of every student toward English language learning, 19 students are "Quite satisfied" and 25 are "Somewhat satisfied". On the students' motivation toward English language learning, the highest mean obtained is 4.86 in item M3 which says that they believe that English is both a real career and a proper means to assist them to get good jobs. The lowest mean is 2.3 in item which says that no one is really educated unless he is fluent in English. The overall mean is 4.00 which implies that the respondents agree that the study of English is important. However, results showed that there is no significant relationship between the respondents' attitudes and motivation and their language learning manifested by their Midterm Grades. This implies that the students' positive attitudes and motivation toward English language learning do not in a way contribute much to their academic performance. One reason could be that they obtained their Midterm Grade because of some other English activities that could set aside whatever their attitudes and motivation they have toward English language learning so long as they have passed the course or have excelled in this particular subject. Meanwhile, the ABELS students have average reading comprehension and at the same time are average students whose grades range from 1.81 to 2.20. A positive correlation between students' academic performance and reading comprehension was strongly observed. Findings suggest that it is important to develop or enhance the students' reading comprehension as this can help them obtain better grades.

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INTRODUCTION

Several researches have shown that one's proficiency in a second language is difficult to be seen if the purpose and attitude are not set by the individual who is learning the language. Attitudes can either be positive or negative. However, positive attitude always strengthens the motivation. There are also situations where one shows a neutral feeling toward language learning when they have no choice but to

learn the language in order to complete their school's requirement. Research into second or foreign language learning has acknowledged that attitudes and motivation are central to effective Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and all the factors involved in SLA presupposed motivation to some extent (Dornyei, 2001). In the academe, college students are motivated to learn the English language for some reasons but are not yet aware that if they love to read, they are still motivated to learn the language. Since reading is one of the four language areas along with listening, speaking, and writing, it is essential for language learners to develop their reading comprehension so they can understand more what is to be understood or interpreted in the text to get the message

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clear. Researches on reading comprehension have produced comprehensive and valuable information regarding the development of reading comprehension skills and the factors that are influenced by these skills (McNamara and Magliano, 2009). Bastug (2014) believed that reading comprehension is a significant predictor of academic achievement. Pongshe (2013) on the other hand, indicated that the students are expected to perform well in academics if they have better ability of English reading comprehension. Research in English language learning focusing on attitudes, motivation, reading comprehension, and language performance is considered significant to help students and teachers in the field of language to do better and consequently improve in these areas leading to a better academic performance.

Objectives of the Study

Generally, this study aimed to know the students' English language learning with respect to their attitudes, motivation, reading comprehension, and academic performance. Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. Determine the respondents' attitudes and motivation toward learning the English language;
2. Identify the respondents' academic performance;
3. Determine the relationship between the respondents' attitude and motivation toward learning the English language and their academic performance;
4. Identify the respondents' reading comprehension level; and
5. Determine the relationship between the respondents' reading comprehension level and their academic performance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study followed a descriptive survey research design. The first set of respondents composed of forty-four (44) Senior High School students under Humanities, Education and Social Sciences (HESS) strand answered Gardner's (2001) Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The second set of respondents composed of thirty-eight (38) Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies (ABELS) students took a reading comprehension test adopted from Johan H. F. and Anne Juwita (2009). Respondents' Midterm Grades were gotten from the students themselves. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was also used to determine relationships among the variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results showed that the Senior High School students are "Somewhat satisfied" when it comes to attitudes toward English language teaching and learning and majority of them think that they should have a greater say in the content and method of English course. Overall, pertaining to the attitude of every student toward English language learning, 19 students are "Quite satisfied" and 25 are "Somewhat satisfied". On the students' motivation toward learning the English language, the highest mean obtained is 4.86 in item M3 which says that they believe that English is both a real career and a proper means to assist them to get good jobs. The lowest mean is 2.3 in item M4 which says that no one is really educated unless he is fluent in English. This implies that an uneducated individual can still be fluent in English depending upon the situation, and especially if his or her first language is English. The overall

mean is 4.00 which implies that the respondents agree that the study of English is important. However, results showed that there is no significant relationship between the respondents' attitudes and motivation and their English language learning manifested by their Midterm Grade. This implies that the respondents' positive attitudes and motivation toward learning the English language do not contribute much to their academic performance. One reason could be that they obtained their Midterm Grade because of some other English activities that could set aside their attitudes and motivation so long as they have passed the course or have excelled in the English subject. Meanwhile, among the ABELS students, findings revealed that they have average reading comprehension and at the same time are average students whose grades range from 1.81 to 2.20. Consequently, a positive correlation between students' academic performance and reading comprehension was strongly observed. Findings suggest that it is important to develop the students' reading comprehension as this can help them obtain better grades.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The students' positive attitude toward English may lead to conclude that they are well aware of the importance of the English language. For them, English is both a proper means and an end they are aiming at since they are found to be highly motivated as they regard English as a career in itself. Furthermore, students need more awareness on exhibiting inspiring attitudes and motivation so that in a way, they be inspired to be more particular on how to excel in their academics. Also, this study has also validated some studies which revealed that indeed, good reading comprehension can help improve one's learning the English language. Findings suggest that it is vital for teachers to devise effective reading strategies so that the students develop their love for reading and enhance their comprehension skills as this can help them obtain better grades.

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