



ATTITUDES OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TOWARDS SPEAKING AND LEARNING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

(Research article)

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Abstract

The students must exhibit positive learning and speaking attitudes in order to maintain quality and successful English language intuition. The study aims to determine the students' attitudes towards speaking and learning the English language. The study utilized a descriptive-correlational method as a research design. There were 266 high school students enrolled in public secondary high school selected through a stratified and systematic sampling techniques. The study utilized an adopted survey questionnaire from Canceran and Temporal (2020) and Al Noursi (2013). Findings revealed that in terms of students speaking attitudes, students realized speaking in English is important for their future job and they were neutrally like to mimic other people's accent. Additionally, in terms of students learning attitudes, student's realized learning English was important and learning English is not a waste of time. Thus, the study revealed that high school students have a positive attitude toward speaking and learning the English language. Furthermore, the study revealed that there is no significant relationship and negligible correlation between the attitudes of high school students towards speaking and learning the English language. This indicated that the speaking and learning attitudes of the high school students had no relevance towards the English language. The study suggests that students may practice speaking and learning more with friends and teachers to gain more confident and good learning attitudes towards the English language to improve their language acquisition to incorporate more meaningful learning experiences that would challenge their knowledge and maximize the opportunity for real language exposure.

Keywords: Attitudes, English language, High School students, learning speaking

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1. Introduction

Students' attitudes towards speaking and learning the English language is one identified factor in assessing students' performance, thus, if a learner does not have the interest and tendency to acquire the target language to communicate with others, the learner will possess a negative attitude and will not be motivated and enthusiastic in language learning. Therefore, learner's attitudes could be incorporated into language learning because it may influence their performance in acquiring the target language (Abidin et al., 2012).

Furthermore, Ali et. al (2019) found that students are quite inexpressive, lack confidence, and lack even basic speaking or communication skills in the English language. Similarly, Tambunan et al (2014) revealed that students do not like to speak the English language because they lack self-confidence and lack interest in their conversational ability, for at high school students the development of foreign language learner's speaking ability is often put aside. Therefore, students' attitudes towards speaking English may lead to hindrances in their achievement in using the target language.

Moreover, Ahmed (2015) revealed that there were 38% of the students have a fear of making grammatical mistakes in speaking English and 22% of the students do not have a fear of speaking English. Likewise, Lo (2013) revealed that 53% of the students have lack of confidence in speaking English. Thus, it showed students' attitudes toward speaking the English language were mostly negative if fears of speaking and lack of confidence were placed on students' attitudes.

On the other hand, in the Philippines, speaking in English seems to be very difficult, especially for students at the secondary level. Additionally, the study revealed that students have low performance in the mean percentage score (MPS) on the student's attitudes toward speaking the English language, because of their fear of committing mistakes and being laughed at (Canceran & Temporal, 2015). Therefore, students' attitudes are to be considered as crucial factors in learning the English language.

Likewise, learning English entails practicing the language, but some learners find it difficult because of their native language or other languages. Thus, students also feel embarrassed to speak English in front of other students wherein a 2.29 mean percentage score was revealed as the lowest mean among others. Therefore, students' native languages and behaviors can influence students' attitudes toward speaking and learning the English language (Ong, 2020).

Moreover, at Muertegui National High School based on the consolidated final grades of the English subject from the previous enrollees from grades 7 to 12 in the school year 2022-2023, showed that among 551 high school students, there are 92 males and female got an average 79 below, 268 who got an average 89 below, and 62 high school students who got an

average 90 up. While there is a body of literature addressing the attitudes of high school students towards speaking and learning the English language, there is a notable gap in the context of the Philippines. The available studies often focus on the attitudes of the students towards learning the English language, and there is limited research dedicated to the relationship between the attitudes of high school students towards speaking and learning the English language.

Hence, there is no current study conducted yet regarding the attitudes of high school students toward speaking and learning the English language at Muertegui National High School. Thus, this study will be conducted to determine the attitudes of high school students toward speaking and learning the English language at Muertegui National High School.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative research design, specifically a descriptive-correlational research to determine the attitudes of high school students towards speaking and learning the English language in Muertegui National High School. Descriptive-correlational research is a design that determines a significant relationship between two variables identified in the study (Tus et al., 2020).

2.2. Respondents and Sampling Procedures

The study involved high school students whose ages ranged from 16 below to 21 years old. Using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error, the sample size was 263 out of 768 high school students, currently enrolled in Muertegui National High School for the school year 2023-2024. The researchers selected the respondents based on the Form 2 of the high school students, thus, the researchers using a stratified sampling technique to equally divide the respondents from the different grade sections. Moreover, the systematic sampling technique used in the study for obtaining a representative sample from a population, thus, researchers selected the respondents every 2nd element or name of the students listed on the form 2 given by the advisers of each section after deciding on a beginning point at random.

Table 1

Sample Size Computation and Representation

Grade Level	Population Size	Sample Size	Number of Section	Sample Size Per Section
7	130	45	3	15
8	117	40	3	13
9	132	45	3	15
10	140	48	3	16
11	131	45	3	15
12	118	40	3	13
Total	768	263	18	

2.3. Research Instrument

The study adopted a survey questionnaire from the English Speaking Attitude Questionnaire (ESAQ) by Cancaran and Temporal (2015) and Attitudes towards learning English by Al Noursi (2013) determining the student's attitudes towards speaking and learning the English language. Part one of the survey questionnaire determined the demographic profile of the respondents, including the age, sex, and grade level of the students. Part two of the survey questionnaire consists of 20 items to determine the student's attitudes toward speaking the English language. Part three of the survey questionnaire would assess the respondents' attitudes towards learning the English language consisting of 40 items entitled Attitudes Questionnaire towards learning English. Scoring of the Student's attitudes towards speaking and learning the English language was based on a 5-point Likert Scale, from (5)- Strongly Agree, (4)- Agree, (3)- Neutral, (2)- Disagree, and (1)- Strongly Disagree.

2.4. Data Collection Procedure

Before gathering of data, researchers prepared first the research instruments, sent a letter of approval to the school head and class advisers to conduct the survey, and determined the sample size and corresponding respondents. The researchers conducted a pilot testing before the actual data gathering process. In collecting the data, researchers personally administered the printed survey questionnaires to the target respondents. The gathering of data happened from November 29 to December 4, 2023. After the data gathering, researchers summarized the data in a tabular form using MS Excel and analyzed the summarized data using appropriate statistical tools. The data summarized was processed through the data coding, data entry, and data cleaning.

2.5. Data Scoring and Interpretation

The interpretation of the mean was based on the following:

Score	Range	Response Choice
5	4.21- 5.00	Strongly Agree
4	3.41- 4.20	Agree
3	2.61- 3.40	Neutral
2	1.81- 2.61	Disagree
1	1.00- 1.80	Strongly Disagree

2.6. Data Analysis Procedure

The data gathered from research questions number one, two, and three were statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, percentage, standard deviation, and average weighted mean. Meanwhile, research question number four was analyzed using Pearson Correlation to determine the attitudes of high school students toward speaking and learning the English language with a 0.05 significance level. The data gathered was processed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

2.7. Ethical Consideration

Researchers followed the code and principles of ethical consideration and protected the rights of every respondent. Voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality were observed during the conduct of the study. Respondents were given the right to withdraw from participating in the study. Moreover, researchers would not pressure the respondents from ceasing to participate in the study.

3. Results and Discussion

The following table presents the statistical data and analysis relative to the problem pointed in the statement of the problem in the study. The corresponding analysis and interpretation are incorporated and presented clearly and concisely.

Table 2
Demographic Profile of the High School Students in Terms of Age, Sex, and Grade Level

		f	%
Age	12-13	77	29
	14-15	95	36
	16-17	77	29
	18-19	15	6
	20 and above	2	1
	Total	266	100
Sex	Male	132	50
	Female	134	50
	Total	266	100
Grade Level	Grade 7	46	17
	Grade 8	40	15
	Grade 9	46	17
	Grade 10	48	18
	Grade 11	46	17
	Grade 12	40	15
	Total	266	100

Table 2 shows the demographic profile of high school students who are currently enrolled at Muertegui National High School for the school year 2023 to 2024. The majority of the high school students were aged from 14 to 15 years old ($n=95$, 36%) followed by 12 to 13 years old ($n=77$, 29%) and 16 to 17 years old ($n=77$, 29%), then followed by ages from 18 to 19 years old ($n=15$, 6%), and lastly there were high school students whose age from of 20 and above years old ($n=2$, 1%).

In terms of sex, the majority of the respondents were female ($n=134$, 50%) followed by male respondents ($n=132$, 50%). In terms of grade level, the majority of the high school students were grade 10 students ($n=48$, 18%) followed by grade 11 students ($n=46$, 17%), grade 9 students ($n=46$, 17%), and grade 7 students ($n=46$, 17%), and lastly there were grade 12 students ($n=40$, 15%) and grade 8 students ($n=40$, 15%).

Table 3]
Attitudes of High School Students Towards Speaking English Language

Statement	M	SD	Interpretation
1. You enjoy speaking English.	3.75	1.03	Agree
2. Speaking English is fun.	3.82	1.02	Agree
3. Being able to speak English often makes you happy.	3.77	.97	Agree
4. Being able to speak English gives you a feeling of success.	3.76	1.02	Agree
5. Speaking English is important to you in general.	3.92	1.07	Agree
6. You speak English because it will make your parents or your teacher proud of you.	3.61	1.09	Agree
7. You speak English because you want to do well on oral tests.	3.73	.99	Agree
8. You speak English because you want to communicate with foreigners.	3.39	1.09	Neutral
9. Speaking English is important to you because you want to make friends with foreigners.	3.49	1.05	Agree
10. Speaking English is important to you because you might study overseas.	3.58	1.12	Agree
11. Speaking English is important to you because you might need it later for your job.	4.03	1.01	Agree
12. You speak English because all educated people can do that.	3.53	1.12	Agree
13. You speak English because you have to do it.	3.48	1.09	Agree
14. You think you speak English well.	3.35	.99	Neutral
15. You like to mimic other people's accents.	3.01	1.06	Neutral
16. You can mimic others accents well.	3.05	1.16	Neutral
17. You think if you put much effort in practicing you can speak English well.	3.91	1.01	Agree
18. At school, if you didn't know how to give an answer in English for sure, you'd still answer out loud in class anyway.	3.36	1.01	Neutral
19. You are not worried about making mistakes when you speak English.	3.31	1.06	Neutral
20. You are not afraid of being laughed at when you make mistakes in speaking.	3.30	1.15	Neutral
Average Weighted Mean	3.56		Agree

The table above shows the respondents' characterized speaking attitudes toward the English language. As presented above, the majority of the high school students realized speaking in English is important because they might need it later for their job ($M=4.03$, $SD=1.01$). This implied that most of the high school students agreed to practice speaking English since students learned the significance of speaking in English to account for their future careers.

This was supported by the study of Canceran and Temporal (2020) concluding that speaking English has a very significant contribution to their future careers. This means that high school students preferred to speak English, thus, they already realized the importance of being able to speak in English for their future job.

On the other hand, the speaking attitude that had the least response was that students were neutrally likely to mimic other people's accents ($M=3.01$, $SD=1.06$). This implied that students often liked other people's accents in speaking English either it was a matter of others' good pronunciation or the way they delivered English words. This means that students often

prefer to use their English accent, and students feel contented and happy to speak the English language through the use of their accent since they are not really into to like mimicking other peoples accent.

This has similar findings from the study of Yuwita and Ambarwati (2023) concluding that students want to sound like an American English accent, thus, students find it easier to understand and communicate with individuals who speak that accent. This indicated that students also like to mimic other people’s accents whereas students showed a favourable disposition towards the American English accent as they may perceive the accent as more intelligible and feel more comfortable by using it themselves.

Overall, the table above indicates that high school students have a positive attitude towards speaking the English language (AWM= 3.56). This means that students practiced speaking English is always performed, and therefore means that there was a successive speaking interest of high school students. Thus, this implied that high school students have adequate speaking habits in English language.

Table 4
Attitudes of High School Students Towards Learning English Language

Statements	M	SD	Interpretation
1. I love learning English.	4.01	1.05	Agree
2. Learning English is important.	4.28	.88	Strongly Agree
3. I prefer to focus on other subjects rather than English.	3.30	1.02	Neutral
4. I don’t think that I need English in my future job.	2.94	1.31	Neutral
5. I would like to spend as much time as possible to study English.	3.68	.96	Agree
6. Learning English is a waste of time.	2.49	1.36	Disagree
7. I am not going to use English in the future.	2.59	1.32	Disagree
8. English should be known since it is an international Language.	3.85	1.02	Agree
9. I think the English language is necessary for communicating with other people.	3.76	1.07	Agree
10. I find learning English language very difficult to learn.	3.25	1.11	Neutral
11. I find learning English interesting.	3.75	1.03	Agree
12. I find learning the English language boring.	2.55	1.18	Disagree
13. I think I’m a pretty good language learner.	2.99	1.10	Neutral
14. I don’t have any idea about how to go about learning a language.	3.22	1.04	Neutral
15. I am good at comprehending this language.	3.23	1.00	Neutral
16. I am good at producing this language.	3.50	1.06	Agree
17. I think I am improving my English knowledge day by day.	3.32	1.00	Neutral
18. I feel myself at ease while speaking in the classroom.			

19. I always practice English whenever there is a chance.	3.71	1.02	Agree
20. I learn English to pass the exams.	3.77	1.02	Agree
21. I believe I can learn English very well.	3.76	1.03	Agree
22. I do my best to learn English because it has many advantages over other languages.	3.78	1.07	Agree
23. Only English is used in the class.	2.82	1.27	Neutral
24. I feel confident about my English ability.	3.35	1.01	Neutral
25. I learn a lot in English class.	3.59	1.07	Agree
26. I don't like to speak English in class.	2.82	1.15	Neutral
27. Students listen to each other's answer and opinions.	3.56	1.03	Agree
28. The use of classroom time is effective.	3.52	1.06	Agree
29. I receive the grades that I deserve.	3.65	1.05	Agree
30. I'm afraid people will laugh at me in if I don't say things right.	3.36	1.11	Neutral
31. Materials and activities are appropriate and interesting.	3.68	.89	Agree
32. My English teacher is able to simplify difficult material so I can understand it.	3.59	1.05	Agree
33. My English teacher teaches in a manner that helps me learn.	3.93	1.02	Agree
34. Native English speakers make the best English teachers.	3.63	1.09	Agree
35. My English teacher is a good example of the ideal English speaker.	3.89	1.04	Agree
36. I understand what my English teacher is saying without a problem.	3.49	.99	Agree
37. The pronunciation of my English teacher is good.	3.91	1.07	Agree
38. I understand my English teacher's pronunciation easily.	3.68	1.04	Agree
39. English teachers should all speak with a perfect American accent.	3.38	1.17	Neutral
40. I don't care where my teacher is from, as long as he/she is a	3.81	1.19	Agree

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is from, as long as he/she is a good teacher for me.			
Average Weighted Mean	3.46		Agree

Table 4 shows the respondents' characterized learning attitudes toward the English language. As presented above, the majority of the high school students strongly agreed that learning English is important ($M=4.28$, $SD=.88$). This indicated that students greatly realized learning English was indeed important and was practiced successively.

This has similar findings from the study of Rohi et al. (2023) concluding that learning English is important and may encourage students to pay more attention to it. Moreover, the study also found out that most of the students felt that English is important to foster their interest in the language and encourage them to learn more. Thus, it indicated that learning English was indeed important.

Meanwhile, high school students disagreed that learning English is a waste of time as their least learning attitude ($M=2.49$, $SD= 1.36$). This indicated that the English language is not a waste of time for the students to practice learning. Thus, students have an eagerness and interest to learn and practice the English language to improve their skills and may learning the English language serves as a fun-activities during their leisure time. Similarly, based on the study findings from the study of Rohi et al. (2023) stated that most of the students preferred studying English after school, and learning English is not a waste of time.

Overall, the learning attitudes presented above indicate that high school students have a positive attitude towards learning the English language ($AWM= 3.46$). This implied that students have a big intention to learn and to use English properly to account for achieving better language acquisitions. Moreover, the positive attitudes of the high school students towards learning the English language would lead them to exert more effort and interest in practicing learning the language. This implies that students have good learning attitudes that greatly influence how they perform, think, and behave towards the English language.

Table 5
Correlation Between Speaking and Learning Attitudes of High School Students Towards English Language

	r value	p value	Correlation	Interpretation
Speaking Attitudes				
Learning Attitudes	.142	.549	Negligible Correlation	Accept Null Hypothesis

Table 5 shows the results of the Pearson’s correlation which revealed the correlation between speaking and learning attitudes of high school students towards the English language. Findings revealed that there is a negligible correlation between speaking and learning English language ($r=.142$). This indicated that there is no relationship between the attitudes of high school students towards speaking and learning the English language. Since the computed p-value (.549) is higher than the 0.05 level of significance, thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between the attitudes of high school students towards speaking and learning the English language. This indicated that students’ attitudes toward the English language will not affect or make a difference in their attitudes toward speaking and learning. Thus, there is no relevance between speaking and learning attitudes regardless of how often they practiced and how much effort a student exerted to master and no further connection to the student’s attitudes in speaking and learning the English language.

Moreover, the speaking attitudes of the high school students will not influence their learning attitudes towards the English language. This indicated that no matter how good or bad their speaking attitudes are, it will not affect their learning attitudes. This means that students speaking attitudes will not correlate to their achievement if they have a good language learning attitude toward English.

However, this finding was contradicted by the study of Syafrizal et. Al (2018) who concluded that students' language learning attitudes towards English have a positive significant correlation with students speaking attitudes. Thus, regardless of the student's lack studying English intuition, there is still a significant relationship between the attitudes of the students toward learning and speaking English.

4. Conclusions

Characterizing good speaking and learning attitudes toward the English language can be a big help for students to realize its significance in different fields. Having a positive speaking attitude is defined as a good way for a student to spend time practicing English language fluency and having a good learning attitude towards the English language is how a student perceives learning positively. Additionally, the respondents' speaking attitudes towards the English language are always practiced, thus, students have a positive attitude towards the English language. More so, students were interested in speaking English, hence, the English language is important for their future jobs, and often like to mimic other people's accents. Thus, students must exhibit better English-speaking attitudes for the benefit of gaining quality knowledge that will enhance students' English language acquisition. Furthermore, findings revealed that learning English is important and that learning English is not a waste of time. Thus, it showed that students have a high interest in English and are motivated to learn English. In addition, positive learning attitudes will allow students to be independent in learning and being able to equip with self-confidence to develop a good learning attitude. Nonetheless, students should still enhance their speaking and learning abilities in the English language which will help them nurture the skills and potential in gaining positive attitudes. The students could also get determination in learning if one is well-equipped with positive attitudes towards the English language especially for high school students who were close to stepping into college. The study suggest that students may practice speaking and learning more with friends and teachers to gain more confident and good learning attitudes towards the English language to improve their language acquisition to incorporate more meaningful learning experiences that would challenge their knowledge and maximize the opportunity for real language exposure.

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Appendix A Permission Letter on Data Gathering



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region VIII- Eastern Visayas
Schools Division of Leyte
MUERTEGUI NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
Daja Diot, San Isidro, Leyte, 6535

November 29, 2023

To:

**Class Section Adviser
Subject Teacher**

Ma'am/Sir:

Greetings!

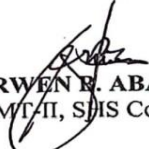
The undersigned below would like to ask permission to allow the following grade 12 student-researchers to use ample time in your class to conduct a survey of your students as they were selected as the respondents for the research entitled **“Attitudes of High School Students Towards Speaking and Learning the English Language”**.

Rest assured that anonymity and confidentiality of the student’s identity will be of utmost care and observed during the gathering of the data.


Thank you for your cooperation. God Bless!


Very truly yours,

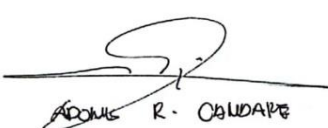

TEOMAR JAMES A. ROSAS
MT-I, Research Adviser


JERWEN R. ABAYON, MAT
MT-II, S/DIS Coordinator

Noted by:


ALLAN R. VALIENTE, MPM
School Head, Head Teacher IV


MONALEYN R. ABAYAN


ADONIS R. CANDAPE

for info/23
Flores, runner note
JURENE D. FLORES
MARY RIVERA N. LUMANG
Nov 29 2023
SINA L. CANTACION
Kristina / KANAN

Appendix B
Survey Questionnaire

Attitudes of High School Students towards Speaking and Learning the English Language

We are the senior high school students, currently undertaking the researchers entitled above. You have selected as one of the respondents to supply the require information of the study. We the researchers ask your cooperation to respond the questions below.

The Researchers

Part I: Demographic Profile

Direction: Kindly fill the needed demographic information on the space provided.

Age: _____ **Sex: Male** _____ **Female** _____ **Grade Level:** _____

Part II: Attitudes towards Speaking (Canceran & Temporal, 2020)

Direction: Please read the statements below carefully and check the appropriate choices that reflect your attitudes and perceptions towards English language.

Use the scale below to answer the questionnaire items.

5= Strongly Agree 4= Agree 3= Neutral 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

Note: check (✓) only one option for each item in the questionnaire.

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
1. You enjoy speaking English.					
2. Speaking English is fun.					
3. Being able to speak English often makes you happy.					
4. Being able to speak English gives you a feeling of success.					

5. Speaking English is important to you in general.					
6. You speak English because it will make your parents or your teacher proud of you.					
7. You speak English because you want to do well on oral tests.					
8. You speak English because you want to communicate with foreigners.					
9. Speaking English is important to you because you want to make friends with foreigners.					
10. Speaking English is important to you because you might study overseas.					
11. Speaking English is important to you because you might need it later for your job.					
12. You speak English because all educated people can do that.					
13. You speak English because you have to do it.					
14. You think you speak English well.					
15. You like to mimic other people's accents.					
16. You can mimic other accents well.					
17. You think if you put much effort in practicing, you can speak English well.					
18. At school, if you didn't know how to give an answer in English for sure, you'd still answer out loud in class anyway.					
19. You are not worried about making mistakes when you speak English.					
20. You are not afraid of being laughed at when you make mistakes in speaking.					

Part III: Attitudes towards Learning the English Language (Omar Al Noursi, 2013)

Direction: Kindly, put a check (/) on the box that corresponds to your degree of agreements to each of the following statements.

5 = Strongly Agree 4= Agree 3= Neutral 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
1. I love learning English					
2. Learning English is important					
3. I prefer to focus on other subjects rather than English					
4. I don't think that I need English in my future job					
5. I would like to spend as much time as possible to study English					
6. Learning English is a waste of time.					
7. I am not going to use English in the future					
8. English should be known since it is an international Language.					
9. I think the English language is necessary for communicating with other people.					
10.I find learning English language very difficult to learn					
19. I always practice English whenever there is a chance.					
20. I learn English to pass the exams					
21. I believe I can learn English very well.					
22. I do my best to learn English because it has many advantages over other languages.					
23. Only English is used in the class.					
24. I feel confident about my English ability.					
25. I learn a lot in English class.					
26. I don't like to speak English in class.					

27. Students listen to each other's answer and opinions.					
28. The use of classroom time is effective.					
29. I receive the grades that I deserve.					
30. I'm afraid people will laugh at me in if I don't say things right.					
31. Materials and activities are appropriate and interesting.					
32. My English teacher is able to simplify difficult material so I can understand it					
33. My English teacher teaches in a manner that helps me learn					
34. Native English speakers make the best English teachers					
35. My English teacher is a good example of the ideal English speaker					
36. I understand what my English teacher is saying without a problem					
37. The pronunciation of my English teacher is good					
38. I understand my English teacher's pronunciation easily					
39. English teachers should all speak with a perfect American accent.					
40. I don't care where my teacher is from, as long as he/she is a good teacher for me.					