

Article

Extended Curriculum Programme Students' Attitude towards English as a Second Language in a South African University

Funmilola Kemi Megbowon* & Chijioke Uwah

Department of English and Comparative Literature, University of Fort Hare, 5200 Eastern Cape, South Africa

*Corresponding Author: kemimeg@gmail.com

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Abstract: English is one of the top ten international languages spoken by people globally and it has continued to play a dominant role in various fields and sectors. Despite the importance of English, it has been a subject of political and social debate in the South Africa space. Nevertheless, irrespective of arguments for and against it, English remains an indispensable language to learn and understand for any globally oriented people, institution, and country. Attitude towards a foreign language learning are part of factors that influence success or otherwise in such a language learning process. Thus, this study aims to investigate the attitude of ECP students towards English and English language learning. The study further explores the differences in the attitudes of ECP students by gender. The participants of the study were a sample of 98 students who were selected through a simple random sampling of students from two different academic years of the ECP in the Faculty of Management and Commerce. Descriptive and inferential analytical techniques were applied on information obtained through a closed-ended questionnaire. The study found that respondents have a positive attitude towards English and English Learning. Therefore, this study concludes that social and political debates on language policies in higher institutions of learning should not be done outside the perception and realities of direct receivers of socio-political debate outcomes. Furthermore, strategies to enhance the English language skills of the students in the midst of the eleven recognized national languages that cannot be absolutely accommodated in the South African higher institutions of learning should be continually developed.

Keywords: English language; perception; behaviour; self-development

Introduction

The education sector like the health sector has been one of the key sectors taking the bulk of governments expenditure in South Africa. The commitment of various South African government to education is no doubt premised on the need to correct the injustice and inequality that was prevalent during the apartheid period which unfortunately has had a lasting impact on South Africans and the South African society. McConnachie et al. (2017) notes that the Apartheid system of governance left South Africa with an extremely unequal and dysfunctional education system. However, more than two decades after the Apartheid government ended, the changes in the socioeconomic situation have not been substantial, with only a few privileged ones being able to access world-class education and basic education remains a hope rather than a reality for the larger group of the society. Nevertheless, the right to education as stated in the South African constitution; Section 29(1) that:

“Everyone has the right – (a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible”

McConnachie et al. (2017) offers a ray of hope that in the long term the pursuit of equality will be achieved in the area of education and its numerous advantages. In terms of further education, access was initially the major concern of the government, however the debate has shifted to other indicators of higher education sector and academic performance such as participation, throughput, and retention rates due to their reported low trends (Mzangwa, 2019). Some of the challenges faced by higher education students in the country are caused by poor socioeconomic background, inadequate secondary education performance, weak preparation of first-time entrants, language of instruction, inadequate academic support, poor exposure to technology, among others. Some of these problems have been attended to by the government through the creation of extended programmes and increasing access to funds to several categories of households in order to cover the needy students. For instance, an extended curriculum program was established to create a successful academic pathway for the under-prepared and unprepared students entering higher education for the first time.

However, irrespective of the effort of the government on the issue of language of instruction; English remains a problem in the higher education because it has been identified to have links with academic performance (grade, throughput, and retention). Studies (Neumann et al., 2019; Martirosyan et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2021) maintain that proficiency in English language is an undeniable predictor of academic success in any English speaking oriented higher education community. With the dominant language of higher education in South Africa being English, which for many has been a struggle and a challenge considering their disadvantaged background, the effort of the South African government to improve academic performance and throughput could be negated. Besides, the need to decolonize Africa has subjected the language of instruction in higher education to various debates considering that non-African languages (e.g., English, French, Portuguese) which dominate knowledge production and dissemination at the expense of indigenous languages are used conveniently and religiously in the higher education sector (Ocholla, 2020) across Africa including South Africa.

Over the years, there has been arguments in favor or otherwise about the use of the English language as a medium of learning and instruction in South Africa. However, regardless of the argument for or against the English language in South Africa's social and political space, it is a fact that English is one of the global languages, and any country that does not want to be left behind in global integration should not undermine it, and as rightly noted by Ocholla (2020), the paradox in the re-occurring debate is in the truth that African and South Africa inclusive still accept and thrive on Western epistemology and pedagogy, mainly because the continent has nothing to fall back on absolutely for the current time. The English language as the first among other global languages and the supposed language of the British, is spoken by nationals of different countries and speakers of different languages, most especially by countries that the British colonialism exert influence on. While it is the prime language to some, to others it is a second language.

Jenkins (2014) maintains that English has become the most dominated and most influential language in the world, that is why many language researchers and linguists call it an international language. English plays a leading role in various fields; it is the language of the higher education, the scientists, advertising, the film industry, transportation, trade and commerce, the internet, tourism and business organizations and some world organizations such as The World Bank, United Nations Organization (UNO), World Health Organization (WHO), World Trade Organization (WTO), International Labour Organization (ILO), among others (Rao, 2019). The present trade and growing commerce between corporations from all over the world poses a need for an internationally recognized language or common language, hence English takes up the status of a commercial language by linking the East, West, North and South (Rao, 2019). It also plays a major role in the level of education all over the world. It is used among teachers, students, and researchers, such that several resources in tertiary education libraries are printed in English to make it accessible to students and teachers all over the world, and this makes it mandatory to learn English (Rao, 2019). Similarly, the present global job market has made it compulsory for job seekers to learn English because most recruiters require good oral and written communication skills in English language (Muller and McKenzie, 2017; Casale and Posel, 2011).

In terms of academic performance, studies have demonstrated the effect of English language proficiency on grade score, GPA, throughput, and retention, respectively. Studies, (Rudd and Honkiss, 2020 and Waluyo and Panmei, 2021) have demonstrated using a correlation technique that an extremely positive relationship exists between GPA and English language proficiency across years of study, gender, faculty among Thai university students. Also, the English language was identified as an inhibiting factor to academic success in a subjective assessment of perception of factors that affect the performance of nursing students in an educational institution in South Africa (Dube et al., 2018). Similar studies (Sadeghi et al., 2013; Mthimunye and Daniels, 2019) support the same view regarding the effect of English ability and proficiency on performance. Therefore, considering the indispensable need of English as a language in the socio-economic and academic engagements, it is vital to know how learning and performance in the English language can be improved among higher education students, and one of such things to be understood is attitude. Furthermore, being knowledgeable about attitude is important in pedagogical capital because language attitude is a significant contributor to teaching language and learning process. According to Wati (2018), a thoughtful consideration of learners' foreign language attitudes is vital because it can assist in obtaining valuable insight that can help to enhance the quality of its teaching and learning pedagogy. Thus, the objective of this study is; i. To examine the attitudes of ECP students towards learning English, ii. To investigate if there exist any statistically significant differences in ECP Students' attitudes towards learning English due to gender. This study is limited to the belief and behaviour component of attitude.

Literature Review

Attitude is a part of the many factors that influence people towards any learning and engagement process, including language learning (Nimehchisalem and Pourshahian, 2012; Wong & Nunan, 2011; Alkaff, 2013; Yosintha, 2020). Pickens (2005) explain that attitude is a mind-set or a propensity to act in a particular way due to both an individual's temperament and experience. Similarly, Gardner et al. (1985) and Eagley and Chaiken (1998), state that attitudes refer to both positive and negative responses which an individual makes to a referent based on his or her beliefs or experience. Attitude can be classified into three components such as affective, cognition, and behavior (Pickens, 2005; Wenden, 1991). The cognitive denotes the thoughts or beliefs about an object, whereas the affective is the feelings and emotions about the object, i.e., disliking or liking a particular thing, also, the behavioral aspect of attitudes refers to the intentions or actions towards the object.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) in explaining the concept of attitude as it relates to learning a second language, note that to accomplish a desired result as a second language learner there is a need for psychological preparation to agree to take the practices of the second language's speakers and their culture. This implies that the attitude of the learners to affiliates of the other language determines their success in learning the language. Kara (2009), holds a similar view, maintaining that positive attitudes of students towards language learning will make their learning process successful. Fakeye (2010) corroborates this view and states that language learning is notably influenced by the learners' attitudes towards it. In terms of the cognitive (perception, beliefs or thoughts) component of attitude, perception is the way we see things based on our beliefs or personal preferences. According to Montemayor and Haladjian (2017), perception from a psychological point of view, is a single unified awareness that is derived from sensory processes, it is about how we see things. In the context of this study, "students' perception" it is the personal opinion of students about learning English and how they perceive it.

Researchers (Zeng et al., 2022; Obeidat, 2019; Dadi, 2018; Elyazale, 2019; Asghar et al., 2018; Orfan & Noori, 2021; Orfan, 2020; Thanh et al., 2020; Bargard et al., 2020; Wati, 2018) have investigated attitudes to English in different contexts (attitude components, English learning, English teaching strategy, English speakers, English speaker's culture, English writing and reading), level of education (primary, secondary, college and university) and geographical areas. Zeng et al., (2022), studied the attitude of Macao university students' attitudes towards ELF. Descriptive analytical technique results of the study reveal that generally the attitudes of Macao university students towards ELF were positive in many aspects, including their

conservative attitudes. The study further reported from T-test analysis disclosed that English minors, students who have overseas intercultural communication experience and local Macao students held more positive attitudes towards ELF than mainland Chinese students, English majors, and those without overseas experience, correspondingly. Wati (2018) investigated the behavioural, cognitive, and affective components of the attitude of undergraduate students of the English Education Department of Surakarta Muhammadiyah University towards the English language. The study reported that both female and male respondents in general hold a positive cognitive attitude toward English. Orfan (2020), studied the cognitive, behavioral and affective, attitudes of Afghan students towards learning English. The study employed sample T-test, descriptive statistics, and one-way ANOVA tests to achieve the objectives of the study. The findings show that the students have positive cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes towards learning English.

In a study conducted by Abu-Snoubar (2017), with the aim of examining the attitudes toward English among 176 students from different faculties at Al-Balqa Applied University in Jordan, it was reported that the students examined had positive attitudes towards learning English. Zulfikar et al., (2019) studied students' views in English, and examined their attitude, feelings and behavior on learning English. Demonstrating through a qualitative research method, the study reported that students from the Department of English were found to have positive attitudes toward learning English. In line with previous research, findings from the study of Masadeh (2021), indicates that most students enrolled in 114 English courses at the Deanship of Preparatory year at Najran university had positive (moderate) attitude towards learning English. Asmari (2013) investigated the attitudes of Saudi freshmen at Taif University studying towards the dynamics of English language teaching and learning process, the study concluded that the students examined exhibited positive attitudes towards English language, the culture of English-speaking countries and native speakers an indication that they bear intrinsic motivational orientations along with strong extrinsic ones. Abolfazli and Sadeghi (2018), study indicate that in general students had a positive attitude toward learning or teaching English. In another context, Jabali (2018) demonstrated that students at An-Najah National University, Palestine had positive attitudes toward writing as a component of English. Alsubaie (2021) showed that students examined in the study reflected positive attitudes to the English as a language, culture of English and English native speakers. Other studies that were conducted that investigated the attitudes of students to English and had reported similar conclusions of positive attitudes (Humaira and Putri, 2022; Siddiq et al., 2019); Ahmed, 2022; Nduwimana, 2019; Yosintha, 2020; Tran et al., 2021; Senturk, 2019; Rahman et al., 2021).

On the contrary, a small number of studies found a negative attitude of students to English learning. For instance, Asghar, et al. (2018), in a study conducted in India, examined the attitude of Art and Design students' attitude towards ESL and it discovered that students hold negative attitudes. In a similar study conducted by Ahmed et al., (2021), among students at private universities in Kurdistan region of Iraq, it was discovered that the students examined have negative attitudes towards learning English in terms of behavioural, emotional and cognitive aspects. Also, in a study conducted by Ahmed (2015), 238 undergraduate students learning English were examined at a university in Malaysia and it was discovered that the course might have affected their learning. The results of the study disclosed that students had negative state of mind toward learning the language because of the domains of usage, classroom instructions and the focus on learning skills. A related negative result was obtained by Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, and Alzwari (2012), in a study carried out among Libyan EFL students on their attitudes towards learning the English language. Equally, researchers have identified several factors that affect the attitude and its strength to include; learners first language, the kind of formal instruction used in the language and gender among others (Baker, 1992; Huguet and Llorca, 2001 cited by Llorca, 2009). Several studies have probed whether gender played any role in the attitudes of students towards learning the English language. Gender was found to be an effective variable in the study of Abu-Snoubar (2017), since females proved to be more positive in their attitudes.

The study of Abolfazli, et al., (2018), using a T-test revealed no significant difference between the attitude of female and male students towards teaching and learning English. The study of Rachmawati et al., (2019), conducted among non-English major pre-service teachers in Indonesia in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education where the Mann-Whitney U test was applied concluded that there is no statistically

significant gender difference that exists in learning English language in terms of attitude and contextual factor score. Shan and Li (2020) found that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female students' attitudes towards the English language and English language teaching methods used in class among selected students examined in China. With a p-value higher than 0.05. Akeem et al., (2021), demonstrated that there exists no statistically significant gender differential in the students' attitude in terms of cognition, conation as well as affection in the study conducted in Nigeria. Contrarily, El-Omari (2016), and Abu-Snoubar (2017), found gender differences in the general language learning attitudes among the students as well as at the level of each component of attitude to the English language. Nduwimana (2019), analysis of the results also indicated that there is no statistically significant difference in students' attitudes both by gender and by field of study. Based on the ANOVA results, Wati (2018), concluded that there is a significant difference in the under-graduate students' language attitudes towards learning the English language across the year in learning English.

Methodology

1. Research Method and Research Design

According to Asenahabi (2019), research design refers to a logical structure of inquiry. It articulates what data is required, from whom and how it is going to answer the research questions. Research methods on the other hand specify the mode of data collection and type of data collected. The research method for the study is quantitative because the study attempts to quantify data that were collected. The research design of this study is a cross-sectional design. Cross-sectional study design examines the population without a specific time dimension. The study adopts a cross-sectional research design and a quantitative research method, a method which involves the collection of data with the aid of questionnaires.

2. Population, Sample, and Sampling Techniques

The study was conducted in a higher education institution in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The target population for this study are Extended Curriculum Programme students at a university in South Africa, who by design undergo a two-year extended programme. The participants of the study were a sample of 98 students who were selected through simple random technique from the two different academic years of the ECP in the Faculty of Management. Majority (70.4 percent) of the participants are female, and 29.6 percent are male students.

3. Research Instrument and Data Analysis

The research instrument used for this study was designed following a review of relevant literature. The questionnaire covers two major parts: the first part sought demographic information of the participants on gender, year of study as well as home language and language of instruction high school. The second part comprises of twenty-six (26) statements that are intended to elicit information on perception and behaviour component of attitude of respondents to English, and English self-development. All items were put in a 5-point Likert scale from level where 1 = strongly disagree (SD), 2 = disagree (D), 3 = neutral (N), 4 = agree (A), and 5 = strongly agree (SA). The information and data obtained through the collected questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics (table and frequencies) according to a statistical procedure that if you have a series of individual questions that have Likert response options for your participants to answer - then analyze them as Likert-type items i.e. modes, medians, and frequencies, and inferential statistics (ANOVA and Independent Samples Test). The Independent Samples T-test compares the means of two independent groups in order to determine whether there is statistical evidence that the associated population means are significantly different. The mean scores for perception and behaviour component of attitude are compared between the group of female students and the group of male students. The data was analysed using Social Science Statistical Package (SPSS) Version 22.

The Findings

The findings and discussion based on the analysis of the data obtained for this study are presented under two sections, which are descriptive statistics of respondents' demographics and attitude to English.

1. Descriptive Statistics of Respondents' Demographics

A summary description of respondents is presented in Table 1. The participants are randomly selected students of the extended curriculum programme in the faculty of Management and Commerce and are enrolled in an English language module. The study used a sample of 98 students; the majority (70.4 percent) are male as shown in Table 1. 94.1 percent, speak IsiXhosa at home whereas 92.8 had the high school language of instruction in English. 68.4 percent of the participants were second year students of the ECP.

2. Attitude to English

Perception aspect of attitude

The perception of ECP students' regarding the advantages or benefits of English language and English language learning is first assessed using related items, and the results of which are presented in the Table 2. As indicated in Table 2, majority (66.4 percent) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that good language skills increase an individual's chance of securing a good job. This perception is in line with the findings of McKenzie and Muller (2017) that proficient in English has a significant and positive effect on the probability of participating in the labour and working at a higher-level or managerial position. Khan et al., (2016) also agreed to the finding by noting that English language proficiency has a significant effect on both employment probabilities and wages in South Africa.

Table 1. Summary of descriptive statistics of respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	69	70.4
Male	29	29.6
Home Language		
English	3	3.1
IsiZulu	1	1.0
IsiXhosa	93	94.9
Sesotho	1	1.0
Language of Instruction or study at high school/college		
English	90	92.8
Afrikaans	2	2.1
IsiZulu	1	1.0
IsiXhosa	4	4.1
Year of Study		
Year One	31	31.6
Year Two	67	68.4

Source: Field of study (2022)

Similarly, more than half (54 percent) of the respondents have the perception that being good at English language aids a student's performance in other modules. This perception collaborates with several studies (Rudd and Honkiss, 2020; Geide-Stevenson 2018; Waluyo and Panmei, 2021), who have asserted and validated the predictive power of good English language skills for good academic performance among the students. Good English language skills would aid oral presentations in class, promote reading and understanding of questions and enables ability to answer questions with clarity. Also, considering that English is a global language, it is indispensable to international communication and competition. It is not surprising

that over 86 percent of respondents examined in this study strongly agree with this fact in item 4 (Being able to communicate in English makes it easy for someone to travel abroad). It is generally known that having good English language skills is one of the criteria that are considered for studying or working abroad especially for non-English citizens. Ostensibly, students who have a global worldview and would like to participate or contribute to the international community are expected to be good at any global language, among which is the English Language. The distribution of respondents' response to item 5 (I try to perform well in English in order to win prizes in class), item 6 (English language modules are unnecessary for my overall academic success), and item 7 (English language modules are unnecessary for my professional development/training) respectively, where the majority chose between strongly agreed and agreed validates the positive perception the respondents have towards English language and learning of same. This positive perception of the importance of English is in consistent with the study of Getie (2020) that demonstrated that students are aware of the importance or value of English language skills.

Table 2. Response to perception component of attitude to English (%)

No.	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	People who are good at English Language have a better chance of getting a good job.	28.6	37.8	16.3	8.2	5.1
2	People who are good at English perform better in the other subjects.	17.3	36.7	14.3	21.4	6.1
3	Being able to communicate in English makes it easy for someone to travel abroad.	60.2	26.5	6.1	3.1	0
4	Learning English language skills help someone to acquire new ideas in life.	30.6	40.8	20.4	2.0	1.0
5	I make effort to do well in English in order to win prizes in class.	17.3	25.5	20.4	16.3	16.3
6	English language modules are unnecessary for my overall academic success.	1.0	6.1	1.0	23.5	63.4
7	English language modules are unnecessary for my professional development/training.	4.1	3.1	4.1	16.3	68.4

Source: Field of study (2022)

Behavioural aspect of attitude

As earlier indicated, the behavioural component of attitude reflects a predisposition to act towards the attitude object in a certain way to English. In this study twelve questionnaire items, bringing about some deductions regarding the behaviour of the respondents towards the English language was examined, a summary of their responses is presented in Table 3. Response to the first item under the behaviour component "I like English modules more than other subjects" shows that the majority (67.4 percent) of the interviewed students indeed like English language modules. The plausible reason for the majority likeness for the module is that it helps them to improve their oral and written expressions effectively using appropriate grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation and thereby making them more confident and better prepared for the university academic community.

The behaviour of non-English speakers to those whose mother-tongue is English language is another aspect of behavioural component of attitude to English. It can be seen from the response to item 3 in table 2 that more than half (52.1 percent) of the respondents' can be said to have positive attitude to speakers whose mother-longue is English language while 29.6 percent are indifferent. Equally, looking at item 12 "I prefer to learn (or be taught) in my mother-tongue than in English", with about 61.2 percent of the respondents choosing to disagree and strongly disagree, it can be deduced that the students examined have a high preference for being taught in English language than in their mother-tongue. Generally, the majority (over 60 percent) of the respondents as shown in the (Table 3), have agreed and strongly agreed with nine positive statements that revealed information about their attitude to learning the English language.

Table 3. Response to behavioural component of attitude to English (%)

No.	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I like English modules more than other subjects	14.3	53.1	24.5	3.1	0
2	I find English modules very interesting	31.6	61.2	3.1	2.0	1.0
3	I like speaker whose mother-longue is English language	14.3	37.8	29.6	10.2	2.0
4	I feel nervous when communicating in English Language.	22.4	19.4	7.1	30.6	18.4
5	On campus I enjoy the company of native speakers	15.3	43.9	24.5	10.2	3.1
6	On campus I prefer to speak in English rather than my own language	18.4	17.3	20.4	30.6	9.2
7	I feel sensitive about my cultural identity when I communicate in English	3.1	21.4	17.3	31.6	22.4
8	I make effort to perform well in English modules because of pressure from my friends	10.2	27.6	3.1	30.6	25.5
9	I feel happy when I do well in English modules.	74.5	20.4	0	0	2.0
10	It is important to attend English module classes regularly and to do what is expected of one	76.5	15.3	1.0	2.0	2.0
11	If I miss my English class, I do plan to catch up with what I missed	60.2	25.5	3.1	3.1	3.1
12	I prefer to learn (or be taught) in my mother-tongue than in English	7.1	12.2	15.3	44.9	16.3

Source: Field of study (2022)

Self-Development towards English language skills

Having determined that the respondents in this study have a positive perception and an appropriate attitude towards the English language and learning, it is further explored in this study the means through which respondents are making effort to enhance their English language skills, this is presented in Table 4. Evidence from literature shows that there are diverse ways through which students can enhance their reading, writing, and speaking skills. Some of these include ICT, the internet, multimedia and social media resources like YouTube, Facebook amongst others. It can be observed from the Table 4 that the majority of the respondents (89.8 percent and 90.8 percent) in this study strongly agreed and agreed that improving their English language skills is a priority to them (item 1), and they would do everything possible to improve their skills (item 2).

Table 4. Respondents' response on self-development toward English

No.	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Improving my English skills is a priority for me love to improve my English Language Skills	58.2	31.6	3.1	2.0	1.0
2	I would like to do anything I can to improve my English Language Skills	54.1	36.7	4.1	0	1.0
3	I regularly read materials written in English Language	38.8	41.8	11.2	3.1	1.0
4	I reinforce my English skills levels by looking for material on websites related to English Learning	26.5	43.9	16.3	6.1	2.0
5	I reinforce my English skills levels by looking for material on websites related to English Learning with multimedia materials	29.6	40.8	15.3	8.2	2.0
6	I watch movies in English without	30.6	42.9	10.2	9.2	2.0
7	I listen to music in English often	34.7	32.7	13.3	11.2	4.1

Source: Field of study (2022)

From the responses to strategies used by these respondents to improve their English language skills include reading material written in English Language, looking for material on websites related to English Learning with multimedia materials, watching movies in English and constantly listening to music in English. These strategies have been identified and proven in literature to be effective in enhancing English language skills (Khan et al., 2016).

Attitude to English language and gender

To determine whether female and male student participants have different attitudes towards learning English language, an inferential statistical analysis was carried out. As it can be seen in Table 5, the overall mean score of female students' attitudes is 3.5617 (SD = 0.41266) while it is 3.5519 (SD = 0.29484) for male students. The difference in mean score is 0.0098. It indicates that there is not a significant difference. Moreover, the results of independent sample T-test (Table 6) shows that the p-value in both Levene's test (1.224) and T-test (-0.114) is greater than the alpha level (0.05). Therefore, it is concluded that there is no statistically significant difference between females and males' attitudes towards learning English language.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of attitudes toward learning English language by gender of respondents

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Attitude	Male	28	3.5519	0.29484	0.05572
	Female	69	3.5617	0.41266	0.04968

Source: Field of study (2022)

Table 6. Independent sample T-test of attitude of students by gender

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
Attitude	Equal variances assumed	1.224	0.271	-0.114	95	0.910	-0.00976	0.08579	-0.18008	0.16056
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.131	69.539	0.896	-0.00976	0.07465	-0.15866	0.13915

Source: Author (2022)

Conclusion and Recommendations

Irrespective of the prevailing arguments for and against English Language in South Africa, the importance of English language learning and use in every sector of the contemporary globalized world cannot be over-emphasized. Also, knowing that success in language learning depends on several factors including attitude in terms of perception and behaviour, this study focused on understanding the attitude of ECP students to English language in a higher institution in South Africa. The quantitative information assisted in providing understanding that both the male and female participating students have good perception and positive behaviour towards English language learning and speakers. This may lead to conclude that they are aware of the importance of English language, and learning it is an important subject. It was also discovered that there is no significant difference between male and female students' attitudes, the mean of attitude among the students by gender was relatively the same.

The positive attitudes of the students should be taking into consideration for more improvement of students' abilities. Consequently, considering the belief of the students and the reality of the benefits of learning English language, this study motivates that social and political debates on language policies in higher institutions of learning should not be done outside the perception and realities of direct receivers of socio-political debate outcomes. Furthermore, strategies to enhance the English language skills of the students in the midst of the eleven recognized national languages that cannot be absolutely accommodated in the South African higher institutions of learning should be continually developed.

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