

## The Correlation Between EFL Students' Attitude And Their Learning Achievement

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### Abstract

The study aims to determine whether or not there is a correlation between students' attitudes in learning English and students' learning achievement at SMA Negeri 1 X Koto Tanah Datar Regency. The study population was class x students, totaling 171 students from 5 classes. The sample was taken using simple random sampling technique so that a sample of 50 students was obtained. Data collection techniques using questionnaires and documentation, then analyzed using the Product Moment Correlation formula. The results showed that students had a positive attitude towards learning English with the results of descriptive analysis showing an average score of 75,6. The correlation coefficient of student attitude and student learning achievement was obtained as  $r_{xy} = 0,232$  with a weak correlation level. Then the result is compared with  $r_{table}$   $df = n-2$  significant level of 5% is 0,284 ( $0,232 < 0,284$ ), the significant  $r$  value that has been obtained in the table is 0,053 where  $0,053 > 0,05$ . After conducting the  $t$  test, the value of  $t_{count} = 1,651$  is compared with  $t_{table} = 1,677$  for a significant level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0,05 and  $df = n-2$ . This means that  $r_{count} < r_{table}$  and  $t_{count} < t_{table}$ , which means  $H_0$  is accepted and  $H_1$  is rejected. Thus the researchers concludes that there is no correlation between students' attitudes and learning achievement in students' English learning at SMA Negeri 1 X Koto Tanah Datar Regency.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Attitudes contribute to all areas of life including education. Attitude determines how students react to situations. It means that when students have an attitude, there is a willingness of students to respond to a situation, object, or event. Students respond in English learning means that students have an attitude towards English learning. Attitude plays an important role in language learning, because attitude is one of the main factors in language learning. Similarly, Peric & Radic (2021) stated that of the many driving factors in language learning, attitude is the main one. Masic & Becirovic (2021) in their research said "besides motivation attitude is considered an important factor in the process of language acquisition.

Attitudes can change over time and in certain situations and are also based on life experiences. There are two types of attitude change towards language learning; positive and negative. Students who have a positive attitude towards language learning tend to be successful learners (Imsa-ard, 2020). As the phenomenon found in SMA Negeri 1 X Koto Tanah Datar Regency related to the attitude of class x students in learning English such as; First, students who have a positive attitude seem happy in participating in English learning. Students are active and participate well in learning. When doing exercises students ask the teacher what they do not understand. In addition, when reviewing the previous lesson, students raise their hands to review last week's lesson. So that the learning outcomes obtained by students are satisfactory. Second, students who have a negative attitude assume that English is not needed to speak in everyday life, so students do not focus on following English learning, students choose to be busy with their other activities outside of English learning. Students ask permission from the teacher when learning is taking place and do not return to class after getting permission to leave. In the end, the learning outcomes obtained by students are not satisfactory. Students who have a positive attitude towards language produce better performance while negative attitudes can hinder the learning process and reduce student achievement (Larasati & Simatupang, 2020). Getie (2020) states "both negative

and positive attitudes have a strong impact on the success of language learning". From the phenomena encountered in the field, it can be concluded that students' attitudes towards learning English are directly proportional to their learning achievements. Positive and negative attitudes determine the results in language learning, if you have a positive attitude it will have a positive impact and a negative attitude will have a negative impact as well (Masic & Becirovic, 2021).

Changes in attitudes towards language learning research can determine whether or not there is a correlation between students' attitudes and their learning achievements. Citing some research results related to the correlation of attitudes and learning achievement, Vahdany et al., (2015) shows the results of a significant correlation between student attitudes and their achievement, besides that teacher attitudes also have a significant correlation with student achievement. Ataman & Eskicumali (2016) also proved that students have a positive attitude towards learning English and there is a positive correlation between students' attitudes towards learning English and their academic success". A correlation study on English learning achievement was also conducted by (Samad et al. al., 2018). The researcher's findings show that students have more integrative motivation than instrumental, students have a moderate level of learning attitude. Then the researchers found a fairly low correlation between attitude and student achievement. In this study, the availability of supporting components of research, namely student attitudes and learning achievement, the two variables are the right reason for researchers to conduct correlation research. The following query elaborates the issue of this study: "Is there any correlation between students' attitude and English learning achievement of class x students in SMA Negeri 1 X Koto Tanah Datar Regency or not?". Then the researchers found a fairly low correlation between attitude and student achievement. In this study, the availability of supporting components of research, namely student attitudes and learning achievement, the two variables are the right reason for researchers to conduct correlation research. The following query elaborates the issue of this study: "Is there any correlation between students' attitude and English learning achievement of class x students in SMA Negeri 1 X Koto Tanah Datar Regency or not?". Then the researchers found a fairly low correlation between attitude and student achievement. In this study, the availability of supporting components of research, namely student attitudes and learning achievement, the two variables are the right reason for researchers to conduct correlation research. The following query elaborates the issue of this study: "Is there any correlation between students' attitude and English learning achievement of class x students in SMA Negeri 1 X Koto Tanah Datar Regency or not?".

Attitude gives color or style to individual behavior, so that others can predict how an individual will respond when faced with a situation or problem. Attitude can be defined as an individual's treatment of an object, situation, or event that is oriented towards positive and negative forms or likes and dislikes. Ganapathy & Ying (2016) define attitude as an expression of like or dislike for a place, person, event or object. This means that individual attitudes are formed in relation to objects encountered through the perception process. Positive or negative relationships formed by individuals lead to attitudes that also vary. According to Tódor & Dégi (2016) a positive attitude is an attitude that leads to increased motivation and leads to better mastery of a particular language. Sengkey & Galag (2018) concluded that the definition of attitude refers to the positive or negative responses of individuals or groups in response to events around them. Attitudes can be in the mind or emotional state of individuals about something, especially those that are revealed in their behavior. The same statement was expressed by Mekaël & Yavuz (2020) 'Attitude' is as a person's thoughts or emotional state about something, especially those exposed in their behavior. Attitude comes from a complex unity, feelings, beliefs that indicate the direction of human behavior to act. According to Thuan (2022) in his study, attitude is traditionally defined as a complex and long-lasting tendency that influences individuals to act in a certain way.

There are many things we need to know about attitudes. Attitude basically cannot be seen directly. Knowing someone's attitude towards a particular object can be through the components

of attitude. Attitude includes three components in it, namely: knowledge (cognitive), behavior (conative) and emotions (affective) (Abidin et al., 2012; Imsa-ard, 2020; O'Meara & Tinkel 2021).

**Knowledge.** The knowledge component relates to students' beliefs about their language learning knowledge and understanding. This means that the knowledge component is the same as views (opinions) especially when it comes to issues or controversial issues; for example, students think language is important and that makes students have a positive attitude in language learning.

**Behaviour.** The behavior component means addressing a person's action, action or response to an object. Responding positively to language learning will encourage students to solve the problems they encounter and conversely a negative attitude makes students avoid language learning which then causes harm to themselves.

**Emotions.** The emotion component clearly refers to a person's feelings towards an object. Emotions describe students' likes or dislikes towards language learning. For example, students like to speak English, meaning that students show a positive attitude towards learning English.

Attitude is one of the most significant factors in language learning besides motivation. Attitude is considered an important factor because it is very influential in language learning. Attitude governs how individuals approach learning. This means that attitude has control in language learning because it encompasses many things. Clarifying a quote from Gardner "positive attitude refers to a favorable attitude towards language learning" (Ataman & Eskicumali, 2016). Individuals will do an activity because the activity is fun and liked by them. Prastiwati & Suharso (2018) said "students who have a positive attitude seem happy in learning English and try hard to get the best score in the test. Students reading books,

Turning to the negative attitude of students. If a positive attitude provides benefits to students, on the contrary, a negative attitude causes harm to students. Because negative attitudes become obstacles to students' success in achieving good results. Negative attitudes reduce student motivation and learning achievement is not successful, negative attitudes make it difficult for students to learn English, besides that negative attitudes make students not focus on learning and often play during English learning (Kartubi, 2017). Based on literacy, it is clear that the behavior of a negative attitude hinders student success. Having a negative attitude exposes students to problems in language learning, besides that negative feelings also make it difficult for students to learn (Mutar, 2019). Negative attitudes have an unpleasant impression.

Learning achievement is obtained by students after going through the learning process. Before that, learning achievement was defined as the results obtained by students from the learning process, the results could be in the form of knowledge, abilities, skills, etc. Learning achievement is certain knowledge, skills, or behavior obtained by a student after a period of learning (Manalu, 2014). For example, learning outcomes that we can find when students receive a report card containing student grades at school after a semester of study. Meanwhile, Kpolovie et al. (2014) said that student learning achievement is the ability of students to learn and remember facts and the ability to communicate their knowledge orally and in writing even in exam conditions. This means that the success of the learning process can be seen from how far an individual can practice what he has learned in everyday life in any situation. It should be noted that the origin of the word achievement is "achieve" which means achieving certain results and goals, status or standards, especially with effort, skill, courage, etc. (Handayanti, 2016). Asvio et al., (2017) their opinion on learning achievement is the acquisition of knowledge or skills developed by subjects, usually indicated by test scores or grades given by teachers.

Learning achievement is used to measure student competence in subjects. Through the learning process; the ability, knowledge, acquired by students can be measured so that it is referred to as learning achievement. Value is a description of the extent to which learning achievement has been obtained by students obtained from the results of tests and other accurate instruments. Achievement in learning is the result of measuring students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor factors after following the learning process which is measured using test instruments or relevant instruments. Student learning achievement can be known by conducting an assessment or measurement process through evaluation activities. The evaluation tool is a test that has been

prepared according to standards, so that it can describe student achievement. The results of learning measurements can be realized in the form of numbers, letters, symbols, or sentences that state the success of students during the learning process. So it can be concluded that learning achievement is the result of a learning activity accompanied by changes that a person (student) achieves which is expressed in the form of symbols, numbers, letters, or sentences as a measure of the level of student success with predetermined standards and becomes perfection for students both in thinking and doing (Rosyid, et al., 2019: 9).

The study of attitudes related to language learning has received much attention. To support the veracity of this study, the researchers reviewed some research results that had been conducted by previous researchers. Language learning research is linked in various contexts. One example is the relationship between attitude and learning achievement.

Finding out the correlation between students' attitudes and academic achievement, Samadani & Ibnian (2015) conducted a study by designing a questionnaire to measure students' attitudes towards learning English. In addition, they also conducted interviews to obtain factors that influence students' attitudes towards EFL learning. The sample consisted of 112 students who were obtained randomly. The findings of the study revealed students had positive attitudes towards EFL learning and students who had the highest positive attitudes obtained high GPAs.

In 2016 Ataman & Eskicumali conducted a study at Duzce University to investigate the correlation between preparatory class students' attitudes towards English learning and their academic success. The study used quantitative method and correlational research design to find the correlation between variables. Data were obtained from a questionnaire adopted from Gardner's (1985) Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) theory. To analyze students' responses, t-test, ANOVA, Turkiye HSD test and Pearson correlation were used. The researchers found that students had a positive attitude towards learning English but their average academic success score was very low. Moreover, there was a positive correlation between students' attitude towards English learning and their academic success.

Putri (2018) also conducted a correlation study between students' attitude towards English and learning achievement. Quantitative method was used to find the correlation between attitude and English learning achievement. The population amounted to 110 and the research sample amounted to 30 which came from stampuk students. Data collection techniques were conducted with questionnaires and English tests. The results obtained were that there was no significant correlation between student attitudes and learning achievement of English Department of USU students.

Furthermore, Naenah (2022) identified the correlation between learning styles and attitudes of AIIAS ESL students with students' academic achievement. The research respondents totaled 32 students. Using Pearson's  $r$  correlation, this study found that attitude and achievement in this study showed a positive correlation. Among the three aspects of attitude, emotion and achievement were significantly correlated. Furthermore, cognitive and attitude were significantly related. The weakest correlation with their attitude was behavior. In terms of attitude, students maintain a positive attitude towards learning English to achieve good grades in their learning process.

Based on the previous literature review, many researchers found a correlation between students' attitude and learning achievement. However, some researchers found no correlation between the two variables. This may be due to the lack of sample size. Actually, the idea of quantitative research relies on a large number of samples to get more comprehensive results (Ardila et al., 2022). Therefore, with the phenomenon found in SMA Negeri 1 X Koto Tanah Datar Regency, the researchers aim to find out the correlation between student attitudes and English learning achievement by increasing the number of samples to get maximum results.

## 2. METHOD

The research was used a quantitative approach as the research design. Included in the quantitative research design, correlation is the right design to find the correlation. Researchers

were used a questionnaire and documentation as a research instrument. The study population consisted of all classes x students consisting of 5 classes is 171 students, which is ± 34 students per class. Researchers took 50 samples to study, obtained 30% of each class. One way of sampling with simple random sampling technique is lottery (Arikunto, 2014). Researchers conducted a normality test to determine whether the sample came from a normally distributed population. The results in the table show that the residual value is 0.2 where  $0, 2 > 0.05$  means that the data is normally distributed.

The questionnaire used a 4-point Likert scale to measure students' attitudes towards English language learning adopted from research (Abidin et al., 2012). The questionnaire items totaled 45 items. Data regarding student learning achievement was obtained by researchers using documentation instrument. Researchers were obtained data in the form of a list of students' English grades from the English teacher. The students' English grades that were taken came from the Mid Semester (1 and 2) exam grades and Semester (1 and 2) exam grades, the exam grades are pure exam results that have not been processed by the teacher into a grade point average .

In this study researchers were also conducted validity and reliability tests in order to obtain accurate data. The validity test was carried out using the Product Moment correlation formula through SPSS software. The validity test results were stated that all questionnaire items were valid. To test the reliability of measuring instruments, researchers was used the Alpha Cronbach formula. The Alpha Cronbach value that was obtained after testing was 0.984 so that the questionnaire was declared reliable. Product moment correlation (discovered by Karl Pearson) is used to determine the correlation of two variables that are both interval or ratio types. After the data was obtained, the researchers analyzed it using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of analyzing students' responses to English learning in questionnaires was stated that students' attitudes are at a high level. Researchers was found the results of descriptive analysis showing an average score of 75.6. These results show that students have a positive attitude towards learning English at SMA N 1

English test scores obtained through documentation instruments are a form of student learning achievement in English learning. After seeing the comparison between attitudes and grades that was obtained by students, researchers came to the conclusion that: First, students who have a positive attitude have satisfactory grades. Second, students who have a positive attitude have unsatisfactory grades.

The results of the person test show that the product moment correlation coefficient shown in the table is 0.232, meaning that the correlation between student attitudes and learning achievement is at a weak level. Then these results are compared with the r table with  $df = n-2$  at a significant level of 5% is 0.284 ( $0.232 < 0.284$ ). Then obtained  $r \text{ count} < r \text{ table}$ . The significant r value obtained in the table is 0.053 where  $0.053 > 0.05$  proves that there is no significant correlation between student attitudes and English learning achievement.

**Table 1. The Results of the Correlation between Students' Attitudes towards Learning English and Their Learning Achievement**

Correlations			
		ATTITUDE	LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT
ATTITUDE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.232
	Sig. (1-tailed)		0.053
	N	50	50
LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT	Pearson Correlation	0.232	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.053	

	N	50	50
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**Table 2. The results of the t test**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Q
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	41,427	14,802		2,799
	ATTITUDE	0.321	0.195	0.232	1,651

a. Dependent Variable: LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT

In the table, the tcount value is 1.651 while the ttable for 50 respondents with a significance number ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05 (df) n-2 is 1.677 so that the obtained t count < t table, there is no relationship between students' attitudes and their English learning achievement. Hypothesis H0 is accepted while hypothesis H1 is rejected. That means there is no correlation between students' attitudes and learning achievement in students' English learning

According to the research findings, students have a positive attitude towards learning English. However, there is no correlation between students' attitudes and learning achievement in English learning at SMA Negeri 1 No significant correlation was found between students' attitudes and students' English learning achievement. The findings of this study contradict the research of Abidin et al. (2012) who found students' negative attitude towards English learning of EFL students in Libyan secondary schools. However, the findings in this study are in line with the research results of Manalu (2014) obtained r of 0.533 where  $0.533 > 0.05$  states that there is no significant correlation between attitude and students' English learning achievement. The results of descriptive analysis show that the average score of students' attitudes towards English learning is 2.90, meaning that attitudes are at a high level. Although students have a positive attitude towards English learning, other factors are considered as determinants of student achievement.

The results of this study are also supported by Putri (2018) the research results obtained are that there is no significant correlation between student attitudes and learning achievement of English Department of USU students, obtained a significant value of 0.254 where  $0.254 > 0.05$  and the H0 hypothesis is accepted. In line with the research findings in Gadamu & Kuche (2018) which found that there was no significant correlation between the attitudes of Ethiopian EFL students and English achievement scores, a significant value of 0.80 was obtained where  $0.80 > 0.05$ . The results of the study also found that the average of the three attitude components was 3.51, meaning that students had a positive attitude towards communicative language learning. Based on the analysis of the attitude questionnaire most students consider English important to them and they show great interest in learning English. However, they feel anxious to use English in everyday life, especially in terms of speaking. This assumption is supported by the research results of Imsa-ard (2020) because they are not used to speak English typically, students feel anxious when speaking English.

In the end, with the acceptance of the H0 hypothesis, this study reveals that there is no significant correlation between student attitudes and students' English learning achievement at SMA Negeri 1 It cannot be denied that attitude is one of the factors that affects student learning achievement. This may be due to the different understanding of students in learning, besides that other factors also fully contribute to the acquisition of students' English learning achievement. That is, intelligence may be more dominant in influencing learning achievement besides factors

such as motivation, confidence, anxiety, parents etc. also contribute to student learning achievement.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

After conducting research between students' attitudes in English learning and learning achievement, the researchers drew several conclusions. First, the researchers concluded that students in SMA 1 X Koto Tanah Datar Regency have a positive attitude towards learning English. Second, the correlation between students' attitudes in English learning and learning achievement is at a weak level. Third, there is no correlation between students' attitude towards English learning and students' learning achievement. The findings show that the alternative hypothesis (H1) is rejected while the null hypothesis (H0) is accepted. Student attitudes are not correlated with student learning achievement, meaning that student attitudes at SMA 1 that also affects students' English learning achievement.

#### 5. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings, the researchers propose some suggestions for teachers, students and other researchers. First, after reading the results of this study, English teachers get information about the correlation between students' attitudes in English learning and students' learning achievement. Thus, teachers are expected to support students to improve and encourage students to seriously apply a positive attitude towards English learning. In addition, it is expected that teachers help students maintain a positive attitude towards language learning so that academic achievement is maintained as well, although in this study no relationship was found between attitudes and learning achievement, it does not mean that attitude does not contribute, only that other factors may be more dominant in influencing student achievement.

Second, for students it is recommended that students develop a positive attitude towards English. Strengthen the beliefs that they have built and explore themselves in learning English so that they get a very satisfying achievement in learning English. For other researchers, who will conduct research related to the subject of students' attitude in learning English to correlate it with other variables because there are still many unexplained factors that can contribute to students' English language ability. The researchers recommend finding out more specifically the causes of attitudes in English language learning circles, factors that contribute to attitudes and provide interventions to reduce the negative effects of attitudes on student performance in language acquisition.

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