

An Analysis of Students' Attitudes Towards English Courses (A Case Study of Sixth Semester Students of English Education Study Program of Nusa Cendana University)

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
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Received : October, 24 th 2024 Revised : Nov, 9 th 2024 Accepted : Dec, 17 th 2024	This study investigated the attitudes of sixth-semester students in the English Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University toward English courses, focusing on affective, cognitive, and behavioural aspects. Using a mixed-method approach, data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The findings revealed a predominantly positive attitude among students, with an average score of 98.15%, which highlighted their confidence, motivation, and enthusiasm for learning English courses. Factors that influenced these attitudes included internal factors such as self-confidence, personal goals, and motivation, as well as external factors such as learning methods, cultural influences, and the social environment. These findings underscored the importance of understanding these factors to create effective learning environments that supported positive attitudes toward English courses.
Keywords:	<i>Analysis, Attitudes, English Courses, Factors</i>

1. Introduction

Language has always played a vital role in human communication and social interaction. As Sapir (1921) asserted, language serves as a unique human tool for conveying ideas, emotions, and desires through symbols. In today's globalized world, the ability to communicate in multiple languages has become indispensable, particularly in the field of education. English, as an international language, holds a central role in various sectors, including education, business, and technology.

In Indonesia, English has been integrated into the national curriculum due to its global importance. It provides students with access to international knowledge, career advancement, and broader life opportunities. However, learning English as a foreign language presents challenges, especially for students whose first language differs

significantly from English. Many Indonesian students have perceived English as difficult, resulting in diverse attitudes toward its learning.

Research has long emphasized the significance of student attitudes in the language learning process. Ellis (as cited in Khasinah, 2014, P. 257) defined attitudes as combinations of beliefs and feelings about languages, teachers, and learning tasks. Positive attitudes have been associated with increased motivation and academic success, while negative attitudes have been linked to learning difficulties (Fakeye, 2010). Gardner and Lambert (As mentioned in Al-Sobhi et al., 2018, P. 1) introduced the concept of motivation as an essential component shaped by learners' attitudes toward the language and its speakers.

Spolsky (1989) explored how both internal and external factors influence student attitudes. Internally, factors such as motivation, self-confidence, and personal goals play a significant role. Externally, teaching methods, cultural context, and social environment contribute to shaping language learning experiences. The dynamic interaction of these factors underscores the need for educators to create supportive learning environments that encourage positive attitudes.

Despite extensive exposure to English in the educational system, many Indonesian students continue to struggle with negative perceptions of the language. These difficulties are often rooted in beliefs that English is inherently challenging, reducing students' motivation and academic performance. Addressing these perceptions requires a deeper understanding of students' attitudes toward learning English.

This study sought to analyze the attitudes of sixth-semester students in the English Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University. It focused on their affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses to English courses and examined the factors influencing these attitudes. The findings aim to contribute to more effective language teaching practices by addressing students' needs and fostering a supportive learning environment.

2. Research Method

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of students' attitudes toward English courses. The research was conducted through a series of systematic stages, including data collection, instrument preparation, research design, and analysis.

The research population comprised sixth-semester students from the English Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University. A sample of 34 students from Class VIA was selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevant representation.

The instruments used in this study included questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire contained 30 items covering affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of language learning attitudes. Respondents rated their agreement on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The interviews were conducted with selected students to explore underlying factors influencing their attitudes.

Data collection followed a structured procedure. Students first completed the online questionnaire, which was distributed through Google Forms. Next, five students representing different levels of language attitudes were interviewed based on their questionnaire responses. Each interview lasted approximately 20-30 minutes and was recorded for analysis.

Data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Quantitative data from the questionnaires were processed using statistical software to calculate means, percentages, and standard deviations. Qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns.

The following formulas were used in the quantitative analysis:

Percentage Formula:

$$P: \frac{Fq}{N} \times 100\%$$

P = Percentage
Fq = Frequency of responses
N = Total number of responses

(Sudjana cited in Al-Hafiedz I.T, 2020)

Mean Score Formula:

$$X = \frac{\Sigma x}{N}$$

X = Mean score
 Σx = Total raw score
N = Number of respondents

(Gay cited in Al-Hafiedz I.T, 2020)

Based on these calculations, student attitudes were classified using the following standards, introduced by Kamarrudin in Al-Hafieds (2020), were as follows:

Positive Attitude: 70 - 100

Neutral Attitude: 40 - 69

Negative Attitude: 0 - 39

By integrating both data sources, the study provided a well-rounded understanding of students' attitudes toward English courses and the factors shaping these perceptions. This methodological approach ensured depth, reliability, and comprehensive insights into the research problem.

3. Research Findings and Discussion

Research Findings

The study presented students' attitudes towards English courses based on the three aspects such as affective, cognitive, behavioral and the factors influencing their attitudes. Data is analyzed using percentages and mean scores, focusing on positive, negative, and neutral attitudes. The researcher provided a detailed explanation of the findings.

3.1 Positive and Negative Attitudes of the Sixth Semester Students towards English Courses in Terms of Affective, Cognitive, and Behavioral Aspects

The researcher measured the sixth-semester students' attitudes by analyzing the data using SPSS and applying two equations as the technique for data analysis. The findings were presented in the form of percentages to reveal the significant range of students' attitudes toward each statement. The researcher presented the findings in two tables, which negative and positive statements, as follows:

Table 1 The Sixth-Semester Students' Positive Attitudes Toward English Courses in Terms of Affective, Cognitive, and Behavioral Aspects Related to Positive Statements

Statement	Affective Aspect				
	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)
“Learning English makes the students more confident about themselves.”	8 (23.53%)	14 (41.18%)	8 (25.53%)	3 (8.82%)	1 (2.94%)
“Engaging with the English language and culture brings joy to students.”	3 (8.82%)	17 (50%)	13 (38.24%)	1 (2.94%)	0 (0%)
“Students feel excited when they discover new words or phrases in English courses.”	7 (20.59%)	16 (47.06%)	10 (29.41%)	1 (2.94%)	0 (0%)
“Learning English enhances students' sense of achievement and pride.”	7 (20.59%)	20 (58.82%)	6 (17.65%)	1 (2.94%)	0 (0%)

“Students enjoys the sense of accomplishment when they improve their English	5 (14.71%)	4 (11.76%)	11 (32.35%)	13 (38.24%)	1 (2.94%)
Cognitive Aspect					
Statement	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)
“Learning English sharpens students’ problem-solving skills.”	2 (5.88%)	16 (47.06%)	14 (41.18%)	1 (2.94%)	1 (2.94%)
“Engaging with English texts enhances students’ critical thinking abilities.”	4 (11.76%)	17 (50.00%)	11 (32.35%)	1 (2.94%)	1 (2.94%)
“Students feel intellectually stimulated when learning grammar and vocabulary.”	5 (14.71%)	12 (35.29%)	14 (41.18%)	2 (5.88%)	1 (2.94%)
“Learning English improves students’ memory retention and cognitive flexibility.”.”	2 (5.88%)	17 (50.00%)	11 (32.35%)	3 (8.82%)	1 (2.94%)
“Students find satisfaction in expanding their linguistic knowledge through English learning.”	0 (0%)	16 (47.06%)	13 (38.24%)	3 (8.82%)	2 (5.88%)
Behavioural Aspect					
Statement	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)
“Students actively seek opportunities to practice English in everyday life.”	2 (5.88%)	13 (38.24%)	18 (52.94%)	1 (2.94%)	0 (0%)
“Engaging with English learning media, such as movies and music, is enjoyable for students.”	21 (61.76%)	8 (23.53%)	5 (14.71%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
“Students make consistent efforts to incorporate English into their daily routine.”	2 (5.88%)	9 (26.47%)	19 (55.88%)	4 (11.76%)	0 (0%)
“Participating in English conversations helps students improve their language skills.”	13 (38.24%)	16 (47.06%)	5 (14.71%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
“Students are proactive in seeking out English learning resources and opportunities.”	0 (0%)	8 (23.53%)	22 (64.71%)	3 (8.82%)	1 (2.94%)

Table 2 Sixth-Semester Students' Negative Attitudes Toward English Courses in Terms of Affective, Cognitive, and Behavioural Aspects

Affective Aspect					
Statement	SA (1)	A (2)	N (3)	D (4)	SD (5)
Students sometimes feel anxious 'stressed when learning English."	0 (0%)	3 (8.82%)	12 (35.29%)	10 (29.41%)	9 (26.47%)
"Frustration arises when students struggle to understand complex English concepts."	1 (2.94%)	6 (17.65%)	10 (29.41%)	11 (32.35%)	6 (17.65%)
"English learning occasionally makes students insecure about their abilities."	2 (5.88%)	6 (17.65%)	12 (35.29%)	8 (25.53%)	6 (17.65%)
"Students experience discouragement when they encounter language barriers in English learning."	0 (0%)	4 (11.76%)	17 (50.00%)	13 (38.24%)	0 (0%)
"Doubts arise when the students compare their English skills with other friends in the class."	5 (14.71%)	4 (11.76%)	11 (32.35%)	13 (38.24%)	1 (2.94%)
Cognitive Aspect					
Statement	SA (1)	A (2)	N (3)	D (4)	SD (5)
"Sometimes, students feel overwhelmed by the amount of information in English learning."	2 (5.88%)	8 (23.53%)	14 (41.18%)	10 (29.41%)	0 (0%)
"Students struggle to concentrate when studying complex English materials."	3 (8.82%)	7 (20.59%)	12 (35.29%)	12 (35.29%)	0 (0%)
"Learning English grammar rules can be confusing and difficult for students to remember."	6 (17.65%)	16 (47.06%)	9 (26.47%)	3 (8.82%)	0 (0%)
"Students find it challenging to apply English vocabulary in real-life situations."	3 (8.82%)	15 (44.12%)	10 (29.41%)	3 (8.82%)	3 (8.82%)
"Understanding English idioms and expressions can be confusing for students."	0 (0%)	13 (38.24%)	15 (44.12%)	4 (11.76%)	2 (5.88%)
Behavioural Aspect					
Statement	SA (1)	A (2)	N (3)	D (4)	SD (5)
"Sometimes, students struggle to find time to dedicate to English learning."	1 (2.94%)	15 (44.12%)	12 (35.29%)	6 (17.65%)	0 (0%)

“Students occasionally avoid English-speaking situations due to fear of making mistakes.”	3 (8.82%)	5 (14.71%)	21 (61.76%)	3 (8.82%)	2 (5.88%)
“Students feel hesitant to engage in conversations with native English speakers.”	2 (5.88%)	13 (38.24%)	17 (50.00%)	2 (5.88%)	0 (0%)
“Learning English sometimes feels like a chore rather than a rewarding activity.”	1 (2.94%)	9 (26.47%)	19 (55.88%)	5 (14.71%)	0 (0%)
“Students find it challenging to maintain motivation and discipline in their English studies.”	4 (11.76%)	21 (61.76%)	6 (17.65%)	2 (5.88%)	1 (2.94%)

The researcher concluded that the sixth-semester students' attitudes toward English courses are positive. It can be stated that the students demonstrate positive attitudes. Through the data analysis format in research method and the formula suggested by Kamaruddin (2004, as cited in Al-Hafiedz I.T, 2020), the researcher calculated an overall score of 98.15. This means that 98.15% is above 70 as a positive attitude indicator. Therefore, the data analysis results showed that the sixth-semester students predominantly have positive attitudes. Some factors influencing their attitudes toward English courses, which must be considered, are presented in the discussion.

3.2 Factors that Influence the Attitudes of Sixth-Semester Students towards English Courses

The findings revealed several factors influencing sixth-semester students' attitudes toward English courses. Internal factors such as self-confidence, motivation, and fear of mistakes played a crucial role, with students showing varying levels of confidence and motivation based on personal goals and experiences. External factors like the social environment, media representation, learning methods, and cultural attitudes also shaped their perspectives. Students with supportive communities, positive media exposure, and effective learning strategies exhibited more favorable attitudes. Conversely, anxiety and fear of making mistakes emerged as barriers, reducing some students' willingness to participate actively in English learning. Overall, the interplay of these internal and external factors determined students' engagement and success in their English courses.

1. “Learning English makes the students more confident about themselves.”

Most students (64.71%) felt more confident after learning English, showing a positive effect on their self-esteem. Some students (23.53%) felt neutral, meaning English learning

did not change their confidence. A small number (11.76%) disagreed, meaning learning English did not boost their confidence.

2. “Students sometimes feel anxious or stressed when learning English.”

More than half of the students (55.88%) did not feel anxious or stressed, meaning they were comfortable while learning. Some students (35.29%) felt neutral, meaning they were neither stressed nor relaxed. A few students (8.82%) felt anxious or stressed, showing negative feelings toward learning English.

3. “Engaging with the English language and culture brings joy to students.”

Most students (58.82%) enjoyed learning English and exploring its culture, showing positive feelings. Some (38.24%) felt neutral, meaning they did not have strong emotions. Only one student (2.94%) disagreed, meaning almost all students found joy in learning English.

4. “Frustration arises when students struggle to understand complex English concepts.”

Nearly half of the students (49.41%) did not feel frustrated, meaning they could handle difficult topics well. Some (29.41%) felt neutral, meaning they were not strongly affected. A small number (20.59%) felt frustrated, meaning they found complex topics challenging.

5. “Students feel excited when they discover new words or phrases in English courses.”

Most students (67.65%) felt excited when learning new words, showing high interest in expanding their vocabulary. Some (29.41%) felt neutral, meaning they were not particularly excited. Only one student (2.94%) disagreed, meaning nearly all students enjoyed learning new vocabulary.

6. “English learning occasionally makes students insecure about their abilities.”

Most students (41.18%) did not feel insecure about their English skills, showing confidence in their abilities. Some (35.29%) were neutral, meaning insecurity was not a major concern. A small group (23.53%) felt insecure at times, showing self-doubt about their language abilities.

7. “Learning English enhances students’ sense of achievement and pride.”

A majority (55.88%) felt proud of their progress in learning English, seeing it as an achievement. Some (29.41%) were neutral, not strongly connecting English learning to personal pride. A smaller group (14.70%) disagreed, indicating they did not feel pride from learning English.

8. “Students experience discouragement when they encounter language barriers in English learning.”

Most students (38.24%) did not feel discouraged by language barriers, showing resilience. Half of the students (50%) were neutral, not strongly affected by language challenges. A small group (11.76%) felt discouraged, showing some struggle with barriers in learning.

9. “Students enjoy the sense of accomplishment when I improve my English skills.”

The majority (79.41%) enjoyed the sense of accomplishment from improving their English skills, showing strong motivation. Some (17.65%) were neutral, not strongly emotional about improvement. A small number (2.94%) disagreed, indicating that they did not feel accomplished when improving their skills.

10. “Doubts arise when students compare their English skills with classmates.”

A small group (26.47%) felt doubt when comparing their skills with classmates, showing insecurity. Most students (41.18%) did not feel doubt, indicating confidence in their abilities. Many (32.35%) were neutral, neither feeling confident nor doubtful about comparisons.

11. “Learning English sharpens students’ problem-solving skills.”

Most students (52.94%) felt that learning English improved their problem-solving abilities, showing a positive view of the cognitive benefits of language learning. Some (41.18%) were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with this idea. A small group (5.88%) disagreed, not seeing a link between English learning and problem-solving skills.

12. “Sometimes, students feel overwhelmed by the amount of information in English learning.”

A portion of students (29.41%) did not feel overwhelmed by the information in English learning, indicating confidence. However, 23.53% agreed that they occasionally felt overwhelmed, reflecting a negative view of the workload. The majority (41.18%) were neutral, suggesting occasional feelings of being overwhelmed but not consistently.

13. “Engaging with English texts enhances students’ critical thinking abilities.”

Most students (61.76%) agreed that working with English texts helped develop their critical thinking skills, reflecting a positive view of the cognitive benefits of language learning. Some (32.35%) were neutral, and a few (5.88%) disagreed, not feeling that English texts improved their critical thinking.

14. “Students struggle to concentrate when studying complex English materials.”

A portion of students (29.41%) admitted struggling to concentrate on complex English materials, showing a negative attitude toward challenging content. However, 35.29% disagreed, and another 35.29% were neutral, indicating that concentration issues were not universal among students.

15. “Students feel intellectually stimulated when learning grammar and vocabulary.”

Half of the students (50%) found learning grammar and vocabulary intellectually stimulating, showing a positive attitude toward these aspects of language learning. Some (41.18%) were neutral, and a smaller group (8.82%) disagreed, not finding grammar and vocabulary engaging.

16. “Learning English grammar rules can be confusing and difficult for students to remember.”

A majority of students (64.71%) agreed that English grammar rules were difficult to understand and remember, reflecting a negative attitude toward grammar. Some students (26.47%) were neutral, showing indifference, while a small group (8.82%) disagreed, indicating that they did not find grammar confusing. No students strongly disagreed, suggesting that most students recognized grammar as a challenge.

17. “Learning English improves students’ memory retention and cognitive flexibility.”

Most students (55.88%) believed that learning English improved their memory and cognitive flexibility, indicating a positive view of the mental benefits of language learning. Some students (32.35%) were neutral, and a smaller group (11.76%) disagreed, not seeing English learning as beneficial for cognitive skills.

18. “Students find it challenging to apply English vocabulary in real-life situations.”

More than half of the students (52.94%) found it difficult to use English vocabulary in real-life situations, showing a negative attitude toward practical application. A smaller group (17.64%) disagreed, feeling confident in applying vocabulary in real-life contexts, while 29.41% were neutral, indicating indifference or uncertainty.

19. “Students find satisfaction in expanding their linguistic knowledge through English learning.”

Nearly half of the students (47.06%) found satisfaction in expanding their linguistic knowledge through English learning, showing a positive attitude. However, 38.24% were

neutral, suggesting indifference, and 14.71% disagreed, not finding satisfaction in learning English. This shows varying levels of enthusiasm toward language acquisition.

20. “Understanding English idioms and expressions can be confusing for students.”

A significant portion of students (38.24%) found English idioms and expressions confusing, reflecting a negative attitude toward this aspect of language learning. A larger group (44.12%) were neutral, and a smaller group (17.64%) disagreed, indicating that they found idiomatic expressions less challenging. The results show a range of attitudes toward understanding idioms.

21. “Students actively seek opportunities to practice English in everyday life.”

A moderate portion of students (44.12%) expressed a positive attitude, either agreeing or strongly agreeing, indicating that they actively seek to practice English outside the classroom. However, a larger group (52.94%) was neutral, neither actively seeking nor rejecting opportunities to practice English in daily life. Only 2.94% disagreed, suggesting that most students are not entirely opposed to the idea but may lack the motivation or opportunities to practice regularly.

22. “Sometimes, students struggle to find time to dedicate to English learning.”

A significant portion of students (47.06%) agreed that they struggle to find time for English learning, indicating a negative attitude toward time management. While 35.29% were neutral, 17.65% disagreed, showing that a smaller group did not feel limited by time constraints. Overall, the majority of students faced some difficulty in allocating time for their studies, reflecting common challenges in balancing language learning with other commitments.

23. “Engaging with English learning media, such as movies and music, is enjoyable for students.”

The vast majority of students (85.29%) enjoyed engaging with English learning media like movies and music, reflecting a highly positive attitude. Only 14.71% were neutral, and no students disagreed, suggesting that English media is seen as an enjoyable and effective tool for enhancing learning experiences.

24. “I occasionally avoid English-speaking situations due to fear of making mistakes.”

A smaller group of students (23.53%) admitted to avoiding English-speaking situations due to fear of making mistakes, indicating a level of anxiety or insecurity. However, the majority (61.76%) were neutral, suggesting they do not actively avoid or fear speaking

English. A few students (14.71%) disagreed, showing that they felt comfortable speaking English without concern for making mistakes.

25. “Students make consistent efforts to incorporate English into their daily routine.”

A smaller group of students (32.35%) made consistent efforts to incorporate English into their daily routine, indicating a proactive attitude toward language learning. However, most students (55.88%) were neutral, showing that they did not actively prioritize English in their daily lives. A small portion (11.76%) disagreed, suggesting they do not actively incorporate English into their routine.

26. “Students feel hesitant to engage in conversations with native English speakers.”

A majority of students (50%) were neutral, neither feeling particularly hesitant nor confident in conversing with native English speakers. However, 44.12% showed hesitation, with 5.88% strongly agreeing and 38.24% agreeing, indicating that many students feel anxiety or lack confidence when speaking with native speakers. On the other hand, 11.76% disagreed, showing that a smaller portion is comfortable engaging in conversations without hesitation. Overall, the data reflects a mixture of hesitation and neutrality, with some students displaying anxiety when interacting with native speakers.

27. “Participating in English conversations helps students improve their language skills.”

An overwhelming majority (85.29%) agreed that participating in English conversations is beneficial for improving their language skills. Of this group, 38.24% strongly agreed, and 47.06% agreed, emphasizing the importance of speaking practice. Only 14.71% remained neutral, and no students disagreed, suggesting that all students recognized the value of conversational practice in language acquisition.

28. “Learning English sometimes feels like a chore rather than a rewarding activity.”

The results showed mixed attitudes toward the nature of learning English. While 29.41% of students agreed that learning English sometimes feels like a chore, 55.88% remained neutral, implying that they did not strongly perceive English learning as either a chore or rewarding. A smaller group (14.71%) disagreed, indicating that for them, learning English is enjoyable. The data suggests that although some students find English learning burdensome at times, most students do not feel entirely burdened by the process.

29. “Students are proactive in seeking out English learning resources and opportunities.”

A majority of students (64.71%) were neutral, suggesting that they do not actively seek out resources for learning English or may not prioritize them. However, 23.53% actively sought learning opportunities, while 11.76% showed a negative attitude, indicating they do not engage in finding resources. The data reveals a tendency towards passive involvement in learning, with some students being more proactive than others.

30. “Students find it challenging to maintain motivation and discipline in their English studies.”

A significant majority of students (73.53%) reported struggling with maintaining motivation and discipline in their English studies, with 61.76% agreeing and 11.76% strongly agreeing. This suggests that motivation and discipline are common challenges for many students. Only 17.65% were neutral, and a small percentage (8.82%) disagreed, indicating that some students find it easier to stay motivated. Overall, the data highlights that staying motivated and disciplined in English learning is a considerable challenge for most students.

4. Conclusion

The research indicated a predominantly positive attitude among sixth semester students towards English courses in terms of affective, cognitive and behavioral with an average score of 98.15% above the 70 thresholds. This suggested a favorable disposition towards the language within this group, highlighting their engagement and willingness to participate in English course activities.

The study identified students' attitudes toward English courses were shaped by both internal and external factors. Self-confidence and self-motivation played a key role in fostering positive attitudes, with students motivated by career goals or personal interests in English. On the other hand, anxiety and fear of mistakes acted as barriers, making some students hesitant to engage with the language. External factors like social environment, media representation, and learning methods also influenced their attitudes, with supportive communities and exposure to English through media helping students stay motivated. Overall, positive experiences, motivation, and a supportive learning environment contributed to more favorable attitudes toward learning English.

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