

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS TOWARDS THE LEARNING OF ESL: A STUDY OF  
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KWABRE EAST MUNICIPALITY**



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**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

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SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KWABRE EAST MUNICIPALITY**



**A thesis in the Department of Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Foreign  
Languages Education, submitted to the School of  
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for the award of the degree of  
Master of Philosophy  
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in the University of Education, Winneba**

**DECEMBER, 2023**

## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

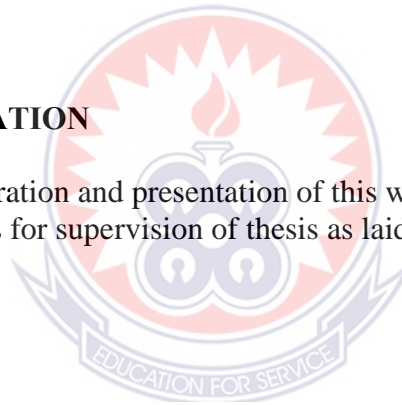
I, Diana Terkpeh, declare that this Thesis with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works identified and duly acknowledged is entirely my own original work and it has not been submitted in any part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

### SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.



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## **DEDICATION**

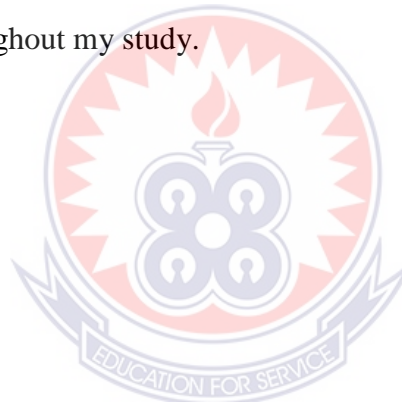
I dedicate this work to my dear husband, Mr. Godwin Atsu Amenuvour and my dear brother, Ebenezer.





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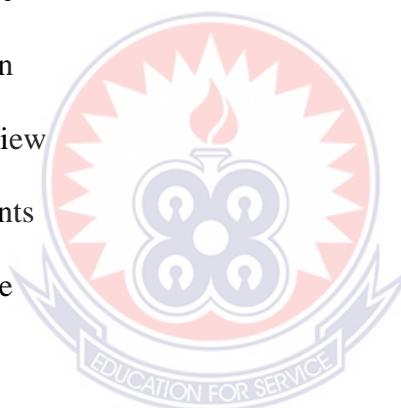
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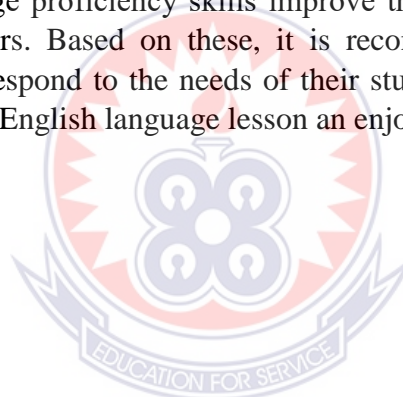
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## ABSTRACT

As the urge to communicate grows, so does the significance placed on language, the most basic instrument for communication. Attitude towards learning the English language has raised so many concerns among teachers and other stakeholders in the education setting. This study examined the attitudes of students towards learning of English as a second language in the Kwabre East Municipality. The objectives of the study were to investigate the attitudes of students towards the learning of English language as a second language, to explore the factors that affect students' attitude towards learning of English language as a Second language, and to determine how students' attitudes affect senior high school students' English language proficiency and performance. The study used a mixed methods convergent parallel design. Questionnaire, focus group discussion guide, and semi-structured interview guide was adopted to obtain data from 600 students and 12 English language teachers and analysed descriptively and thematically. Results suggest that most of the students have positive attitudes resulting in high aptitude but mainly have high learning anxiety in learning the English language. The study also revealed that language motivation, both positive and negative attitude of teachers and favourable learning environment of students are important factors that influence the attitudes of the students to learn the English language. It was found that students' English language proficiency skills improve their academic performance and communication with foreigners. Based on these, it is recommended that teachers should understand their beliefs and respond to the needs of their students by providing meaningful activities that would make the English language lesson an enjoyable experience.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the study

The study of English as a second language remains mandatory for all students at the senior high schools in Ghana due to the fact that, it has grown to serve as the national and official language of the country (Aboagye Da-Costa, 2019). To form part of the global village and to be able to fit into Ghanaian society, it is important that learners are exposed to the English language at an early stage of their education. This is because the English language is needed for successful academic work (Dako & Quarcoo, 2017). It is the official language in Ghana, and everybody is expected to formally use it in government, the media, commerce and banks (Mohammed, 2022). It is the standard means of communication, even within the borders of Ghana (Torto, 2017). For this reason, English language is one of the core subjects taught, learnt and spoken in all schools in Ghana (Adika, 2012).

Learning a second language is a Herculean task. This is because apart from requirements such as the investment of time and effort, and a proper learning environment with qualified teachers, learners' attitude is required to ease and expedite learning (Mohammed, 2022). It is argued that age, intelligence, anxiety and personality play an important role in English language learning (Abidin, et al. 2012). Qimmahtum et al. (2023) also assert that in second language learning, factors such as attitudes, motivation, and aptitudes might influence students' learning process and mentioned that, the most crucial factors that provide significant influence in language learning is students' attitudes. Attitudes are the feelings people have about their own language or the languages of others Crystal as cited by Nkrumah and Dako (2020). According to Wigati (2019), attitude is someone's intelligence that is related to acceptance and refusal that might influence their behaviour. According to Youssef (2012),

attitudes in language learning might be positive or negative. When the learners have enthusiasm in language learning, it can be indicated as a positive attitude.

On the contrary, when the learners tend to be less enthusiastic, lazy, and not showing any interest in language learning, it is indicated as a negative attitude (e.g. Chalak & Kassaian, 2010). This statement is supported by Zulfikar, Dahliana, and Sari (2019) who define the concept of positive learning attitude as a situation when the learners are happy towards the language learning and the learners would actively engage in the process of teaching and learning. While the concept of negative attitude is a situation when the learners may feel anxious in learning, would find difficulties in enjoying the class, and easily get bored in the learning process. In conclusion, it is indicated as a positive attitude when the learners show more interest in language learning. The learners tend to be happy, enjoy, and active in the learning process. In contrast, it is considered negative attitude when the learner shows less interest and tends to be passive in the class. They do not have the desire to learn the language and dislike it. In a general sense, positive attitude is an excellent driving force that creates an urge in humans to perform certain tasks (Sounders, 2021).

To help students develop positive attitudes towards a second language, Nazary (2008) believe that teachers' attitudes should correspond to their learners' aptitude and motivation in learning English Language. The success factor of learning English Language therefore does not rely on the students alone but the teachers who teach the language (Thang et al., 2011). McKay (2012) points out that the teaching and learning of an international language like English must be different from the teaching and learning of any other second or foreign language. The opinion expressed by McKay (2012) makes consideration of teachers' attitudes inevitable in the discussion of students' attitudes towards learning of English language. This study assesses the attitudes of senior high school students towards the learning of English

language, giving consideration to teachers' attitudes in the Kwabre East Municipality of Ashanti Region.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

English language currently enjoys the standing of an international language (Afrifa et al., 2019). It is the only official language of communication and the official medium of educational institutions in Ghana (Akurugu, 2010). English plays a significant role in character building, boosting self-esteem, and providing opportunities for developing curiosity and creativity (Akowuah et al., 2018). In view of this importance, it is desirable for all students in Ghanaian Senior High Schools (SHS) to put extra effort into the learning and use of the language. But this seems not to be the case. English language teaching and learning, as well as its use in our Senior High Schools, has been a problem in this country as it is a second language (Mohammed and Kinyo, 2020). Complaints about poor English results of students at the senior high schools have been heard from teachers in schools all over Ghana, especially during Ghana Association of Teachers of English (GATE) conferences. Mensah (2014) notes that the general belief is that many Ghanaian students have difficulty with the English Language. For example, the WASSCE performance in the English Language dropped from 52.24 per cent in 2017 to 46.91 per cent in 2018 (WAEC, 2019). Although in 2019 WASSCE there was an improvement in performance in English language, this was still below the expectation (GATE, 2020). Senior high Schools in the Kwabre East Municipality of Ashanti Region are not exception to this problem (Kwabre East Municipal Educational Directorate, 2021). Many reasons have been cited for students' poor performance in English in Ghana which include, inadequate classroom conditions such as large student numbers, lack of motivation, poor, quality teaching, poor quality teaching and learning materials, little opportunity provided to practice speaking, personality factor like attitude (Dansieh, 2018).

According to Yamashita (2013), there are several factors that have impact on learning the English language process for instance attitude, age, anxiety, aptitudes, gender, and personality and so on. Attitude is one of the important factors determining in the success of language learning (Herwiana, 2021; Bui & Channarong, 2013). Studies have been conducted on students' attitudes towards English language learning (e.g. Abidin et al., 2012; Chalak & Kassaian, 2010; Choy & Troudi, 2007; Dako, & Quarcoo, 2017; Dansieh, 2018; Getie, 2020; Mustafa et al., 2015, Yeboah, 2021). These studies reveal either a positive or negative attitude towards English language learning as well factors affecting the attitudes towards English language learning. Other studies on students' attitudes towards English language learning (e.g. Anokye, 2022; Herwiana, 2021; Nyamubi, 2016) explore how attitudes affect students' English language proficiency and performance. However, these researches did not investigate students' attitude towards English language learning, factors affecting the attitudes towards English language learning, and how attitudes affect students' English language proficiency and performance in a single research. This would have given better understanding of connections between students' attitudes towards language learning, factors affecting the attitudes, and how attitudes affect students' English language proficiency and performance.

Therefore, this study aims to understand the attitudes of students towards the learning of ESL of SHS in Kwabre East Municipality in relation to their poor performance in English Language as explained. Specifically, it examines attitudes to of students towards the learning English, factors influencing students' attitudes to learning of English, and how attitudes and its factors have affected students English language proficiency and performance. Moreover, studies conducted on students' attitudes towards learning of English language concentrate on quantitative data of students and qualitative data of teachers, but this study includes focus

group of the students to deepen the true reflections of students' attitude towards the learning of the language

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to assess the attitude of senior high school students towards learning of English Language in the Kwabre East Municipality.

### **1.4 Research objectives**

The study was guided by the following specific research objectives:

1. investigate the attitudes of senior high schools' students towards the learning of English language as a second language.
2. examine the factors that determine of senior high schools' students' attitude towards learning of English Language as a Second Language.
3. explore how students' attitudes affect Senior High School students' English language proficiency and performance.

### **1.5 Research questions**

This study, on the basis of the objectives, addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the attitudes of senior high schools' students towards the learning of English language as a second Language in the Kwabre East Municipality?
2. What factors determine students' attitude towards learning of English Language as a Second Language in the Kwabre East Municipality?
3. How do attitudes of senior high school students affect their English language proficiency and performance in the Kwabre East Municipality?

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

The discoveries of the investigation will be relevant to policy makers, teachers, school administrators and students. The discoveries of this study may provide opportunities for policy makers to be well informed about students' attitude towards the learning of ESL in the

Senior High School when it comes to curriculum planning and development. That is, effective and efficient policies will be devised by policy makers to guide learning of second language, particularly, English language in senior high schools in Ghana. English teachers on their part may gain understanding of students' attitude towards the learning of the ESL. The discoveries of the study may allow the adaptation of teaching methods by English teachers to meet the actual students' needs and enable the teacher to stay up-to-date professionally. Moreover, the findings may augment teachers teaching styles which will also lead to a successful teaching and learning process. For practice, the study would guide English language teachers on how to support students to change their negative attitudes towards learning of English Language to positive attitudes. This is so because through this study, teachers of English Language would know all the negative attitudes of students that serve as hindrance to learning of English language. This knowledge would serve as basis for designing effective support system for students to develop their attitudes positively towards learning of English language.

To the school administration, this study may help them to prepare or secure appropriate learning materials for teachers and students. It may enable them to provide the necessary training skills for teachers who may, in turn, apply them in the teaching process to promote better understanding of students on the learning of ESL. With regards to students, the findings of the study may enable them to identify their attitude towards the learning of the ESL and give them an advantage that will maximize their learning potentials in ESL. The findings of the study may again develop a sense of responsibility in students towards their own attitude influencing their study of ESL which will inspire greater curiosity and motivation for life-long learning. Finally, it may help students to take advantage of their natural capabilities and tendencies.



Additionally, the study will reveal existing gaps in literature about attitudes towards learning of English language thereby recommending future studies to help address such gaps. This knowledge would motivate many researchers in English language discipline to conduct several studies about attitudes and learning of English language in Ghana to assist in bringing a conclusion to the subject matter in Ghanaian literature

### **1.7 Delimitations**

The study is focused on attitudes of senior high school students towards learning of English Language as a Second language in the Kwabre East Municipality. Although there are many Second Languages in Ghana, this study focused on English Language due to its popularity in Ghanaian schools. The study assessed attitudes towards learning of English language, factors affecting students' attitudes towards learning of English Language, and how students' attitude affect their proficiency and performance in English language. This study was also focused on Kwabre East Municipality because of reports of relatively lower WASSCE performance in English language among students in the schools in the District (Kwabre East Educational Directorate, 2020). Hence, the research's geographic focus was restricted to senior high schools in Kwabre East Municipality.

### **1.8 Limitations of the study**

The study was restricted to attitudes of students in four Senior High Schools at the Kwabre East Municipality and therefore the results can only be applied to those schools. Structured questionnaire, focus group discussion and semi-structured interview guide were used to collect the data which allowed the respondents to do self-reporting of themselves. The interview guide also allowed the teachers to do some self-reporting of their own teaching strategies and commitment to teaching. These were meant to complement those of the students' responses. Some of the responses were therefore difficult to be authenticated. These challenges are likely to affect the data collected and hence the results of the study. But the

development of the instruments under the supervision of my supervisor and use of probability sampling for sampling of the students enabled an objective result to be obtained and hence reliable and valid results for generalization of the findings of the study.

### **1.9 Organization of study**

The rest of the thesis is organized as follows: Chapter 2 discusses the perspectives of other writers in the literature that is relevant to this inquiry. Additionally, it examines the theoretical framework, ideas and conceptual framework that drive the study as well as language learning and its Importance, the idea of attitude and factors affecting students' attitude towards second language acquisition. Chapter 3 explains research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, procedure of data collection and method of data analysis as well as ethical considerations employed in the study. The study's results are presented in Chapter 4. Discussion of students' and teachers' responses were carried out to cover attitude of students towards the learning of the English, factors that determine students' attitude towards the learning of English Language and how students' attitude affect students English Language. Students demonstrated positive attitude towards learning of the English Language. Language motivation, attitude of teachers and the learning environments were factors that determine students' attitude towards learning of the English Language in the study. Students' learning skills in the form of language proficiency were found to promote speaking and writing performance of the students. Chapter 5 provides summary of the study, importance of students' attitude of English, pedagogical implications, suggestions for future research and conclusion.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

Chapter two focuses on the review of literature on the attitudes of learners of English Language as a second language acquisition. This chapter contains various scholarly works that have been reviewed for the purpose of this study. The reviews are an overview of different researches of many scholars related to the attitudes of learners towards learning of English language as a second language acquisition. The chapter specifically entails theoretical framework, conceptual framework and empirical reviews which are related to the history of teaching and learning English language in Ghana, language learning and its importance as well as second language and its acquisition. The rest are the concept of attitude, dimensions of attitude, attitudes of students towards learning of English language and factors affecting students' attitude towards second language acquisition, and effects of students' attitude on English language proficiency and performance.

#### **2.1 Language learning and its importance**

Following Avrorin, the concept of the language function can be defined as «the practical manifestation of the essence of language, the realization of its purpose in the system of social phenomena, the specific action of language due to its very nature, without which language cannot exist, as there is no matter without movement (Korneeva, 2019). Language, in general, is a huge plus for coexistence since for interaction, it is such a crucial instrument (Yu & Huat, 2015). Language researchers have different opinions about the number and nature of functions (Korneeva, 2019). Again, many researchers analyze the functions of the language as a universal phenomenon, i.e. the functions inherent in different languages. Language learning functions as a cultural mirror and facilitates interpersonal dialogue. Studying language, according to Yang, (2012), aids understanding of an individual's socio-

cultural configuration since dialect mirrors culture essentially. Language is therefore seen as a cultural road map that reveals people's origins and where they are most likely to travel in the future (Tanni, 2015). Language has continued to be a major and widely acknowledged component of the school curriculum, with fluency in a second language being seen as a crucial talent. However, there are significant challenges in developing language abilities, and many students fall short of the required competency, particularly in communicating (Zhang, 2011). The learners' attitudes and impressions of the languages are some of the most essential variables that promote language acquisition (Waldman, 2016). The word "perception" was first used to describe how mediaeval landowners collected rent (Wu, Mensah & Tang, 2018). According to Spada and Lightbown (2019), perception is the process by which we choose, arrange, and evaluate data obtained by the sensations in order to understand the environment around each other. Anxiety, humiliation, disappointment, and despair are all origins of negative attitudes. Learning happens as a result of the learner's environment working on him or her, according to Freeman and Freeman (2014). The learner's understanding of his or her immediate surroundings is referred to as the environment in this situation.

### **2.1.1 Language learning functioning as a cultural mirror**

Hartono et al. (2021) opine that people's perceptions and experiences are wholly determined by their language. This linguistic determination would mean that speakers of two structurally different languages would have two different versions of reality. Different linguistic communities have unique ways of viewing the world and that their languages give us systematic clues to what those views are. This means that if speakers of language A have certain words to describe things while speakers of language B lack similar words, then speakers of the language A will find it easier to talk about those things. That is, if language A has a word for a particular concept, then that word makes it easier for its speakers to refer to that concept than speakers of language B, who lack such a word and are forced to use

circumlocution (Ahmad, 2012; Feryok, 2008). Since language and culture are intricately interwoven, one cannot separate the two without losing their implication on either language or culture (Hartono et al., 2021). Hence, students should be taught English with the focus on gaining linguistic competence, cultural knowledge, and cultural awareness as well. Otherwise, even students who perform excellently in English may find it difficult to successfully communicate with native speakers in a real-life situation.

Catana (2014) suggests that teaching the English language in higher education context should not only focus on developing the students' linguistic competence; it should also emphasize the achievement of cultural competence for enhancing their cross-cultural awareness. In this way, Catana believes that students will be able to develop their discourse strategies and communicative approaches to cope with cross-cultural differences. This notion seems to gain support from a research finding by Tarihoran (2020) indicating that the students showed a positive response to this approach to teaching and learning which promoted their sense of the uniqueness of their culture as a positive value and enabled them to accept the uniqueness of the other cultures. Furthermore, Tarihoran found that the power of sharing and learning from other students encouraged understanding and appreciation of other cultures. Parlindungan et al. (2018) also observe that exposure to the English language is largely facilitated with the use of English textbooks. Thus, knowledge of culture and its origin embodied in the textbooks becomes a serious issue because culture mingles both language and thought.

### **2.1.2 Language learning facilitating interpersonal dialogue**

Interpersonal dialogue is an interaction between students and teachers or between students and students (Gorsky et al., 2007). According to Brown (cited in Derakhshan et al., 2016), there are several ways to develop students' speaking skills, including imitation, responsive, intensive, transactional dialogue, interpersonal dialogue, and extensive. It can be

said that interpersonal dialogue is an effort to develop speaking skills. There are several expressions used in interpersonal dialogue: greet and say goodbye, make introductions, identify yourself, extend, accept and decline invitations and offers, make and break off an engagement, express and acknowledge gratitude, praise and congratulate, react to the speech of the interlocutor, show concern, interest, surprise, sympathy, happiness, distrust, and disappointment (Celce-Murcia cited in Nuha, 2019). Based on these expressions, it can be said that interpersonal dialogue is an interaction whose content is more in the form of pleasantries that occur in social relationships.

The goal of interpersonal dialogue is to improve the ability to speak English, because by speaking, students will discover new vocabulary and correct English sentence structures (Hidayati, 2020). It is therefore implemented in order for students to get used to using English and speaking English. Students feel the impact of implementing interpersonal dialogue such that learning becomes more fun; students become more active, acquire new knowledge such as vocabulary and grammar, and also develop self-confidence (Hidayati, 2020). Janah et al. (2016) explain that dialogue provides advantages, including developing students' vocabulary, improving students' speaking skills, encouraging student confidence, and enabling students to master speaking in English. Hence, language learning will assist interpersonal dialogue. Thus, interpersonal dialogue provides a significant impact, not only perceived benefits for school and students, but for the language learning process itself. Furthermore, with the development of interpersonal dialogue, it results in the establishment of good relations between actors, such as sharing knowledge and information and helping each other in solving problems (Khodijah et al., 2018).

### 2.1.3 Language learning aiding understanding of an individual's socio-cultural configuration

According to Emitt & Komesaroff (2003), language is used in a cultural phenomenon to exchange ideas and opinions or share experiences. It is so much interrelated that without properly understanding the cultural setting and social behaviour of its users, it can lead to misinterpretation and breakdown in communication or it may result in errors and misunderstanding. This is possible because it is not simply a medium for sending or receiving information; it also functions as social behaviour in certain cultural contexts. There are difficulties which are very complex to understand for foreign or second language learners. The individual has direct contact with the microsystem such as their home environment. Components in the home *microsystem*, for example, household socioeconomic status, education of caregivers, and number of children and adults in the household, shape everyday socialization practices. Interaction between the microsystems, such as home and school, makes up the *mesosystem* that is in turn linked to and shaped by the larger *exosystem*. The exosystem relates to the individual without their involvement as an active participant, for instance, the location/geographic area of the extended family and neighborhood, and larger economic and social influences. Everyday practices and activities making up different cultural environments shape and are shaped by these different ecological systems that contribute in different ways to the individual's developmental processes and outcomes (Markus & Kitayama, 2009; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017)

Ozfidan et al. (2014) observe that language learning facilitates the understanding of an individual's socio-cultural configuration through the concept of sociocultural theory (peer interaction and feedback, private speech, and self-efficacy). In a study conducted by these authors, 20 participants' answers to the questions in the interviews related with the sociocultural factors in order to obtain an overall picture of their ideas and thoughts based on



their language learning experiences. Considering the influence of peer interaction and feedback in the language learning process, the 20 participants expressed contradictory views. Peer interaction has a major influence on the language learning process of most of the participants whereas it has a minor influence for few. These authors recommended that in language classes, it may be useful to increase the activities and tasks that provide more peer interaction. Such an approach can create the collaborative atmosphere in the language classroom, providing more interactive learning opportunities for the language learners.

In terms of feedback, it is clear from the remarks of the participants that direct error correction made repeatedly by the teacher is not preferable since it discourages them from participating in classroom activities. Based on these, the authors recommend that language teachers should be careful about how and when they give feedback to the students since feedback means more than simply correcting them. Self-efficacy can have a direct effect on language learning process since it forces individuals to reach their goals. The participants in the study have similar views on the effect of this socio-cultural concept on their language learning. It is worth stating that negative teacher feedback had an undesired effect on the self-efficacy of the participants. It was recommended by the authors that it is the duty of the language teacher to help improve the self-efficacy beliefs of their students towards language learning.

Private speech is another central concept of socio-cultural theory that affects language learning process. It is to some extent the inner-defensive-tool of the language learner. The participants in the study viewed private speech as a helpful tool in language learning. In addition, Lantolf (2000) explicates more on the concept by stating that via private speech “we ask ourselves questions, answer these questions, tell ourselves to interrupt a particular activity, tell ourselves we are wrong or that we cannot do something, and that we have



completed a task” (p.15). Private speech ultimately develops into inner speech and becomes sub-vocal as the person develops cognitively.

#### **2.1.4 Language learning as a means of expressing the inner person’s world**

Language is a means of expressing the inner person’s world; it not only transfers informational messages, it also contains the attitude to the statement, in which the speaker manifests his feelings, experiences, and emotions. With the expressive function, language serves as a means of expressing the inner state of the speaker, expresses the speaker’s attitude to the information content, to the interlocutor, and to the communicative situation. Language expresses not only thoughts, but also human emotions. A person spontaneously or consciously conveys his mental attitude to what is happening. In the sphere of communication, the leading function of language is its communicative function as it allows an individual - the speaker - to express his thoughts, and the other - the perceiver - to understand them, react, take note, or change their behaviour (Korneeva, 2019).

#### **2.1.5 Language learning as a means of communicative function**

The communicative function of the language is realized on the basis that the language itself is a system of signs. To implement this function, the language was formed as a system of signs, combined with each other according to certain rules, through which human thought is materially expressed and perceived. Language is a communicative system on the basis of which speech statements are made. As for the content, language allows us to express a great number of thoughts and ideas using the minimum set of words and grammar. This function mediates individual content through individual speech and turns into a social phenomenon, emphasizing the unity of the communicative and social functions of language (Zhogova, 2017).

### 2.1.6 Summary

In sum, it follows that language learning functions as a cultural mirror facilitating interpersonal dialogue, aiding understanding of an individual's socio-cultural configuration, revealing people's origins, serving as a means of expressing the inner person's world, and serving as a means of communicative function. A cultural mirror has to do with learning language to portray the unique ways communities view the world. English language learning involves developing students' vocabulary, improving students' speaking skills, encouraging student confidence, and enabling students to master speaking in English so as to exhibit attributes which are required in their interpersonal dialogue. Language learning consists of proper cultural setting and social behaviour of language use which does away with misinterpretation and breakdown in communication, thereby aiding understanding of an individual's socio-cultural configuration. Language learning as a means of expressing the inner person's world enables one to convey his mental attitude to what is happening. Language learning as means of communicative function also allows learners to express their thoughts and ideas. From the above summary it is clear that language learning is inevitable to communicating human ideas.

### 2.2 Second language

The term *second language* or L2 refers to languages learned in native surroundings, perhaps as a result of the learner wanting to be able to adapt to life in a different region after moving there. This is because the learner thinks that learning the language is the most potent sub-section in the state or area where the person currently resides will help him or her do better (Ellis, 2014). It is unusual to study such tongues in a structured setting, and it is much more unusual to learn them for fun or as part of the curriculum. Nevertheless, these still are considered second languages. In other terms, a second language is often an authorized or sociologically dominant dialect that is necessary for instruction, employment, and other

crucial tasks (Wu et al., 2018). Minority group members or immigrants who do not speak English as their native language typically pick it up. On the other hand, immigrants may not always pick up a second language. Students learning a variety of languages at school, which may or may not be beneficial in the nation in which they live, is a glaring example of the opposite (Saville-Troike, 2006, p. 4). When learning a second language, there are two groups of elements to consider: external factors and internal factors. Internal factors, known as individual difference factors, are composed of learner's age, attitude, personality, motivation, and first language proficiency, and the like. On the other hand, external factors (or social factors), usually refer to the political, economic, cultural, and technological environment (Sun, 2019).

Based on many researches, Cazden notes that children, teenagers, and adults will experience the same learning period, during which they have to deal with language data (Cazden, 1988). However, in terms of learning speed and achievement, there are great differences between them. Generally, adults can do better at the initial stage for their better cognitive ability, while children can do better in pronunciation and standard accent, and after a long period of learning, can be more likely to succeed in acquiring second language and communicating with it. Attitude can be positive or negative. With positive attitude, a learner will be active in communicating with the people speaking the target language, and this will promote second language learning. With a negative attitude, a learner tends to refuse or be afraid to contact the people speaking target language, which will definitely hinder the development of language and the improvement of the communicative ability (Sun, 2019). Having a positive attitude may result in a better student performance (Genc & Aydin, 2017). On the other hand, having a negative attitude may hamper the learning process and hinder the student's performance.

Psychologically, personality can be divided into extroverted and introverted. Compared to an introvert, an extrovert is more likely do better in language learning, because extroverted personality endows the learner with optimism, better socializing ability, and a strong desire to communicate with others, especially the person speaking target language, which will help create more opportunities to practice the target language for a learner. While the introvert often misses the chances for language learning and practice, because the introverted person tends to be inactive in networking, language learning and communication, which are all obstacles to language leaning (Krashen, as cited by Sun, 2019).

Motivation is an internal process that stimulates an individual's activity and helps them to maintain the effort to realize their expected goal (WEI Fang-fang and HE Hua-qing, 2013). As an internal impetus, motivation can promote the learning process, and can inspire and guide learners' learning. There is no doubt that motivation plays an important role in second language learning. To some extent, whether the learner 's motivation is strong or not directly affects the learning efficiency. Learners with definite motivation are always active in participating in second language learning, which often results into high learning efficiency. On the contrary, learners with weak motivation always take a negative attitude in the learning process, and they tend to spend less time and energy in a second language learning, which often lead to low learning efficiency, (Sun, 2019). Political situation exerts a subtle influence on language learning. If two countries are hostile to each other, people of these two countries will hold hostility and prejudice to each other, too, which certainly hinder them learning from each other about their culture and language (Skehan, 1989).

Economically, to get a job is the main motivation to learn or acquire a second language. In China, many people learn English with economical orientation- mastering English can help them get more opportunities to obtain a job in transnational corporations, where they can be better paid (Sun, 2019).

According to Usman (2016), there should be a distinction between learning a foreign language and acquiring it. Language acquisition refers to a subconscious process in which people acquire the language through social communication and then use the language properly, which is quite similar to the process they acquire their mother tongue. With the acquisition of the language, people can communicate easily, which is a natural process and features the natural usage without learning studiously. Language learning is a conscious learning process, usually obtained in a fixed setting, mainly in school settings. In the process of language learning, people focus on the rules of the language and the conscious learning of the systematic knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, etc., instead of the practical usage. People always cannot have a fluent communication with such kind of learning (Sun, 2019).

### **2.2.1 Second language acquisition**

According to Usman (2016), language acquisition describes the organic process of acquiring a foreign language while engaging in normal conversation with native speakers, lexicon, morphology, phonetics, and other aspects. Sun, (2019) defined second language acquisition as a kind of language learning that people learn, besides their mother tongue, inside and outside classrooms. Ellis (2014, p. 3) indicates that second language acquisition has two basic purposes. The capacity in recognizing the internal and environmental aspects that influence how students learn and advance is referred to as portrayal. Second Language Acquisition linguists speak about the ability to notice how and what students produce while deploying a second language as well as the capability to monitor how students' knowledge increases. One may see, for instance, how the students' pronunciation advances or how they become more fluent in the language they are acquiring (Ellis, 2014, pp. 4-5). Language acquisition involves the social context in which learning occurs, such as the possibility for language learners to listen and communication verbally the language they are trying to learn.

Internal factors might consist of the perspectives that students develop toward the languages they are striving to acquire (Ellis, 2014, pp. 4-5).

### **2.2.2 Second language learning**

Saville-Troike (2006) defined second language learning as the process of learning a language after learning a first language as a kid as well as the study of individuals and groups who are really acquiring a foreign language. This is usual to refer to the study of a foreign language in a general sense, regardless of whether one is doing it in a school or studying it on your own through tutoring. According to Usman (2016), learning refers to the systematic study of a language's grammar and vocabulary. Learning activities normally take place in classrooms through an instruction by a teacher who act as a facilitator to the learning process.

Learning a second or foreign language is not an easy matter to discuss, because it does not only require to know vocabulary and grammar of a language being acquired, but also knowledge about the context and culture and a new way of thinking and acting needs a great consideration. The task of learning a foreign language is much more complex, since; “you must have a comprehensive knowledge of the entry behaviour of a person, and objectives you wish to reach of possible method” (Brown, 2007, p.79). It is quite observable that some learners learn a new language more quickly than others, because they are successful by their virtue of strong determination, hard work and persistence. Yet, some other learners are not very successful in acquiring a new language, and it is quite obvious that there exist some crucial factors affecting their success which are mostly beyond the learner's control.

Learning a second language is a long and complex undertaking (Brown, 2007). One's whole person is affected as one struggle to reach beyond the confines of one's first language into a new language, new culture, new way of feeling and acting. “Learning a language is an emotional experience, and the feeling that the process of learning evokes will have a crucial

bearing on the success or failure on the learning” (Mirhadizadh, 2016, p.47). From this statement, it is clear that emotional factors are important for learners to determine their success or failure in learning a language. To gain these emotional factors students should be encouraged to learn a language, to achieve success instead of failure. The second language learner brings all these variables into the process of the leaning the second language. Teacher also has to undertake the system and functioning of the language that he/she teaches in order to enable students achieve it effectively.

As a matter of fact, researchers showed that children usually succeed in acquiring the spoken language in early childhood “provided that they have adequate opportunities to use languages over a period of several years” (Brown & Spada, 2006). This is reversed in case for the learner of second language whose success is dependent on many factors. Thus, what remarked and observed several times in the same English as First Language classes is that some students show high interest in studying, by their well performance; therefore, they progress rapidly, while others make very slow progress, even if they learn in the very same conditions. However, there are crucial factors relating to their success that are largely beyond the control of the learners participating in a class and a teacher as the facilitator and controller who is a great help to learners to achieve success in the process of learning the second language. There are many general factors that influence second language learning such as age, aptitude, intelligence, cognitive style, attitudes, motivation, and personality (Ellis, 2014).

### **2.2.3 Summary**

There is a distinction between learning a foreign language and acquiring it. While learning refers to the systematic study of a language’s grammar, acquisition describes the organic process of acquiring a foreign language while engaging in normal conversation with native speakers. Learning activities normally take place in classrooms, whereas acquisition



activities are conducted when students engage with native speakers (Ellis, 2014, p. 163). learning doesn't equal to acquisition, and its only function to monitor and edit the output information of a learner. Clearly, language acquisition is more important than language learning, and the former should be final goal of the latter. From above, it can be concluded that it will be more efficient for students to acquire rather than learn a second language.

### **2.3 Factors that affect second language learning**

Considering all variables relating to second or foreign language learning simultaneously would be an extremely difficult task. Thus, it sounds logical to classify these factors into two groups of internal and external which include elements of the same type. External factors are largely dealt with books dealing with curriculum development and course design and internal factors are discussed in second language acquisition and psychology books. Internal variables imply cognitive and meta-cognitive factors as intelligence, perception, self-esteem, learning style among others, while external variables imply social and affective factors such as social class, first language, early start, L2 curriculum among others.

#### **2.3.1 Internal factors**

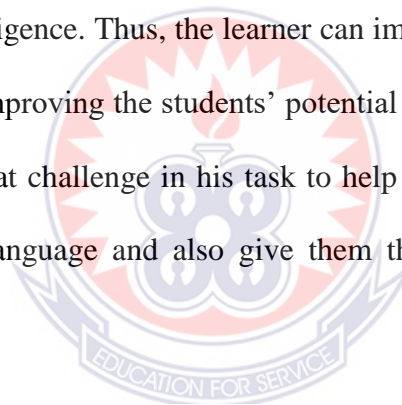
The internal are factors which come from inside the individual. According to Brown (2007), these factors are specified by the individual students like attitude, personal practice and study habits. Each of these factors is an individual element of learners' ability to acquire a foreign language but each component also interacts with another.

##### **2.3.1.1 Intelligence**

Intelligence is an issue that has been dealt with from many psychologists over many years till now. The term intelligence has traditionally been used to performance on certain kinds of tests. These tests are other associated with success in school (Brown & Spada, 2006, p.57). Nearly the same definition is provided by William and Burden (2007) if asked to define



what was meant by intelligence most people would probably refer to some form of inborn, general ability which enable some of us to better or faster than others. Oller (cited in Brown, 2007, p.17) suggested that intelligence may after all be language based. Language may not be merely a vital link in the social side of intellectual development; it may be the way foundation of intelligence itself. In relating intelligence to second language learning, we can say such a view tends to assume that intelligence is fixed at birth (Williams & Burden, 2007, p.17). That is, this perspective considers the success or failure in learning English language to intelligence. If the student is logically smart, he will be able to succeed in learning a second or foreign language. These views of fixed intelligence dominated in the 1950. Intelligence is the role of cognitive skills within specific strategies and appropriate context which frees us from the old fixed view about intelligence. Thus, the learner can improve himself. In addition to the crucial role of the school in improving the students' potential and intelligence, and the teacher also account encounters a great challenge in his task to help learners develop their strategies needed in learning English language and also give them the way of effective thinking as important aspect in education.



### **2.3.1.2 Perception**

Perception is one of the most influential factors that have a great impact on learning. Like any other characteristic; perception differs from one individual to another. Before moving to the definition of the term perception, it is important to start with what William and Burden (2007, p. 26) said: “minds that have nothing to confer find little to perceive”. Many researchers argued that perception is a very complex mental process and at the same time it is of a great help to the individual to interact with his external world. So without such ability, we cannot react to the stimuli we get from the general environment. Therefore, we cannot understand what is going on around us. For instance, when a teacher gives an activity to his/her students, the instruction of this activity will be perceived differently. This indicates that

each individual learner will interpret or understand the activity depending on his own cognitive capacities. Some will find it easy, while others will find it difficult. In this case their perception is influenced by their feeling toward such a subject. Besides perception, there is another cognitive ability which influences learning. This concerns attention which is according to Wode and Tavis (2000), a fairly stable opinion towards a person, object, or activity, containing a cognitive element (positive or negative). For instance, when the learner believes that he/she is in need to learn such a language, this way pushes him to pay more attention to it so that he/she will achieve the best level; otherwise he/she will not care about it at all.

Wode and Tavis (2000) define perception as the process by which the brain is organized and interprets sensory information. They added that

A camera that doesn't care what it sees, a tape record doesn't ponder what it hears, but as human beings we are different. Not only we care about what we perceive, but our thoughts and feelings can affect our perceptions. (p. 192)

This shows that perception is an inner process related to senses that has its connection with external world. It is an ability that makes us react to stimulus in the environment, in order to understand what's going around us. Moreover, when a teacher gives an activity, for example, some students may find it easy, others difficult because they perceive it differently according to the feeling of importance or relevance they have toward it.

### **2.3.1.3 Self-esteem**

If motivation is to be successful, then, it must draw on the whole person and develop one's self-esteem. Self-esteem is considered as an important affective element in the process of scholastic and educational achievement. Hence forth, its absence results the mistrusting of learners own abilities which lead them to perform low as an outcome of this lack of confidence. In this context Brown (2007, P. 154) posits that "self-esteem is probably the most

pervasive aspect of human behaviour. It could easily be claimed that no successful cognitive or affective activity carried out without some degree of self-esteem”.

#### **2.3.1.4 Self-esteem and self-efficacy**

One of the primary affective elements in learning is self-efficacy. It is important here to understand the distinction between self-esteem and self-efficacy. Self-esteem is the personal feeling about one’s self-worth, but self-efficacy refers to one’s personal belief about his or her ability to reach a goal. Self-efficacy is a term referring to the evaluation which individuals make and customarily maintain with regard to themselves. It expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which individuals believe themselves to be capable, significant, successful and worthy. In short, self-esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that individuals hold toward themselves. It is a subjective experience which the individual conveys to others by verbal reports and other overt expressive behaviour. People derive their sense of self-esteem from the accumulation of experiences with themselves and with others and from assessments of the external world around them.

#### **2.3.1.5 Extroversion/introversion**

Extroverts are active; enjoy group work and relationship with others. They are sure to understand only when they explain the new knowledge to themselves or to the others. They are also assertive, take risks, and make social contacts and practice language. Hedge (2000, p.20 cited in Ellis, 2014) indicates that extrovert students may be silenced and may lose their enthusiasm if taught by irritated teachers. Hence, teachers should be aware of this fact. Conversely introverts are quiet, prefer reading to meeting people, have few but close friends and usually avoid excitement. Extroversion/introversion represents a continuum but the extent to which individuals tend to verge towards one type.

### 2.3.1.6 Age

The effect of age on second/foreign language acquisition is very important. A learner's age is one of the important factors affecting the process of second/foreign language acquisition. At a younger age, the ability to acquire language becomes higher and more intuitive. Lubis (2015) expresses that successful language acquisition depends on the learner's age. In one of the earliest studies on second language acquisition, Ntim (2010) claims that there is a certain period in the acquisition of a second language. In this period, which is identified as the critical period hypothesis in language acquisition, Ntim theorizes that the acquisition of language is an innate process determined by biological factors which limit the critical period for acquisition of a language from roughly two years of age to puberty. Ntim believes that after lateralization, which is a process by which the two sides of the brain develop specialized functions, the brain loses plasticity and lateralization of the language function is normally completed by puberty, making post-adolescent language acquisition difficult. However, it can be asserted that older students between the ages of 8 to 12 are faster, more efficient acquirers of school language than younger students between the ages of 4 to 7. In many of the studies, young children beginning the study of a second language between the ages of 4 and 7 take much longer to master skills needed for academic purposes than older children do. The reason why students acquire the language skills better is that children who enter school at the age of 5 or 6 have not yet acquired their first language completely, which continues through at least age 12.

### 2.3.2 External factors

External factors are those factors that come from outside the individual. Based on Browns' definition (2007), external factors can be different for each individual, but their common attribute is that they are based solely on the circumstances outside of the control and influence of the learner. These factors are motivation, Socio-cultural status, and curriculum,

instruction. The rest are using successful education programme, access to native speakers, and using kinematic games and visual learning

### **2.3.2.1 Motivation**

The reasons why students are learning English are different and very significant. Adult learners may consider learning English as hobby or a cultural pursuit or learn it for communication purposes but in the case of school or university systems students have other motives for learning English. In fact, there is a general belief among teachers that motivation is very important in classroom because it is a precondition for successful learning. Hence the teacher's job is to find the classroom experiences which will enhance motivation. Human motivation to learn any particular thing was accoutered for in terms of what biological needs where being met during the early learning years and what kind of reward or reinforced was provided for early attempt to learn. From these statements one could draw the conclusion that motivation has a close relation to our needs which lead to the satisfaction of those needs and realization of those goals. In this study, the needs to be satisfied and the aims to be achieved are learning a language.

Being motivated to learn a second language is a way to fulfill many goals as it is mentioned in the following statements: Achievement in language learning has many sides; some students wish to become linguists, translators, interpreters, and so forth; others to get prestigious job; others survive on other causes taught in the new language (perhaps competition with native speakers); others in some parts of the world, to identify with other language community (McDonough, 2011, p. 155). Ellis (2014) claimed that, as teachers, we should know all factors involved in motivating students to achieve tasks. He suggested the following variables: To give more time to group work and try to build cohesiveness within the group, to be aware of differences in motivation in emotional responses, and in learning

styles and strategies, to encourage students build awareness of their personal preferences, and to provide variety of activities (listening, reading), teaching strategies and interaction.

Students may be motivated, but this initial motivation needs to be increased, and this is one of the teacher's responsibilities. The teacher's behaviour can increase levels of student's motivation in three different ways: First, motivating students into the lesson at the opening stages of lesson. It has been observed that remarks of teachers about forth coming activities can lead to higher level of interest on the part of student; Second, varying the activities, tasks, and materials the students need to be interested, both with the subject and the given activities, so the teacher should provide students with variety of activities and tasks since this way attract the learner and break the same routine which lead to decrease in intention and increase in boredom; and Third, using co-operative rather than competitive goals. Co-operative learning activities in which the students must work together result in the increase of self-confidence of student, since, every participant in co-operative task has an important role to play (Brown & Spada, 2006).

### **2.3.2.2 Socio-cultural status**

There is some evidence that student in situations where their own culture has a lower status than that of the culture in which they are learning the language make slower progress. Among the socio-cultural status considerations are attitude towards language learning and socio economic status of students.

#### **2.3.2.2.1 Attitude toward language learning**

The learner's attitude toward the language, whether positive or negative, has a direct impact on learning. In fact, if it is positive, it will foster learning, whereas, if it is negative it will hinder it and result in failure. So the language learner should be aware of the historical background of that language, its culture, and its political economic and social status in his country as well as all over the world. Therefore, having such knowledge about the language

they are learning is of great help to each individual learner. Wade and Tavris (2000), argued people have attitudes about all sorts of things. Moreover, they believe that attitudes influence how people see the world and the attribution they make to explain events. From these statements, we can understand that people look at things and think about them differently. Our case is learner's attitude towards language learning, some of them may think about English as a prestigious language through which they may obtain prestigious job; also it may help them to travel abroad and communicate with people easily, while others might think differently. That is. they learn just for the sake of learning as if they are learning any other subject, they have no ambitious to go abroad and that is the reason why they do not care so much about it whether they achieve a good or bad level.

#### **2.3.2.2.2 Socio economic status of students**

Good and Brophy (2000) note that among individual difference variables used to describe particular students or even entire school population, the most important may be socio economic status (SES) and social class. This indicates that the teacher should know the social background of their students, because learning such a language does not depend only on the learner's ability, but also on the attitudes shared by either the members of the society where they live or the closet people to them whether parents or friends. The two terms, socio-economic status and the social class, are defined differently by Good and Brophy (2000). They consider the socio-economic status as a cold, impersonal statistic compiled from indices such as type of occupation, years of education, size of income, quality of housing and desirability of neighborhood. Whereas, the social class usually is defined in a more personal way that expresses local prestige and respectability.

The following statement expresses the same idea that persons who are high in social class are described as respectable, influential or prestigious. In other words, learning process is influenced by the society or in particular the social class to which the students belong as well



as by its members and their attitudes toward them. The learner's parents are also another influential part. As Good and Brophy (2000) argue, in any case, parental educational level is especially important to teachers because it is linked to parental interest in and attitudes toward education. This shows that the language teacher should take care of is the learners' parents' degree of education as well as their kind of job. This led them to know more about how to deal with each individual learner. Moreover, parents' educational level, whether higher or low, in both case always look for the best to their children. If they have a higher level of education, they expect their children to reach the same level; they will be more aware of the value of education and want their children to do the maximum in order to realize what their parents could not achieve.

#### **2.3.2.3 Instruction**

Clearly, some language teachers are better than others in providing appropriate and effective learning experiences for the students in their classrooms. If the teacher has a strong personality and has new language teaching strategies, the students will be able to get more information (Choy & Troudi, 2016).

#### **2.3.2.4 Using successful education programmes**

These programmes include beginning teaching children English language at an early age (4-6) years. In this, teachers who are well-trained and have previous experiences in their work and possess innovative techniques of teaching can involve learners in these programmes. These successful language teaching programmes have great impact on language learning (Ellis, 2014).

#### **2.3.2.5 Access to native speakers**

According to Mirhadizadeh (2016), native speakers are linguistic models and can provide appropriate feedback. Clearly, language learners are likely to make slower progression, particularly in the oral aspect of language acquisition. The opportunity to



interact with native speakers both within and outside of the classroom is a significant advantage. Native speakers are linguistic models and can provide appropriate feedback. Clearly, second-language learners who have no extensive access to native speakers are likely to make slower progress, particularly in the oral/aural aspects of language acquisition (Wu et al., 2018). Although few studies have been conducted regarding the factors that influence foreign language acquisition, Wu et al.'s (2018) study tried to focus on attention on those studies that looked at the internal and external factors that help children to acquire English language, the perfect age to teach the children English language and other factors that help them improve their language competency.

#### **2.3.2.6 Using kinematic games and visual learning**

Language learners are usually familiar with kinematic games and visual learning. In these games, teachers use many activities such as drawing design with visible activities, and using kinematic games that have a role in the development of children's ability to learn English Language. They also acquire more and deep information in order to have the best language skills (Tanni, 2015).

#### **2.3.3 Summary**

Learning is a very complex undertaking. Thus, it is recommended to teachers to consider factors which influence the process of learning. They need to be aware of all the factors that exist inside every individual by considering all the differences they each have as well as the effect of external factors. This study concludes that English language teachers need to have knowledge of the different factors playing role on the process of learning second/ foreign language so that they could take the advantage of the theoretical foundation in their classroom.

## 2.4 The concept of attitude

One of the most essential factors impacting L2 learning achievement is attitude (Goktepe, 2014). Furthermore, attitudes have an impact on how much pupils continue to engage in the language learning process. There are both positive and negative changes in attitude toward language acquisition. Learning a language is closely related to the attitudes towards the languages (Starks & Paltridge, 2006). Karahan (2007) avers that positive language attitudes let learner have positive orientation towards learning English. As such, attitudes may play a very crucial role in language learning as they would appear to influence students' success or failure in their learning. Brown (2007, p.168), in his great work *Principles of language learning and teaching* adds attitudes, like all aspects of the development of cognition and affect in human beings, develop early in childhood and are the result of parents' and peers' attitudes, contact with people who are different in any number of ways, and interacting affective factors in the human experience. Here it seems clear that there are many stimulants which lead to positive or negative attitude of an individual.

Chamber (2009) asserts that learning occurs more easily, when the learner has a positive attitude towards the language and learning. Gardner and Lambert (2002) in their extensive studies give evidence that positive attitudes toward language enhance proficiency as well. Language attitude studies explore how people react to language interactions and how they evaluate others based on the language behaviour they observe (Lubis, 2015). Lubis (2015) shares the same idea with Brown; attitude is a product of all life experiences. Therefore, attitude may not come out during school life. But it is the duty of school to help students develop positive attitude towards foreign language. To sum up, attitude refers to our feelings and shapes our behaviours towards learning (Lubis, 2015).

Alieto and Rillo (2018) discovered that students' capacity to comprehend a second language is governed not just by their mental competency or linguistic talents, but also by

their views and beliefs regarding the language of choice. They also contended that the attitudes' concept may assist language learning by changing the nature of students' behaviours and attitudes toward the other languages, its society and organization, and therefore recognizing their inclination to learn that language. In 1992, Baker presented a full theoretical model, highlighting the need of doing philosophical research in the area of language learning. Baker (1992, p. 9 as cited in Navarro-Villaroel, 2011, pp. 5-6) argues that attitudes toward a language appear to be important in linguistic repair, preservation, degeneration, or death. Language teachers, researchers, and students, according to De Bot et al. (2015), should understand that student strong motivation and positive attitude boost second language learning. As a consequence, if a learner lacks enthusiasm and desire in learning the target language when communicating with others, he or she will have a hostile perception toward language acquisition and will be uninspired and enthusiastic about it. As a result, learners' attitudes may have an influence on their ability to acquire the target language.

#### **2.4.1 Dimensions of attitude**

Most studies conducted by researchers focused on the three dimensions of attitudes which are behavioural, cognitive, and emotional dimensions. Wenden (1991, as cited in Tanni, 2015) states that attitudes have behavioural, cognitive, and affective components (p. 139). According to Abidin et al. (2012), the three dimensions are based on the three theoretical approaches: behaviourism for behavioural, cognitivism for cognitive, and humanism for affective (p. 121). Abidin et al. (2012) point out that the behavioural aspect of attitude, which is the first dimension of attitude, "is the way the learner behaves and reacts in particular situations" (p. 121). Students who have good behavioural attitudes toward their studies engage with the material and are ready to learn more. Additionally, these children are

considered to be more motivated to interact socially, learn skills and knowledge that are applicable to daily life, and solve difficulties.

Moreover, cognitive dimension deals with the beliefs of the language learner about the knowledge that he or she receives in school and his or her understanding of the process of language learning (Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, & Alzwari, 2012, p. 122). The four steps of the cognitive attitude include relating new information to past knowledge, creating new knowledge, testing new knowledge, and applying new knowledge in various situations. The third dimension of attitude which is affective, as defined by Feng and Chen (2009, as cited in Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, & Alzwari, 2012), is the emotional factors that affect language learning (p. 122).

Learning is an emotional experience, according to Feng and Chen (2009). A range of emotional factors have an impact on it. The instructor and his students engage in a range of emotional actions, which result in a variety of emotional outcomes. Learners can use attitude to communicate whether they enjoy or detest the products or circumstances in their environment. It is well acknowledged that learners' internal thoughts and emotions affect how they perceive and behave in relation to a specific tongue (Choy & Troudi, 2016). Van Els et al. (1984, as cited in Hosseini & Pourmandia, 2013) mentioned that the relationship of the three dimensions is so close that even if only one dimension is measured, sufficient information regarding the learners' attitudes can be obtained. They also claim that it does not matter which of the dimensions of the attitudes will be measured (p. 68).

#### **2.4.2 Positive attitude towards learning English language**

Having a positive attitude toward the language and culture and toward learning a foreign language is an important contributor to the success of foreign language learning (Usman, 2016). A positive attitude might spur learners on to interact with native speakers, which in turn increases the amount of input that learners receive. A positive attitude often

leads learners to use a variety of learning strategies that can facilitate skill development in language learning. According to Youssef (2012), a positive attitude brings out greater overall effort on the part of language learners and typically results in greater success in terms of global language proficiency and competence in specific language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. A positive attitude also helps learners maintain their language skills after classroom instruction is over (Gardner, 2005).

Those who have a positive attitude about the L2 have an advantage over those who have a negative mindset. A person with a positive attitude learns to boost existing motivation. Youssef (2012) asserts that attitude has a significant role in language learning. According to Usman (2016), students who have a good attitude toward language acquisition contribute more and better engagement in second language. Positive attitudes are usually associated with the speakers of the language in issue and the society that they represent. It is likely that language learners will want to converse with natives of the dialect they are learning, therefore such positive attitudes are likely to boost learning. In other words, pupils may be more motivated to study a language if they are interested in the nations where it is spoken (Noels, 2013).

### **2.4.3 Negative attitudes towards learning English language**

Negative attitude can hinder or slow down language learning because those attitudes emerge when learners are not motivated, not interested or have difficulties with the teacher (Ellis, 2014, pp. 197-201). Negative attitudes, even though producing negative effect on learners, may also have a positive effect. This may happen if the learners have a strong will to learn a language or when students are persistent and struggle hard and fight those negative attitudes (Ellis, 2014). The willingness to achieve a good grade or language fluency may turn negative attitudes into positive ones. Another characteristic of students' attitudes is that they can change. They may have negative attitudes at the beginning of the language learning

process and later on they may get used to it and acquire positive attitudes, or their positive attitudes may change into negative ones due to low grades, failure to lead a fluent conversation, and the like.

Attitudes towards language learning represent reactions to objects and environmental factors in the learning process that can be evaluated. Abidin et al. (2012) state that “negative beliefs may lead to class anxiety, low cognitive achievement, and negative attitudes” (p. 120). Aliakbari and Gheitasi (2017) researched the connection between attitudes towards foreign language learning and test anxiety. They found that there was a relationship between test anxiety and negative attitude and that females showed more optimistic attitudes towards English language learning. Noels (2013), presenting the results of the findings of students’ attitude towards English-only environments in school, reports that students’ expressed negative attitude is due to forcing students to speak English, punishment, and teachers’ reactions to students speaking L1 (p. 2). Negative attitudes have a detrimental effect on learners’ motivation (Bratož et al., 2019). Gömleksiz (2010) also concludes that in order to understand how negative attitudes can be changed into positive ones, “teachers should be aware of the factors affecting students negatively and should take the needs of students into consideration” (p. 917).

Rahimi and Hassani (2012) investigated the role of learning materials in shaping learners’ attitude and found correlation between them. They concluded that “it is evident that students often develop negative attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language due to the lack of stimulating and authentic learning material and tasks” (p. 71). The analysis of predictors of negative attitudes towards language learning can be found in the study of Ghaedsharafi et al. (2019). The authors have reported that the materials that students use for English language learning are “the best predictor of negative attitudes that can be considered as the most practical and key finding” (p. 147). Materials, they concluded, can have an effect

on other teaching and learning factors and contribute to inappropriate learning environments. Moreover, they found that the learning environment and difficulty to learn English contribute to the development of negative attitudes as well. Thus, negative factors of language attitude such as shyness, and laziness to practice decrease students' achievement in learning English.

#### **2.4.4 Summary**

Attitude toward language might be positive or negative (Youssef, 2012). Both negative and positive attitudes have a strong impact on the success of language learning. The attitude of an individual depends heavily upon different stimuli. Noels (2013) claims that the affective component contributes are at least as much and often more to language learning than the cognitive skills. All studies adduce that affective variables have significant influences on language success (Nugent, 2009). Discovering students' attitude about language will help teachers and students in the teaching and learning process. The characteristics of the affective domain are: interest, values, and tendency and most of these shape our attitudes (Saracaloğlu, 2000). Value, belief, interest, and expectations are affective characteristics. In fact, measuring attitude is achieved more successfully than defining it as a term. Students' attitude measured with high reliability shapes the school curriculum, especially in English language teaching classes. Because attitude is so very important in language learning, instructional activities and materials should be exciting, stimulating, and interesting to learners. Moreover, teachers should pay special attention to the attitudes students bring to the second language learning as teachers may have to overturn stereotypic or negative views toward the target culture, language, people and the language learning process.

#### **2.5 Theoretical framework: Socio-Educational Model**

The Socio-Educational Model of second language acquisition proposed by Gardner in 2000 is the framework underpinning the study. Gardner's socio-educational model, according



to MacIntyre (2007), is one of the most dominant models in the field of second language acquisition (SLA). It is the first and most influential theory of motivation in the area of L2 motivation research (Gu, 2009). Being considered as the most influential social-psychological models of SLA (Williams & Burden, 2007), it falls under the category of positivist models (Dewaele, 2009). The central concept of this model is motivation (Tremblay & Gardner, 2005). In simple terms “a socio-educational model of second language learning suggests that the learning of a second language involves both an ability and a motivational component and that the major basis of this motivation is best viewed from a social psychological perspective” (Gardner & Lalonde, 2005, p. 1).

Gardner started developing his socio-educational model depicting the attitudes and motivation in second language learning in the 1960s and has continued revising it. Gardner intimates that second language acquisition takes place in many different contexts and the first thing that he believes that must be considered is the nature of context itself. That indicates that the learner’s cultural setting also has an influence in acquiring another language and can influence one’s motivation in learning it. The model presents four variables that are interrelated in acquiring the second language: social milieu that includes the individual’s culture and environment; the second variable is individual differences that includes sub variables as intelligence, aptitude, motivation (effort, desire and affect) and anxiety, which could be seen in most of the cases as an inhibited factor in the individual learning; the third variable, second language acquisition contexts includes the settings where the language is being learned (formal and informal settings) and the fourth, outcomes that includes linguistic knowledge and language skills as well as non-linguistic skills. Figure 2.6 represents Gardner’s Socio-educational Model:



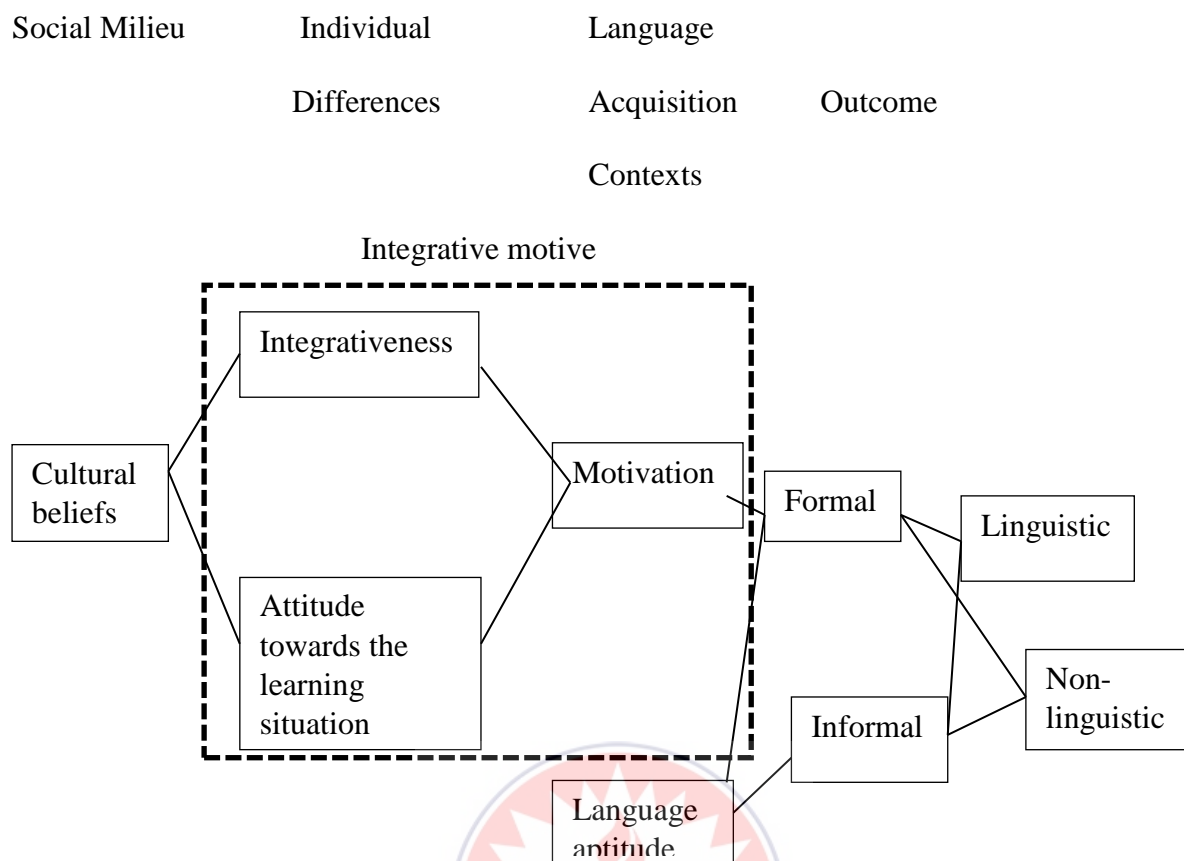


Figure 2.6. Gardner's Socio-Educational Model

Gardner (2005) modified the model by introducing the concept of integrative motive within the individual differences variable. This concept is divided in three components:

- Integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation and motivation. Integrativeness is seen as an interest, identification with the second language community, with their culture and beliefs;
- Attitudes toward the learning situation involve attitudes toward the school, reactions to the textbooks;
- Motivation is the effort exerted to learn the material, desire plus positive attitudes in learning the material.

According to Gardner (2006), integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation are two correlated variables which influence motivation to learn a second language. Moreover, motivation and language aptitude influence language achievement. According to

Gardner (2006), based on this model someone may show high levels of integrativeness and/or very positive attitudes toward the learning situation, but these are not linked with motivation to learn the language. These variables will not be particularly highly related to achievement. Similarly, a person who demonstrates high levels of motivation which are not supported by high levels of Integrativeness and/or favourable attitudes toward the learning situation may not show these high levels of motivation consistently. Integrative motivation represents a complex of these three variables.

The social educational model proposes that there are two primary individual differences variables in language learning: ability and motivation. It is proposed that individuals with higher levels of ability (intelligence and language aptitude) will tend to be more successful at learning the language than the students who are less-endowed. Similarly, students with higher levels of motivation will do better than the students with lower levels, because they will expend more effort, will be more persistent, will be more attentive, will enjoy the experience more, will be goal directed, and will want more to learn the material. These factors are expected to be relatively independent because some students with high ability may be high or low in motivation and vice-versa. In the model, both ability and motivation are related to the formal and informal language learning contexts. The formal contexts refers to any situation where instruction is realized (the language classroom), and informal contexts are any other situation where the language can be used or experienced (i.e. listening to the radio, watching movies, the street among others). It is assumed that whereas both ability and motivation would be equally involved in formal contexts, motivation would be more involved than ability in informal contexts, because motivation determines if the individual takes part in informal contexts. In the socio-educational model, both contexts are shown to lead to both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes. Finally, it is shown that the educational setting and cultural context influences the motivation, but not the ability.

### **2.5.1 The social milieu**

The first variable, social milieu, refers to the individual's cultural beliefs or environment and it plays a role as influencing both affective and cognitive individual differences among language learners. Social/cultural milieu, according to Semmar (2007), refers to the social and cultural setting, and this can be monolingual or monocultural. Multilingual/multicultural societies, where learning takes place, shape the learner's belief about other ethnic and linguistic groups.

#### **2.5.1.1 Individual's culture**

An individual's culture beliefs refer to situations where individuals learn to pay attention to interaction in their culture that can guide them make them make well-informed choices of behaviours when they are communicating with members of a second or foreign culture. Individual's culture beliefs may not only encourage the development of language learners' identity but also encourage the awareness of others'. Moreover, it is important that second or foreign language learners know the different cultural frameworks, otherwise they will use their own cultural system to misinterpret messages (NanChang, 2020). Culture, being an important and integral part of human society, deals with the communication of language by the individuals in a variety of situations and circumstances (Ali et al., 2015). Hence culture beliefs ensure competence in intercultural communication. According to Amiri and Karfa (2021), the more similarity exists between the students' cultures, the more successful the learning is.

In addition, the authors concluded that for education institutions to take steps towards more effective implementation, an intracultural communication course that includes several disciplines, should be demanded for ESL/EFL students. That helps them exchange information between them, interpreting the behaviours of other students in a more objective way and not heavily laden with emotion and values. It also gives a chance to all the students

to learn about their peers' cultures beforehand to minimize misunderstanding and, therefore, the culture shock. A study by Kuo and Lai (2006) revealed that unless cultural issues become an inherent part of the language curriculum and instruction, students cannot be successful in their target language learning. Second language teachers were therefore advised by the authors to pay more attention to the diversities of cultures, identify key cultural items in every aspect when they design a language curriculum, and apply appropriate teaching strategies to learning activities in order to help students to bridge the culture gaps.

### **2.5.1.2 Environment**

A research by Amiri and Karfa (2021) revealed that the more highly sophisticated the social environment is, the more likely it is to foster ESL/EFL students' academic achievements. According to Håkansson and Norrby (2010), there are some differences concerning pragmatics, lexicon and language backgrounds. The authors concluded that the learning environment is the crucial factor on language acquisition. In addition, a study by Chen (2023) shows that environmental factors (educational tools, economic conditions, geographical and cultural) positively influence SLA). Milal et al. (2021) claim that various external factors that might have impact on the acquisition and improvement of learners' language competence can be addressed to both formal and natural environments that are manifested in terms of linguistic input that abundantly exists and is frequently exposed to the learners.

### **2.5.2 Individual differences**

The second variable, individual differences, include four sub-variables (two cognitive and two affective factors) as intelligence (a determiner of how quick and how well the learner will acquire the language), language aptitude (verbal and cognitive abilities), motivation (effort, desire and affect – it determines how active and how hard the learner will work to acquire the second language) and finally, situational anxiety (seen as an inhibiting

effect on the learner's performance in acquiring a second language). According to Gardner, these four individual difference factors are the most influential in acquiring a second language. As already indicated, Gardner (2005) has modified the model by introducing the concept of integrative motive within the individual differences variable. It is divided in two components: attitudes toward the learning situation and integrativeness. According to Ellis (2008), Gardner identified a number of variables that are conducive to individual differences. Gardner and MacIntyre (1992, as cited in MacIntyre, 2007) have referred to the socio-cultural milieu which affects both cognitive and affective (Individual Differences) variables. Cognitive variables include intelligence, language aptitude, and language learning strategies, and affective variables include attitude, motivation, language anxiety, and self-confidence.

#### **2.5.2.1 Integrativeness**

Integrativeness is seen as an interest in the second language group, the learner shows an openness and identification with the target language community and their culture. Gardner “never meant integrativeness to mean one wanted to become a member of another cultural community, but rather an individual's openness to talking on characteristics of another cultural/linguistic group”. Gardner (2005) states that “individuals for whom their own ethno-linguistic heritage is a major part of their sense of identity would be low in integrativeness; those for whom their ethnicity is not a major component, and who are interested in other cultural communities would be high in integrativeness”.

#### **2.5.2.2 Attitude towards the learning situation**

Attitudes towards the language situation involve attitudes towards the school environment, reactions to the textbooks, evaluation of the language teacher and the language course. Clearly, the nature of the learning situation will influence a student's motivation. An interesting and skilled teacher with a good command of the language, an exciting curriculum,

carefully constructed lesson plans, and meaningful evaluation procedures will promote higher levels of motivation than a teacher lacking in some of these attributes.

### 2.5.2.3 Motivation

According to Gardner & Lambert (1959 cited in Gardner, 2010), L2 motivation differs from that involved in other learning processes because language is inherently related to socio-cultural identities and socio-political factors. Motivation to learn a second language plays the leading role in the socio-educational model. However, motivation is a complex concept which cannot be simply measured by one scale (Gardner, 2010) and there are many variables which affect motivation (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995 cited in Gardner, 2010). According to Tremblay and Gardner, in order to query why there is a relationship between motivation and proficiency a simple statement that some aspects of motivation result in higher proficiency or better performance is not sufficient. Rather, they believe that to improve motivation models mediators that explain why one variable affects the other should be identified. They proposed that the three motivational behaviours: *effort*, *persistence*, and *attention* mediate between the seemingly distant factors of *language attitude*, *motivation* and *achievement*. They found support for a structural equation model linking these variables and concluded that the new motivational measures deepen our insights into motivation in language learning.

In other words, this construct, as acknowledged by Gardner (2010), is a complex concept which cannot be simply measured by one scale. Rather, it should be assessed by multiple scales. Therefore, motivation, as defined by Gardner (2005), refers to “the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language” (p. 10). Consequently, motivation in the socio-educational model, according to Gardner (2010), is assessed in terms of the following three components: 1) The desire to learn the language, 2) Attitudes toward learning the language, 3) Motivational intensity (the effort extended to learn the language). Therefore, according to

Gardner (2005), for a student to be considered motivated four elements of a goal, desire to achieve the goal, positive attitudes, and effort are necessary. Gardner (2010) believes that while neither any of the three aforementioned elements on its own would provide an adequate assessment of motivation the tripartite assessment provides a rather fairly good estimate of this construct.

### **2.5.3 Language learning contexts**

The third variable, learning acquisition contexts, refers to the setting where the language is being learned, the combination of formal language training and informal language experience. A research by Sato et al. (2017), postulated that learners will enhance their lexical and grammatical knowledge through the application when combined with formal learning (in class) and informal learning (outside the classroom).

#### **2.5.3.1 Formal contexts**

Formal language learning is a language learning process defined by regulations and predetermined outcomes usually bounded by a physical class set-up, instructions, a fixed learning path and a specified timeframe (Sundqvist, 2019). A study by Kameli et al. (2012) investigated ESL students studying in a TESL programme in Malaysia. This investigation attempted to understand the influence of a formal language learning environment (classroom, teachers, and peers) on vocabulary learning strategies. This study describes how school environments as well as mediating agents interfere or support ESL students in vocabulary learning strategies. The findings suggest that teaching methods, the level of encouragement students received, peers' negative and positive behaviours, classroom activity, and textbooks were significant factors that generally affected the learners' choice of vocabulary learning strategies in school.



### 2.5.3.2 Informal contexts

Informal language learning itself is the embodiment of limitless language learning in which the learning process is self-initiated, unrestricted by objectives, and most notably takes place anywhere desired by the learner regardless of the topic of interest (Sundqvist, 2019). Over the years, educational institutions have been focusing more on standardizing the learning goals based on a fixated teacher-oriented performance assessment; this in a way renounces the traditional notion of education which inspires informal learning through formal guidance (Rao, 2018). The shift in education standards has negatively affected learners' interest and drive to indulge in formal learning any longer (Isık & Balçıklanl, 2020). This phenomenon has prompted the majority of learners to direct their attention to informal English language learning which despite being unguided by professional entities, still offers quality content at par with what formal learning offers (Sundqvist, 2019). The rationale behind this transformation might be due to the fact that informal learning has effectually fulfilled the five distinct sources of support for language learning: affective support, resource support, capacity support, technology support, and lastly social support (Isık & Balçıklanl, 2020).

### 2.5.4 Outcomes

The fourth variable, language learning outcomes, includes linguistic knowledge and language skills (vocabulary knowledge, grammar, fluency, pronunciation among others) and non-linguistic skills (these are seen as the individual's attitudes and values regarding the beliefs or cultural values of the target language community). The outcome of learning which, according to Ellis (2008), can be linguistic (L2 proficiency), and non-linguistic (attitudes, self-concept, cultural values, and beliefs). Ellis (1997) reasons that individuals who are motivated to integrate both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the learning experience will attain a higher degree of L2 proficiency and more desirable attitudes.



#### **2.5.4.1 Linguistic outcomes (L2 proficiency)**

Linguistic outcomes refer to actual language knowledge and language skills, such as proficiency in vocabulary or pronunciation. A considerable number of studies have examined the effects of linguistic proficiency on L2 pragmatic development (e.g., Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2012; Bardovi-Harlig, 2009; Pinto, 2005; Taguchi, 2007). The findings of this line of research have shown that although linguistic proficiency generally has positive influence on pragmatic performance, more proficient learners do not always outperform their less proficient counterparts. A higher level of linguistic proficiency also does not necessarily guarantee native-like performance, especially in a foreign language learning environment (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001).

According to a study by Joyce (2019), L2 listening comprehension is most closely associated with L2 syntactic knowledge, followed by the ability to recognise words in connected speech. The results also revealed that listeners at different proficiency levels process the language in decidedly different ways. Less proficient learners were discovered to be far more dependent on the linguistic and psycholinguistic sub-skills that are closest to the surface of the message. On the other hand, owing to the development of their syntactic knowledge and recognition of words in connected speech, more proficient listeners benefitted from a greater interaction between their more closely entwined higher and lower level processing skills.

#### **2.5.4.2 Non-linguistic outcomes (attitudes, self-concept, cultural values, and beliefs)**

The attention to non-linguistic outcomes in Gardner's socio-educational model is important, since such non-linguistic outcomes encompass the attitudes, values and beliefs that learners have derived from the learning experience (Ellis, 2008). Consequently, such outcomes affect the learner's identity. This is in line with the idea held by many scholars such as Williams and Burden (2007) who consider language as part of one's identity, and a means

to convey this identity to other people. Non-linguistic outcomes reflect on an individual's attitudes concerning cultural values and beliefs, usually towards the target language community. Gardner stresses that attitude change as a possible non-linguistic outcome can be caused by mere exposure to the language, not only by language learning.

### **2.5.5 Rationale for using Gardner's Model**

Gardner (2006, p. 237) believes that his model is superior to other models in that "it is concerned with the motivation to learn and become fluent in another language, and not simply with task and/or classroom motivation". Taking into account all merits and demerits of Gardner's socio-educational model into account, the influential role of this model cannot be neglected. This point can be evidenced by the fact that criticisms addressing this model were not successful at marginalizing it. To the extent even Dörnyei (2014), who has been ranked among the critics of this model, has acknowledged the seminal work of Robert Gardner and his colleagues and admitted that Gardner's model has profoundly influenced his thinking on this subject. Indeed, even Dörnyei himself has attempted to integrate the social psychological constructs postulated by Gardner and Clement and their associates into the proposed new framework of L2 motivation (Dörnyei, 2014). On the whole, not neglecting the achievements made by Gardner, it can be said that considering the complexity of the construct of motivation still there is a long way ahead of researchers to be taken.

By playing an important role in implementing scientific L2 motivation research procedures, Gardner's psychological theory brought research to maturity (Gu, 2009). Gardner's model is associated with the AMTB which provides reliable assessments of its major constructs, allowing empirical tests of the model (Gardner, 2006). This issue is important because, as acknowledged by Gardner (2010), often, various models use concepts and measures that are somewhat different. Assessing the validity of such models, therefore, requires obtaining more information regarding the specific measures used in each model.

Moreover, observing the utilization of somewhat different constructs bearing the same name, Gardner (2010) has also recommended the clarification of concepts in order to remove the problem of using multiple definitions for one construct.

Consequently, one of the main concerns of Gardner (2010) is to present models which focus on the underlying constructs and their measurement while containing schematic diagrams which indicate the processes by which the variables under considerations are linked. Gardner believes that an appropriate strategy in a scientific investigation is to follow such a procedure since it emphasizes the operational definition of the constructs and therefore, enables other researchers to verify the validity of the generalizations made by the model. This point can be considered as one of the strengths of the model. In fact there are many researches whose results empirically support Gardner's socio-educational model, for example, Gardner, et al. (2003) and Semmar (2007).

The other strength of this model can be claimed to be what Gardner (2010) and many scholars (Baker, 2002; Ellis, 2008; MacIntyre et al., 2001) have referred to as the non-static nature of the socio-educational model. This model, therefore, "is a dynamic one in which individual difference variables are seen to influence language achievement and language achievement is seen to have an influence on the individual difference variables" (Gardner, 2010, p. 85). Consequently, this model, as acknowledged by Baker (2002), is also cyclical, in the sense that the outcomes of the learning feed back into the model. That is, the experiences gained by learners in formal or informal settings affect attitude which in turn affects motivation, which in itself is an endless cyclical process which affects continued experience in those settings. Therefore, this model takes the true dynamic nature of learning into account and allows for the inevitable variability of the inter-language, and as such the model is considered to be (more) realistic than other methods. Moreover, due to this dynamic nature, Gardner (2010) has rejected some of the critics of this model who consider individual

difference variables as traits. Since traits, as acknowledged by him, are relatively enduring, while these variables allow for changes under different circumstances.

As mentioned by Gardner (2001), there are other attributes of the motivated individual about which the model is silent, but the model tries to focus “on only the defining attributes *in the interest of parsimony*” (p. 6). In other words, “it satisfies the scientific requirement of parsimony in that it involves a limited number of operationally defined constructs” (Gardner, 2006, p. 237). Nevertheless, this point does not pose a threat to the model because Tremblay and Gardner (2005) indicate that the integration of other indices of motivation into this model still does not change its basic structure.

There are some criticisms raised which have been apparently answered by Gardner (2010). For example, there are critics who believe that socio-educational model is just applicable to bilingual settings such as Canada, where most of Gardner’s studies took place, believing that the results of such contexts cannot be generalized to different settings (particularly in English as first language contexts as opposed to English as second language contexts). But, as held by Gardner (2006), the socio-educational model can be applicable to both foreign and second language learning contexts. To find out the generalizability of Gardner’s model, a number of researches were conducted in this area in English as first language contexts. But the results of some of them do not support Gardner’s claims, such as Takahashi (2013). Such results point to the limitations of integrativeness in such contexts. Nevertheless, the study conducted by Gardner (2006) shows that when uniform measures are utilized, the results obtained show considerable stability.

#### **2.5.6 Summary**

Learning a language goes beyond simple acquisition of linguistic aspects and it includes an alteration in self-image. In short, according to Gardner (1979, as cited in Finegan, 2012), the acquisition of a second language is far more than learning new information.

Rather, it is a process during which the learners acquire “symbolic elements of a different ethno-linguistic community” (p. 520). Therefore, the acquisition of, for instance, new words, grammar, and pronunciation are far more than learning new concepts, new words order, and new ways of saying different things. It is a process which involves the acquisition of features of another ethno-linguistic community.

Many L2 researchers had problems understanding integrative intent, integrativeness, and integrative direction in this framework in prior decades (Dörnyei, 2014). The integrativeness concept and operational definitions both have inconsistencies. The term expresses a genuine desire to learn a second language in order to better understand the other language group. The statement has slightly various implications to many different folks in a specified forum (Gardner, 2001). Two significant elements were proposed to reconcile the discrepancies: integrativeness and attitudes toward learning situation. Integrativeness is the strong desire of a learner to acquire a foreign language to deepen their connections to the other group of languages (Gardner, 2001). Ability and desire, which comprise intellect and verbal aptitude, have a significant influence on a person’s linguistic accomplishment in the domain of language development. The socio-educational model has evolved ever since its presentation, so that its current version, according to Gardner (2010), focuses on the six latent constructs of language aptitude, attitudes toward the learning situation, integrativeness, motivation, language anxiety and language achievement. The last construct has been characterized in terms of linguistic and nonlinguistic outcomes.

## **2.6 Attitude of students towards learning of English language**

This session of the review looks at scholarly articles that are related to the attitude of students towards second language acquisition. Ming et al. (2011) performed a questionnaire survey on the attitudes and motivation of a sample of secondary school students in East Malaysia regarding learning English as a Second Language. The survey demonstrates that Art

and Science students have a generally good attitude about studying English. Students with a bachelor's degree in science and those with a better level of English proficiency are more interested in enhancing their English. Furthermore, the data show a link between higher levels of competency and positive attitudes and enthusiasm to study English. Iranian high school students' attitudes regarding their English as First Language textbooks and how it influenced their approach to learning English as a foreign language were examined by Rahimi and Hassani (2012). The results showed that Iranian students were excited about learning English as a foreign dialect and considered their English textbooks to be helpful learning tools. It has been demonstrated that attitude about using English as First Language textbooks predicts attitudes towards learning English.

The attitudes of rural Malaysian students regarding studying English as a second language were investigated by Zulkefly and Razali (2019). This study's main objective was to examine the many factors or traits that affect rural high school learners' attitudes toward English language learning. Using a case study methodology, four students from two distinct grade levels at a remote high school were specifically chosen, personally interviewed, and monitored in their learning environments. The authors examined and analyzed interview transcripts, selected themes, devised a coding scheme, and categorized the data using within and cross case analyses as well as thematic analysis. According to the data, there were two major elements that influenced students' attitudes toward English study. To begin with, classes were not tailored to students' skill levels and interests, as well as their particular reactions to bad and good experiences.

In terms of specialty, gender, and conversational fluency, Jain (2014) looked at the relationship between anxiety, disposition, and enthusiasm of tertiary students learning English as a foreign language. The Faculty of Education at a Malaysian institution polled 60 first-year undergraduate students. Information was gathered via interviews that were semi-



structured and a questionnaire. The interview results were transcribed and used to support the findings. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software to determine the relationship between tertiary learners' anxiousness, attitudes, and motivation in studying English as a second language. The findings of this study showed a negative but significant relationship between the three main factors of specialty, sex, and language proficiency among tertiary students who were learning English as a second language. While students with poor proficiency had a bigger and more substantial relationship between attitude and motivation than students with high competency, those with scientific majors showed a somewhat more positive attitude toward learning English.

Additionally, Abu-Melhim (2019) was interested in discovering how Jordan's Irbid University College students felt about studying English as a second language. Forty-five female Irbid University College students participated in this study. The purpose of wanting to teach English as a second language was the question asked the students. Notes were taken throughout these interviews, and responses were written down. The 45 female students at the college who participated in the survey received it along with clear instructions. The students' motivations for studying English revealed a wide range of viewpoints and intentions. Surprisingly, more than half of the students felt negatively about studying English and opting to become teachers. Some students were more optimistic than others.

In a premium primary school in Adana, Turkey, where English is heavily taught, Karahan (2017) looked at the relationship between linguistic attitudes toward English and its utilization. Despite having more opportunities to interact with English in a classroom than other students in public schools, these kids only have somewhat favourable opinions of the language; female students in particular had higher rates. They were aware of the importance of the English language, but they did not show much enthusiasm for learning it. On the other

hand, they were only marginally accepting of English-based culture, and they did not tolerate Turkish people speaking English among themselves.

Taylor (2016) looked at what students thought about studying French and English in a private institution in Ghana. Students' views about the study of English were significantly influenced by their sexual identity, with females displaying a more positive attitude than their male counterparts. The findings show that sexual identity had a major impact on students' views regarding the study of English. However, there was no discernible difference in sentiments between males and females about the study of French, suggesting that gender had no effects on learners' attitudes toward the subject. Additionally, it was established that the age of the students had no bearing on their perceptions about the studying of English and French. It was also demonstrated that the students' academic standing had no bearing on how they felt about studying English and French. Students' views about learning English were influenced by their language background in a similar manner. The results, however, showed that language blockage had a significant influence on students' perceptions toward French instruction. Comparatively speaking, Anglophone students lagged behind their Francophone peers in enthusiasm for studying the language. Abidin et al. (2012) evaluated the attitudes and motivation of primary school children towards English and language acquisition. This early study included 40 participants, all of whom were between the ages of 10 and 12. The information was gathered using a questionnaire survey and interviews. Descriptive statistics were used to evaluate the results. Students who were highly driven have a positive attitude about learning English, and were extrinsically motivated.

In their study *Second language learners' attitudes toward the methods of learning vocabulary*, Mukundan et al. (2012) investigated how students felt about learning after being exposed to three different vocabulary-learning strategies: contextual hints, dictionary policy, and computer-assisted language learning. In contrast to the contextual hints and dictionary



approach groups, learners in the computer-assisted language learning group felt that utilizing computers has enhanced their perspectives on learning English vocabulary, according to the study's findings. The study's findings also demonstrate that if good learning attitudes were connected to students' abilities, they may be formed.

Preston et al. (2022) conducted a research and found that the respondents were extremely motivated and had a favorable attitude about learning English. They were driven both instrumentally and integratively. They wanted to learn English for job objectives and to be able to communicate with individuals who spoke English. The data, however, showed that the respondents were intrinsically driven, and so external influences such as the independent variables had no effect on their attitude or motivation. Abdullah et al. (2012) conducted a study on the attitudes of undergraduate students about English language acquisition. The pupils' attitudes regarding the English language classes, which they must take as part of Bangladesh's foreign language learning policy, were found to be positive. The students acknowledged that they recognized the importance of English on a global scale during this era of globalization and international communication networks. It was determined that the students' positive impressions of the English language may be connected to the fact that they were motivated to acquire it for practical purposes.

Many pupils in rural regions understand the value of English and are aware of the numerous advantages it offers them. Unfortunately, they do not put out enough effort to improve their English (Mat & Yunus, 2014). Nevertheless, in several rural places, the pupils are heavily impacted by the small-mindedness of society and the *shyness* mindset, which prevents them from understanding the importance of the language (McKay, 2012). Furthermore, Nikubakht et al. (2018) claimed that social situation has a significant impact on how one behaves. This assertion is in line with Brown's (2010) notion that attitudes are formed early in life and are influenced by those from different cultures as well as those of

one's peers and family. The geographical features of the area where a learner is studying a second/foreign language may also have an impact on that student's ability to learn that language (Navarro-Villarroel, 2011).

For instance, most African students only come into touch with the English language through their English lectures, which is especially true for those who live in remote regions (Nikubakht et al., 2018). This incident illustrates how useless studying English is for these pupils attending remote schools. As a result of the language having no significance to them, they behave poorly around it. In addition, how pupils feel about the possibility of humiliation and conceding defeat all through the education process is closely related to their attitude (Gobel et al., 2013). This anxiety will only hinder language acquisition (Ortega, 2011). According to Lee's research from 2003, many students who are learning English as a foreign language in the nation still have a negative opinion of the language. According to her study, English learners in rural areas feel more welcomed in some situations even if they do not speak English than whenever they do. She also discovered that in some circumstances, speaking English might even cause anger, hostility, and estrangement. It is further confirmed by Saracaloglu (2013) who said that pupils in rural areas are impacted by a mindset that is stereotypical of those with little exposure to English: one that is constricted and reticent.

## **2.7 Effect of students' attitudes on English language proficiency and performance**

The Council of Europe (2001, p. 183) defines proficiency as "what someone can do/knows in relation to the application of the subject in the real world" while Cambridge business English Dictionary refers to proficiency as great skill, ability, and experience. Therefore, by being proficient in a particular language, for example, English, it means that person must be able to converse and understand English to certain degrees depending on their proficiency level (Larasat & Simatupang, 2020). Fakeye (2010) proposes that students' attitude is considered as one of the most influencing factors that impact on students' learning

process. The importance of attitudes in the language learning processes is supported by Popham (2011) who considers attitude as important because of its influence on students' future behaviour. He believes that students' future behaviour is affected by some affective variables such as attitudes, interests and values. He emphasizes that those variables are important. He also believes that to pursue learning in the future students have to possess positive attitudes.

Kara (2009) states that attitude towards learning English, besides opinions and beliefs, gives a big influence on students' behaviours and also their performances. She also observes that students who possess positive beliefs towards language learning have a tendency to increase more positive attitudes towards language learning. On the other hand, she believes that negative beliefs may lead to negative attitudes and anxiety in the class and these result in low cognitive achievements. Students who have positive attitudes and admit that they like the lesson tend to be more excited also have a willingness to work hard during the learning process. Invariably, students who have a willingness to work hard will also achieve better.

Focusing on attitude towards language learning, Abidin et al. (2012) explain that the ability of students to master a particular language is not only influenced by the mental competence or language skills but also by their attitudes and perceptions towards the target language. They also advocate that attitude concept could enhance the process of language learning, influencing the nature of students' behaviours and beliefs toward the other language, and this will influence their tendency to acquire that language. Visser (2008) also notes that students' belief in knowledge acquisition is a significant factor in their performance. Those who believe that learning occurred quickly or not at all are more likely to have fewer problems in searching for information or evaluation than those who believe learning to be a gradual process, requiring both time and effort. Attitudes towards a language can help see what people feel about the speakers of that language. Karahan (2017) argues that

language attitudes let learners have positive orientation towards learning English, so it can be said that attitudes play a crucial role in students' success or failure in the language learning processes. The importance of language acquisition as a stepping-stone for proficiency in learning all school subjects cannot be ignored.

Attitudes also play a vital role in language growth or decay, restoration or destruction. In other words, the status and importance of a language in society and within an individual can be adopted and learnt (Baker, 1988, in Siregar, 2009). Many teachers believe that students' attitudes toward a subject affect their achievement in the subject (Giner, 2002). Attitude stirs passion and drive and results in empowerment (Mesiti, 2009). Similarly, Alimen (2009) confirms that indeed, attitude is what makes students work to gain achievement in school, especially in English. In addition, Savignon (2002) accentuates the fact that the learner's attitude is and without doubt the single most important factor in their success. Whether the motivation of the learner is integrative or instrumental, the development of communicative competence involves the whole learner. Hence, she concludes that the most successful teaching programmes are those that take into account the affective as well as cognitive aspects of language learning.

According to Holbrook et al. (2005), there is a positive correlation between the amount of knowledge a person possesses and the personal importance of the person's attitudes toward the object. For instance, Falsario (2000) in her study found that pupils had an uncertain attitude towards English as a subject. This implies that there is the need to develop a favourable attitude towards the English subject among pupils since attitude was found to have a positive relationship to performance. A positive attitude leads to a better performance in English and other subjects as well. The ability to use language (language proficiency) to help solve problems is a tool. In this sense, language is a tool for learning and an aid to improve understanding and hence academic achievement. Human learning assumes

a specific social perspective and process by which children groom into the intellectual life around them. So we can say that language acts as a vehicle for educational development and is vital for intellectual growth and higher order academic attainment. Students' attitude towards English and their English proficiency indicates that there is a significant relationship between students' attitude towards English and their English proficiency. This means that students with better attitude towards English tend to become more proficient in English.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

The literature examined studies conducted on attitudes and how these affected learning of English as a second language. The review also touched factors that affect students' attitude towards learning of the English language. The areas discussed in the literature reviewed were related to this study because the purpose of the present study is to assess the attitudes of Senior High School students towards learning of English language in the Kwabre East Municipality of the Ashanti Region. The review of literature also tried to explain the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, concept of attitudes, importance of attitudes and its impact on learning English Language as a second language.

Most students in Ghana can rarely master English despite having studied it for almost 15 years at the primary and junior high school levels, especially those in rural areas (Mensah, 2014). These challenges are also seen when the students go on to pursue their senior high school education. When they pursue university education or gain employment, this problem becomes quite obvious. The views of rural pupils and their proficiency in the English language are significantly correlated. Consequently, it is crucial to carry out study on this subject, since, by knowing the attitudes of Ghanaian rural students, it would be possible to better comprehend their limited grip of the English language and offer solutions to prevent future issues.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used to conduct the study. The methodology focused on description of the research philosophy, approach and design, population, sample and sampling techniques and research instruments, validation and reliability. Data collection procedure and data analysis were also provided in the methodology chapter.

#### 3.2 Research philosophy

Pragmatism posits that there is an objective reality that exists apart from human experience. However, this reality is grounded in the environment and can only be encountered through human experience (Morgan 2014). A major underpinning of pragmatist philosophy is that knowledge and reality are based on beliefs and habits that are socially constructed (Yefimov, 2004). Pragmatists generally agree that all knowledge in this world is socially constructed, but some versions of those social constructions match individuals' experiences more than others (Morgan 2014). Creswell (2014) have mentioned that pragmatism is considered to be “the philosophical partner” of the mixed research approach as its underlying assumptions which provide the essence for mixing research methods. Also, Saunders et al. (2009) agree that pragmatism is an advanced philosophy that provides the epistemology and the logic for combining the quantitative and qualitative approaches and methods.

Moreover, Creswell (2014) observes that pragmatism is the philosophy that permits mixing paradigms, assumptions, approaches and methods of data collection and analysis. Morgan (2014) has argued that pragmatism implies that pragmatic research is *inter-subjective*, which means being subjective and objective at the same time, accepting both the existence of one reality and that individuals have multiple interpretations of this reality.

Moreover, Saunders et al. (2009) have mentioned that pragmatism implies that reality is external and multiple at the same time and that a researcher chooses the view best serves his research purposes. Similarly, Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) have mentioned that to conduct mixed research it is important to understand both the objective and subjective views of reality. Although it is important not to be biased or affect the phenomenon under investigation, it is also so important to understand the social actors' point of view. This study will therefore adopt pragmatism since it helps to investigate practical problems in the real world, such as students' attitude towards learning of second language in Kwabre East Municipality.

### **3.3 Research approach**

The study deploys the mixed research approach. A mixed-methodologies research design, as defined by Creswell (2014), is a research design with its own philosophical presumptions and methods of investigation. It uses philosophical presumptions as a technique to give instructions for the gathering and interpretation of data from several sources in single research. In the mixed research, a researcher uses a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches (designs and methods) in one study or a set of related studies. This can be done either concurrently when conducting both parts at the same time or sequentially when conducting one part first and the other second (Amedahe & Asamoah-Gyimah, 2017). A mixed-methods methodology mixes post-positivism and interpretive, interweaving qualitative and quantitative data in such a manner that research concerns are effectively explained (Creswell, 2014), offering a variety of advantages to tackling complicated research challenges. Additionally, it provides a logical foundation, methodological adaptability, and a comprehensive comprehension of smaller cases (Amedahe & Asamoah-Gyimah, 2017).

There are two main advantages of using the mixed research approach (Creswell, 2014). The first advantage is the complementary strengths, which means using the strengths of one



research method to enhance or support another one. Mixed researchers believe that using only quantitative or qualitative research is limited and incomplete for many research problems. As every approach has its strengths and weaknesses; they should be combined in a way that improves research quality by gaining integral strengths and avoiding overlapping weaknesses (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Therefore, by integrating two sets of strengths and simultaneously making up for each method's shortcomings, a mixed-methods design gives the highest opportunity of addressing research problems (Sauders et al., 2009). The second advantage is "triangulation". The purpose of triangulation is to enrich and strength research results by using different methods of data collection and analysis to study the same phenomenon in order to gain a complete understanding of this phenomenon. For the purposes of triangulation and covering shortcomings of each method, the study deploys the mixed research approach to examine students' attitude towards learning of second language in Kwabre East Municipality.

### **3.4 Research design**

Convergence or merging of quantitative and qualitative data is used in convergent parallel design mixed methodologies to offer a thorough study of the research topic. When using this approach, the researchers usually gather both types of data simultaneously, give equal weight to each method, maintain the independence of the data analysis, combine the results during the overall interpretation, and look for patterns of convergence, divergence, contradictions, or relationships between the two sources of data (Razali et al., 2019). Two distinct strands of quantitative and qualitative data were gathered and analyzed by the researchers. In this design, both the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study run simultaneously. Further, because both occurred simultaneously, they take place within the same phase of research. As such, both strands were prioritized equally. Each strand take place independently until the analysis of data is completed. It is only at this point that the results were mixed and interpreted together. Therefore, the researcher adopted the convergent



research design to develop an overall understanding of students' attitude towards learning of second language. To do so, questionnaire and interview were deployed with students and English teachers in the selected schools in Kwabre East Municipality. The data from the questionnaire were analyzed using quantitative means while the data from the interview were analyzed qualitatively. The results were then combined to highlight instances where the knowledge of students' attitude on learning of second language either converges or diverges.

### **3.5 Population**

Creswell (2014) defined population in research as group of items or units (for example, people) having common characteristics that are of interest to a study. The population of this study comprises of senior high school students and English Language teachers in the Kwabre East Municipality. Kwabre East Municipality has four (4) public SHSs with a total population of 9,481 and English Language Teacher population of 41 (Kwabre East Municipal Education Service, May, 2022). However, the study makes use of Form 2 students who were in the selected public schools. Simms SHS has a total of 746 Form 2 students, Kofi Agyei SHS has 589 Form 2 students, Gyaman Pensan SHS has 803 Form 2 students and Antoa SHS has 656 Form 2 students. In total, the target population for the study was 2,794 Form 2 students.

### **3.6 Sample size determination**

The sample size for students and English Language teachers were determined for each school, using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table. This sample size is based on the sample size determination of less than or equal to 10,000 population, using 95 percent confidence interval. Based on the Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table, the sample size for the study was 600 students. Simple random sampling techniques were used to select students from form two classes of the four institutions. Convenient technique was used to select from the selected students to form the focus group.

Four focus groups were formed (Group A-D) with each selected institution having one group. Each focus group was composed of 25 students resulting in overall total of 100 students. Simple random sampling was used again to select 12 teachers out of the 41. Simple random sampling technique was used because it ensured that all the four schools have equal chances of being selected for the study (Creswell, 2014). Form 2 students in each selected school were stratified into gender strata and simple random sampling technique was used to select the required number of gender from each gender stratum. This gives each individual in each sex stratum an equal chance and opportunity to be selected and used for the study. This procedure was used to avoid bias in the sampling of the students. The sample size of the students was 600 made up of both males and females using Krecjie and Morgan's (1970) sampling frame. Based on this table, the sample size for a population of 2,794 is 600. Therefore, the sample size for a population of 2,794 was 600. The sample size distribution of the students from the schools is shown in Table 3.6.

*Table 3.6. Sampling size distribution of students from the four schools*

Schools	Total No. of students	No. of students sampled	No of boys sampled	% sampled	No. of girls sampled	% sampled
Simms SHS	746	143	85	59.4	58	40.6
Kofi Agyei SHS	589	127	76	59.8	51	40.2
Gyaman Pensan SHS	803	195	116	59.5	79	40.5
Antoa SHS	656	135	81	60.0	54	40.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,794</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>59.7</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>40.3</b>

Form 1 students were not included because they have just entered school and may not have developed any proper attitude practices whilst those in Form 3 had completed their course of study and were not in school to be recruited for the study. The study used 358 boys representing 59.7 percent and 242 girls representing 40.3 percent. Also, 12 English teachers were selected from the four schools and interviewed using census sampling. This is because all the teachers who teach English Language in Form 2 classes in the four schools were recruited for the study. The teachers were responsible for the teaching of the students and were the right participants who can give appropriate data for students' academic performance in English Language and their attitudes towards learning of the subject in the schools (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). In all, 612 respondents were used to conduct the study.

### **3.7 Data collection instruments**

Three data collection instruments were used in this study and these were questionnaire, focus group discussion guide, and semi-structured interview guide.

#### **3.7.1 Students' questionnaire**

The questionnaire has four sections. Section A of the questionnaire was designed to collect information on socio-demographic data on students, namely gender, form, age distribution and place of resident. The items in section A were constructed using multiple choice questions where students were asked to select the option applicable to them. Section B dealt with data on attitudes of students towards learning of the English Language. The items were related to learning attitudes, language aptitude and learning anxiety. The items in this section were constructed using five point Likert scales namely strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. The five-point Likert scale was later collapsed into three point Likert scale summated agree, disagree and neutral. Section C was on factors that determine students' attitude towards the English Language, the factors were language motivation, teacher factors, and learning environment. The items were constructed using the

procedure described in Section B. Section D was on how attitude of students affect students' English language proficiency and academic performance. The section looked at learning skills, learning aptitude, and teachers' commitment. The items were constructed using the procedure described in Section B.

### **3.7.2 Focus group discussion**

One hundred (100) students were sampled based on convenient technique out of the 600 students used to conduct the study. Thus, 25 students were sampled from each school and put into groups of four students per group. Each group was made up of the five programmes that the students were studying. Each student in a group was coded. Students from Group A were coded as ST. 1-25, Group B as ST. 26-50, Group C as ST. 51-75 and Group D as ST. 76-100. Each group was given a paper containing 37 questions related to the items on the questionnaire and divided into the same sections as the questionnaire. The students were to discuss the items and provide responses.

### **3.7.3 Semi-structured interview**

Interviewing is a method of data collection in research where an interviewer asks questions while an interviewee responds directly. This instrument allows respondents to express their views, beliefs, practices and concerns (Frankel & Wallen, 2006). Interviewing has a number of advantages over other data collection instruments like questionnaire administration and observation. Interviewing offers the opportunity for both interviewee and interviewer to seek for clarification. Interviewing makes it possible to check on the reliability of responses by asking the same question differently and at different stages of the interview (Amedahe & Asamoah-Gyimah, 2017). Structured interview guide was used to ensure that each of the teachers was asked the same questions in the same order. The interview guide helped to provide teachers' views on students' attitudes towards learning of the English Language. The questions on the interview guide were related to the objectives of the study and contained 27

questions and divided into sections based on the objectives of the study. The responses obtained were recorded and later transcribed and put into themes in line with the objectives.

### **3.8 Validity of the instruments**

Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) defined validity as the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study. The study was interested in content, criterion and construct validity. Content validity was used to assess whether the content of the questionnaires, focus group discussion, and structured interview guide measured what they were supposed to measure. The opinion from the researcher's supervisor was of great help concerning how relevant the content in the instruments were with regard to the objectives of the study. Lastly, piloting, testing and re-testing the instruments helped limit the discrepancies that could have arose in the actual study. The researcher's supervisor's opinions and feedback from piloting in form of recommendations to the researcher were all incorporated in the final instruments for validation.

### **3.9 Data collection procedure**

The instruments were administered personally to ensure proper coverage, high return rate and establish rapport with the students. Data were collected from primary sources using the questionnaire, focus group discussion and interview guide. The researcher visited the selected schools and administered the questionnaire and focus group discussion and scheduled date with the teachers for interview. On the fixed date, the researcher went to the schools, gathered the sampled students in one of the classrooms and distributed the questionnaires to the students. The purpose and objectives of the study as well as the structure of the items on the questionnaire were explained to the student respondents. The respondents were then allowed to provide responses to the items based on the selection of the option which was applicable to them. It took 35 to 40 minutes for the students to complete answering the items.

The researcher collected the questionnaire administered on the same day to ensure high return rate. Twenty-five students from each school based on their programmes were selected and grouped into five groups and provided with the focus group discussion to provide their responses. In all, it took four weeks for the data to be collected for the study. The researcher met the teachers individually and interviewed them using the interview guide. The responses given were recorded and later transcribed and put into the various themes and objectives of the study and analyzed.

### **3.10 Data analysis**

The data collected with the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics in a form of frequencies, percentages and means with their respective standard deviations. The data collected were first edited to remove errors and then coded. The cleaned data were analyzed with the assistance of a Computer Software, SPSS 23.0 version. The mean scores calculated were interpreted on the basis of the following indicative scale: Disagree = 1.00-2.50; Neutral = 2.51-3.50, Agree = 3.51-5.00. In addition, the researcher used thematic analysis to interpret the qualitative data from the focus group discussion and the interview guide. With this, the responses obtained from the focus group discussion and interview guide were transcribed orthographically and coded and put into various themes based on the objectives of the study.

### **3.11 Reliability**

The method of test-retest was used to measure the reliability of the data. The instruments were administered and re-administered in an interval of three weeks. The test-retest was carried out at OKESS SHS in the Tafo Municipality in Ashanti Region which has the same characteristics as the schools used for the study. The results of the two consecutive tests were then correlated by calculating the Cronbach Alpha Co-efficient of correlation. The reliability coefficients obtained were used to determine the reliability of the data. The

reliability coefficient is computed using the equation written out as alpha equals N multiplied by C, which is all divided by  $V = V + (n - 1) c$ . In this case, alpha is the coefficient, N is the number of test items, v is the average variance, and C is inter-item covariance. The results obtained were 0.71, 0.73 and 0.75 for the students' questionnaire, focus group discussion and teachers' interview guide respectively, which was more than 0.70 recommended by Gliem and Gliem (2003).

In transcribing teachers' semi-structured interview, the researcher listened to the recording, produced a transcript of the individual teachers' responses and coded it as TR. 1-12. Prior to coding, all transcripts were reviewed and compared to the accompanying recordings. Small edits were made, as needed, to provide a more accurate transcript. The inter-rater reliability was determined by point-to-point percentage agreement, whereby the number of agreements in recorded transcriptions teachers were divided by the total number of transcribed units. The number of agreement in teachers' responses was 11 out of 12. This gave percentage agreement of 91.7%. A percentage agreement of 85% or more is typically reported in the literature (Shriberg and Lof as cited by Seifert et al., 2019) to yield reliable response.

### **3.12 Ethical consideration**

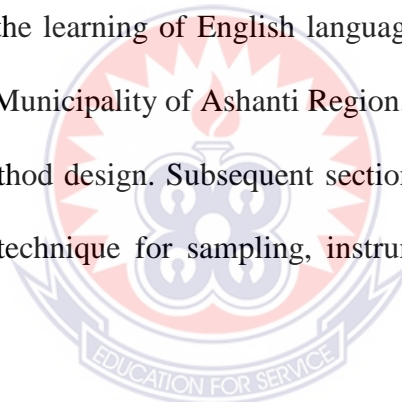
All social organizations have some ethical concerns to consider so do research work (Creswell, 2014). Revelation of facts by teachers on their students' attitude towards learning of the English language and the students on their teachers' commitment can affect the school and many other ethical concerns in relation to the schools selected for the study. To address this, Creswell (2014) suggests that justification of the study should first be explained to the respondents. The privacy of the data collected from respondents be considered by ensuring that their names and other information that can bring out their identities not be exposed in the data given. They were made to recognize their role in the data collection activity to find answers to the research questions. To avoid imposing the study on respondents, Creswell



again suggests that respondents should be given the option to opt out if the exercise disturbs them in any way. The methods and procedures explained above were used in pursuing the needed data for the analysis. Thus, the respondents were assured of their confidentiality and privacy.

### **3.13 Conclusion**

The principal motive of this chapter was to outline the several scientific procedures and techniques needed in the research work in order to reach at empirical results and the rationale behind attitudes of students towards the learning of English language as a second language. The chapter discussed the research methodology and design used to obtain the objectives of the research work. The principal motive of the investigation was to examine the attitudes of students towards the learning of English language as a second language among SHS students in Kwabre East Municipality of Ashanti Region. The research work employed a convergent parallel mixed method design. Subsequent sections of the chapter dealt with the population, sample size and technique for sampling, instrumentation, and how data were collected and analysed.





## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the results of the analyses of the data and discussion of the findings, focusing on selected students and teachers from the Kwabre East Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Specifically, it aimed at finding the attitude of students towards learning of English, the factors that affect the attitude of students towards English and how the attitude of students affect their academic proficiency and performance in accordance with the theoretical framework of the study coined from Gardner's Socio-educational model (Gardner, 2001). The results are presented in three sections: The first section focuses on the results regarding the learning attitudes of students. Here, findings of the analysis show that students had positive attitudes towards English, taking into consideration, learning attitude of students, language aptitude of students and learning anxiety of students. These were recorded both in their responses to the questionnaire items, focus group as well as the interview responses.

Second, the findings show that language motivation, attitude of teachers and learning environment are factors that affect attitude of students towards the learning of English. It was indicated that teachers are therefore responsible for the attitude exhibited by students towards English. These were recorded both in their responses to the questionnaire items, focus group as well as the responses of the teachers. Third, the findings reveal that most of the students do not relate very well to their study of the English language and therefore have negative aptitude which acts as a disincentive to their learning of the English language. These are evident in students' learning skill, their learning aptitude and teachers' commitment.

#### **4.1 The attitude of students toward the learning of English language**

The first objective was to examine the attitude of students towards learning of English Language. In general, the findings showed that students had positive attitude towards the learning of English. These attitudes range from learning attitude of students and language aptitude of students, to learning anxiety of students. Regarding learning attitude of students, the gathered data agreed that, students have good attitudes towards learning of the English language. This is due to the fact that students agree to the idea that English language making them skillful, getting other subjects as a result of understanding English, and English language helping them to have a good relationship with other native. The rest are getting respect as a result of learning English language and teachers being a good example of the ideal English speaker. Teachers also agreed to students' responses. Also, concerning language aptitude, it was evident that students had good learning aptitude as they show readiness and speed in the acquisition of the English language. Teachers and students agree that students' interest in English language had increased their understanding. Again, students had vocabulary to express themselves and feel confident with English language since it is their second language. Finally, in relation to learning anxiety, teachers and students reported favourably on low learning anxiety among students which has facilitated students' learning of the English language. These issues are discussed in the following sections.

##### **4.1.1 Learning attitude of students**

The findings of the study portrayed students' positive attitude towards the learning of the English language. Concerning learning attitude, students and teachers demonstrated strong positive learning attitude in their responses. The responses from the questionnaire are shown in Table 4.1.1.

*Table 4.1.1. Learning attitude of students*

Statement	N	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Studying the English language is important because it makes me skillful	600	594(99)	2(0.34)	4(0.66)	4.39	.541
Understanding the English language will help me to get other subjects as well	600	528(88)	45(7.5)	27(4.5)	4.01	.668
Studying the English language helps me to have a good relationship with other native	600	548(91.3)	0(0)	52(8.7)	4.18	.566
Studying English is important because other people will respect me	600	553(92.1)	2(0.4)	45(7.5)	4.20	.575
My English teacher is a good example of the ideal English speaker	600	267(44.5)	187(31.2)	146(24.3)	3.20	1.138

82.9 3.99

Table 4.1.1 sought students' learning attitude towards English language. With a mean of 4.39, students agreed that studying the English language is important because it makes them skillful. In terms of percentage, 99% students saw the need in studying the English language as it makes them skillful, with 0.66% taking a neutral stance and the remaining 0.34% disagreeing with the assertion. Again, with a mean of 4.01, students attested that understanding the English language will help them perform well in other subjects as well. In terms of percentage, 80% of the students agreed with the statement while 7.5% students

disagreed with 4.5% of the students demonstrating a neutral stance. Furthermore, with a mean of 4.18, students agreed that studying the English language helps them to have a good relationship with other speakers and studying English being important because other people will respect them. Regarding percentages, 91.3% agreed to the statement while the remaining 8.7% were indecisive. Moreover, with a mean of 4.20, students agreed that studying English is important because other people will respect them. In terms of percentage, 92.1% students saw studying English is important because other people will respect them, while 0.4% disagreed and 7.5% remained unsure. With a mean of 3.20, students demonstrated a neutral stance to the statement “My English teacher is a good example of the ideal English speaker”. When you look at the percentages (44.5% agreeing to the statement, 31.2% disagreeing, 24.3% neutral), you see that there is a seeming confusion among the students. This is why there is no clear 50% agree or disagree.

The results in Table 4.1.1 with mean of 3.99 show that students agreed to have favourable attitudes towards learning of English language (82.9%). The only exception is that students could not agree or disagree to their English teacher being a good example of the ideal English speaker. This is possible due to the fact that participants do not always see all teachers communicating in the English language. However, generally, the responses indicate that the students have good attitudes towards learning of the English language. The findings confirm those of Ming et al. (2011) who conducted a study on attitudes and motivation towards learning English as a second language of secondary school students in East Malaysia. Ming et al. (2011) found that the students have positive attitudes towards learning English language. Similarly, these findings are also consistent with those of Karahkurliuk (2016), which confirmed that learners’ attitudes and impressions of the language are some of the most essential variables that promote language acquisition. Youssef (2012) also asserts that attitude has a significant role in language learning. This is evident in the study as favourable attitudes

towards learning of English language were exhibited by the learners as it provides them with skills and help them have good relationship with other speakers among others.

From the focus group discussion, students were asked a question about how the study of the English language makes them skillful. One of the students, ST. 4 in Group 1, said:

*I speak the English fluently so I am able to express myself well, therefore I have skills*

The following were also offered by students in relation to the same question:

*I am able to communicate well in English language with friends (ST. 26)*

*As a result of the study of English language, am able to read and understand other subject (ST. 93)*

*The study of English language has significantly improved my speaking skill (ST. 63)*

*The study of English language enables me to inform, persuade, and direct my fellow students in English (ST. 15)*

*As a result of the study of English language, am able to express thoughts, ideas, feelings in written form (ST. 72)*

*I have improved my creativity and exploration skills in other subjects as a result of studying the English Language (ST. 28).*

The responses suggest that studying English language makes students skillful in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Suparman (2017), proficiency in each skill is necessary to become a well-rounded communicator. These skills, from the students' responses, have improved their interpersonal dialogue (e.g. Janah et al., 2016), have aided their understanding of an individual's socio-cultural configuration (e.g. Kitayama et al., 2009; Ozfidan et al., 2014), enabled them to see its study as a cultural mirror (e.g. Catana, 2014; Hartono et al., 2021; Parlindungan et al. 2018; Tarihoran, 2020), and assisted them to appreciate it as a means of expressing the inner person's world (e.g. Korneeva et al., 2019).

On the other hand, three students said that they are not acquiring the needed skills regarding the study of English language. Respondent, ST. 29 indicated that:

*I lack self-confidence because I do not speak English language.*

ST. 94 responded that:

*I cannot read and write well in English, hence find studying of English language boring.*

ST. 71 remarked that:

*I cannot understand written text in English language.*

Minshar (2020) asserts that such students display weakness in the English language, as they are unable to speak English, and their ability to comprehend and understand written texts is also weak.

Regarding the question, “How does the English language help you to study and do well in other subjects?”, students gave answers such as:

*English helps us to understand anything we read, write and pass other subjects (ST. 73)*

*we are able to read and comprehend other subject (ST. 96)*

*English helps us to pass our exams because we have the right vocabularies to use as well as express ourselves (ST. 30).*

The responses indicate that studying English helps students to understand, and read and write to pass their exams because they have right vocabularies to express themselves. Students in this category will have good learning attitudes towards English language. Moreover, the students were asked a question about “How the study of English language helps them to have good relationship and communicate with other natives?”, Respondent ST. 51 reported that:

*English serves as intermediary language which helps me to communicate and interact with others*

Student ST. 78 stated that:

*English helps different ethnic groups to interact without inferiority of one's local language, so I am able to interact with other natives*

All answers given by students indicate that students are able to interact with different natives as a result of English language. This result reveals that the students are able to communicate and interact with other natives.

Concerning the question “How is the studying of the English language important for other people to respect you?”, the focus group from each school offered some answers:

*Speaking English language fluently will cause people to value us (ST. 29).*

*People see us to be in high position because we can speak English language (ST. 9).*

*Being able to express ourselves confidently and fluently portrays how educated we are (ST. 96)*

*We are treated special by our teachers for being fluent in English language (ST. 66)*

These responses portray that the students who speak English are respected.

With respect to the question “How are your English teachers a good example of an ideal English speaker?”, Respondent ST. 45 said:

*My English teachers speak with clear pronunciation of words*

Student ST. 80 answered that:

*My English teachers know a lot about English language and can easily answer any question posed to them*

The students' assertions related to learning attitude of English language with regards to the discussion on the focus group above, revealed that majority of the students have positive learning attitudes of the English language due to their acquisition of skills, ability to learn English to help them to perform well in other subjects, the ability to communicate and interact with other natives, and command respect from people because they speak English



The qualitative data also indicated that majority of the students have positive learning attitudes towards the English language. These findings support those of Navarro-Villaroel (2011) who observes that positive attitudes toward a language appear to be important in linguistic repair and preservation. Thus, learners' attitudes may have an influence on their ability to acquire the target language. The results of the study also echo the views expressed by Visser (2018) that attitude is considered as an essential factor influencing language performance. The teachers were asked to comment on their students' commitment to learning of the English Language. They gave various responses such as

*The students see English as an interesting subject (TR.3)*

*The students see the English as a valuable subject (TR.7)*

The teachers' responses indicate that their students were committed to the learning of the English language. In effect, these students are likely to have positive learning attitudes towards the English language. The study further sought from the teachers how the students demonstrate their commitment to learning the English language. Teachers commented as follows:

*Students do demonstrate commitment to study the subject through listening and speaking (TR.2)*

*High level of commitment to learning of English language are demonstrated by students as students are punctual and corporate during English language class (TR.3)*

*Most of the students are able to express themselves during debate competitions (TR.4)*

*Students respond promptly to English language instructions (TR.1)*

*Students ask question that will enable them master the English language (TR.8)*

Only teacher TR.6 gave an opposing comment that:

*The students do not demonstrate enough commitment to the study of the subject as students' attitude towards buying of English textbook is bad.*



This suggests that commitment to the study of the English language demonstrated by students was not enough to teacher TR. 6. Thus, students' inability to buy the English textbook negatively affects students' commitment to the study of the English language. This finding is contrary to a study by Getie (2020), where students' acquisition of English textbooks positively affected their commitment to the study of the English language.

The teachers were again asked "Do your students use the English language in and out of their classrooms?" They reported that:

*Yes, because their students have the confidence and vocabularies to express themselves (TR. 6)*

*Yes, because the students find it easy to communicate (TR. 5).*

*Students do use the English language in and out of their classrooms (TR. 7).*

*Majority of the students practice the use of English language in their interaction with colleagues (TR. 9).*

However, teacher TR.8 indicated that:

*I have seen few students use the English language in and out of their classrooms, as majority of the students are afraid to make mistakes when they speak.*

This detailed opposing opinion offered by teacher TR.8 shows a duality where the students are anxious to speak English, but also consider making mistakes as part of learning (Rohi et al., 2023). Thus, students' fear of making mistakes when using English language serves as an obstacle to students communicating in the English language in school. However, majority of responses showed that teachers agree to their students using the English language in and out of their classroom because they have the confidence and the vocabulary to use to express themselves. The responses also suggest that majority of the teachers have proof of their students having positive learning attitudes towards the English language. This is due to their high commitment towards learning of English language and the ability to use it in and

out of the classroom. This finding supports the results obtained from the students' responses from the questionnaire and focus group discussions. These findings are consistent with those of Elyazale (2019), Yuliani et al. (2023), and Zulfikar et al. (2019) which reported that students hold a positive attitude towards English language.

#### 4.1.2 Language aptitude

One other area of the attitude of students toward the learning of English language was the views of students on language aptitude. In respect of this, students demonstrated good language aptitude towards the learning of English language. Responses to questions from the quantitative analysis are presented in Table 4.1.2.

*Table 4.1.2. Language aptitude of students*

Statement	N	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
When I study the English language, I get more knowledge	600	480(80)	68(11.3)	54(8.7)	4.02	1.053
Studying the English language like the native is enjoyable	600	77(12.8)	365(60.8)	158(26.4)	2.40	.998
I would like to spend as much time as possible to study English	600	308(51.3)	106(17.6)	186(31.1)	3.29	1.183
When I hear someone speak the English language, I like to practice speaking with him/her	600	396(66)	204(34)	0(0)	3.71	1.008

As indicated in Table 4.1.2, with a mean of 4.02, the students agreed to the suggestion that when they study English language, they get more knowledge. In terms of percentage, 80% confirmed that when they study English language, they get more knowledge with 11.3% disagreeing and 8.7% indicating they are not sure. On the other hand, with mean of

2.40, students disagreed that studying the English language like the native is enjoyable. Relating this to percentages, 12.8% agreed with 60.8% disagreeing and the remaining 26.4% not sure. Students embraced the idea that they would like to spend much time as possible to study English language with mean of 3.29. That is 51.3% agreed with 17.6% disagreeing and remaining 26.4% not sure. Again, with mean of 3.71, students affirmed that when they hear someone speak the English language, they like to practice speaking with them. In terms of percentages, 66% agreed with 34% disagreeing.

The results indicate that majority of the students have responded positively to three statements. From the values presented, we can conclude that students have good or favourable language aptitude. These results are consistent with those of Abu-Melhim (2019) and Calderón (2020). According to Abu-Melhim (2019), when students have interest in learning English they will feel happy in understanding it so that they will master it easily. Poves (2020) asserts that language aptitude can be a predictor of profitable execution in foreign/second language acquisition. The results therefore suggest that students in the study have specific abilities, which allow them to learn a foreign/second language easier, faster, and better than others (Wen, 2012). One of the students, ST. 63, when asked about “What contribution does English language make to students obtaining new knowledge”, said that:

*The use of English helps me to make more research and get meaning of words which intend give new ideas and knowledge*

When asked a question on “How the study of the English language, like students’ native language, is enjoyable”, they reported that:

*English is the only subject with a lot of aspects which make learning it not enjoyable*  
(ST. 23)

*We do not enjoy English language because marks are deducted with the little mistake*  
(ST. 76)

*We do not enjoy the English language because it has many grammar rules (ST. 83)*

These results showed that grammar has negative impact on the students' English language learning. This is in line with a study by Sabah and Mahmood (2021), which concluded that knowing grammar rules is not helpful to enhance learners' speaking skills.

Regarding the question "How would you like to spend much time as possible to study English language?", Student ST. 44 said that:

*I often try to read my Literature books ahead of my teachers*

Another respondent, ST. 8, said:

*I spend two hours per day studying the English Language because of its relevance to us, we do spend time studying English Language because we cherished the language*

These responses portray that students who do spend time to study the English language due to its relevance, are likely to have good learning attitudes of the subject. Finally, students were asked "Are you prompted to speak English with someone when they hear them speaking English?"

*I always communicate in English language with anyone who tries to use the same English language on me (ST. 73).*

ST. 48 said: *I feel confident to speak the English Language.*

ST. 10 also said: *I like to speak the English language due to the fact it is my second language.*

ST. 6 in school 'A' agreed that she is able to speak English with someone when she hears them speaking English since she has the vocabulary to express herself. The responses showed that students are prompted to speak the English language because they have the vocabulary to express themselves, feel confident, and like the English language since it is their second language. However, respondent ST. 76 remarked that:

*No, because I do not like the English language since it is not my native language*

The findings from the focus group discussions reveal that majority of the students show good language aptitude towards English language learning. This is because they are able to acquire new knowledge, enjoy learning the English language as it helps them to understand things easily, express themselves, and value the language. This is consistent with a study by Abramova et al. (2020) and Poves (2020) which reported that language aptitude is a predictor in English language acquisition.

The study further examined the views of teachers regarding students' English language learning aptitude. The teachers were asked "Do your students use English language throughout their English lessons?"

*Yes, but, in certain situations they do code-switching (TR. 5)*

*Yes, because the students learn English language through grammatical rules (TR. 2)*

*Yes, because the students do understand the concepts explained in the English language (TR.6)*

*Yes, because the students learn English language through vocabulary memorization (TR.7)*

*Yes, because students believe that using the English language will help the growth of your mind (TR.3)*

These answers show that the students have specific abilities which allow them to speak English language easier, faster, and better throughout their English lessons. This indicates students' readiness and the capacity for learning English language. The teachers were also asked if their students were aware of the effects of English language on their academic work. They responded thus:

*Yes, because the students write their WASSCE in English Language (TR. 10)*

*It is their medium of instruction (TR. 12)*

*Yes, because their textbooks are written in English language (TR. 1)*

*The students know that, those who speak good and correct English Language are those respected in school (TR.9)*

*Students are aware that learning English language will help hem excel in the subjects (TR. 11)*

*The students know that those who speak good and correct English Language are those elected as leaders in school (TR.4)*

All the responses by the teachers indicate that their students are aware of the positive effects of English language on their academic work.

Responses offered by the teachers regarding students' English language learning aptitude revealed students' grammatical sensitivity, verbal memory skills, and analytic reasoning or pattern recognition skills associated with the learning of English language. These are due to their readiness and ability to communicate in English language in and outside of the classroom. Also, most of the students do speak English language throughout their English language lessons, suggesting that their language aptitude positively influences their learning of English language. These findings are in line with those of Baker (2012) and Sanopao (2022). The authors reported on positive effects of learners' aptitude in SLA. Furcsa (2018) also revealed that language aptitude is crucial for success in English language learning, an assertion which is consistent with the current study.

### **4.1.3 Learning anxiety**

One other area regarding the attitude of students toward the learning of English language was the learning anxiety of students. In respect of this, students showed favourable and high learning anxiety towards English language. Responses to questions from the quantitative analysis are displayed in Table 4.1.3.

Results from Table 4.1.3 indicate that with a mean of 2.32, majority of the students representing 66.4% agrees to the statement "I feel shy when I communicate in the English

language with others” while 17% disagreed and the remaining 16.6% undecided. With a mean of 3.02, students demonstrated a neutral stance to the statement “I wish I have many English language friends in order to learn their language”. When you look at the percentages (45.1% agreeing to the statement, 39% disagreeing, 15.9% unsure), you see that there is appears to be confusion among the students as to what they really think. This is why there is no clear 50% agree or disagree.

*Table 4.1.3. Learning anxiety of students*

Statement	N	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
I feel shy when I communicate in the English language with others	600	102(17)	398(66.4)	100(16.6)	2.32	.961
I wish I have many English language friends in order to learn their language	600	271(45.1)	234(39)	95(15.9)	3.02	1.041
The English language have no impact on me	600	100(16.6)	319(53.1)	181(30.3)	2.30	.868
I will practice with the English language as my native language	600	236(39.3)	214(35.6)	150(25.1)	2.98	1.015
When speaking English, the fear of grammatical mistakes has great influence on me	600	370(61.6)	135(22.5)	95(15.9)	3.59	1.185

With a mean of 2.3 majority of the students representing 53.1% disagree to the statement “The English language have no impact on me” with 16.6% agreeing and the remaining 30.3% undecided. Additionally, with a mean of 2.98, students embraced a neutral



stance to the statement “I will practice with the English language as my native language”. Considering the percentages (39.3 % agreeing to the statement, 35.6% disagreeing, 25.1% did not declare their stand), one would notice that, there is a seeming confusion among the students as to which way to go. Students agreed to the statement “When speaking English, the fear of grammatical mistakes has great influence on me”, demonstrating this with a mean of 3.95. In effect, 61.6% agreed while 22.5% disagreed with 15.9% that did not make a decision.

The results demonstrate a low anxiety to the learning of English language, with their responses of not feeling shy when communicating in the English language with others and English language having impact on them. This result supports that of Goktepe (2014). Goktepe (2014) reports that students with low learning anxiety contribute more in second language than those with high anxiety. On the contrary students also exhibited high learning anxiety to the learning of the English language with their responses on the fear that grammatical mistakes have great influence on them when speaking the English language, and they will not be able to tell whether they wish to have many English language friends in order to learn their language or not. Students also failed to confirm whether or not will they practice with the English language as their native language. Students’ quantitative responses are in consonance with the Yerkes-Dodson law which states that students may benefit from low levels of anxiety while being negatively affected by high levels of worry; student performance improves with low anxiety, but levels of anxiety higher than a specific threshold negatively affect performance (Yerkes & Dodson as cited by Alindao et al., 2022). From the focus group discussion, the question “Why do you (students) not feel shy to speak English language with others?”, Respondent ST. 24 in school ‘A’ said that:

*I do not fear to make mistakes during speaking*

Another student ST. 56 in school ‘C’ stated that:



*I am not afraid to be hooted at when I make errors during speeches.*

From the responses, all the students do not feel shy to speak English because they are not afraid of the stigma that they will be exposed to and the names they will be given. This behaviour causes them to have low learning anxiety towards the English language. Regarding the question “Do you wish to have many English language friends so that you can learn their language? Student ST. 74 in school ‘C’ answered that:

*Yes, I wish to have many English language friends so that I can learn their language*

Another respondent ST. 19 in school ‘A’ stated that:

*No, I don’t wish to have many English language friends so that I can learn their language. My English books and my English teachers can serve that purpose.*

Student ST. 41 in school ‘B’ answered that:

*He does not know whether to wish to have many English language friends so that I can learn their language or not*

The above were the three different answers offered by the focus group. These render the statement to be neutral. Thus, these results do not contribute to whether students have low anxiety or high anxiety during speaking of the English language.

The study also looked at the impact of English language on the students. The groups offered answers such as:

*The English Language helps me to get new ideas to pass my exams because the exams are written in English Language (ST. 24 in school ‘A’).*

*The English Language helps me to build my vocabularies (ST. 68 in school ‘C’).*

*The English Language helps me to excel in other subjects (ST. 98 in school ‘D’)*

*English has an impact on her because she does read and express herself in the English language. (ST. 58 in school ‘C’)*

The reasons provided revealed that majority of the students agree that English language has an impact on them, particularly on passing their exams, helping them to communicate when they travel, and building their vocabulary. These benefits propel the students to show low anxiety to the learning their English language.

Concerning the question “How often do you practice speaking English language like their local language? a respondent ST. 38 in school ‘B’ said:

*I do practice speaking English language because I always use the language to express myself.*

In addition, student ST. 88 in school ‘D’ indicated that:

*I do practice the English language because I find it easy to speak and express myself*

Student ST. 73 in school ‘C’ said:

*I do not practice with the speaking of the English language because I find it difficult to speak and express myself.*

Another respondent ST. 16 in school ‘A’ indicated that:

*I don't know whether I practice the English language because I am found of practicing both my native language and that of the English language.*

This was the pattern of answers offered by the focus groups; thus, making the statement neutral. This does not contribute to whether students have low or high anxiety during speaking of the English language.

The findings on learning anxiety indicate that most of the students do not feel shy to speak English because they are not afraid of the stigma that they would be exposed to. Students showed a neutral stance on whether to have English friends so that they can learn from them. They also agreed that the English language has an impact on them, particularly on passing their exams, communicating when they travel, and building their vocabulary. Also, they showed a neutral stance on how often they practice speaking the English language

because they find it easy to speak and express themselves. However, students were found to have challenges with the use of tense, sentence constructions, and use of conjunctions in their sentences. These results, despite the grammatical challenges encountered by the students, showed that majority of them have favourable learning anxiety.

These outcomes confirm that there is a positive relationship between students' level of anxiety and their performance in English language. This is consistent with a research by Özütürk and Hursen (2013). These authors revealed that students' English learning anxiety was very low as they do not have any problem when they are asked questions. This result is also supported by the findings of Pamungkas (2018). Regarding this issue, the teachers were asked how students interact among themselves and with their teachers. These were their responses:

TR. 7: *They do that through the use of English Language*

TR. 9: *Students interact in English language with the teachers.*

These results show that students interact with their teachers and their peers using English language. This implies that the students have low level learning anxiety of the English language which is positive in promoting their performance in English.

The teachers were also asked "How do your students feel when they make mistakes in using the English language"? The following were their responses:

TR. 12: *The students accept their mistakes and were ready to be corrected but teacher*

TR. 5: *Our students do not feel ashamed and embarrassed when they make mistakes in using the English Language*

They indicated that their students accept their mistakes and are ready to accept corrections. Thus, majority of them have low anxiety level to English language learning which is facilitative in language acquisition. When it comes to the overall attitude of the students towards learning of the English language, responses from teachers indicate that the students

have positive attitudes because they see English language as their official language and the one used to instruct them in school. The responses of the teachers relating to their students' learning anxiety were also found to support the responses from the questionnaire and the focus group discussion. Thus, the majority of the students have low level of English language anxiety which facilitates their learning. These results corroborate those of Ming et al. (2011) who found that learners' anxiety contributes to enthusiasm for their learning of the second language.

#### **4.1.4 Summary**

The objective to examine the attitude of students towards learning of English language has revealed that students had positive attitude towards the learning of English. This is so as students affirmed that English language helps to establish a good relationship with others, helps students to gain respect, and to see their teachers as good examples of the ideal English speaker. Students' demonstration of their readiness, speed, and easiness in learning the English language has revealed that grammatical sensitivity, verbal memory skills, and analytic reasoning or pattern recognition skills are associated with the learning of English language. Hence, good learning aptitude was exhibited by the students. From the discussion, it is clear that language aptitude is a predictor in English language acquisition and that students' language aptitude influences positively on the learning of English language. It is evident from the discussion that students had low and high learning anxiety in learning English language. This is related to second variable of Gardner's Socio-educational Model which expatiates on individual differences regarding second language learning. As a result, it promotes the learning of the English language.

## 4.2 Factors that determine students' attitude towards the learning of English language

The second objective sought to find the factors that determine students' attitude towards the learning of the English language. In general, the findings confirmed that factors such as language motivation, attitude of teachers, and learning environment determine students' attitude towards the learning of English language. These factors were examined from quantitative analysis of the responses from the students' questionnaire, qualitative analysis of the focus group discussions as well as interview with English language teachers.

### 4.2.1 Language motivation

Findings of the study also showed students' responses on language motivation as a determinant of students' attitude towards learning. Low motivation to learn the English language was reported by students though the focus group found the relevant role motivation plays in its learning. On contrary, teachers attested to the fact that majority of the students are motivated in learning the English language. Students' responses as gathered from the questionnaire are shown in Table 4.2.1.

*Table 4.2.1. Language motivation*

Statement	N	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
I think English is the most interesting subject that we have in school	600	348(58)	164(27.3)	88(14.7)	3.64	1.157
I like to learn English because I want to live in abroad	600	148(24.6)	333(55.5)	119(19.9)	2.50	1.069
I learn English language to pass my exam	600	484(80.6)	40(6.6)	76(12.8)	4.01	.813
I do my best to learn English	600	347(57.8)	138(23)	115(19.2)	3.52	1.092

language because it has many  
advantages over other languages

I think as a student, English language is necessary for me to communicate with my mate and other people in the community	600	572(95.3)	0(0)	28(4.7)	4.50	.586
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Table 4.2.1 presents responses of students on motivation. With a mean 3.64, majority of the students which represents 58% agreed to the statement “I think English is the most interesting subject that we have in school” while 27.3% disagreed with the remaining 14.7% undecided. Also, with a mean of 2.50, which represents 55.5% of the students, disagreed with the statement “I like to learn English because I want to live in abroad”, 24.6% agreed and the remaining 19.9 undecided. Furthermore, with a mean of 4.01, almost all of the participants agreed that they learn English language to pass their exams; 6.6% disagreed with the remaining 12.8% being neutral. Again, with a mean value of 3.52, 58% affirmed that they do their best to learn English language because it has many advantages over other languages. This is opposed by 23.0% showing disagreement, with the remaining 19.2% undecided. More so, with a mean value of 4.50, 95.3% of the students agreed that English language is necessary for them to communicate with their classmates and other people in the community, while 4.7% remained.

The results reveal that majority of the students agrees that English is the most interesting subject, as almost all of them believe that they learn English language to pass their exam, and so do their best to learn it because it has many advantages over other languages. Also, nearly all of the students think that English language is necessary for them to communicate with their mates and other people in the community with a quarter of them having the view that they like to learn English because they want to live abroad. This means

that living abroad is not a motivating factor for learning the English language. These findings are in line with those of Zhang (2011). Zhang reiterates that motivation induces students to learn English language for the pleasure they will derive from the process of acquisition. Similarly, the results also confirm those of Dörnyei (2014) who asserts that an intrinsically motivated individual learns a second language for the love of it and to satisfy their curiosity.

The study further looked at the responses provided by students during the focus group discussions. Concerning the statement that English is the most interesting subject that they learn in school, respondent ST. 14 in school 'A' said

*Yes, because it helps me to acquire vocabularies which I use to write other subjects.*

On the other hand, student ST. 78 in school 'D' responded

*No, because it comprises of numerous grammatical rules, it is a boring subject since I cannot express myself well in it and it has many aspects which make it difficult to be understood and one is tagged with mistakes made.*

The results show that students agree that English language is interesting to them because it helps them to learn vocabulary which they use to write other in subjects and it helps them to read and understand. However, few members of each group indicated that they were not interested in learning English language because it is a subject with many aspects which are difficult to learn, with numerous grammatical rules, and is boring because of their inability to express themselves. Over all, the results mean that most of the students consider English language as most interesting and therefore motivated to learn it.

With the reasons regarding why they study English Language, these were the responses:

*It is compulsory to be studied in schools and used to write exams. (ST. 65 in school 'C')*

*English Language is easy to be studied and spoken. (ST. 45 in school 'B')*



*I do like to study English because I have the confidence to speak and express myself.*

(ST. 91 in school 'D')

On the other hand, ST. 26 in school 'B' stated that:

*It is stressful and boring to be studied.*

The groups stated that they study the English language as a compulsory subject and used to write exams. On the other hand, few individuals reported English language have many regulations and difficult to be studied and spoken, stressful and boring to be studied. This may be caused by the internal factors of second language learning. According to Brown (2007), internal factors of second language learning are specified by the individual students like attitude, personal practice and study habits. Students' study habits and personal practice as well as attitude of teachers and students may result in students having difficulty in speaking the language and seeing its study as stressful, boring and having many regulations. This situation is likened to Gardner's Socio-educational Model which underpins this study. The second variable of the model which is individual differences includes sub-variables as intelligence, aptitude, motivation (effort, desire and affect), and anxiety, which could be seen in most of the cases as an inhibited factor in the individual learning. Hence, students' inhibiting factors of seeing English language as having many regulations and difficult to be studied and spoken, stressful and boring to be studied, may be caused by individual differences.

Regarding the question "how learning of English Language helps them to pass examinations? The following responses were given:

*Learning the English Language helps me to learn vocabularies that enabled me to read and understand questions during the examinations, construct correct sentences and to express myself when writing.* (ST. 16 in school 'A')

*The study of the English language helps me to write without mistakes and spell words correctly. (ST. 58 in school 'C')*

Despite the above positive responses, ST. 93 in school D reported that:

*I fail in examination because I find it difficult to read questions to understand, express myself well and to construct sentences devoid of spelling mistakes.*

The focus group discussions revealed that learning the English language helps student to pass their exams because it helps them to learn vocabulary that enabled them to read and understand questions during the examinations, construct correct sentences and to express themselves when writing. On the question “Do you do your best to learn English language because it has many advantages over other languages? ST. 37 in School ‘B’ said

*English help me to communicate and have interaction with others when I travelled.*

Another student, ST. 66 in school ‘C’, said:

*I put in my best, due to the fact I write all other subjects in English.*

However, ST. 27 in School ‘B’ indicated that:

*It has no advantage for me because I always speak the local language.*

These results show that students have seen the advantages of learning the English language. This also implies that most of the students know the essence of using the English language to communicate and interact. This reason encourages and motivates them to learn the English language.

Concerning the question, “How does English language contribute to your communication? ST. 82 in School ‘D’ reported that:

*English language helps me in communication because I speak the English language daily, have the confidence to speak and express myself with the vocabularies I acquired from English lessons.*

Also, ST. 77 in School ‘C’ indicated that:

*The English Language enhances my understanding when speaking with my mates and community members.*

These responses suggest that learning the English language enhances students' understanding when communicating with their classmates and community members due to the vocabulary acquired and the confidence to express themselves.

The results show that the benefits derived from learning English language motivate students to learn it. The findings also agree with those of Yashima (2012) who observes that motivation and consciousness have a role in one's preparedness to learn a foreign language. However, some students did not benefit from learning the English language and as such were not motivated to learn the English language. This is due to the fact that they always speak the local language and fail in their examinations as they find it difficult to read questions to understand, to express themselves well, and to construct sentences devoid of spelling mistakes. These negative attitudes have a detrimental effect on learners' motivation (Bratož et al., 2019). Gömleksiz (2010) also concludes that in order to understand how negative attitudes can be changed into positive ones, "teachers should be aware of the factors affecting students negatively and should take the needs of students into consideration" (p. 5). It can be concluded that motivation is one of the factors affecting the students' learning of English language.

The study examined the perspectives of the English language teachers regarding students' motivation. The teachers were asked: "Are your students learning English because they want to live abroad? Teacher TR. 8 indicated that:

*No, because students are comfortable with speaking their local language.*

Another teacher, TR. 12, said:

*Such reason is out of place for the students.*

Teacher TR. 1 indicated that:

*Students do not have any idea of living abroad which will in turn motivate their studying of the English language.*

Only Teacher TR. 7 reported that:

*Yes, because some students reveal to me that they want to experience other areas and life elsewhere to function effectively in their world of work.*

Juxtaposing these with that of the responses from the questionnaire, it was obvious from the two results that living in abroad was not a motivating factor for students to learn the English language in the study. It was revealed by a teacher that students who don't aspire to live in abroad are found of speaking their local language. This inhibits the learning of the English language. According to a study by Ghaedsharafi et al. (2019), laziness to practice the English language decrease students' achievement in learning English. However, few students also see living in abroad as a motivating factor to the learning of the English as explained by the teachers. The other question posed to teachers was "Do students think English is an interesting subject? These were their responses:

*Yes, because students see English as an easy and interesting subject. (TR.4)*

*Yes, because it helps them to express themselves and acquire new vocabularies. (TR. 3)*

The results revealed that teachers responded *yes* because it will help their students to express their ideas and acquire new vocabulary for communication. This implies that majority of the students are interested and therefore motivated in learning the subject. It could be concluded that motivation is one of the factors affecting the students' learning of English language in the schools. This result is also in line with that of Dörnyei (2014) who concluded that intrinsic motivation leads to improved and effective acquisition of the second language.

#### 4.2.2 Attitude of teachers

Findings also showed teaching attitude of the teachers as a factor affecting students' attitude towards learning of the English language. English teachers play a greater role in the learning of students by employing methods that will enable them to be active and participate in lesson and this was reported by students. Teachers indicated that their commitment enables students to pay attention in class. Students' responses as gathered from the questionnaire are presented in Table 4.2.2.

Table 4.2.2. Attitude of teachers

Statements	N	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
I look forward to going to English classes because my English teacher is good	600	310(51.6)	136(22.8)	154(25.6)	3.44	1.004
My English teacher has dynamic and interesting teaching styles	600	256(42.6)	224(37.4)	120(20)	3.11	1.160
I have strong desire to know all aspects of English language	600	396(66)	64(10.7)	140(23.3)	3.71	.998
I would like to spend as much time as possible to study English but the rules spelt out by my teacher are too many	600	406(67.6)	4(0.8)	190(31.6)	3.82	.696

Table 4.2.2 shows students' responses to attitude of teachers. With a mean 3.44, 51.6% students affirmed that they look forward to going to the English class because their English teacher is good, 22.8% disagreed with the remaining 25.6% were undecided. With respect to English teachers' dynamism and interesting teaching styles a mean of 3.11 was

realised which indicate another neutral stance by the participants. A total of 42.6% agreed and 37.4% disagreed with 20% not sure. With a 3.71 mean value, students agreed to the statement “I have strong desire to know all aspects of English language”, 66.0% agreed and 10.7% disagreed with the remaining 23.3% undecided. Also, with a mean of 3.82, students agreed to the fact that they would like to spend as much time as possible to study English but the rules spelt out by their teacher were too many. In terms of percentage, 67.7% agreed and 0.8% disagreed with 31.6% being not sure.

From the responses, it was realised that teachers demonstrated positive, neutral and negative attitudes towards the teaching of the English language. Two items (I look forward to going to English classes because my English teacher is good, I have strong desire to know all aspects of English language) from the table, gave positive attitude of the teachers from students’ responses, one item (I would like to spend as much time as possible to study English but the rules spelt out by my teacher are too many) offered a negative attitude of the teachers from students’ responses and one item from the table gave a neutral stance of teachers’ attitude towards the teaching of English language from students’ responses.

With the negative attitude of teachers towards the teaching of the English language, the statement was in negative and students responded in affirmative, thereby making it a negative attitude of teachers. Noels (2013), in commenting on negative attitude towards the learning of the English language, reported that teachers’ reactions to students learning the language can negatively hinder the progress of the learners. Hence teachers’ bombardment of too many rules of the English language on the students in the study affected them negatively. This finding was in consonant with the work of Saloverly and Sluyter (2010) who disclosed that teachers’ attitudes towards their teaching assignment is one reason why many learners fear and hate English language and subsequently fail the subject. It is expected that this

negativity which renders the students' learning of the English language to be difficult be attended to by the teacher (Gömleksiz, 2010).

Positive attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of the English language from students' response, was as a result of students responding in the affirmative to have strong desire to know all aspects of English language. Students' strong desire was induced by the teacher. According to Aniah et al. (2021), such positive attitude helps English language teachers to develop a conducive learner friendly environment in the classroom as this also costs a fruitful effect on learning of the students. Students' demonstration of neutral stance regarding teachers' attitude towards the teaching of the English language makes the teachers' attitude to be suspicious. Once students' acquisition of the English language is assured as a result teachers' attitude, the issue of neutral stance does not come in. In affirmation of the above, Worell (2015) in her study evaluating teachers' teaching effectiveness reported that the more positive an individual cultivates attitude towards a thing, the more realistic the individual's level of aspirations in school.

The results of the focus group discussion of the students related to teachers' teaching attitudes are presented. Concerning reasons for attending English language classes, student ST. 38 in school 'B' opined that:

*My teachers involved me in the lessons and helped me to understand concepts taught as well as well-disciplined and built students' confidence.*

Another respondent ST. 76 in school 'D' indicated that:

*My English teachers are punctual to classes and correct me when I make mistakes.*

However, student ST. 54 in school 'C' stated that:

*I do not attend English classes because my teachers use poor teaching methods and use big vocabularies.*



It was found from the above focus group discussion that teachers and teachers' attitude towards influencing students to attending English language classes was met with a neutral stance. This was evident from students' responses. Some students see teachers' attitude regarding this as positive while some do not concur. The attitude of a positive and encouraging teacher impacts positively on the student's attitude and behaviour (Lee, 2019). In contrast, a discouraging attitude, negative feelings regarding the usefulness of studying in English, and teaching approaches also significantly impact the attitude and behaviour of a student (Beuaert et al., 2013, Chang & Hwang, 2018). Such developed behaviour of the student may prevent them from attending their English classes. It was found from the group discussion that the responses offered by the students are no different from the ones offered in the questionnaire. Although positive and negative attitude of teachers were demonstrated by the students, a neutral attitude by teachers towards the teaching of the English language was dominant in the discussion with the students.

Regarding the question Is your English teacher having dynamic and interesting teaching styles? Student ST.4 in school 'A' reported

*My teachers use demonstration, dramatization, role play and use of group work.*

Another respondent ST. 68 in school 'C' responded that:

*Yes. My English teachers possess dynamic and interesting teaching styles.*

It is worth noting that other interviewees had different views on the same question.

For instance, respondent ST. 30 in school 'B' stated

*My teachers do not mark my exercises promptly to enable me do my corrections.*

In addition, student ST. 58 in school 'C' said:

*My teachers use boring methods of teaching such as lecturing.*

Again respondent, ST. 99 in school 'D', indicated that:

*My teachers use the local language to explain concepts.*

The focus group discussion also revealed that teachers demonstrate a neutral attitude towards the teaching of the English language. This was deduced from the students' responses above. Effiong (2001) opines that many language educators and linguists claim that teachers' attitude to work is important and influential to effective teaching of English language in the classroom. Salovey and Sluyter (2010) disclosed that teachers' attitude to teaching is one reason why many students hate English language and subsequently fail the subject. In particular, teachers' discouraging attitudes and discouraging approaches can cause negative attitude to learn in English language (Wang & Littlewood, 2021).

Concerning the question "Do you have strong desire to know all aspects of English language? Student ST. 67 in school 'C' said:

*I desired to learn comprehension and literature.*

Student ST. 7 in school 'A' responded:

*Grammar and essay writing.*

However, student ST. 67 of school 'C' reported that:

*I do not have the desire to learn any aspect.*

The responses showed that majority of the focus groups mentioned they want to learn many aspects including comprehension, literature, grammar and composition writing. This focus group discussion is consistent with the responses given on the questionnaire where 66% of the students agreed that they have a strong desire to know all aspects of English language. This finding indicated that majority of the students have the desire to learn all aspects of the English language in which they are examined during their WASSCE. The teaching done by the English language teachers might have caused the students to have such a desire. This agrees with the results of Caballero (2010) who reiterates that foreign/second language teachers have different views toward the language they teach, which might influence language learners by motivating them to act in particular ways toward the language.

The study further explored from the English language teachers, the influence of their teaching attitudes as a factor on students' attitudes towards learning of English language.

Teacher TR. 1 opined that:

*Different strategies such as group work and giving of assignments were used.*

Again, teacher TR. 8 mentioned that:

*I make use of individual activity and showing of videos to explain concepts.*

Moreover, teachers TR.12 reported:

*I make use of discussions, demonstrations and role play as strategies employed.*

The responses provided by the teachers revealed that all of them use different strategies to teach the subject. These responses are consistent with those of Dhanapala (2021) who reports that learning activities such as group work, pair work, presentations, and activity-based learning require teachers' engagement in the environment in the classroom.

Similarly, on the aspects of the English language they teach, Teacher TR.4 reported that:

*I teach all the aspects such as grammar, comprehension, literature, syntax and summary.*

This finding agrees with the results of the questionnaire where 66% of the students agreed that they have a strong desire to know all aspects of the English language. This implies that the teachers devote most of their time teaching all aspects of the English language. This also is an indication that the teachers are committed to their work by teaching their students all aspects of the language. This outcome of the focus group discussion is consistent with literature. For instance, Stronge et al. (2011) assert that an effective teacher should maximize instructional time.

Concerning how students feel in their English language classes, Teacher TR. 3 reported that:

*The students feel excited because students see English as an important subject which helped them to learn and write their examinations.*

Teacher TR. 6 indicated that:

*No because their students see English Language as a boring subject and difficult to study.*

It could be seen from the responses that teachers indicated majority of the students feel excited and actively participated in the lesson. On the other hand, a few of the teachers said their students feel bored and find the subject difficult to study. This means that the teaching methods employed make the students active and to participate in the lessons. This supports the results obtained from the questionnaire where 51.6% of the students indicated that they look forward to going to English classes because their English teachers are good. This result tallies with that of Donkor (2010). Donkor reports that the teaching method employed should be activity-oriented and one that helps the students to be engaged in the lesson and actively participate in speaking and performing practical activities among others.

With regard to teachers' commitment to influence students' attitudes towards learning of the English language, Teacher TR. 9 said

*Yes, teacher commitment makes the students to love the English Language.*

Teacher TR. 8 also reported that:

*Teacher commitment serves as model to the students and encourages them to pay attention in class.*

All the teachers indicated they show commitment. This result is in line with that of Asikhia (2010) who argues that a committed teacher should be able to simplify complex materials to make it understood by the students in the classroom.

### 4.2.3 Learning environment

Findings of the study also identified the learning environment as a factor affecting students' attitude towards learning the English language. Conducive learning environment and a learning environment created to foster effective learning and acquisition of English language were reported by the students. Similarly, teachers reported that a congenial environment of students act as an incentive to encourage them to speak and express themselves. Students' responses as gathered from the questionnaire are shown in Table 4.2.3:

*Table 4.2.3. Learning environment*

Statements	N	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
I like to learn the English language because the learning atmosphere is good	600	421(70.1)	144(24.0)	35(5.9)	3.65	1.323
I am free from any frustration whenever I speak English in the classroom	600	345(57.5)	200(33.3)	55(9.2)	3.24	1.193
I use the English language outside the classroom	600	38(6.3)	45(7.5)	517(86.2)	2.03	.720
There is a lot of time for practicing English language in my school	600	21(3.5)	533(88.8)	46(7.7)	1.93	.655
I am afraid people will laugh at me if I don't say things right	600	378(63.0)	154(25.6)	68(11.4)	3.43	1.233

Table 4.2.3 sought students' learning environment as a factor affecting students' attitude towards learning the English language. With a mean of 3.65, students confirmed that

they like to learn the English language because the learning atmosphere is good. In terms of percentage, 70.1% agreed, 24.0% disagreeing with the remaining 5.9% undecided. Again, with a mean of 3.24, students attested that they are free from any frustration whenever they speak English in the classroom. In terms of percentage, 57.5% the students agreed with the statement while 33.3% disagreed with 9.2% demonstrating a neutral stance. With a mean of 2.03, students demonstrated a neutral stance to the statement “I use the English language outside the classroom”. In terms of percentage, 6.3% of the students agreed with the statement while 7.5% students disagreed with 86.2% of the students demonstrating a neutral stance. With a mean of 1.93, students disagreed to the statement “There is a lot of time for practicing English language in my school”. In terms of percentages, 3.5% agreed to the statement, 88.8% disagreeing with the remaining 7.7% undecided. With a mean of 3.43, students agreed to the statement “I am afraid people will laugh at me if I don’t say things right”. In terms of percentage, 63.0% agreed to the statement, 25.6% disagreeing with the remaining 11.4% unsure.

The responses revealed that favourable learning environment, free from hostility and consciousness of the environmental issues as well as time available for practicing the language as indicated by 70.1%, 57.5% and 88.8% respectively are critical in the learning of the English language. These findings are in line with those of Dhanapala and Premaratne (2021), Brooks (2010), and Softa (2011). Results of their studies have shown that conducive learning environment would help improve academic success. In addition, Waldman (2016) observed that before students can succeed academically, they must feel safe, both physically and mentally, and have a safe learning environment. Also, Kilei (2012) observes that sufficient learning facilities and instructional materials, including adequate time in the learning environment, are important factors which lead to gaining an impact on teaching and learning of a second language.

The study also sought from the students what learning environment they encounter in their English language classrooms. Student ST.37 in school ‘B’ indicated that:

*I have conducive atmosphere because one is free to express oneself.*

Another respondent, ST. 54 in school ‘C’, said:

*I experience active learning environment because I involve myself in the lessons.*

However, ST. 76 in school ‘D’ opined that:

*I do not experience conducive practical learning environment because any mistake made one is tagged with it.*

It could be seen from the group responses that majority the students encounter safe and stimulating learning environment in their English language classes because they feel free to express themselves. This result is consistent with those of Raccoon gang (2018). Raccoon gang (2018) reports that working collaboratively, communicating effectively, learning how to learn, and developing academic mindsets greatly increased students’ engagement in learning a second language.

With the question Are you free from any frustration whenever you speak English in the classroom? Student ST. 15 in school ‘A’ said that:

*There is no problem whenever I speak the language.*

Another respondent, ST. 86 in school ‘D’, said:

*No frustration.*

In addition, student ST. 58 responded:

*I don’t experience any form of frustration.*

On the contrary, student ST. 34 in school ‘B’ said:

*I am frustrated at times.*

Majority of the students confirmed that they are not frustrated whenever you speak English in the classroom. This means they are offered an enabling environment devoid of any



frustration to speak the English language. This is in consonance with those of Orlu (2013) who reiterates that students learn in environments that are free from impediment but empowering and engaging (Orlu, 2013).

When the students were asked how often they speak English outside their classrooms?

Student ST. 1 in school 'A' reported that:

*I do not speak English language outside the classroom because I cannot express myself and lack the confidence to speak the English Language.*

Again, ST. 38 in school 'B' mentioned that:

*I use local language to communicate.*

The responses revealed that almost all the students said they do not speak English language outside their classrooms. This means that the environments outside the classroom are not stimulating to encourage and compel students to speak the English language. This result also confirms the results obtained from the students' questionnaire where only 6.3% of the students agreed practicing the English language outside their classroom. This finding is in support of that of Umar (2017). Umar (2017) notes that learning activities can also be used to measure how well their English language is utilized. With the question on time students are allowed to practice speaking English language in their schools, student ST. 15 in school 'A' said that:

*We are allowed adequate time to practice speaking the English language because speaking of the local language is prohibited except during Ghanaian Language lessons.*

Student ST. 85 in school 'D' responded

*Yes, there are rules governing the speaking of the local language which are enforced with punishment for those who violate the rules.*

However, respondent ST. 65 in school 'C' said:

*No, there are no rules.*

The responses indicate that majority of students are given a lot of time for practicing English language in their school for except a few of them. This contributes to the learning environment which fosters positive learning attitudes of students for English language. These outcomes agree with those of Orlu (2013) who reiterates that students learn in environments that are empowering and engaging.

When it came to students' ability to speak correct English in their schools, student ST. 30 in school 'A' said:

*I feel confident and fluent when I am speaking correct English.*

Another student ST. 78 in school 'D' indicated that:

*I feel engaged when speaking”.*

Again student ST. 24 in school 'A' stated that:

*One is praised and corrected with the mistakes made.*

The results show that a stimulating environment is created when one commits a speaking error which promotes effective learning among the students. Thus, the learning environment created in the schools does encourage the students to use the English language and therefore causes them to have positive attitudes towards learning of English language. The responses provided by the students from their focus groups revealed that the learning environment created in the schools does foster effective learning and acquisition of the English language. These findings confirm results of the study carried out by Waldman (2016) who observed that before students can succeed academically, they must feel safe, both physically and mentally, and to have a safe learning environment, students must feel welcomed, supported, and respected. The study also examined the learning environment from the perspective of the English language teachers. The teachers were asked if their students were free to express themselves in English language in class and outside the classroom. Teacher TR. 5 responded

*Yes, because it is the medium of instruction and feel free to express themselves.*

Again, TR. 12 said,

*Because practicing the use of the language will build their confident level.*

However, teacher TR. 11 said:

*No because the students find it difficult to express themselves and were afraid to make mistakes.*

From the responses provided by the teachers, it is evident that students are free and confident to express themselves and have vocabulary to communicate. Also, it can be deduced that the congenial environments of the students act as an incentive to encourage them to speak and express themselves. The conducive environments thus act as a stimulating factor to students' development of positive attitudes towards learning of English language (Baeten et al., 2013). In all, the stimulating learning environment influenced students to put in effort necessary to learn a language. Also, Ibnian's (2017) assertion revealed that the environment and education setting of the school affect students' attitudes towards learning of English as second language.

#### **4.2.4 Summary**

The findings confirm that factors such as language motivation, attitude of teachers, and learning environment determine students' attitude towards the learning of the English language. From the discussion, students are motivated to learn the English language because it is the most interesting subject in their curriculum. They also need it to pass their exams and it has many advantages over other languages. Again, English language is necessary for them to communicate with their mates and other people in the community. The students agreed that their teachers' attitude is a factor influencing their learning of the English language as teachers are responsible for the attitudes exhibited by students towards English language. It was evident from the discussion that teachers were punctual to classes, involve students and

engage them in the lessons, spend time in explaining issues to students' understandings, correct student's mistakes when they commit errors in speaking, as well as take disciplinary measures in the classroom. Negative attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of the language were also reported by the students. A favourable learning environment free from hostility and a consciousness of the environmental issues, as well as time available for practicing the language, were confirmed by the participants to exist in their schools. Hence, the learning environment determines students' attitude towards the learning of the English language as it acts as an incentive to encourage them to speak and express themselves.

### **4.3 Students' attitudes that affect their English language proficiency and performance**

The third research objective sought to find out the attitudes that affect students English language proficiency and their academic performance. The students and teachers were expected to express their views on the issue with the questionnaire and the focus group discussion as well as the interview. Data gathered were in the category of learning skills, teachers' commitment and learning aptitude of the students. With regards to the learning skills, students have acquired learning skill (speaking, reading, listening and writing) through learning of the English language. On the teachers' commitment, students reported that their teachers have low commitment. On the contrary, teachers indicated that their attitudes are high as they have positive social interactions with parent and students. Finally, on learning aptitude of the students, poor learning aptitude was exhibited by the students. These issues are discussed as follows.

#### **4.3.1 Learning skills**

Findings in this section showed learning skills as an attitude of students affecting their English language proficiency and performance. The students were asked questions related to their learning skills. In response to learning skills as shown in Table 4.3.1, nearly all of the

participants argued that English language proficiency has improved their academic performance compared to just a few of them (2%, N=12) who disagreed, followed by 6.4% (N=38) who were neutral. This is why more than 80% (N=504) further contested that English language proficiency has enabled them to effectively communicate with foreigners. Meanwhile, 48 representing 8% affirmed that English language proficiency has not enabled them to effectively communicate with foreigners with another 8% (N=48) indecisive.

*Table 4.3.1. Learning skills*

Statements	N	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
English language proficiency has improved my academic performance	600	550(91.6)	12(2.0)	38(6.4)	4.99	.710
English language proficiency has enabled me to communicate with foreigners efficiently	600	504(84.0)	48(8.0)	48(8.0)	4.77	.821
I can learn English through grammatical rules and vocabulary memorization	600	66(11.0)	462(77.0)	72(12.0)	2.05	.935
I think that listening, speaking, reading and writing are all important in English language	600	460(76.6)	76(12.6)	64(10.8)	3.89	1.042

Again, apart from 11% (N=66) and 12% (N=72) who agreed and did not come out clear respectively, the remaining majority (77%, N=462) disagreed when it came to ‘I can learn English through grammatical rules and vocabulary memorization’. Notwithstanding, 460 of the participants representing 76.6% agreed that listening, speaking, reading and writing are

all important in English language. Only a few (12.6%, N=76) disagreed that listening, speaking, reading and writing are all important in English language while 64 representing 10.8% remained neutral.

From the results presented in Table 4.3.1, 91.6% and 84% of the students respectively agreed that English language proficiency has improved their academic performance and communication with foreigners efficiently. Similarly, 76.6% of the students also agreed that listening, speaking, reading and writing are all important in English language learning. However, 77% disagreed that they can learn English through grammatical rules and vocabulary memorization. These results show that most of the students have acquired skills through their learning of the English language which has improved their academic performance, communication with others, while enhancing their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. This implies that learning skills are important in the acquisition of the English language. This outcome indicates that the students have English language learning skills. These results also agree with those of Sakkir et al. (2021). According to Sakkir et al. (2021), spoken language skills are substantially associated with second language acquisition.

Based on the results obtained from the students' questionnaire, focus group discussions were carried out to substantiate the findings from the questionnaire responses. The discussions sought from the students to explain how their English language proficiency contributes to their academic performance. Student ST. 19 in school 'A' indicated that:

*I have a foundation which promotes my proficiency which contributes to my academic performance.*

Another student ST. 73 in school 'C' indicated that:

*I have the skills and ability to speak the English Language, I make better results.*

Moreover, student ST.5 stated that:

*I have the right vocabularies which contribute to my high proficiency that positively affect my academic performance.*

Respondent ST. 38 in school 'B' indicated that:

*I do like reading to acquire skills that will improve my writing proficiency and therefore positively affect my academic performance.*

However, student ST. 53 reported that:

*I do not have self-confidence to express myself in speaking and writing which reduces my English Language proficiency and negatively affecting my academic performance.*

These discussions suggest that majority of the students have proficiency skills to contribute to their academic performance due to their reading culture, speaking, and writing abilities and vocabulary to express themselves. The English language proficiency skills identified from the discussions confirm the questionnaire results and therefore consistent with the work of Sakkir et al. (2021).

The students were also asked whether English language proficiency has enabled them to communicate with foreigners efficiently. Student ST. 85 in school 'D' said that:

*I have speaking proficiency skills to communicate.*

In addition, student ST. 65 in school 'C' stated that:

*I have listening and speaking skills as well as use of new vocabularies which helps me to improve my communication.*

Respondent ST. 6 in school 'A' stated that:

*My inability to speak and express myself causes me to isolate myself.*

These responses showed that while only few of the students do not have communication proficiency skills to speak, majority of the students have proficiency skills to communicate with foreigners. This result also confirms that of Sakkir et al. (2021). According to Sakkir et al. (2021), proficiency in spoken language skills is substantially associated with second



language acquisition. Regarding the question Can you learn English through grammatical rules and vocabulary memorization? Student ST. 37 in school 'B' said that:

*Yes, I can do that.*

Another student ST. 8 in school 'A' responded that:

*Grammatical rules and vocabulary memorization are part of the English language that I study in school.*

Student ST. 55 in school 'C' said that:

*The use of grammatical rules enables me correct myself whenever I have doubts about a spoken sentence in English.*

These results showed that majority of the groups considered grammatical rules and vocabulary memorization as part of English language study and that they can learn English through these. This is consistent with a study by Cong (2020), that learning English through grammar helps learners to speed up their English learning process. Regarding the question on learning the components of the English language posed to the students, respondent 15 in school 'A' indicated that:

*The English language is not important to me because I cherish my local language.*

On the other hand, ST. 76 in school 'D' stated that:

*Learning the four components of the English Language will help me to read, write and understand the English Language.*

Again student ST. 38 in school 'B' said that:

*The four components help me to be effective communicators, acquire new vocabularies to write correct English to pass my examinations.*

These results showed that majority of the students have realized the need to study the four components of the English language to be effective in communication. This result again demonstrates the need for the students to have proficiency skills in the learning of the English

language. This finding is also not different from that of Sakkir et al. (2021) who suggest that proficiency skills are substantially associated with second language acquisition.

The study further explored from the teachers, the learning skills of their students. The teachers were to explain the ways their students' attitudes affect their English language proficiency and performance. Teacher TR. 2 stated that:

*It affects them negatively because they have no learning skills and practicing the language to improve their proficiency and performance.*

The responses from the teachers revealed that the students have no learning skills to increase their proficiency and performance. The study also found out from the teachers if their students are aware of the importance of their study of English language on their communication with others. Teacher TR. 9 stated that:

*Yes because English is the official and universal language which is common to all the people and used for communication.*

Another teacher TR.11 said that:

*It is a common language and medium of communication.*

The responses from teachers indicated that their students were aware but put no effort into acquiring the requisite proficiency skills. These responses confirm those given by students in Table 4.3.1 that they have poor proficiency skills of the English language. These results also disagree with those of Sakkir et al. (2021) that spoken language skills are substantially associated with second language acquisition.

#### **4.3.2 Teachers' commitment**

Findings of the study also portrayed teachers' commitment as an attitude affecting students' English language proficiency and performance. The students were to agree, disagree, or remain neutral on their responses on four statements about teachers' commitment. Table 4.3.2 presents the results from the questionnaire on the views of students.

In response to Teachers' commitment as indicated in Table 4.3.2, concerning the first item with mean of 1.81, students disagreed to the statement. Except a few (2.0%, N=12) who agreed, almost all of the students (84.3%, N=506) disagreed that their teacher is able to simplify difficult topics so they can understand. Meanwhile, 13.7% (N=82) remained undecided.

*Table 4.3.2. Teachers' commitment*

Statements	N	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
My English teacher is able to simplify difficult topics so I can understand	600	12(2.0)	506(84.3)	82(13.7)	1.81	.766
My English teacher uses different strategies to help me understand what he or she teaches	600	130(21.6)	411(68.5)	59(9.9)	2.25	1.184
My English teacher always gives me homework to help me improve in English Language	600	28(4.6)	458(76.3)	114(19.1)	2.08	.776
My English teacher calls my parents to inform them about my performance in English language	600	477(79.5)	68(11.3)	55(9.2)	3.93	.957

Again, with mean of 2.25, students disagreed to the statement "My English teacher uses different strategies to help me understand what he or she teaches". In terms of percentages, 21.6% agreed to the statement, 68.5% disagreeing with the remaining 9.9% unsure. Moreover, with a mean of 2.08, students disagreed to the statement. 4.6% agreed, 76.3% disagreed, with the remaining 19.1% undecided. However, with mean of 3.93,

students agreed to the statement “My English teacher calls my parents to inform them about my performance in English language almost”. In terms of percentage, 79.5% agreed to the statement, 11.3% disagreed with 9.2% unsure.

Three of the items of the above table 4.3.2 and their results demonstrated negative attitude of teachers affects students’ English language proficiency and performance. The result of this finding was in consonant with the work of Salovery and Sluyter (2010) who disclosed that teachers’ attitude towards their teaching assignment is one reason why many learners fear and hate English language and subsequently fail the subject. English language teachers exacerbate this fear by their qualification, type of training, grading system and questioning technique. Also according to Duatepe and Akkuş-Çıkla (2004), teachers’ negative attitudes towards their profession are likely to negatively influence their teaching practices.

Only one item (My English teacher calls my parents to inform them about my performance in English language) of table 4.3.2 and its result shown positive attitude of teachers’ commitment that affect students’ English language proficiency and performance. In a similar view, Worell (2015) in her study evaluating teachers’ teaching effectiveness reported that the more positive an individual cultivates attitude towards a thing, the more realistic individual’s level of aspirations in school.

One of the questions discussed in the focus group discussion was about the teachers’ ability to simplify complex materials to students’ understanding. Respondent ST. 9 in school “A” mentioned that:

*My teachers do not use teaching learning materials to explain things to us.*

Student ST. 67 in school ‘C’ also stated that:

*Our teachers use the local language to explain the concepts.*

Another respondent, ST.78 in school ‘D’, reported that:

*My English teachers employed demonstrations and show videos to explain complex situations for me to understand.*

The responses suggest that few teachers use practical and activity methods to help students to understand complex concepts taught. This means that majority of the English teachers do not do that. This finding also demonstrates that teachers do not show commitment to their teaching work. This result also supports that of Muodumogu's (2014) assertion that a committed teacher should be able to simplify complex materials to make it understood by the students. The students were also asked to indicate how their English language teachers are able to help them to improve their performance. Student ST. 49 in school 'B' stated that:

*I am always punished when I perform poorly which does not motivate me.*

Student ST. 76 in school 'D' said:

*My English language teachers' use of local language does not encourage me to learn English to acquire new vocabularies and expressions.*

Another respondent, ST. 44 in school 'B', indicated that:

*My English language teachers do not give me home work.*

These discussions revealed that English language teachers do not assist their students to improve their performance in the language.

This result also showed that the non-commitment of the English teachers to their teaching work is inconsistent with the findings of Stronge et al. (2011), who report that a committed teacher should maximize instructional processes. Regarding the question My English teacher always gives me homework to help me improve in English language, respondent ST. 35 in school 'B' said that:

*Most of our parents are illiterate, so they cannot supervise homework given by our teachers.*

Another respondent, ST. 12 in school 'A', indicated that:

*Nobody forces the teachers to give us homework.*

Student ST. 86 in school 'D' said that:

*Our teachers complain of providing wrong answers whenever they give us homework.*

The findings are supported by the statistical results where 84.3% of the students disagreed that their English language teachers are able to simplify difficult topics so they can understand, their English teachers use different strategies to help them understand what he or she teaches, and their English teachers always give them homework to help them improve in English language. Another issue discussed in the focus group was teacher communicating students' performance in English language to their parents. Student St. 19 in school 'A' indicated that:

*My teachers sometimes do so through the terminal reports sent to parents during each term.*

On the contrary, respondent ST. 39 in school 'B' reported that:

*Our reports do not get to our parents because we give wrong addresses and phone number of our parents to our teachers.*

The results from the groups show that apart from few students whose performance is not reported to their parents, it was reported for the majority of the students. These results imply that teachers have low commitment, only that they at times report their students' performance to their parents in the form of feedback to them. This outcome agrees with that of Aina and Adedo (2013) who found that feedback is very important in teaching and learning because it improves students' learning.

The study also examined self-reporting from the teachers related to their commitments. The teachers were asked how they were able to simplify difficult concepts to the understanding of their students. Teacher TR. 4 said

*We used teaching-learning materials to make the lessons practical and to involve the students to understand the lesson.*

Similarly, Teacher TR. 7 reported that:

*We give the students the opportunities to practice what they learn in and out of the classroom.*

The results imply that all the teachers provided their students with participatory approach in their learning of the English language through simplification of complex material. The teachers were asked to mention the teaching strategies that they used to help their students to learn the English language. Teachers TR. 3 mentioned that:

*We use group work, individual participation and showing of videos which were related to the lessons to make it practical for the students to understand.*

On the other hand, Teacher TR.9 stated that:

*We use discussion, demonstration, role play and simulation methods to teach the students for them to understand.*

These results indicate that the teachers employ different practical teaching methods to make their students to understand the various lessons that they teach, implying that they have high commitment towards their work. This contrasts with the students' responses. There is therefore contradiction between students' and teachers' responses on the strategies used to improve students' understanding.

The teachers were also asked if the background of parents influences students' performance in learning English language. Teacher TR. 8 said that:

*Because it is parents who provide their wards with learning materials such as exercise books and text books, the literate parents provide conducive environment for their ward learning, speaking the language with them as well as motivating them to*



*speak the language whilst the illiterate parents also look for teachers to have extra classes for their wards.*

These results showed that the teachers have seen and were aware of the importance of parental background in learning the English language. This finding confirms the responses given by the students, where 79.5% agreed that their English teachers call their parents to inform them about their performance in English language. These findings of the study are consistent with the views expressed by Taviil (2009) who claims that instructors' attitudes are improved by having positive social interactions with the parents of the students. The result is also in tandem with that of Ellis (2014). According to Ellis (2014), students from the middle class consistently perform better than those from the poor and lower classes.

#### **4.3.3 Learning aptitude of the students**

Findings of the study also showed learning aptitude as a factor affecting students English language proficiency and performance. The students were provided with five statements which were related to learning aptitude and asked to provide their responses. Table 4.3.3 contains the findings from the questionnaire on the views of students regarding learning aptitude.

*Table 4.3.3. Learning aptitude*

	N	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
I find English language very difficult	600	557(92.8)	27(4.5)	16(2.7)	4.14	.764
I prefer to focus on other subjects rather than English language because I score low marks in exams	600	343(57.1)	202(33.6)	55(9.3)	3.36	1.302
English language is a second	600	341(56.8)	197(32.8)	62(10.4)	3.41	1.222

language so I do not need it						
I do not have any idea about how to learn English	600	174(29.0)	316(52.6)	110(18.4)	2.75	1.185
I am not good at producing the English language	600	451(75.1)	107(17.8)	42(7.1)	3.76	1.112

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Results from Table 4.3.3 indicate that, we mean of 4.14, almost all of the students (92.8%, N=557) confirmed that they find English language very difficult with the exception of 27(4.5%) who disagreed. 16 (2.7%) were undecided. The implication is that students are struggling with the subject. With a mean of 3.36 students confirmed to the statement “I prefer to focus on other subjects rather than English language because I score low marks in exams”. Regarding percentage, 57.1% agreed, 33.6% disagreed with the remaining 9.3% not sure. Moreover, majority of the students (56.8%) which gave a mean of 3.41 agreed that English language is a second language so they do not need it and this was directly opposed by 32.8% while 10.4% did not declare their stance. On the other hand, with mean of 2.75, 29.0% confirmed that they do not have idea about how to learn English and this was disagreed by more than half of the students (52.6%). This suggest that majority of the students are familiar with how to study the English language and this ensures positive learning aptitude towards English language proficiency and performance. 18.4% were unsure. With a mean of 3.76, students agreed that they are not good at producing the English language. 17.8% disagreed with the remaining 7.1% undecided.

These results revealed that, four of the items in Table 4.3.3 suggest most of the students do not relate very well to their study of the English language and therefore have a negative aptitude which acts as a disincentive to its learning. These will affect students' acquisition of the English language as a study by Cochran et al. (2010) revealed that positive aptitude is predictive of ultimate L2 attainment. These results are inconsistent with those of

Ririantika et al. (2020) who report that aptitude connected to linguistic abilities has an impact on foreign/second language acquisition.

The focus group discussion was also related to the English language learning aptitude of the students. They were asked to indicate what makes English language learning difficult for them. Student ST. 76 in school 'D' said that:

*English language has many rules which make it difficult for it to be study, as one can easily flout the rules.*

Another respondent, ST. 13 in school 'A', stated that:

*Pronunciation of setting words in English makes it speaking very difficult for me.*

Again, respondent ST. 48 reported that:

*The many aspects of the English language make its study hard for me.*

Moreover, ST. 62 in school 'C' stated that:

*I find it difficult to understand what my English teacher teaches me*

Responses officered above, cannot be 'predictive of how well, students can learn a foreign language (English) in a given amount of time and under given conditions' (Carroll and Sapon 2002: 23).

On the reasons for which students do not prefer to learn the English language, student ST. 87 in school 'D' said that:

*I don't feel easy when it is time for learning of the English language.*

Respondent ST. 38 in school 'B' indicated that:

*I don't feel comfortable speaking at English lessons*

Student ST.57 in school 'C' stated that:

*Because of the intimidating nature of my English teacher*

Respondent ST. 14 in school 'A' stated that:

*I do not prefer to learn the English language, since it calls for a lot of reading.*

These reasons given by the various groups showed that students have negative learning aptitude which does not augur well for the study of the English language.

Regarding the question as to whether English language is a second language, student ST. 43 in school 'B' responded that:

*I do not want to learn another person's language.*

Another respondent, ST. 78 in school 'D', said:

*I see English language as a language imposed on me.*

The group response indicates that students see English as a second language; hence, do not need it.

Concerning the question on whether students have any idea about how to learn English, majority of the members of the groups disagreed to the question as group had an idea about how to learn. Student ST. 34 in school 'A' said that:

*English is used to teach me since primary school, so I have an idea about how to learn it.*

Respondent ST. 48 in school 'B' reported that:

*We know that reading a lot of books will enhance I speaking and writing skills.*

Moreover, student ST. 64 in school 'C' said that:

*I have an idea about how to learn English because I do group work, debate, quizzes and watch videos on the literature books.*

With the question regarding not good at producing the English language, student ST. 14 in school 'A' reported that:

*I lack confidence in speaking English language.*

Another respondent ST. 46 in school 'B' said that:

*I feel nervous in speaking the English language in public.*

Again, student ST. 69 in school 'C' said that:

*I am afraid I will make grammatically make mistake when speaking English.*

It could be deduced from the above that, students demonstrated poor learning aptitude and may lack the specific abilities that serve as the best predictors of success in second language learning (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Again students with poor learning aptitude will not benefit from a study by Erard (2012), which stated that “... learners with greater aptitude (specific abilities) can figure out the rules of language based on input” (p. 32). The findings from the focus group discussions do not support those of Abu-Melhim (2019) who contends that when the students have an aptitude in learning English, they will feel happy in understanding English step-by-step so that they will master English easily.

The study sought from the teachers the learning aptitude of the students. The teachers were asked “Do your students find English a difficult subject to learn”? Teacher TR.1 said that:

*No because if the students understand the concepts, it will not be difficult for them.*

On the other hand, Teacher TR. 9 stated that:

*Yes, because English is not their L1, so they make a lot of mistakes both in writing and speaking.*

Teacher TR. 8 indicated that:

*Students see English Language as boring.*

From the teachers’ responses, majority of the teachers reported that students find English to be a difficult subject and therefore do not have the requisite aptitude to study it.

The teachers were further asked “Do your students focus more on English language as they do for other subjects”? Teacher 10 said that:

*No because students see English language as not important as other subjects to be learnt.*

Teacher TR. 3 responded that:

*No, because students find it difficult to express themselves confidently in the language.*

Teacher TR. 5 indicated that:

*No, students do not have note books for taking notes during English lessons*

This shows that all the teachers have responded that their students see English language as not important to them and therefore put no effort in its study. This result also shows that students have poor learning aptitude towards English language. This result supports the questionnaire responses of the students where as many as 92.8% of the students indicated that we find English language very difficult subject. This also implies that the type of aptitude that one has helps them to acquire a language; positive aptitude will promote learning while negative aptitude acts as a disincentive. These results are also inconsistent with those of Ririantika et al. (2020) that aptitude connected to linguistic abilities has an impact on foreign language acquisition.

#### **4.3.4 Summary**

In examining the attitudes that affect students English language proficiency and their academic performance, students and teachers' views were gathered in the category of learning skills, teachers' commitment and learning aptitude of the students. On the learning skills of the students, the study revealed that students' response to their learning skills shown they have acquired skills through the learning of English language with the exception of few. On contrary, teachers' responses indicated that, students have no learning skills to increase their proficiency and performance. Regarding teachers' commitment, students reported that teachers have low commitment but teachers reported that their attitudes are high as they have positive social interactions with parent and students. Low commitment portrayed by teachers include: teachers do not simplify complex materials to the understanding of their students and

teachers do not assist their students to improve their performance. It is clear students' attitude of acquired learning skills and teachers' low commitment to their work as described by the students themselves and teacher commitment as purported by the teachers in the study really affect students English learning proficiency negatively. With respect to students learning aptitude, students demonstrated poor learning aptitude and therefore may not poses the specific abilities that serve as the best predictors of success in second language learning (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Teachers also reported students have poor learning aptitude towards English language.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

The discussions in the study have shown the responses of students and teachers on the attitude of senior high school students towards English learning in the Kwabre East Municipality. Discussions of students and teachers' responses were carried to cover the attitude of students towards learning of the English language, factors that determine students' attitude towards learning of English language, and how students' attitude affect students English language. It can be concluded that students positive learning attitude, favourable language aptitude and low and high learning anxiety demonstrated by students affected the teaching and learning in the study. Positive learning attitude provided students with acquisition of skills, ability to learn English to help them to perform well in other subjects, the ability to communicate and interact with other natives, and command respect from people because they speak English. Favorable language aptitude ensure students in the study have interest in learning English language, feel happy in understanding it so that they will master it easily and have specific abilities, which allow them to learn a foreign/second language easier, faster, and better than others. Moreover, low and high learning anxiety demonstrated by students in the study will ensure that students whose learning anxiety is low contribute more in second language than those with high anxiety in teaching and learning of the English



language. Students in the study may benefit from low levels of anxiety while being negatively affected by high levels of worry; student performance improves with low anxiety, but levels of anxiety higher than a specific threshold negatively affect students' performance.

Turning now to factors that determine students' attitude towards learning of English language, conclusion can be made of language motivation, attitude of teachers and learning environment of students as factors that determine students' attitude towards learning of English language in the study. In terms of language motivation, it was established in the study that, benefits derive from learning English language motivate students to learn the language. Such motivation induces students to learn English language for the pleasure they will derive from the process of acquisition. Intrinsically motivated individual learns a second language for the love of it and to satisfy their curiosity. Motivation will therefore promote students' preparedness to learn an English language. Regarding both positive and negative attitude of teachers affirmed in the study, positive attitude will help English language teachers to develop a conducive learner-friendly environment in the classroom as this also costs a fruitful effect on learning of the students. Teachers' negative attitude towards their teaching and learning is one reason why many learners fear and hate English language and subsequently fail the subject. It is expected that this negativity which renders the students' learning of the English language to be difficult be attended to by the teacher in teaching and learning of the English language. Concerning favourable learning environment affirmed in the study, it will act as an incentive to encourage students to speak and express themselves in the learning of the English language. Conducive environments acting as a stimulating factor will develop students' positive attitudes towards learning of English language.

Conclusions can be made of how students' attitudes affect students English language proficiency under the following category: learning skills, teachers' commitment and learning aptitude. Students' response of acquiring English learning skills and contrary view of

teachers reporting students have no English learning skills affected teaching and learning of English language in the study. Students having English learning skills will speed up their English learning process and increase their proficiency and performance as proficiency skills are substantially associated with second language acquisition. Learning skills in the form of language proficiency were found to promote speaking and writing among the students. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills were seen to affect their English language proficiency. Poor proficiency skills of the English language will retard teaching and learning of the English language and teachers and students are advised to promote English learning skills. Students reporting of their teachers having low commitment and teachers reporting of their attitudes as being high teachers' affected teaching and learning of English in the study. The students' responses revealed that the teachers were not committed to their teaching; however, the teachers' responses showed that they were committed. Teachers' negative attitudes towards their profession are likely to negatively influence their teaching practices. Committed teacher will be able to simplify complex materials to make it understood by the students thereby promoting teaching and learning. Poor learning aptitude demonstrated by the students negatively affected teaching and learning of English language in the study, since students lack specific abilities that serve as the best predictors of success in second language learning.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings of the study as analysed and explained in the preceding chapter. The importance of students' attitude in learning English, Pedagogical implications of the findings of this present research as well as suggestions for future research are given. Also featured in this chapter are conclusions based on the findings of the study. The main aim of this study is to assess the attitude of Senior high school students towards learning of English Language in the Kwabre East Municipality.

#### 5.1 Summary of findings

This section looks at the findings of the analysis and discussion of data. The objectives of the study were to determine the attitudes of students towards the learning of English language as a second language, to identify the factors that affect students' attitude towards learning of English language, and to determine how students' attitudes affect senior high school students' English language proficiency and performance. To achieve these objectives, research questions were answered. In relation to research objective one, the study addressed the question; "What are the attitudes of senior high schools' students towards the learning of English Language? Objective two answered the question; "What factors determine students' attitude towards the learning of English Language as a second language? Finally, objective three addressed the question "How do attitudes of senior high school students affect their English Language proficiency and performance in the Kwabre East Municipality?"

The study used qualitative and quantitative approach of descriptive survey design. In all, six hundred (600) students and twelve (12) English Language teachers were sampled using systematic random sampling technique. Data for the study were collected with

questionnaire, focus group discussion, and semi-structured interview guide and they all participated fully. Questionnaire, interview and focus group discussions were used for the data collection. The reliability co-efficient of the instruments were found to be 0.71 for the students' questionnaire, 0.73 for focus group discussion, and 0.75 for the teachers' interview guide. Data collected with the instruments were analyzed using descriptive statistics with the help of software of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 23.0 version) in a form of percentages, frequencies and means with their standard deviations. A summary of the results are as follows:

### **5.1.1 Attitude of students towards learning of English language**

On the issues of attitudes of students towards learning of English Language, three areas of attitudes were examined: learning attitude, aptitude, and anxiety of the students. In terms of learning attitude, the results revealed that 88-99% of the students agreed that studying the English language is important because it makes them skillful, understanding the English language help them to get other subjects as well, studying the English language helps us to have a good relationship with other natives and studying English is important because other people will respect us. These findings were also supported by the focus group discussions and English Language teachers' interview. For instance, 75% of the students indicated that studying the English does make them skillful, almost all the students indicated that studying English helps them to understand, read, and write to pass their exams because they have right vocabularies to express themselves and 80 percent of the students were able to communicate and interact with other natives. The responses of the teachers on their students learning attitudes showed that majority of the teachers, over 91% have shown that their students have high learning attitudes towards the English language which were due to their high commitment towards learning of English Language and ability to communicate in English language inside and outside the

classroom. The responses of the teachers showed that their students demonstrated positive attitudes towards learning of the English Language.

For aptitude, the results indicated that 80% of the students agreed that when they study English language, they get more knowledge, 60.8% of the students disagreed that their studying the English language like their native is enjoyable, meaning most of the students enjoy learning the English Language than their native language, more than 50% agreeing that they would like to spend much time as possible to study English language as well as 66% of the students affirmed that when they hear someone who speaks the English language, they like to practice speaking with them. The focus group discussions also showed that majority of the students have good language aptitude. For instance, 85% of the students were able to acquire new knowledge through their study of English language, 90% of the students do enjoy learning the English language because the English language helps them to understand things easily, express themselves and therefore value the language. On the part of the teachers, majority reported that their students do speak English Language throughout their English language lessons, 91% of the students have the ability to communicate in English Language inside and outside the classroom and all the teachers indicated that their students were aware of the positive effects of English Language on their academic work.

When it comes to learning anxiety of the students, it was found during the study that most of the students have good learning anxiety of the English Language. It was found in the study that 66.4% of the students do not feel shy when they communicate in the English language with others, 45% also agreed that they wish they have many English language friends in other to learn their language. Also, more than 50% of the students confessed that English language has an impact on them whilst nearly 40% agreed that they will practice with the English language as their native language. In the same vein, when speaking English, more than 60% of the students fear of making grammatical mistakes. All these responses provided

by the students from their questionnaire indicated that they have favourable learning anxiety of the English language.

The focus group discussions also showed that students do not feel shy to speak English because they were not afraid of the stigma that they will be exposed to and the names they will be given. Majority of the students do wish to have English language friends so that they can learn the speaking of their languages and more students agreed that the English language has an impact on them, particularly on passing their exams, communicate when they travelled and building of their vocabularies. From the teachers' perspective, it was found that students interact with their teachers in English language and students do interact among themselves with English language. Majority of the teachers indicated that their students accept their mistakes and were ready to accept corrections. Teachers indicated that students have positive attitudes towards the learning of the English language. The results from the three categories of instruments used for the study have indicated that students have positive attitudes towards learning of the English language in terms of learning attitude, aptitude, and learning anxiety.

### **5.1.2 Factors that determine students' attitude towards the learning of the English language**

Three factors were examined: English language motivation of the students, attitudes of English language teachers, and learning factors of the environment. On motivation, it was found that majority of the students (58.0 %) indicated that they have motivation to learn the English Language because it is the most interesting subject in their curriculum, 80.6% said to pass their exams and 57.8% of the students indicated it has many advantages over other languages. 95.3% of the students indicated that English language is necessary for them to communicate with their mates and other people in the community. However, "living abroad" was not a motivation factor for 75% of the students for learning the English Language.

It was found from the focus group discussions that majority of the students said English Language is interesting to them because it helps them to learn vocabularies which they used to write other subjects; helps them to read and understand; used to learn other subjects of the curriculum. Majority of the groups stated that, they study the English Language as a compulsory subject and used it to write exams. From the teachers' interview, majority of the teachers have indicated that travelling out of their country is not a motivational factor to encourage their students to learn English Language. Again, all the teachers indicated that the English Language helps their students to express their ideas and acquire new vocabularies for communication.

On teachers' attitudes, majority of the students have agreed that their teachers' attitude is a factor influencing their learning of the English Language. For example, more than 50% of the students affirmed that they look forward to going to English classes because their English teacher is good, 66.0%, of the students agreed that they have strong desire to know all aspects of English language and close to 70% further confirmed that they would like to spend as much time as possible to study English with 42.6% other students confessing their English teachers' have dynamism and interesting styles of teaching. The focus group discussions revealed that majority of the groups stated that their teachers were punctual to classes, their involvement of students and their participation in the lessons, their time used in explanation of issues to their understandings, corrections of their mistakes when they make errors in speaking as well as the discipline measures, they carried out in the classrooms encouraged them to attend English classes. However, few of the students stated that their English teachers have dynamic and interesting teaching styles. Teacher factors are therefore responsible for the attitudes exhibited by students towards English Language in senior high schools in Kwabre East Municipality.



On matters related to the learning environment, it was found that 70.1% and 57.5% of the students reported of favourable learning environment free from hostility and frustration. Students were conscious and of the learning environment and students have enough time for practicing the English Language. The results of the focus group discussions showed that majority of the groups stated that they encounter safe and stimulating learning environment during their English Language classes, because they were free to express themselves. All students have the ability to carry out practical activities that make them active learners culminate with discovery of knowledge. Majority of the students were compelled to speak the English language in their schools always. Thus, the learning environment created in the schools does encourage the students to use the English language. Majority of the teachers said the students were free and confident to express themselves, and use vocabularies to communicate. The congenial environment of the students acts as an incentive to encourage them to express themselves. The conducive environment therefore is seen as a stimulating factor to students' development of positive attitudes towards learning of English language.

### **5.1.3 Attitude of students that affects their English language proficiency and academic performance**

The results revealed that 91.6% and 84.0% of the students have agreed that English language proficiency has improved their academic performance and communication with foreigners efficiently. Similarly, 76.6% of the students have also agreed that listening, speaking, reading and writing are all important in English language learning. However, 77% of the students disagreed that they can learn English through grammatical rules and vocabulary memorization. The results of the focus group discussions revealed that majority of the students have proficiency skills to contribute to their academic performance due to their reading culture, speaking and writing abilities and vocabularies to express themselves. Majority of the students have proficiency skills to communicate with foreigners and realized

the need to study the four components of English Language (speaking, reading, listening and writing) so as to be effective in their use. Concerning teachers' interview, majority of the teachers indicated that students have no learning skills in practicing the communication of the language in order to improve their proficiency and performance.

With the results of the students' aptitude, the questionnaire results showed that 92.8% of the students agreed that English language is very difficult; 57.1% of the students prefer to focus on other subjects rather than English language; 52.6% of the students disagreed that they do not have any idea about how to learn English and 75.1% also indicated that they are not good at producing the English language. The results revealed that most of the students do not relate very well to their study of the English language and therefore have negative aptitude which acts as a disincentive to the learning of the English Language. From the focus group discussions, it was found that rules and aspects of English Language, procedures used for assessment and inability to use appropriate teaching and learning materials cause students to find English Language difficult to learn and therefore have poor learning aptitudes towards the subject. The teachers' interview results indicated that majority of the teachers reported that their students find English to be a difficult subject and therefore do not have the requisite aptitude to study it. Also, all the teachers stated that students see English Language as not important as other subjects to be learnt.

With teachers' commitment, the results from the questionnaire showed that only 2.0% of the students agreed that their English teachers are able to simplify lessons, 21.6% agreed that their English teachers use different strategies to help them to understand what they teach and 4.6% agreed that their English teachers always give them homework to help them to improve in English language. This shows that students have indicated low commitment of the English Language teachers. It was found from the focus group discussions that only few teachers use practical and activity methods to help students to understand complex concepts

which they were taught. The group responses also revealed that the English Language teachers do not give them home work to improve their performance in English Language.

With regard to the teachers' interview results, it was found that all the teachers reported of providing their students with participatory approach in their learning of the English language through simplification of complex material. On the issue of strategies that they used to help their students to learn the English language, the teachers said they employed different practical teaching methods to make their students to understand the various lessons that they teach. It was also found from the teachers that they have seen and was aware of the importance of parental background in the learning of the English language and therefore calls parents to inform them of the performance of their wards. Teachers' responses demonstrated a high commitment on their part which was contrary to some of the responses give by students.

## **5.2 The importance of students' attitude in learning English language**

The finding has revealed that students showed positive attitudes or welcoming perceptions of attitudes towards the English language. For instance, the responses from the questionnaire commented that the majority of the respondents agree that studying the English does make them skillful, have right vocabulary to express themselves and interact with other natives, helps them to understand, read, and write to pass their exams. This is also evident from the students' and teachers' interviews that students have high learning attitudes towards the English language which were due to their high commitment towards learning of English language, and ability to communicate in English language inside and outside the classroom. As Watters and Watters (2007) argued, positive attitudes help individuals to commit to the jobs they do.

Again, concerning the students' attitude toward learning of the English, we can deduce that learning may be either beneficial or detrimental to them and this is consistent

with the evidence to back the claim that success or achievement is influenced by attitudes rather than the other way around. For aptitude, both students and teachers agreed that students acquire more knowledge and enjoy the studying of the English language as native, when they demonstrate positive attitude towards the learning of the English language. It was revealed that most of the students have good learning anxiety of the English language from students and teachers' points of view as students communicate in the English language with others. They confirmed that there is connection between students' favourable learning anxiety in the English language and students' attitude in learning the English language. This was evident as students did not feel shy to speak English because they were not afraid of the stigma that they will be exposed to and the names they will be given.

It is interesting to know that motivation of students, attitude of English language teachers, and learning environment of students affect students' attitude towards learning of the English language among senior high school students. Hence the success of students' attitude towards learning of the language is dependent on these factors in the study. The discussion on these three reveals nearly all students think that knowing English well will help them communicate with their students and other members of the school community, which is a factor that has a positive impact on English learning, teachers also believe that exams are one of the things that motivate students to study. They claim this is because students are aware that if they do poorly on their English exams, they cannot further their education. A learning environment which is free from hostility, frustration, and consciousness as well as available time for practicing the language, contributes towards students' positive attitude in learning the language.

The extent to which attitude of the students' influence English language proficiency and academic performance was determined in the study through students' learning skills, learning aptitude of the students and teachers' commitment. Students demonstrated acquiring

the speaking, reading, listening and writing skills, which have influenced their attitude. However, students' learning aptitude was seen to be negative because they consider the learning of the language boring and difficult. Teachers' commitment was seen to be low by students while teachers consider their commitment to be high. This contradiction is negatively affecting the study of English language among senior high school in the Kwabre East Municipality.

It is therefore clear from the discussion that attitude, whether implicit or explicit, is relevant in learning and for that matter, the English language. I argue that the relevance of students' attitudes toward learning English, in general, cannot be overemphasized, since Ghana's education system employs the English language as a second language and a medium of instruction. Therefore, when students exhibit positive or favourable attitudes, they will gain mastery of the English language, which will in turn help them to excel in their academic performance and also help them to aspire to higher levels of education.

### **5.3 Pedagogical implications**

Attitude of students towards learning is not an easy aspect in the teaching and learning process. It needs combination between skill and knowledge. Lack of understanding about students' attitude towards learning of the English language will make teaching and learning activity run ineffectively. It is important for teachers to understand the concept of students' attitude towards learning. This is due to the fact that English teachers who do not have good foundations of the concept will find it difficult to express that differentiation of students' attitudes towards learning (Ağır, 2019). Glynn et al. (2005) opine that the fundamental reason that teaching objectives have not been achieved is due to the attitudes of the students towards learning. Therefore, the effort of the student to show the expected behaviours in terms of teaching objectives, as a positive or negative attitude towards learning, is regarded as a predictor of their academic success (Hong-Sheng, 2005; McAuley et al., 2012; Osborne et al.,

2003; Tandogan & Orhan, 2007). Watters and Watters (2007) argue that positive attitudes help individuals to commit to the jobs they do and a negative attitude can decline a student's motivation, limit their interest in learning, and hinder their academic progress.

Therefore, when a teacher adopts encouraging teaching approaches that create a sense of usefulness of learning the English language, the students will develop positive attitude and be more motivated to study English (Tran, 2013). Conversely, when the teaching approaches are discouraging, students are more likely to be demotivated because they have negative feelings regarding the usefulness of studying English (Chang & Hwang, 2018).

The consistency between teachers' knowledge on factors (language motivation, attitude of teachers and learning environment) that determine students' attitude towards the learning of the English Language and classroom practices is very important. A student displays feelings and thoughts in terms of the learning environment and learning processes with appropriate or inappropriate behaviours in accordance with the expectations of the environment. They tend to explain ones' self with positive or negative attitudes (Ağır, 2019). Past research indicates among other factors that the teacher is the most influential factor that can significantly impact motivation (Yadav & BaniAta, 2013). In particular, when a teacher has a discouraging attitude toward English, students are less likely to show their interest to learn in that language. Consequently, students' motivation level goes down, and they feel demotivated. Taking this into account, except that when teachers negatively comment and show no interest in students or lack enthusiasm, the student will be more likely to like English (Takase et al., 2019). This consistency will enable teachers to be keen on these factors so as to cause them to positively affect students' attitude towards the learning of the English language. It will also ensure that teachers revise their traditional rejection of students with negative attitude towards learning the language and assist them to increase their professional development as a teacher.

Students' acquired learning skills, students not relating well with their study, and teachers' low commitment and high commitment reported by students and teachers respectively portray the level of influence of students' attitude on English language proficiency and academic performance. To limit this, teachers need to have good understanding of students' attitudes towards English language proficiency and the syllabus of the senior high school. However, teachers must also have knowledge about students' attitude regarding English language. This is because if they do not do so, they will not understand students' current learning needs. This goes a long way to improve the teaching and learning process. The knowledge eventually guides teachers to modify their teaching strategies, influence students' general well-being and in turn, shape their learning environment, their motivation, and their language achievement and ability.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for future research**

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher would like to propose some suggestions that hopefully will be very useful to improve the teaching and learning English. This study might be replicated in other senior high schools in other Municipalities, Districts and Metropolis using students and parents as respondents. Future researchers may conduct further studies regarding students' attitudes towards English and factors that affect their attitudes which may include students' learning strategies used by students. Studies might also be conducted on English teachers' commitment to their teaching work by using their heads as respondents and observation as one of the instruments for gathering data.

#### **5.5 Conclusion**

Based on the findings and discussions, the researcher concludes that the respondents of senior high schools from Kwabre Municipality have a positive attitude toward learning of English Language as second language. This was due to the fact that, students' responses from the questionnaire commented that the majority of the respondents agreed studying the English



does make them skillful, have right vocabularies to express themselves and interact with other natives, helps them to understand, read, and write to pass their exams. These favourable feelings of students created welcoming perceptions of attitudes towards the learning of the English Language.

Motivation of the students, attitudes of English Language teachers and learning environment of students are factors that affect students' attitude towards learning of the English language among senior high school students. Students' success in attitude towards learning of the English language in the study is dependent on these factors. According to the dictates of these factors in the study, nearly all students think knowing English well will help them communicate with their students and other members of the school community. This is a factor that has a positive impact on English learning; teachers also believe that exams are one of the things that motivate students to study. They claim this is because students are aware that if they do poorly in their English exams, they cannot further their education. A learning environment, which is free from hostility, frustration and consciousness, contributed towards students' positive attitude in the learning of the language in the study. English language proficiency and academic performance are influenced by students' attitude in the study. This was conducted through students' learning skills, learning aptitude of the students and teachers' commitment. Students demonstrated acquiring the skills of speaking, reading, listening, and writing to influence their English language proficiency and academic performance. However, from the perspectives of the students, their teachers have lower commitment but the teachers' responses showed that they are committed.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS**

#### **TOPIC: THE ATTITUDE OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TOWARDS LEARNING OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN THE KWABRE EAST MUNICIPALITY**

##### **Section I: Attitudes of Students Towards Learning of English Language**

###### **A. LEARNING ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS**

1. In what ways are students committed to the learning of English language?
2. Do you find your students use the English language during and outside the class?
3. How do you think studying English will help your students do well in other subjects?
4. How would the study of English help your students have a good relationship with other natives
5. Do your students spend time studying English?

###### **LANGUAGE APTITUDE OF STUDENTS**

6. Are students aware of the effect of English on their academic performance?
7. How do your students enjoy studying English language?
8. Why do you think English language is made core for all students?
9. Do you use English language throughout your English lessons?
10. Would your students love to speak English if others were to be speaking too?



## **B. LEARNING ANXIETY OF STUDENTS**

11. How do students behave when they make mistakes in speaking English?
12. Why do students feel shy to speak English language?
13. Do students think English is an interesting subject?
14. Do you think your students would have been influenced positively by speakers of English language?
15. How has the study of English language had impact on your students?

## **Section II: Factors Affecting Attitudes Towards Learning of English Language**

### **C. LANGUAGE MOTIVATION**

16. Why do you think students would want to live in this region and not elsewhere?
17. Do your students find English an interesting subject to study? Why?

### **TEACHING ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS**

18. How do students feel when they have English lessons?
19. What strategies do you use during English lessons?
20. Do you teach all the aspects of the English language?
21. Does teacher's commitment to students learning influence students' attitude towards learning of English Language?

### **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

22. Are students free to express themselves in English? how?
23. Do students speak English during and outside the classroom? Why?

24. In your opinion, does self-confidence of students influence their attitude towards learning of English Language?

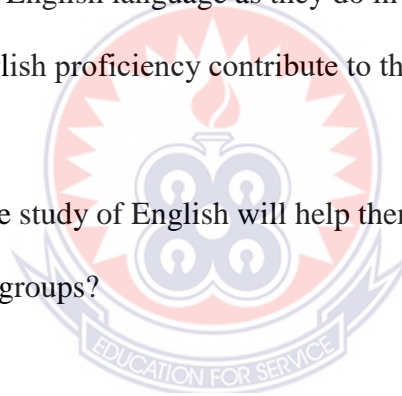
### **Section III: Effect of Attitude on English Language Proficiency and Performance**

#### **D. LEARNING APTITUDE OF STUDENTS**

25. Why do students find English a difficult subject to learn?
26. Why do your students prefer not to learn English?
27. Are your students aware English is their second language?

#### **E. LEARNING SKILLS OF STUDENTS**

28. Do students focus more on English language as they do in their elective subjects? why?
29. Explain how students' English proficiency contribute to their academic performance?
30. Are students aware that the study of English will help them communicate with other students from other ethnic groups?



#### **TEACHERS COMMITMENT**

31. How do you simplify difficult topics for your students to understand?
32. How do you help your students to improve their English language performance?
33. How do you communicate your students' performance to their parents?

## APPENDIX 2

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STUDENTS

This questionnaire aims at assessing the attitudes of senior high school students towards learning of second language. Kindly indicate your preference among alternative answers for each question by ticking [ ] in the appropriate box. Where alternative answers are not provided, fill in the gaps provided. I would be grateful if you respond to the items as frankly as possible. Respondents are assured of confidentiality of this exercise because it will be solely used for academic purpose. Thank you for your contribution.

#### Section I: Socio-Demographic Data of students

1. School: .....
2. Form .....
3. Age      15- 18 [ ]   19 – 21 [ ]   23+ [ ]
4. Sex [ ] Male [ ] Female
5. Place of permanent residence (e.g. Mampong) .....



## The attitude of students toward Learning of English Language

### Learning Attitude

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Studying the English language is important because it makes me skilful					
Studying the English Language well will help me to get other subjects as well					
Studying the English Language helps me to have a good relationship with other native					
Studying English is important because other people will respect me					
My English teacher is a good example of the ideal English speaker					

### Language Aptitude

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
When I study the English Language, I get more knowledge					
Studying the English Language like my native language is enjoyable					
I would like to spend as much time as possible to study English language					
When I hear someone who speaks the English Language, I like to practice speaking with her/him					

**Learning Anxiety of Students**

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel shy when I communicate in the English Language with others					
I wish I have many English Language friends in order to learn their language					
The English language does not have any impact on me					
I will practice with the English language as my native language					
When speaking English, the fear of grammatical mistakes has great influence on me					

**Factors that determine students' Attitude Towards the English Language****Language Motivation**

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I think English is the most interesting subject that we have in school.					
I like to learn English because I want to live abroad					
I learn English Language to pass my exams					
I do my best to learn English Language because it has many advantages over other languages					
I think as a student English language is necessary for me to communicate with my mate and other people in the community					

**Attitude of Teachers**

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I look forward to going to English classes because my English teacher is good					
My English teacher has dynamic and interesting teaching styles					
I have a strong desire to know all aspects of English language					
I would like to spend as much time as possible to study English but the rules spelt out by my teacher are too many					

**Learning Environment**

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I like to learn the English language because the learning atmosphere is good					
I am free from any frustration whenever I speak English in the classroom.					
I use the English language outside the classroom					
There is a lot of time for practicing English language in my school					
I am afraid people will laugh at me if I don't say things right					

## How Attitude of students affect their English Language Proficiency and Performance

### Learning Skills

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
English Language proficiency has improved my academic achievement					
English Language Proficiency has enabled me to communicate with foreigners efficiently					
I can learn English through grammatical rules and vocabulary memorization					
I think that listening, speaking, reading and writing are all important in learning English					

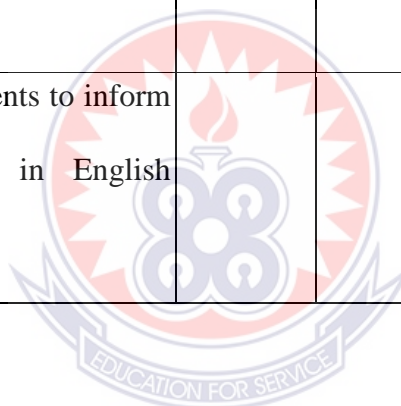
### Learning Aptitude

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I find learning English language very difficult					
I prefer to focus on other subjects rather than English language because I score low marks in exams					
English language is a foreign language so I do not need it					
I do not have any idea about how to learn English					
I am not good at producing the English language					



### Teachers Commitment

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My English teacher is able to simplify difficult topics so I can understand					
My English teacher uses different strategies to help me understand what he or she teaches					
My English teacher always gives me homework to help me improve in the English language					
My English teacher calls my parents to inform them about my performance in English language					



## APPENDIX 3

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

#### Attitude of Students to learning English Language

##### Leaning Attitude

1. How does the study of the English Language make you skilful?
2. Explain how the study of the English Language help you to study and do well in other subjects
3. How does the study of the English Language help you to have good relationship and communicate with other natives?
4. How would the study of the English Language cause other people to respect you?
5. How much time would you like to spend in studying English Language?

##### Language Aptitude

6. What contribution does the use of English Language make towards getting new knowledge?
7. Is the study of the English Language enjoyable as compared to the native Language?
8. Why is the English Language taught in school?
9. Are you prompted to speak English Language with someone when you hear him/her speaking English?

##### Learning Anxiety of Students

10. Why do you feel shy to speak English Language with other?
11. Do you wish if you have many English Language friends so that you can learn their Languages?
12. Why are you afraid to make mistakes when speaking English?
13. How do the English Language have an impact on you?

14. How often do you practice speaking English Language as you do with your local language?

15. What types of grammatical mistakes do you make when speaking English Language?

## **II. Factors Determine Student's Attitudes towards Learning English.**

### **Language Motivation**

16. Why is English Language the most interesting subject that we have in the school?

17. Why do you like to study English Language?

18. How is the learning of the English Language will help you to pass you examines?

19. What advantage do you think you have in learning English Language?

20. How do English Language contributes to your communication with your mates and community members?

### **Teaching Attitudes of Teachers**

21 Why do you like attending English Language classes?

22 Give four dynamics and interesting strategies of your English Language teacher?

23 Name the aspects of the English Language that you have the desire to learn?

### **Learning Environment**

23. What learning environment do you encounter in your English Language class?

24. What types of learning activities do you carry out in your English Language lessons?

25. How often do you speak English Language outside the classroom?

26. Are there rules governing the speaking of local languages in your school?

27. Do your school have language laboratory for teaching and learning?

28. What happens to you if you are unable to speak correct English in your school?

## **Section IV. How Attitudes of affect the English Language proficiency and performance of Students**

### **Learning Skills**

29. Explain how your English Language proficiency contributes to your academic performance.
30. What skills contributes to your effective communication in English Language with other students from other ethnic groups?
31. Give reasons why all the four components of English Language (listening, reading, speaking and writing) are important in learning English Language.

### **Learning Aptitude**

32. Do you find learning English Language very difficult for you
33. Why do you prefer not to learn English Language?
34. Why do you consider English Language as a second language?

### **Teacher Commitments**

35. Explain how your English teacher is able to simplify complex topics and concepts easier for your understanding?
36. How does your English Language teacher able to help you to improve your English Language performance?
37. Does your English Language teacher communicate your performance in English Language to your parents?

