

Construction and Standardization of Attitude Towards English Language Scale

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ABSTRACT

The paper describes the development and Standardization of Attitude towards English Language Scale. For the scale's first draft, 59 statements related to students' attitude towards the English language were framed. Following consultation with specialists, the number of items was reduced to 36. After item analysis, final draft of the attitude towards English Language scale comprised total of 31 items is finalized. The test-re test reliability was determined to be 0.84. To determine the validity of the current scale, Concurrent validity index was computed. To obtain Concurrent validity, the current measure was compared to Attitude towards English Language Learning among EFL Learners by Ahmed (2015) yielding a validity score of 0.55.

Keywords: Construction, Standardization, Attitude towards English Language.

INTRODUCTION

A key factor in secondary school students' language learning and academic achievement is their attitude towards the English language. As a universal language, English is frequently linked to improved educational and career prospects, which affects students' desire to acquire it (Crystal, 2003). Positive attitudes like enthusiasm, interest, and confidence tend to encourage higher engagement and performance whereas, negative attitudes like worry, a fear of making mistakes, and a lack of desire can impede growth (Gardner, 1985).

In many non-native English-speaking nations (Baker, 1992), numerous factors, such as the educational strategies used, parental support, social pressure, and the accessibility of English-language, influence students' opinions. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), students are more likely to form a positive attitude towards the subject of English when it is taught through interactive and communicative methods. However, a strong focus on rote memorization and grammatical exercises might cause alienation and apathy.

Understanding students' attitudes is essential for designing successful language instruction and creating a more encouraging learning environment. As English continues to gain popularity around the world, it is critical to locate and address students' perspectives and difficulties in order to improve learning outcomes.

To create and standardize this Attitude towards English Language Scale, the Likert (1932) method was employed. There were three steps in the scale construction process:

- Planning Phase
- Construction Phase
- Standardization Phase

Planning Phase : It includes:

- i. Identification of different situations effecting students' Attitudes
- ii. Operational definition of Attitude towards English language
- iii. Attitude scale construction methodology.

Identification of different situations effecting students' Attitudes

The researcher employed a range of resources, such as catalogues, books, journals, government documents, and websites, to gain a deeper understanding of students' attitudes towards English language. Every facet of their mindset regarding learning the English language was carefully monitored that would have an impact on their attitude towards English language.

Operational definition of Attitude towards English Language

Attitude towards English Language in the present study has been considered as positive or negative feelings that students have towards learning English. It is a predisposition or a tendency to respond positively or negatively towards learning different concepts of English in the class or outside the class.

Attitude scale construction methodology

In research, the most popular variation of Likert's scale is the five-point rating scale with a range of possible responses. The response categories are Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. In response to the statement, the person must select the group that most accurately captures his or her true feelings.

Construction Phase: Following steps include in this phase:-

- Preparation of item pool,
- Editing of the items and Provisional Draft,
- Directions for respondents,
- Try Out of the scale,
- Item Analysis,
- Selection of Items and Preparation of the Final Draft and
- Scoring System

Preparation of item pool

The establishment of an item pool is necessary for the scale-building process. Every aspect of students' attitude towards learning English was meticulously tracked and recorded. Experienced educators and psychologists were consulted for developing the statements for the scale. In the beginning, 59 statements about students' opinions of the English language were constructed.

Editing of the items and Provisional Draft

Guidelines proposed by Wang (1932), Thurstone and Chave (1929), Likert (1932), Bird (1940), Edwards and Kilpatrick (1948) for reviewing and editing the statements was taken into account for the construction of statements of Attitude towards English Language Scale.

After discussing the comments with the supervisor, the necessary adjustments were made. A 46-item script was finished after the required adjustments were made. To avoid grammatical faults, repetitions, or ambiguities, the prepared pool of 46 statements was distributed to seven subject specialists with extensive backgrounds in education, psychology, research, and language. The expert group consisted of senior instructors from schools and college associate and assistant professors. Each expert was encouraged to thoroughly evaluate each comment and determine if it should be retained, altered, or erased. After subject-matter experts' suggestions, a set of 36 statements was chosen for the attitude towards English Language Scale's preliminary draft.

Directions for respondents

In Attitude towards English Language scale booklet, on the front page of the booklet, instructions were written for the participants to attempt the test. These were:

Fill in the personal information:

Name:

Class:

Age:

Gender:

Name of School & City:

Read all the instructions carefully.

This booklet contains 36 statements. After carefully reading each statement, evaluate how much of it pertains to you. The degree of application is shown using a 5-point scale, with five boxes in front of each sentence. The example is given below:

Table-1: The Sample of Statement and Corresponding Options

Sr. No.	Statement	Response Alternative				
		Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Undecided (UD)	Disagree (D)	Strongly Disagree (SD)
1.						

Express your own thoughts after attentively reading the sentence. Tick the box below that says "strongly agree," which is the first box, if you fully agree with the statement. Similarly, tick the check box below to the agree option if you agree with the statement, but only to a certain extent. That means you have to pick the choice that best fits you out of the five.

Try out of the scale

Small group try-out: Twenty-five students (15 boys and 10 girls) from Salem Tabri, Ludhiana's Government High School were given the 36-item scale. Depending on inputs, difficult terms were swapped out for simpler ones. However, no assertion needs to be ignored. As a result, the 36-statement draft was deemed suitable for additional review.

Large group try out: Data gathered from 163 students on the Attitude towards English Language Scale was used for item analysis.

Table-2: Sample Distribution of Large Group Try out

S. No.	Name of the School	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	Total
1.	Government Senior Secondary School, Multipurpose, Ludhiana	40	41	81
2.	Government Model Senior Secondary School, Cemetery Road, Ludhiana	42	40	82
	Total	82	81	163

Item Analysis

Since the current English language attitude scale was created as a rating scale with the goal of eliciting an expression of opinion regarding the trait being examined, it is not possible to grade it in terms of right or wrong responses. This makes the concept of item difficulty meaningless. So, the item discrimination index for the current tool building was created based on the data collected.

Item discrimination index

The discrimination index of an item is determined by the extent of discrimination it displays between high and low groups. Kelley's dichotomy was used to identify the high and low categories on this scale. Kelley (1939) showed that the tails of the distribution alone might be used to calculate the product moment correlation between a test item score and the total score. He also demonstrated that the most useful division to use was made up of the top and bottom 27% tails. For the present scale, this suggestion was followed.

The performance scores of 163 students obtained at the final tryout were first arranged in descending order. There were 44 pupils in each group, with the higher and lower groups being made up of 27% of the students with the highest and 27% of the students with the lowest marks, respectively. The discriminative power of the various items was assessed by comparing the mean value of each question for the higher and lower groups. The following formula was used to calculate the item discriminative power:

$$\frac{\sum H - \sum L}{N/2}$$

$$\text{Discriminative Power Index} = \frac{\sum H - \sum L}{N/2}$$

Where:

$\sum H$ = sum of all scores of a particular item responded by higher group

$\sum L$ = sum of all scores of a particular item responded by lower group

N = total number of students in higher and lower group.

Selection of Items and Preparation of the Final Draft

44 students were considered as higher group and 27% from bottom i.e. 44 students from bottom comprised the lower group. For calculation, t-value, mean and standard deviation (SD) of both the groups (higher and lower) were calculated. Mean, standard deviation and t-value of all the items included in the provisional draft comprised of 36 items of Attitude Scale towards English Language is shown in table below:

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation (S.D.), t-value and the Accepted/Rejected Items

S. No.	High Group N=44	Low Group N=44	t-value	Accepted/ Rejected (A/R)
1	Mean = 4.70 S.D. = 0.59	Mean = 3.89 S.D. = 1.15	4.26**	A
2	Mean = 4.64 S.D. = 0.53	Mean = 3.64 S.D. = 0.92	6.25**	A
3	Mean = 4.80 S.D. = 0.51	Mean = 4.05 S.D. = 1.22	3.95**	A

4	Mean = 4.70 S.D. = 0.51	Mean = 3.93 S.D. = 1.04	4.52**	A
5	Mean = 4.34 S.D. = 0.64	Mean = 3.25 S.D. = 1.35	4.95**	A
6	Mean = 4.64 S.D. = 0.69	Mean = 3.66 S.D. = 1.10	5.15**	A
7	Mean = 4.50 S.D. = 0.70	Mean = 3.80 S.D. = 1.19	3.50**	A
8	Mean = 4.16 S.D. = 1.01	Mean = 3.23 S.D. = 1.26	3.87**	A
9	Mean = 2.82 S.D. = 1.19	Mean = 3.05 S.D. = 1.10	0.95 (NS)	R
10	Mean = 2.77 S.D. = 1.18	Mean = 2.75 S.D. = 1.06	0.10 (NS)	R
11	Mean = 4.41 S.D. = 0.87	Mean = 3.50 S.D. = 1.13	4.22**	A
12	Mean = 4.02 S.D. = 0.73	Mean = 2.82 S.D. = 1.21	5.67**	A
13	Mean = 2.95 S.D. = 1.28	Mean = 2.68 S.D. = 1.29	1.00 (NS)	R
14	Mean = 4.48 S.D. = 0.76	Mean = 3.41 S.D. = 1.00	5.65**	A
15	Mean = 4.50 S.D. = 0.85	Mean = 3.16 S.D. = 1.27	5.81*	A
16	Mean = 4.16 S.D. = 1.18	Mean = 2.84 S.D. = 1.33	4.92**	A
17	Mean = 4.68 S.D. = 0.71	Mean = 3.27 S.D. = 1.30	6.31**	A
18	Mean = 3.84 S.D. = 0.94	Mean = 2.25 S.D. = 1.04	7.54**	A
19	Mean = 3.55 S.D. = 0.93	Mean = 2.82 S.D. = 1.15	3.27**	A
20	Mean = 4.41 S.D. = 0.76	Mean = 3.20 S.D. = 1.09	6.02**	A
21	Mean = 4.02 S.D. = 1.15	Mean = 3.36 S.D. = 1.26	2.56*	A
22	Mean = 4.61	Mean = 3.18	7.61**	A

	S.D. = 0.54	S.D. = 1.13		
23	Mean = 4.59 S.D. = 0.58	Mean = 3.52 S.D. = 0.95	6.35**	A
24	Mean = 4.77 S.D. = 0.42	Mean = 3.45 S.D. = 1.15	7.13**	A
25	Mean = 4.64 S.D. = 0.61	Mean = 3.25 S.D. = 1.18	6.90**	A
26	Mean = 4.36 S.D. = 0.69	Mean = 3.66 S.D. = 0.86	4.25**	A
27	Mean = 4.32 S.D. = 0.86	Mean = 2.93 S.D. = 1.19	6.28**	A
28	Mean = 4.23 S.D. = 0.83	Mean = 3.41 S.D. = 1.15	3.83**	A
29	Mean = 4.55 S.D. = 0.63	Mean = 3.50 S.D. = 1.07	5.60**	A
30	Mean = 4.20 S.D. = 1.07	Mean = 3.30 S.D. = 1.05	4.03**	A
31	Mean = 4.16 S.D. = 0.81	Mean = 2.70 S.D. = 1.30	6.29**	A
32	Mean = 4.25 S.D. = 1.01	Mean = 2.75 S.D. = 1.26	6.15**	A
33	Mean = 3.95 S.D. = 1.31	Mean = 2.95 S.D. = 1.16	3.79**	A
34	Mean = 3.52 S.D. = 1.32	Mean = 3.73 S.D. = 1.02	0.81 (NS)	R
35	Mean = 3.70 S.D. = 1.17	Mean = 2.68 S.D. = 1.09	4.23**	A
36	Mean = 3.84 S.D. = 1.10	Mean = 3.43 S.D. = 1.04	1.79 (NS)	R

*Significant at 0.01 level of significance, **Significant at 0.05 level of significance NS means non-significant

Table 3 indicate that 5 out of 36 previously used items were eliminated. The Attitude towards English Language Scale, which has 31 items in all, has therefore been finalized.

Scoring Procedure

The response scale for positive assertions goes from strongly agree to strongly disagree, where 1 denotes strongly disagree and 5 denotes strongly agree. Conversely, negative comments were given a score between 1 and 5, where 1 indicated great agreement and 5 indicated significant disagreement. The scoring system for both positive and negative statements is demonstrated in the table below:

Table-4: Scoring Procedure

Type of Statement	Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Undecided (UD)	Disagree (D)	Strongly Disagree (SD)
Positive	5	4	3	2	1
Negative	1	2	3	4	5

The total of each item's score indicates the subject's attitude towards the English Language. The following are specifics of both the positive and negative score items:

Table-5: Differentiation of Items as Positive and Negative

Type of Item	Item Number
Positive	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26
Negative	11, 13, 14, 23, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31

Theoretically, scores range from 31 to 155. High scores indicate positive attitude towards the English language, and vice versa.

Standardization Phase

It includes:

- Establishing the Reliability of the scale
- Establishing the validity of the scale
- Setting the time limit

Establishing the Reliability of the scale

Reliability is the degree to which a test or measure consistently evaluates the subject of the test. "The consistency of scores obtained from individuals when examined twice on the same test under similar conditions at two different times" is what Anastasi (1951) defined as reliability. Due to the failure to meet the parallel items and unifactor test assumptions, the Kunder-Richardson formula was rejected. However, because only one version of the exam was created, the parallel form technique was disregarded. Ultimately, the split half method was rejected since the objects could not be arranged in equal halves. The test-retest method proved to be the most successful of the several methods for assessing a test's reliability.

For establishing the reliability of the Attitude towards English Language Scale, final draft of 31 items was given to the participants to attempt, the scale was administered to 163 students of Government Senior Secondary Model School, PAU, Ludhiana and Government Senior Secondary School, Multipurpose, Ludhiana, Punjab, India. Retest was conducted after a period of three weeks on the same participants. Scores of all the 163 students were recorded and counted on the basis of marking scheme of positive and negative statements. The coefficient of reliability of Attitude Scale of English Language was found to be 0.84. This value shows that the test can be considered as reliable.

Table-6: Index of Reliability of Attitude towards English Language Scale

N	Reliability Index	Significance Level
163	0.84	0.01

Establishing the validity of the scale

"Validity" refers to the truth or faithfulness of anything. The connection of the test with some independent, external criteria is considered by experts to be the best indicator of the quality or aptitude being evaluated. For Kaplan and Saccuzzo (2001), validity is defined as "the agreement between a test score or measure and the quantity it is believed to measure."

The attitude scale was distributed to a group of renowned experts for face and content validity assessment. The Attitude towards English Language Scale's general layout and each item were to be reviewed by them. Following an evaluation of the scale's social acceptability, specialists came to the conclusion that it accurately captures every aspect of students' opinions towards the English language.

Concurrent validity was also achieved for the current scale. To determine the validity of this type of scale, a relationship or discrimination is formed using pre-existing scale or test. When the researcher evaluated Ahmed's (2015) Attitudes towards English Language Learning among EFL Learners at UMSKAL with the self-constructed attitude towards English Language Scale, a validity score of 0.55 was found.

Table-7: Index of Validity of Attitude towards English Language Scale

Correlation with the tool	Validity Index	Significance Level
Attitudes toward English Language Learning among EFL Learners by Ahmed (2015)	0.55	0.01

Setting the time limit

Twenty minutes was the allotted time for the test, which included the time required to read the instructions and finish the test. This was calculated by calculating the average time required by 80% of the examinees (Swineford, 1974).

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