

# Effect of classmate's teaching on attitude towards the course of language 1

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Received: January 27, 2015

Accepted: March 31, 2015

## ABSTRACT

Current research, performed in 2014 in an experimental method, aimed to recognize effect of classmate's teaching on changing attitude towards the course of language 1 and its components (joy, motivation, concern and fear). In this regard two classes were selected from the studied society and were located in two groups of experience ( $n=24$ ) and control ( $n=22$ ). Used tool was Aiken attitude measurement; after performing pretest, nine sessions of classmate's teaching were carried out; at the end the two groups were examined by posttest. Obtained data was evaluated using SPSS21 software and covariance method and t-test. Obtained results from covariance with the significance level of  $p \leq 0.05$  showed that method of classmate's teaching affected general attitude of students towards language 1 significantly and increased the positive attitude towards the course of language 1 in the experience group. Furthermore method of classmate's teaching increased the joy of the course of language 1. Regarding incomppliance of assumptions of linearity and homogeneity of slope in the components of motivation, concern and fear, independent t-test method was used. The results showed that classmate's teaching increased motivation of students in the course of language while it is ineffective on concern about the course of language 1 and reducing the fear of this course.

**KEY WORDS:** classmate's teaching, Aiken attitude measuring

## INTRODUCTION

Attitude is defined as the body status, practical and mental preparedness, positive or negative nerve reaction, inference, feeling or trust of someone towards another person, a group, a belief, a position or an object (Agha Ahmady, Mobashernia, 2007). Many of the researchers have investigated different emotional and characteristics features in relation with learning English course, but during recent years, attention of researchers and teachers has been drawn to the role of emotional factors in learning language (Shirbeigy, Azizy 2010). From the beginning of the 60's decade and accompanied by launching extensive study of Gardner & Lambert about the role of social, mental factors in learning English, researches related to the field of learning English have focused on two factors of motivation and attitude. Undoubtedly, one of the important factors of success in learning foreign language is motivation (Oxford & Shearin 1996, quoted by Shirbeigy and Azizy 2010). This variable has been studied extensively in the literature related to learning language. Some researchers such as Lai (2000), Lin & Varden (1996), Ugan & Sakamatv (1999), Bomshir & Mac Lvlyn (2001), Oxford (1996) have advanced; they claim that motivation is the initial factor in learning English (Trmblay & Masgvr (1977) quoted by Shirbeigy and Azizy 2010). But this fact that two concepts of attitude and motivation are not fully distinguished from each other in the related works often seriously prevents offering explanation of related roles to these concepts among complicated factors related to the success in non-native language. From the perspective of Rogers, attitude of students towards academic issues is an important factor in learning and academic progress. According to his theory, when students have favorable attitude towards a course, he is more likely to show his hard working and strength and also to try to reach higher levels (Fardaei benam, Farzad 2012, Berim and Self 1989, quoted by Shirbeigy and azizy 2010). In the other hand attitude and value are often considered the same. But the general perspective in related with attitude and value is that attitudes can be placed in writings which shows a processes degree of internalization; this perspective was also considered in the classification of Kravt & Bloom & Masia (1964) in the classification of educational purposes (Fardaei Benam, Farzad 2012). According to this perspective, the most unsteady attitudes in this continuum include fields which are considered as reception or acceptance. Higher grades of this continuum include response and valuation and in the last grades of this continuum, processes of organization and personality formation are placed which indicates value taking and internalization of attitudes. Thus attitude can be defined as a four-dimension template including cognitive, valuing, emotional and behavioral dimensions. Cognitive dimension points out having conscious beliefs and in the opinion of Brblak & tabl 2004 (quoted by Fardaei Benam, Farzad 2012) it is considered as the basis of the effective attitude. Valuing dimension focuses on positivity or negativity of emotional orientation of individuals and emotional dimension points out excitement and feeling of individuals towards considered subject. Behavioral dimension emphasizes on orientation towards performing a special behavior (Reber & Reber, 2001, quoted by Razavie, Seif and Tahery, 2005). Difference between forming attitudes and changing them is very delicate and new information changes individual's belief towards the attitude and this leads to changes in positive and negative evaluation; as a result individual's attitude will change. Findings show that variables like being concerned about English language, skill degree of individuals, academic average of students, type of obtained evaluation from learning English language and also expected benefits from learning English language affect attitude

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specifically. Content structure of offered courses can affect making and enhancing attitude towards English language through type of academic field. Thus some fields provide more favorable condition than others while some fields haven't provided this condition (Agha Ahmady, Mobashernia, 2007). Fashion-Bine&Ayzen believes that a chain of different factors creates the behavior which intention is the main medium between them. In this theory, intention depends on tendency to that behavior or subjective norm. The first variable: tendency towards that behavior is an individual and personal variable in which an individual evaluates performing a behavior (or a phenomenon) from his point of view and decides whether it is good or bad. Second variable: subjective norm reflects influence and social influence pressure which is perceived by the individual to perform a behavior. The variable of subjective norm is a function of two other important factors: others' expectations: expecting that how a specific behavior is evaluated by the important individuals; this may stem from different reasons such as attraction, face, intelligence, mental and physical and social competency which can be observed by the own person or has been transferred somehow by others. And the other factor is the motivation of following others' expectations. What are individuals looking for by following others' expectations? Are the words of important individuals important for them? Sap and Howard are two theorists who added another variable named social acceptance beside the theory of Fashion-Bine & Ayzen. They believe that social expectations are effective in appearance of intention. In this regard they refer to the theory of reference group and consider it as a group which plays the role of reference framework and reflects beliefs of a more extensive social system. As a result, human being perceives the world around him from the perspective of a general reference group (Rafi pour quoted by Agha ahmady, Mobashernia, 2007). According to the mentioned theories, it can be indicated that the plan of classmate's teaching (circular of education, 2012) is effective as a group learning and research oriented method in which students with acceptable scientific capabilities in the class contribute other students in the same group in order to promote quality of educational activities in the English class which makes them motivated. In this regard, findings of Mousavi in 2012 based on private education of peers showed that this method provides a positive attitude towards math course among students which indicates significant difference in comparison with group. Furthermore, from the perspective of Seify Javan, Abi (2013), who investigates and criticizes these researches, believes that this method leads to a change in attitude and an increase in enthusiasm and respect among students with different ethnicity fields and also an increase in their interest in education and discussed subjects while many of senior students are unwilling to learn English in high schools (Maftun 1997). Anderson 1993 (quoted by Kalantary, Gholamy, 2012) ,by performing a research in china, showed that group discussion is more efficient in teaching English while from the perspective of Alavy, Keyvan panah(2003), Iranian students are loath to group work. Majority of them are of the opinion that their classmates don't have enough favorable knowledge to unravel problems and offer appropriate solutions. They evade group work that provides an appropriate situation for gaining data; they announce their satisfaction with individual work. In fact it can be said that students works individually and they are not motivated strongly to participate in group work and they are not interested in feedback of their classmates. This kind of attitude can be accompanied by unfavorable consequences; in addition to reducing students' tendency to participate in the class activities, it deprives them of enjoyment derived from group learning. According to the research findings (Shirbeigy, Azizy 2010), an environment which is poor in the terms of communication and conversation between learners and their familiarity with the culture of foreign language not only provides any motivation and enthusiasm but also it causes stress, worry and lack of self confidence among learners. We can see an increase in amount of students registering in the private language schools all over the Iran (Maftun1997). From the perspective of Riazzy 2005 (quoted by kalantary, gholamy 2013), the main problem in educating foreign language in Iran is that after thirty years, there isn't a written and organized plan or clear policy about educating foreign language. The subject of attitude and its great importance in forming individuals' lives is an irrefutable fact. This issue has been being heeded day by day by the experts and public. This issue that how we should change the attitudes is a subject which is less considered. So the current research aimed to recognize the effect of classmate's teaching on attitude towards the course of language 1 and find effective solutions to change the attitude of students towards this course. This is presumed that classmate's teaching is effective on general attitude of students towards the course of language 1, and also amount of joy, motivation, concern and fear of this course.

## METHOD

Research method is experimental. Statistical society includes all the students of first grade one of high school from the region 15 of Tehran city which are 149 individuals.

Sampling method: from the six classes of first grade which included 149 individuals, two classes were selected by the means of random-stratified method which included 46 individuals. Then randomly a class was considered as a group which was exposed to experience directly (n=24) and another class was considered as the control group (n=22). The used tool was language attitude measuring of Aiken which included 24 questions according to 5-item scale from completely agree to completely disagree in related to questions of language attitude. The questions 1,5,9,13,17,21 were about joy, questions 2,6,10,14,18,22 were about motivation, questions 3,7,11,15,19,23 were about concern and questions 4,8,12,16,20,24 were about fear.

Scoring method: the questions 1,4,6,7,9,12,14,15,17,18,20,22,23 were scored reversely that in the analytical analysis, they were scored in the form of 5 to 1. The score of each individual for each item was converted to spectrum from 20 to 100.

Reliability and validity of the tool: structural validity of this scale was confirmed by the 'Tyler research (1979) (Razavie, Seif, Tahery 2005). In order to investigate reliability of the questionnaire, internal identical coefficient or

Cronbach's Alpha was used by the means of SPSS21 software (Hoyt and Cramer quoted by Pasha Sharify et al 2010). The obtained coefficient for whole the questionnaire was 0.86 and for each question was from 0.85 to 0.86. This figure indicates high internal correlation between items of the scale.

Performing method: first session: holding test of language attitude measuring (pretest), grouping the students and determining elite students and educating them, second session to fifth session: teaching, problem solving and holding exams about offered subjects by the elite students for the group members according to determined policy by the language teacher (7 groups and 7 teachers). Sixth and seventh sessions: watching Magic English movie and offering its summary in English language. Eighth and ninth sessions: free discussion, hot chair, tenth session: poster making in the environment of Publisher in English language with a desirable subject. Eleventh session: performing posttest of language attitude. All the sessions were held out of educational hours by the elite students. In order to analyze data in the part of descriptive statistics, mode, Skewness, Kurtosis, indicators of dispersion from center, standard deviation, Variance were used and in the part of analytical statistics, methods of one-way Covariance analysis and t-test independently were used to respond hypothesis of the research (Pallant quoted by Rezaei 2010).

Table 1: summary of covariance for effects of classmate's teaching on general attitude towards language 1, control and experience groups

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pre- test	8623.34	1	8623.34	90.32	.001	.67
Group	886.32	1	886.32	9.28	.004	.17
Error	4105.09	43	95.46			

The results of table 1 shows that significance level F is equal to 0.004 which is less than 0.05 Alpha. Thus it can be concluded that after removing the effect of pretest, classmate's teaching increases general attitude towards the course of language 1 in the experience group. Size of test effect is 17. There was a strong relation between scores before involvement and after involvement in the test of general attitude towards the course of language 1 that its effect size was 67.

Table 2: summary of covariance for effects of classmate's teaching on enjoyment derived from the course language 1 of students of first grade of high school

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Enjoyment (pre Test)	9849.23	1	9849.23	52.79	.001	.55
group	893.53	1	893.53	4.79	.034	.10
Error	8021.47	43	186.54			

The results of table 2 shows that significance level F is equal to 0.034 which is less than 0.05 Alpha. Thus it can be concluded that after removing the effect of pretest, method of classmate's teaching increases the enjoyment derived from the course of language 1 in the experience group. Size of test effect is equal to 0.1. There was a strong relation between the scores before involvement and after involvement in the test of general attitude towards the course of language 1 that its effect size was 55.

Table 3- difference between average and standard deviation of pretest and posttest of experience and control groups in the components of language attitude

	group	N	Difference Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
<b>Motivation</b>	experience	24	9.44	17.98	3.67
	control	22	.45	9.50	2.02
<b>Concern</b>	experience	24	2.50	13.73	2.80
	control	22	-4.39	10.56	2.25
<b>Fear</b>	experience	24	7.77	18.08	3.69
	control	22	-1.96	16.15	3.44

Table4- independent t-test of components of motivation, concern and fear in control and experience group in the post test

	Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	DF	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Motivation	9.63	.003	2.14	35.53	.039	8.989	4.192	.48	17.49
Concern	2.98	.091	1.91	42.75	.062	6.893	3.595	-.35	14.14
Fear	.84	.365	1.93	43.97	.060	9.747	5.049	-.42	19.92

In response to this hypothesis that: classmate's teaching can change degree of motivation for the course of language 1, it can be suggested that regarding the tables 3 and 4, obtained significance level regarding motivation towards the course of language, the obtained  $t$  is equal to 0.003 and less than 0.05. Thus, it can be said that classmate's teaching can change degree of motivation towards the course of language 1 and this hypothesis is confirmed. Regarding degree of concern about the course of language, the obtained  $t$  is equal to 0.62 and more than 0.05, this hypothesis that classmate's teaching changes degree of concern about the course of language 1 is rejected. Regarding degree of fear of the course of language, obtained  $t$  is equal to 0.60 and more than 0.05, this hypothesis that classmate's teaching is effective on reducing fear of the course of language 1 is rejected.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of current research are consistent with findings of Agha Ahmady and Mobashernia (2007) which indicate that attitude and motivation affect speed of learning vocabulary and that attitudes affect educating foreign language which are considered a kind of emotional and valuing reaction. The results of findings of Pahlavan Sadegh, Kajbaf (2011) indicate significant and direct influence of the process of math education on attitude towards math. Findings of Cooper et al. (1996), Jacobs et al (1996), Lee Kane and Lawsky (1997) who have mentioned effectiveness of collaborative learning in order to change the negative attitude (Sobhany Nejad, Fardaei, Abedy, 2011) and Mousavi (2012), Kruse Berghen & van (2003), Bryant (2005), Astydy et al (2008), Gersten, Chard, Jayanty & Barker (2009), Hughes & Macky 2008 (quoted by Mousavi 2012), Nazal (2000), Waskovaz (2000), Robinson et al (2005), Sanders (2009), D.Perry (1998), Pntyz (1999) and Moore (1991), Curtis (2006), Penny C. (2009) and Nazal (2000 quoted by Mousavi, 2012) which indicate that private education of peers makes students have a positive attitude towards the course are consistent with the findings of current research.

In order to answer the question why and how this happens, by the means of studying theoretical bases of current research, we can indicate that undoubtedly one of the important success factors in learning foreign language is motivation (Oxford and Shearin (1996 quoted by Shirbeigy and Azizy)). Some of the researchers have advanced and have claimed that motivation is the primary factor in learning language (Gardner, Trmblay and Masgvt 1997 quoted by Shirbeigy and Azizy 2010). According to the obtained findings from the research of Agha Ahmady, Mobasherian 2007, individuals who perform favorably in the field of scientific and specialized subjects poses stronger attitude in this field. Billy, Anoyogbazy and Dally, 2000, Gardner, Trmblay and Masgvt 1997 (quoted by Elahy, Fallah, Tabatabaei, 2003) have investigated the role of several variables in the second book of language and they have concluded that there is a basic relation between emotional indicators and progression in foreign language. It is said that enthusiasm or positive feeling towards every issue can provide necessary condition and infrastructure in the fields of different subjects such as English language. The individuals who are more interested in learning English language gain higher score in achieving positive attitude (Agha Ahmady, Mobasherian, 2007). From the perspective of Marvan and Silisarua 2003 (quoted by Shirbeigy and Azizy 2010), individuals take control of motivation voluntarily. Berim and Self 1989 (quoted by Shirbeigy and Azizy 2010) believe that in order to achieve a specific purpose, motivation depends on this issue that how much attractive the purpose is felt and how much an individual believes in making it comes true. Thus it seems that motivation depends on the results significantly. The findings show that variables like concern about English language, degree of individuals' skills, academic average level, and types of obtained evaluations from learning English and also expected advantages of learning English affect the attitude specifically (Agha Ahmady, Mobashernia 2007). Since individuals assess themselves while they are taken for others by themselves, according to the theory of Med, the picture they have in mind about others' expectation plays an effective role in forming the attitude and keeping it up. Thus, if the individuals are placed in the proper positions and their conceptions are enhanced consequently, it will be effective on forming positive attitude since verbal, spatial and temporal neighborhood can provide appropriate and favorable expectations for the individuals. Robert Slawn (quoted by Seify, Javan, Abi 2013) who investigates and criticizes proceedings of classmate's effects believes that this method leads to a change in attitude and an increase in enthusiasm and respect among students with different ethnicity fields, improvement of social acceptance of ordinary students by the classmates, more intimacy between them, an increase in their self-esteem and their interest in education and discussed subjects (Seify, Javan, Abi 2013). Another point that is necessary to mention is that evaluation of individuals of performance of their and other's knowledge about English language is effective and useful considerably on changing and creating attitude. In other word, positive evaluation provides stronger attitude (Agha Ahmady, Mobasherian, 2007). In the recent years, extensive researches have been performed to recognize factors which ease English learning directly or indirectly. They indicate that communication provides an opportunity for learning so that they could practice what have learned during the learning process and complement their learning. In fact it can be said that receiving feedback is the main reason of presenting in the class and communicating with others (Pika et al, 1996). Barner 1999 (quoted by Alavy, Keivan panah 2003) considers expecting strong feedback as the factors which increase motivation of active participation in class activities and contributes learning. Motivation for participating in class activities, commenting on activities of other classmates, offering constructive suggestions about classmate's activity and using their suggestions to improve the work quality should be provided. Researches show that students are willing to receive feedback from their classmates. In group learning, students are likely to provide and receive feedback. Without presence of teacher, they learn how to provide feedback. In fact, in language activities, learning how to provide feedback without presence of teacher as the guidance is done naturally. Interviewing with students show that they feel free to express their beliefs without presence of teacher and they can talk their weakness points over with their classmates (Cornell 2000, quoted by

alavy, Keivan panah 2003). In fact if students are encouraged to participate in class activities and they are guided patiently so that they could learn new points and enjoy success and knowledge by the means of collaborating and consulting with classmates, we can be hopeful that this type of attitude changes over time and the positive and constructive role of classmate's feedback is better understood. But the important point is that in order to adopt such method, emotional environment of the class should be arranged in a way that students could participate in class activities and express their beliefs easily and without fear and anxiety. In case of applying this method, each student regarding his enthusiasm and motivation degree participates in learning and achieves considerable success. Moreover, since the mentioned method requires preparation of students, it guarantees continuous and permanent effort of them. Thus, it is recommended that teachers of foreign languages try to encourage students to participate in class activities and communicate with each other and in this way they could increase possibility of feedback in the class. In order to make learning foreign language significant for students, they should be involved in policies and decision makings. Because the purposes of education authorities may differ from purposes of students for learning English language, it may cause that internal motivation of students for learning foreign language eliminates.

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