

**TEACHER'S ATTITUDE AND TEACHING OUTPUT IN ENGLISH SUBJECT. A CASE STUDY OF
NAMUTIN PRIMARY SCHOOL, NEBBI MUNICIPALITY**

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ABSTRACT

The poor quality of English, both spoken and written, of Ugandans in general, and of our students in particular, has become a source of worry to many well-meaning educationists, parents and the general public. Several reasons have been given for the falling standards. Included among them are reading habits, poor teaching, inadequate library facilities, decline in the teaching of subject and the de-emphasis of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction. There are those who believe that the use of the mother tongue at the basic level of education helps the learner to relate similar grammatical concepts in the L1 to those of the English Language. Much as the aforementioned could be said to be accountable, there is a fundamental phenomenon that acts as the underlying cause of the problem. The role that academic performance and attitude of the learners plays in the acquisition of skills in English has, over the years, been terribly ignored. The perception of students, teachers, policy makers, and the larger community, which includes parents, has played a considerable role in bringing about the fall in the standard of English. This study investigates the extent to which the fall in the standards of English could be attributed to attitudes and academic performance. The study has revealed that a serious disconnection exists between the needs of students and the solutions that are being used to raise the standard of English Language among learners. The study also reveals that, in most cases, parents, teachers and policymakers cannot escape blame for the problem either for their action or inaction regarding the promotion of the learning of the language. Though the study may have identified other reasons for the decline in the standards of English, the study focuses, to a large extent, on the very attitude and academic performance of the learner. It has suggested ways of developing positive academic performance and attitudes towards the language. These suggestions include sound approaches to the teaching and learning of the language. The approach is carved in a manner that would make English more attractive to learners thus leading to attitudinal and performance change, which in turn would lead to enhanced performance of learners in English.

Key words: teachers, attitude, teaching output and english subject

Background of the study

The English language plays an important role in Ugandan society. It is the only official language of communication and, to a large extent, the official medium of school instruction (Anthony, Kazaara, Kazaara et al., 2023). It plays a unifying role in the country by facilitating contact between Ugandans of

different linguistic origins. The knowledge needed for the social, economic and technical progress of the country is found in books written in English. Even warnings designed to protect us from danger are written in English (Anthony, Kazaara, & Kazaara, 2023). All competitive examinations,

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whether for entry into educational institutions or for professions, include tests of competence in the use of English. English is actually the language of education, administration, law, communication and commerce (Victoria et al., 2023). As a result, it has a significant role in the social life of Ugandans. Once a person decides to educate himself, there is no good reason not to speak English well. In addition, a deficiency in the use of English can be easily revealed in an interaction with another person. Student performance has been a subject of great interest since the beginning of modern education (Godfrey et al., 2023). Most countries have realized that students are at the center of the educational process. It was further noted that all innovations seen in education without good performance are destined to fail (Christopher, Moses, et al., 2022). Globally, the main goal of education in any democratic society is to provide students with a quality education that

Statement of the problem

Systematic teaching of the English language continues to stop language fear among students, although it could be said that the systematic method contributes to the problem, there is an underlying phenomenon that eludes all those looking for a solution to the problem (Shamim et al, 2023).

Just as attitude and academic performance can determine a person's level of success in a particular endeavor, they can equally be seen as key to competence in using English as a means of communication (Christopher, Komunda et al., 2022). Paradoxically, it was terribly ignored. A thorough examination of the learning outcomes

will train them to become productive members of society (Christopher, Moses, et al., 2022). In some studies, authors have argued that students who enter schools with lower academic performance should be taught a simplified remedial approach that also allows those students who are better prepared to move unhindered by slow classmates (Christopher, Komunda, et al. , 2022). In a few schools, students who are considered weak in English are taught very poorly due to the fact that they are academically weak and therefore become weaker in academics (Ntirandekura et al., 2022). A study conducted to assess academic performance among school students in the U.S. found that learning English is not the only or primary determinant of English learners' academic performance. The availability of trained and prepared teachers also makes a difference in improving academic performance (Micheal et al., 2023).

and attitudes of students and even teachers especially towards the subject of English will go a long way in explaining the root cause of the declining level of English in Namutin Upper Primary School (Nasuru & Bafaki, 2023). Moreover, the attitude of policy makers in general towards the improvement of English is worth investigating and would be a significant step towards finding a solution to the problem faced by the majority of English language learners in Uganda (Richard, 2022).

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Objectives of the study

1. To examine the factors influencing student's attitudes and academic performance in English subject.
2. To determine the extent to which teachers' attitude influence academic performance of students in English subject
3. To examine how student's attitude affect their academic performance in English subject

Methodology

This research adopted a research design that was descriptive in nature. Mugenda (2008) noted that a research design that is descriptive helps to determine and report things naturally and attempts to present issues as feasible behavior, attitudes, ideals and characteristics. This study sought to describe the current situation on attitude and academic performance of English among students in Namutin primary school in Nebbi municipality. This design was suitable for this study because it elucidates facts regarding the nature and position of a circumstance, as it occurs at present time of study. It also sheds light on the prevailing relationships and practices, values and processes that are occurring, effects that are being felt or trends that are developing. The study used a total study population of 65 respondents comprising of 60 Students, 4 teachers of English and 1 English head of department in Namutin primary school in Nebbi municipality.

Table 1: showing target population

Category	Members
Students	60
English teachers	4
English head of department	1
Total	65

Source: Researcher

The researcher selected Namutin primary school in Nebbi municipality as the case study. Therefore, the study used a sample size of 25 respondents that is 20 English students, 4 English teachers and 1 English head of department because it was large enough compared to the target population in Namutin primary school in Nebbi municipality. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. During this study, questionnaires, documentations, interviews and observation methods were used to collect information. Primary data are original in

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character (Kothari 2007). Document review, such as review of books, reports, publication was obtained from local or central Government and professional journals used to search secondary data which have already been collected by someone and passed through the statistical process (*Ibid*) in order to see what the researcher obtained and suggested for further studies. The questionnaire was piloted by taking 10% in the sample population who was later excluded in the actual data collection process. Reliability coefficient values was computed using Cronbach alpha coefficient method. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient normally ranges between 0 and 1. However, there is actually no lower limit to the coefficient. The closer Cronbach's alpha coefficient is to 1.0 the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale. Both qualitative and quantitative data collected was analyzed on the objectives and research questions of the study using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables to show the general features of attitude and perception of students' academic performance in Namutin Primary school and data was coded using SPSS (Nelson et al., 2022).

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RESULTS**Table 2: Perceptions and beliefs of students towards English subject**

	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Freq	Percent
English is applicable in other subjects	5					2	10
English is useful for career growth		5				1	5
It is Important to do well in English			2			1	5
Do you belief that English is difficult				5		1	5
Would you avoid English if it were optional				3		15	75
Total						20	100%

Source: Researcher

According to the table above it indicated that 75% of the students said that if English was optional they would avoid it which indicated that the perception and belief they have towards English has continued to make them fail English because if a student thinks English is important, useful and contributes towards success in other subjects due to its applicability, they will not think of it as optional, but instead will work hard and put a lot of efforts as they build on their related future careers which may lead to improved performance.

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Table 2: Attitude of Respondents towards English

Valid	strongly disagree	1	2.5
		3	7.5
disagree	undecided	11	27.5
	agree	25	62.5
	Total	40	100.0

Source: Researcher

Table 2 presents the frequency distribution of the respondents' attitude towards English as a subject matter taken from their individual responses. The above categorization was adapted from a ready-made checklist for measuring the attitude towards English were strongly disagree denotes highest negative feeling towards English as subject matter down to strongly agree which dictates highest positive attitude towards English (Mark et al., 2023). The data above reveals a total number of 25(62.5%) respondents under agree, 11(27.5%) for undecided, 3(7.5%) for disagree, and 1(2.5%) for strongly disagree respectively. The above percentage clearly explains that more than half of the total percentage of the entire percentage have positive attitude towards the subject matter defeating the sum percentage of 10% who has a negative attitude towards English (Oromo et al., 2023). Further, the data suggests that the class views English as an enjoyable and at the same time interesting subject. This can be attributed to the teacher's skill in effectively employing various pedagogical methodologies, the learning experiences and availability of materials need.

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Academic Performance of Respondents in English Class**Table 3: Academic Performance of Students in English Class**

Valid	approaching proficiency	18	45.0
		22	55.0
proficient		40	100.0
Total			

Source: Researcher

Table 3 presents the academic performance of the respondents in their English subject using their general percentage average based from their respective grades in every quarter. The general percentage average was then categorized following the standard categories under the umbrella of the Basic Education Curriculum which includes: Advanced (89.50 and above), Proficient (84.5-89.49), Approaching Proficiency (79.50-84.49), Developing (74.5-79.49) and Beginning (74.49 and below). It can be gleaned above that 22(55%) are under the category of Proficiency, 18(45%) are under Approaching Proficiency while no respondent was labeled as Advanced, Developing or Beginning (Ntirandekura et al., 2022). Further, the data suggests that more than half of the entire population of the study are Proficient which means that in general, the respondents have good performance inside their English class. This performance may be attributed to factors affecting the teaching and learning process (Richard et al., 2022).

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Table 4: Single Regression Analysis on the Significant Relationship Between Respondents'**Attitude towards English and their Academic Performance**

Variable	Beta	Sig.	Interpretation
Attitude towards English	0.207	0.208	Not Significant
R-Square	0.041		
Adjusted	0.016		
F-value	1.638		
sig.-value	0.208		

Source: Researcher

To test the existence of significant relationship between the attitudes of the students towards English and their academic performance inside English class a single regression analysis was conducted. Result of the analysis (Table 4) showed an R-square value of 0.041 which means that only 4.1% of the variance in English performance could be explained by their attitude towards English as a subject matter. The analysis of variance showed an F-value of 1.638 with a significance value of 0.208 which is greater than the 0.05 significance level (Nelson et al., 2023). This means that there is no significant relationship that exists between the students' attitude towards English and their academic performance. Moreover, result dictates that the academic performance among the respondents is not affected by all means with their individual attitudes toward English as part of the subject areas. Beta coefficient showed that attitude towards English ($\beta = 0.136$, $p < 0.05$) did not significantly predict the performance of students in their English class as reflected in their general percentage average having significance value of .208 which is greater than the 0.05 significance level for accepted margin of error. This means that the achievement of the students in their English class is not determined nor influenced by their personal belief and attitude towards the subject matter. In addition, their attitude toward English does not serve at all as their motivation to work harder and perform better in their English class.

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Conclusion

The study concluded that other factors like teachers' workload influenced students' performance in English, Extra responsibilities assigned to the teacher, number of teachers, students' enrollment were some of the aspects that played an important role in determining the outcome of students' performance in English, More responsibilities assigned to the teacher inhibited his or her performance in teaching as there was no adequate time to prepare for the lessons and hence lowering productivity, Shortage of teachers of English meant the few who were available being overworked hence making them less productive, High student enrollment in most schools strained the meager human and physical resources (teachers, textbooks, classrooms and materials). This could not allow good performance in English to be posted.

Recommendations

In order to improve the performance of students in English language in Namutin Primary school, it was recommended that the bottlenecks that caused the poor performance were addressed, 'The bottlenecks included: low attitude among teachers of English, over enrolment, lack of adequate preparation among teachers of English, lack of exposure, shortage of relevant teaching/learning materials and interference from other responsibilities. The following recommendations were made:

- 1) The school management to ensure that teachers of English prepared adequately for the lessons by preparing necessary documents such as lesson plans,
- 2) The government would as well introduce some incentives in schools like presidential award, scholarships to reward both students and teachers who put in more efforts to improve the performance in the English language.

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