



# A Correlational Study of Student Engagement and Attitudes Toward Learning English with English Academic Achievement

Sumit Pradhan<sup>1</sup>, Chayada Thanavisuth<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine whether there was a significant relationship between student engagement and attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an international school, Thailand. **Research design, data and methodology:** A total of 115 students participated in this study. The first research instrument was the Student Engagement and Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire (SEATLEQ). It consisted of the Engaged Learning Index (ELI): Student Engagement to determine the level of student engagement; and Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire (ATLEQ) to determine students' attitudes toward learning English. The second research instrument was the English Final Test for Grade 3 students to analyze their English academic achievement. **Results:** The findings indicated that Grade 3 students at the target school had an overall high engagement level for learning English. While the overall level of attitudes toward learning English was interpreted as partially positive. The English Final Test depicted that students had a good level of English academic achievement. **Conclusions:** The results specified that there was a strong, positive, and significant relationship between student engagement and attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

**Keywords:** An International School in Thailand, Attitudes Toward Learning English, English Academic Achievement, Grade 3 Students, Student Engagement Toward Learning English

**JEL Classification Code:** C12, I20, I21, N35

## 1. Introduction<sup>2</sup>

With the advent of globalization in the 1990s, the English language gained momentum all over the world as it has become the lingua-franca internationally and it still continues to be (O'Rourke & Williamson, 2002). Crystal (1997) argued that English became a global language because of the power of the people who speak it. English is increasingly being used as the primary medium of instruction in most schools around the world (Smokotin et al., 2014). Simultaneously, this growth imposed a high proficiency in English for students to carry out their academic tasks efficiently. To achieve this purpose, many educational institutes in Thailand provide increased

assistance to students learning English. In accordance with EF English Proficiency Index 2021, Thailand was listed #100 out of 112, with a score of 419 which indicates a 'very low proficiency' level of English. Thailand's position in Asia was ranked 22 out of 24 countries (Education First, 2021). This denotes that Thailand still has to demonstrate improvement in the English proficiency level as compared to other neighboring Asian countries such as the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore (Chantarasiri, 2022). Since Thailand realizes that a good proficiency of English language is a prerequisite (Foley, 2005), the Basic Education Core Curriculum of Thailand regards English as a compulsory subject in schools in Thailand (Ministry of Education [MCD], 2008).

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Almost all the international schools applying the International Baccalaureate curriculum framework use English as the mode of instruction in all the core subjects and a common communication tool in the school, which serves as an international outlook as well as provides the local perspective (Ledger et al., 2014). As a consequence,

students with a first language other than English could face difficulty in using the English language in their learning process. Although international schools in Thailand promote support to such learners, there is still space for improving their English language competency. Hence, to conduct this study, the group that the researcher worked with are Grade 3 students of English at an International School in Thailand. The rationale for choosing Primary Years students, specifically Grade 3, was to build a strong base in English while preparing them for the Middle Years Program. According to Piaget's (1971), theory of stages in cognitive development, the target sample in this study falls under the category of the concrete operational stage (7-11 years), when children start using logic in their thought process while being concrete. Vygotsky (1978) stated that social interaction is vital for cognitive development. Furthermore, students in international schools come from all over the world, with varied backgrounds and cultures (Chantarasiri, 2022). In addition to the cultural shock, they also must undergo the language barrier which may act as a hindrance to their engagement and their attitudes toward learning the language. Thus, it is important to focus more on student engagement and their attitudes toward learning English to help them increase their English academic achievement.

There has been a relatively limited number of research studies on student engagement and attitudes toward learning English in international schools in Thailand (e.g., Feng & Kim, 2020; Lin & Lynch, 2021). So, the first author aspires to shed light by inferring on attributes like behavioral, cognitive and emotional engagement, and reporting on the way these students express their engagement and their attitudes toward learning English.

The first author had been working closely with the target sample. Therefore, through intensive observation and interviews with Grade 3 homeroom teachers and the English department, the first author found out that some students at the target international school had low English academic achievement. Furthermore, students in this international school with low English proficiency usually had lower academic achievement. This issue could have arisen because most of the students have a negative attitude toward learning

English as they are not motivated to learn, consequently reducing their English academic achievement. The first author observed that the students do not have a heightened attention span and they tend to show a lack of involvement in their learning tasks as students do not tend to participate in English learning activities. These are indicators of negative attitude and low student engagement in English class which leads to a lower level of English academic achievement. Also, owing to the fact that the parents of these students are mostly expatriates who come from different countries like Korea, Japan, France, India, etc., the students in the target international school comprise a variety of ethnicities, cultures and backgrounds (Hayden & Thompson, 2008). Consequently, their first language is not English which makes it demanding for these students to engage in their learning or have a positive attitude to excel in their academic achievement.

The target international school follows the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum which is an inquiry-based, transdisciplinary curriculum framework (International Baccalaureate Organization, n.d.), where the medium of instruction is English for all the other core subjects such as Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, etc. This also provides a hindrance for the learners in their academic progress as they have to apply the English language in all the other subjects. Nonetheless, to overcome this challenge, students of English ought to have a higher level of engagement and foster a positive attitude toward learning English, as these are considered to be the predominant factors to excel in any language and ultimately, their overall academic achievement (Akey, 2005). Researchers around the world have justified that determining students' attitudes toward learning English is a prime facet in an attempt to enhance their language learning prospects (Al-Noursi, 2013; Pawlak, 2012). It is also essential for learners to become ardently engaged in their learning process to achieve academic success and effective progress (Bask & Salmela-Aro, 2013; Salmela-Aro & Upadyaya, 2020).

Besides, previous studies on student engagement and their attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement in the context of international schools that employ the International Baccalaureate curriculum framework have scarcely been researched. This research aims to consolidate the structure for the previous body of research in view of accentuating the notion of an educational system that identifies and analyzes the needs of the students to implement strategies that stimulate a higher level of student engagement and promote a positive attitude

to their learning process that will have a constructive effect on English academic achievement.

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to determine whether there is a significant relationship between student engagement and attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

## 2. Research Objectives

The research objectives addressed in this study were as follows.

1. To determine the level of student engagement toward learning English of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.
2. To determine the level of attitudes toward learning English of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.
3. To determine the level of English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.
4. To determine whether there is a significant relationship between student engagement and attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement of Grade 3 at an International School in Thailand.

## 3. Theoretical Framework

This study was conducted based on the self-determination theory and the socio-educational model of second language acquisition to explore student engagement and attitudes respectively.

### 3.1. Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory is a macro-theory of human motivation, personality development, and health (Ryan, 2009). It is supported by the behavioral aspect of self-determination and the social and cultural conditions. In this theory the essential psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are established in a way similar to the correlation between the fulfillment of the need of extrinsic rewards and the modulation of intrinsic motivation (Adams et al., 2017). The fulfillment of these needs are crucial for self-motivation and intrinsic objectives to enhance rewarding student engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2015).

Additionally, to measure student engagement for this study the first author used the Engaged Learning Index which was derived from Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (Schreiner & Louis, 2011).

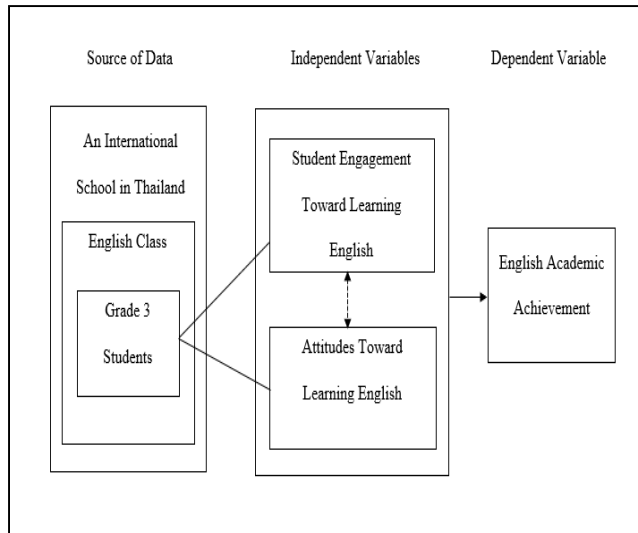
### 3.2. Socio-Educational Model of Second Language Acquisition

Gardner (2010) asserted that the socio-educational model of second language acquisition derives the interaction between motivation and attitudes in language learners that plays an important part in students' language achievement. Likewise, language achievement has a direct impact on attitude and motivation of language learners (Gardner, 2001), with integrative motivation as its focal point (Gu, 2009). This theory is grounded on the basis of three constructs; attitude toward the learning situation, integrativeness, and instrumentality, which are intended to be reciprocally related to one another (Gardner, 2006).

According to Wenden (1991), attitudes toward learning a language can be categorized into three interrelated components which are, cognitive, affective and behavioral components. Furthermore, attitudes toward learning a language can either be positive or negative (Youssef, 2012).

## 4. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of the study. The independent variables of this study were student engagement and attitudes toward learning English, while the dependent variable was Grade 3 students' English academic achievement.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework of the Study

## 5. Literature Review

This section highlights some previous studies related to the research variables addressed in this study.

Feng and Kim (2020) conducted their research on enhancing teaching effectiveness to foster student academic motivation and student engagement in the EFL classroom through organization development interventions in China. They pointed out that student engagement is essential not only for students' academic achievement but also for their social and physiological experiences. Through this action research on 82 freshmen participants, using the paired-samples t-test and the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, it was reported that there was a very strong positive relationship between academic motivation and student engagement which contributed to a higher level of academic achievement.

Lei et al. (2018) carried out their study on the relationships between student engagement and academic achievement. Through a meta-analysis of 69 independent studies (196,473 participants) they affirmed that student engagement and academic achievement has a moderately strong and positive correlation. Additionally, they found out that behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement have a strong relationship with academic achievement which are further influenced by reporting methods for engagement, cultural value, or gender.

Lin and Lynch (2021) conducted a correlational study on Chinese Junior High School students' motivation, attitudes

toward the learning situation with EFL academic achievement in China. For this quantitative study, a sample of 110 Grade 9 students participated in a survey using English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Questionnaire, adapted from Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (Gardner, 2010). The conclusion derived from descriptive statistics and correlational analysis (using multiple correlation coefficients) indicated a rather weak correlation among motivation and attitudes of learners toward the learning situation for learning EFL with English academic achievement.

Al-Qahtani (2013) implemented a cross-sectional descriptive research on the relationship between English language, learning strategies, attitudes, motivation, and students' academic achievement in Saudi Arabia with the help of the Attitudinal Measure of Learners of English as a Second Language (AMLESL) questionnaire. He concluded that there were significant relationships between English achievement and the other variables namely, learning strategies, attitudes and motivation. Moreover, he propounded that learners apply many kinds of language learning techniques, especially cognitive strategies.

## 6. Methodology/Procedure

This section provides details on the study's research design, population and sample, research instruments, collection of data and data analysis.

### 6.1. Research Design

The purpose of this research was to determine whether there is a significant relationship between student engagement and attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement at an International School in Thailand. In order to achieve this purpose, the researcher conducted a quantitative and correlational research design.

To examine the independent variables the Student Engagement and Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire (SEATLEQ) was used as a research instrument, which consisted of Engaged Learning Index: Student Engagement (Schreiner & Louis, 2006) and Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire (Gardner, 2004). Whereas to examine the dependent variable the English Final Test for Grade 3 students was employed. The data collection was carried out in June 2022.

The collected quantitative data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics (mean, and standard deviation) and



statistical hypothesis testing (multiple correlation coefficient) in order to address the objectives and hypothesis of this research.

## 6.2. Population and Sample

This study was conducted on a population sample comprised of all 115 Grade 3 students of English, enrolled in the academic year of 2021-2022 at an International School in Thailand.

## 6.3. Research Instruments

This research was conducted using two research instruments: Student Engagement and Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire (SEATLEQ) which was subdivided into Engaged Learning Index (ELI): Student Engagement and Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire (ATLEQ); and the English Final Test for Grade 3.

### 6.3.1. Engaged Learning Index (ELI): Student Engagement

In order to measure student engagement toward learning English the Engaged Learning Index: Student Engagement questionnaire from Schreiner and Louis (2006) was employed. A total of 10 items, both positively and negatively worded, based on a 6-point Likert-type scale were used to collect data.

Schreiner and Louis (2011) mentioned that the conceptual framework upon which the Engaged Learning Index was based is on Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory. The items in the Engaged Learning Index assesses affective, behavioral, and cognitive elements of the level of engagement of students in their learning. (Schreiner & Louis, 2011). For the purpose of avoiding response sets, the negatively worded items were dispersed in the questionnaire. These items on the Engaged Learning Index: Student Engagement were assessed on a 6-point Likert-type scale: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4= slightly agree, 5= agree and 6=strongly agree (see Appendix 1).

The Cronbach's alpha reliability test was carried out for the overall items of the ELI, for internal consistency reliability analysis. As a result, an excellent internal consistency reliability was found for the total score of the current study, with a Cronbach's alpha of .92 (see Table 1).

**Table 1:** Reliability of the ELI Using Cronbach's Alpha Values

Variable	Cronbach's alpha values			
	Schreiner & Louis (2006)	Louis (2014)	Anggraini et al. (2014)	Current study
Engaged Learning Index: Student Engagement	.85 (Good)	.91 (Excellent)	.73 (Good)	.92 (Excellent)

### 6.3.2. Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire (ATLEQ)

To measure the attitudes toward learning English the Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire, adapted from Gardner's (2004) Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) International Version, was employed. The AMTB is a research instrument which has been developed to assess the major affective components shown to be involved in second language learning (Gardner, 1985). The socio-educational model of second language acquisition that it was developed for, comprised five essential elements which was further categorized into 11 relative subscales.

To measure the attitudes toward learning English, a total of 10 items were utilized. These items on ATLEQ were assessed on a 7-point Likert scale, with the following scores: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 5=slightly agree, 6= agree, and 7= strongly agree (see Appendix 1). Since, the original version of the AMTB does not have the scoring value of 4, in order to have a definite and easier representation of the scores with a 6-point Likert scale (Gardner, 2010). Moreover, since the grade level of the target sample is elementary Grade 3, only one subscale i.e., attitudes toward learning English, was extracted from the original questionnaire.

The Cronbach's alpha reliability test was carried out for the overall ATLEQ, for internal consistency reliability analysis. As a result, a good internal consistency reliability was found for the total score, with a Cronbach's alpha of .86 (see Table 2).

**Table 2:** Reliability of the ATLEQ Using Cronbach's Alpha Values

Variable	Cronbach's alpha values			
	Gardner (Spain; 2004)	Gardner (Croatia; 2004)	Gardner (Romania; 2004)	Current study
Attitudes Toward Learning English	.90 (Excellent)	.89 (Good)	.89 (Good)	.86 (Good)



### 6.3.3. English Final Test

The second research instrument for this study was the English Final Test for Grade 3 students to measure their English academic achievement. This test has been constructed by the homeroom teachers of Grade 3, along with the support and approval of the English department as well as the academic support team, to assess students' reading, vocabulary, spelling and grammar skills.

The final scores ranged from Grade A as the highest score to Grade D as the lowest score. Students scoring 90-100 points received an 'A' while students scoring below 49 points were considered to have scored a poor English academic achievement.

### 6.4. Collection of Data

For this study, two research instruments were employed. The first research instrument was Student Engagement and Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire which was subdivided into Engaged Learning Index: Student Engagement (Schreiner & Louis, 2006) and Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire, which was adapted from Gardner's (2004) Attitude and Motivation Test Battery. While the second research instrument was the English Final Test for Grade 3 students to analyze their English academic achievement.

For data collection, firstly, the researcher submitted a permission letter to the Head of the School of the target international school and got the permission, in order to request access to the data before commencing data collection. Then the researcher conducted the data collection process with the help of six Grade 3 homeroom teachers and their academic assistants. In order to ensure a consistent and reliable survey result, the researcher went to each of the six Grade 3 classrooms and distributed the hand-outs with the first research instrument to 115 Grade 3 students. To assure an effective survey result, the six homeroom teachers along with their academic assistants monitored the Grade 3 students to fill up the two questionnaires in the class. However, the researcher, the six homeroom teachers and their academic assistants helped the students only if they needed assistance to understand the vocabulary but not in providing the response. After the completion of the survey, the researcher collected the survey

responses from all the students for evaluation.

Furthermore, the 115 Grade 3 students took the English Final Test in June 2022 at an International School in Thailand. The six Grade 3 homeroom teachers checked the test papers and sent the scores of the English Final Test to the researcher in order to administer the English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

The following table demonstrates the research timeline:

**Table 3:** Research Timeline

Date	Task
January 2022	Got permission from the school authorities.
April 2022	Finished the first three chapters of the thesis proposal.
May 2022	Thesis proposal defense.
June 2022	Distributed the questionnaire to 115 Grade 3 students and allowed them time to complete it.
September 2022	Finished Chapters IV and V.
September 2022	Thesis final defense.
October 2022	Submitted and presented the article in the conference.

### 6.5. Data Analysis

Based on the research objectives, the following statistical methods was used to carry out the data analysis in the present study.

1. To determine the level of student engagement toward learning English of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

**Method.** In order to address this research objective, mean and standard deviation was used to measure the level of student engagement toward learning English of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

2. To determine the level of attitudes toward learning English of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

**Method.** In order to address this research objective, mean and standard deviation was used to measure the level of attitudes toward learning

English of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

- To determine the level of English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

**Method.** In order to address this research objective, mean and standard deviation was used to measure the level of English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

- To determine whether there is a significant relationship between student engagement and attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

**Method.** In order to address this research objective, correlational analysis (multiple correlation coefficient) was used to determine whether there is a significant relationship between student engagement and attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand.

## 7. Research Findings

The research findings report the results gathered from the data analysis of this study. The negatively worded items were reverse coded in order to average them with the positively worded ones.

### 7.1. Findings From Research Objective 1

Regarding Research Objective 1, the findings indicated that the overall level of student engagement toward learning English held by Grade 3 students at the target international school, Thailand was interpreted as a high engagement,  $M = 4.65$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ .

### 7.2. Findings From Research Objective 2

Regarding Research Objective 2, the findings indicated that the overall level of students' attitudes toward learning English held by Grade 3 students at the target international school, Thailand was interpreted as partially positive,  $M = 4.69$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ .

### 7.3. Findings From Research Objective 3

Regarding Research Objective 3, the findings indicated that the overall level of English academic achievement held by Grade 3 students at the target international school, Thailand was interpreted as good,  $M = 74.17$ ,  $SD = 8.59$ . Furthermore, Grade 3 students' English academic achievement ranged from a minimum score of 52 to a maximum score of 90.

### 7.4. Findings From Research Objective 4

Regarding Research Objective 4, the following findings were obtained by performing a correlational analysis using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient. Table 4 depicts the results of bivariate correlations of student engagement toward learning English and attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an International School, Thailand.

**Table 4:** Bivariate Correlations Between Student Engagement and Attitudes Toward Learning English with English Academic Achievement of Grade 3 Students at an International School, Thailand

Variables	1	2	3
1. Student engagement toward learning English	—		
2. Attitudes toward learning English	.77* ( $< .001$ )	—	
3. English academic achievement	.72* ( $< .001$ )	.65* ( $< .001$ )	—

Note. \* denotes a statistically significant relationship (statistical significance level set at  $p = .05$ , two tailed).  $p$ -values appear within parentheses below the correlation coefficients.

- Grade 3 students' engagement toward learning English correlated significantly, positively and strongly with their English academic achievement ( $R = .72$ ,  $p = < .001$ ), at a significance level of .05
- Grade 3 students' attitudes toward learning English correlated significantly, positively and strongly with their English academic achievement ( $R = .65$ ,  $p = < .001$ ), at a significance level of .05.
- There was a strong, positive, and significant relationship between student engagement and attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at an International School in Thailand, since the significance probability was lower than .05,  $R = .73$ ,  $F(2, 112) = 65.95$ ,  $p = < .001$ , at a significant level of .05.



## 8. Discussion

This section presents a discussion of the research findings obtained from conducting the current study, by relating them with the findings reported by previous research studies.

### 8.1. English Academic Achievement

According to the current study, the findings indicated that the overall level of English academic achievement held by Grade 3 students at an International School, Thailand was interpreted as good.

Correspondingly, as reported by many previous studies, factors such as the variables in this study, student engagement and attitudes toward learning English play a vital role in improving their English academic achievement (Abidin et al., 2009; Appleton et al., 2008; Jones, 2018; Zyngier, 2008). Hence, one of the probable factors to rationalize their level of English academic achievement, which was interpreted as good, could be due to the emphasis that the target international school puts on learning English, as it is an interdisciplinary theme. However, students could improve their English academic achievement level by participating in activities and learning more, to attain their outcome of being better at English and being aware of the significance of English in school and beyond.

### 8.2. Relationship between Student Engagement Toward Learning English and their English Academic Achievement

The results of the current study revealed that the overall level of student engagement toward learning English held by Grade 3 students at an international school in Thailand, was interpreted as high. The result also indicated that there was a strong, positive, and significant correlation between student engagement toward learning English with English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at the target international school. There are various reasons that the researcher extracted from this study that favored a high engagement level of students such as the opportunity for discussion and participation in the English class, having real-life application of their learning and feeling comfortable to ask questions to their English teachers.

These findings were found similar to some previous studies. Feng and Kim (2020) conducted their research on

enhancing teaching effectiveness to foster students' academic motivation and student engagement in the EFL classroom through organization development interventions in China. Through this action research on 82 freshmen participants, using the paired-samples t-test and the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, it was reported that there was a very strong positive relationship between academic motivation and student engagement which contributed to a higher level of academic achievement.

Similarly, Lei et al. (2018), through their study on a meta-analysis of 69 independent studies (196,473 participants) affirmed that student engagement and academic achievement has a moderately strong and positive correlation. Additionally, they found out that behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement have a strong relationship with academic achievement which are further influenced by reporting methods for engagement, cultural value, or gender.

Furthermore, the current findings are slightly congruent to the one from Heng (2014), who studied the relationships between student engagement and the academic achievement of first-year university students in Cambodia. A total of 919 first-year students were invited to participate in the study using the National Survey of Student Engagement and the College Student Experiences Questionnaire to measure student engagement. The regression analyses disclosed that the student engagement in time devoted to out of lesson related activities and active participation in the learning environment added considerable advantages to student academic achievement.

### 8.3. Relationship between Attitudes Toward Learning English and their English Academic Achievement

The results of the current study revealed that the overall level of attitudes toward learning English held by Grade 3 students at an international school in Thailand, was interpreted as partially positive. Furthermore, the result also indicated that there was a strong, positive, and significant correlation between attitudes toward learning English with English academic achievement of Grade 3 students at the target international school in Thailand. This could be because of the emphasis that the school lays on English and that according to this study, ([Item 14] "I plan to learn as much English as possible") suggests that many students have an urge to learn English.

These findings were found similar to some previous



studies. Bidin et al. (2009) in their study on ‘Motivation and Attitude in Learning English among students of Universiti Teknologi Mara in the Northern Region of Malaysia’ observed the relationship between learners’ motivation and attitude with their English language performance. They found that there was a significant correlation between student attitude and academic achievement. Evidently, it proposed that students with a positive attitude have higher academic achievement while students with a negative attitude towards learning have a lower academic achievement.

Furthermore, Al-Qahtani (2013), implemented a cross-sectional descriptive research on the relationship between English language, learning strategies, attitudes, motivation, and students’ academic achievement in Saudi Arabia with the help of the Attitudinal Measure of Learners of English as a Second Language (AMLESL) questionnaire. He concluded that there were significant relationships between English achievement and the other variables namely, learning strategies, attitudes and motivation. He also propounded that learners apply many kinds of language learning techniques, especially cognitive strategies.

However, the current findings are slightly different from the research by Fakeye (2010) on students’ personal variables as correlates of academic achievement in English as a second language in Nigeria. This correlational analysis was led on the variables and their English scores through t-test data analysis. With the help of instruments such as Questionnaire on Students’ Attitude Toward English and Students’ Academic Ability Test and a total sample of 400 senior secondary students, he found out that the relationship between students’ attitudes toward learning English and their English academic achievements was too low and not significant.

## **9. Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are provided for school administrators, students, teachers and future researchers.

### **9.1. Recommendations for School Administrators**

School administrators should be conscious of the impact of student engagement and attitudes toward learning English on English academic achievement. They should provide proper infrastructure, equipment and resources to enrich the teaching and learning experiences both for teachers and

students, while working collaboratively with teachers. This can be achieved when the administrators have regular meetings with the team leaders and teachers to plan the lesson outcomes, acknowledge the ideas provided by the teachers, observe classes to provide constructive feedback, and organize activities in order to stimulate student engagement and their attitudes toward learning English. Furthermore, they should provide constant professional development to teachers to enhance their teaching strategies and pedagogical knowledge.

### **9.2. Recommendations for Students**

The findings of this study depicted that the Grade 3 students at an international school, Thailand had a high level of engagement toward learning English overall. Hence, in order to improve the students’ engagement level, the researcher suggests that students require “self-directed learning opportunities, interactive environments, multiple forms of feedback, and assignment choices that use different resources to create personally meaningful learning experiences” (Barnes et al., 2007; Glenn, 2000, p. 2). Furthermore, students should put more emphasis on learning and engagement primarily rather than achievement, indulge in gaining competency that are pertinent and effective, create a healthy yet demanding classroom environment to enrich their problem-solving, metacognition, social and emotional skills. Students should be in a positive environment where they can collaborate not only with their classmates but also with their teachers to design, create, participate, execute and reflect on the lessons while being involved in their assessment for learning and of learning (Taylor & Parsons, 2011).

Regarding students’ attitudes toward learning English, the findings of this study depicted that Grade 3 students had a partially positive level overall. Therefore, the researcher suggests that students should be aware of the importance of learning English and put an effort to participate more often in the class activities. When an activity connects to what students like to do, students will willingly spend time thinking, dialoging, interacting and creating ideas with each other in a meaningful way and nurture a positive attitude towards their learning (McCarthy, 2014). Students should develop their own learning objectives, work towards being autonomous learners and take charge of their learning. This will keep them motivated and engaged in their lessons while fostering a positive attitude toward learning English.



### 9.3. Recommendations for Teachers

The findings of this study revealed that the students' engagement and their attitudes toward learning English were significantly related to their English academic achievement.

Teachers should encourage students to learn English and address its significance in today's world. They should promote a plethora of teaching strategies such as activating individual and group work, implementing differentiated instructions, using clear concept-checking questions and instruction checking questions, executing a student-centered class, molding students' problem-solving skills and creative skills, praising good examples in the classroom and providing constructive feedback. Apart from being well-versed in the subject-matter, teachers are bound to be conscious of the social and emotional well-being of the students by monitoring and observing students' behaviors as a means to increase the students' level of engagement and their attitudes toward learning English (Van Uden et al., 2014). Teachers should give students ample space to grow by acting as a mere facilitator, encouraging them to actively ask questions and participate in learning activities. They should facilitate activities that are engaging, aligned to the outcomes, have a meaningful and real-life outcome, not only in the classroom but also beyond.

Teachers should work in collaboration with their peers to help each other, find the best possible solutions to their classroom management issues and share teaching experiences in relation to student engagement and their attitudes toward learning English and to enhance the students' English academic achievement. This will make the teachers well equipped to facilitate a differentiated class that caters to the individual needs of their students.

### 9.4. Recommendations for Future Researchers

The current research is a quantitative one, designed to investigate student engagement and attitudes toward learning English for Grade 3 students at an international school in Bangkok. Based on the research limitation of the demographic scope of the current study, it is suggested that future researchers conduct the study by examining different grade levels, in order to render more conducive results regarding students' tendency of engagement level and attitudes in learning English between different school grades. Moreover, future researchers could consider a mixed study, both quantitative and qualitative research methodology, and include other factors that can significantly

influence students' English academic achievement such as: learning strategies (Al-Qahtani, 2013), enhancing teaching effectiveness to foster student academic motivation (Feng & Kim, 2020) and self-efficacy (Hayat et al., 2020). This would enable future researchers to perceive a deeper insight in order to improve students' engagement and attitudes toward learning English.

Furthermore, in this study the researcher used 10 items from the AMTB catering to the sub-scale on attitudes toward learning English. Therefore, future researchers could include more items from the AMTB questionnaire to achieve a more effective and comprehensive result so as to achieve an extensive understanding on student engagement and their attitudes towards learning English and improving their English academic achievement.

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## Appendixes

### **Appendix 1:** Items in the Student Engagement and Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire (SEATLEQ)

Item No.	Item statement
<b>Engaged Learning Index (ELI): Student Engagement</b>	
1	I often discuss with my friends what I'm learning in class.
2	I regularly participate in class discussions in most of my classes.
3	I feel as though I am learning things in my classes that are worthwhile to me as a person.
4	It's hard to pay attention in many of my classes.
5	I can usually find ways of applying what I'm learning in class to something else in my life.
6	I ask my teachers questions during class if I do not understand.
7	In the last week, I have been bored in class a lot of the time.
8	I find myself thinking about what I'm learning in class even when I'm not in class.
9	I feel energized by the ideas that I am learning in most of my classes.
10	Often, I find my mind wandering during class.
<b>Attitudes Toward Learning English Questionnaire (ATLEQ)</b>	
11	Learning English is really great.
12	I love learning English.
13	I hate English.
14	I plan to learn as much English as possible.
15	I think that learning English is dull.
16	English is a very important part of the school program.
17	I really enjoy learning English.
18	Learning English is a waste of time.
19	I would rather spend my time on subjects other than English.
20	When I leave school, I will give up studying English because I am not interested in it.