

Research paper

Attitudes towards Learning English as a Foreign Language: Comparing Iranian and Iraqi EFL Learners


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Abstract

This study tries to assess the comparison attitudes toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners. This study involved 60 EFL students from Iran and Iraq who were chosen at random from two distinct universities: Public University in Diyala, Iraq, and Islamic Azad University in Shiraz, Iran. A 5-point Likert scale of 30 items of the attitudes toward English language learning questionnaire was used for data collection. The data analysis encompasses means, standard deviations, and an independent t-test. The results indicated that although EFL students in Iran had higher positive attitudes toward language learning, those in Iraq had less positive attitudes toward language learning. Regarding the three aspects of attitude, there was a statistically significant difference between Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners' attitudes toward language learning. In fact, the level of cognitive and behavioral difference among Iranian EFL learners was more than among Iraqi EFL learners, but the level of emotional difference among Iraqi EFL learners was more than among Iranian EFL learners. These findings have led to several recommendations regarding teaching strategies, curricula, instructional resources, and the state of English in Iran and Iraq from this perspective.

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Introduction

Learning a language demands dynamism and a significant amount of personal participation. Tódor and Dégi (2016) contend that learning a new language is a dynamic process. Dynamic refers to a person's positive attitude and the ongoing change that comes with learning. Learning even one foreign language is a fantastic opportunity for all students to experience different cultures, meet new people, and communicate with them (Rashid & Jabbar, 2017). Naturally,

learning multiple languages has many advantages in both personal and professional spheres. Speaking more than one language boosts an employee's overall image in the eyes of the employer and provides many possibilities in the professional world. The major motivation, though, is to increase one's knowledge and become a better listener and learner. Lightbown and Spada (2006) asserted that a person's views are closely related to language learning. This supports beliefs regarding the link between attitude and language learning. There will be excellent outcomes in the end if there is a strong motivation to learn and a positive attitude about it. For someone to learn another language, motivation is crucial. Clearly, the motivation of students can be increased by the usefulness of the languages they study and learn. The historian Stearns (2009) claimed in his book, "Educating Global Citizens at Colleges and Universities" that Americans are "legendary" in their reluctance to study foreign languages. It might be because English is a language that is extensively spoken and studied over the world. But the truth remains that 75% of the world's population does not speak English.

Attitudes can be characterized by cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. Students' intentions can be determined, for example, by how positively they express their thoughts toward a language, if they view English as a helpful practical language rather than as a barrier to their studies, or whether they prefer to watch movies in English to their native language. In terms of societal factors, some students might view English as a beneficial language that promotes success and higher levels of academic and professional achievement, while others might think that learning a foreign language will ultimately destroy their culture, language, and heritage. People may be hesitant to socialize with an English-speaking community in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) environment like Iran or Iraq since there is little exposure to the English language outside of the classroom.

All participants gain benefits in different ways from research on linguistic attitudes. First of all, examining students' attitudes is a useful way for researchers, education planners, syllabus designers, and language teachers to gain a deeper knowledge of the language learning and teaching process. Secondly, learners' needs, perceptions, views, learning styles, and educational experiences differ from one another, and forcing change on them can have unfavorable effects.

The main objective of the quantitative study is to compare Iraqi and Iranian EFL students' attitudes toward English language learning. To this end, this study investigates learners' attitudes toward learning English, provides educators with an understanding of those attitudes, and aids learners in developing positive attitudes also, this study attempts to investigate and identify factors that may have influenced how students learned English and create a positive attitude for students toward English language learning. So, the study aims to respond to the following questions:

1. What dimensions of attitudes toward language learning do Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners have in terms of their emotional, cognitive, and behavioral elements?
2. Is there any significant difference between Iraqi and Iranian EFL learners in terms of their attitudes toward English language learning?

Literature Review

The ancient Latin term *actus*, which in English means to act, was the source of the word *attitude* (Navarro-Villarroel, 2011). According to Lennartsson (2008), learners believe that having a positive attitude toward learning is important and that it causes them to perform better. Past research has found a strong correlation between motivation and attitude (Todor & Dégi, 2016). Some students have positive attitudes, but their motivation to learn is not as high, or vice versa. Someone needs to give them a little push or direct them in the proper direction. The essential elements of a process that is known as language learning are attitudes that learners acquire throughout their lives. According to Yagi (1991), students' attitudes significantly influence overall foreign language learning. The nature of language acquisition includes psychological and social components in addition to an academic perspective, and it largely depends on the learners' desire and attitude toward learning the target language (Padwick, 2010). According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), a student's ability to learn a language is determined by their mental aptitude or linguistic skills and attitudes and views on the target language. In addition, they contended that changing students' attitudes and behaviors as well as their perceptions of the foreign language, its culture, and its community may enhance the process of learning a language. If they are more likely to pick up the target language, this will help determine that.

The Nature and Aspects of Language Attitude

The development, restoration, and demise of a language all depend on attitudes. Learning outcomes are influenced by learners' internal states, or attitudes. The internal state is a degree of favorable/unfavorable or positive/negative reaction to an object. A researchers (such as Stern, 1983) made a distinction between three different types of attitudes in the context of learning a second language: "(a) Attitudes towards the community and people who speak the L2 (group-specific attitudes), (b) Attitudes towards learning the concerned language, and (c) Attitude towards languages and language learning in general" (pp. 376-377). The learner's personality, such as whether they are "ethnocentric" or "authoritarian," has an impact on these attitudes. They could also be impacted by the particular social environment (*milieu*) in which language learning takes place. For instance, different attitudes may be present in monolingual versus bilingual environments (Ellis, 1985). According to Brown (2000), the term "attitudes" refers to the viewpoints that the learner has toward others who speak the target language as well as toward his own culture.

When one learns a particular subject, one is expected to think and conduct differently and to have distinct beliefs, so learning is seen as a positive change in the person's personality in terms of the emotional, psychomotor (behavioral), and cognitive domains (Kara, 2009). In addition to the cognitive approach, the learning process also contains social and psychological components. These three perspectives can be used to view the attitude concept. The features of each of these dimensions vary depending on the language attitude that results. The attitude notion, therefore, comprises three parts, namely behavioral, cognitive, and effective. These three characteristics of attitude are based on the behaviorism, cognitivism, and humanism schools of thought, respectively.

Factors Affecting Attitudes toward Learning EFL

Numerous research has developed taxonomies of the factors that influence language proficiency in second and foreign-language learners' attitudes. These variables include personality variables, educational variables, and social variables, as well as others like age and sex (Ehrman, 1996; Ellis et al., 1984; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; Spolsky, 1989). Furthermore, Conteh (2002) backed the idea put forth by some applied linguists that a variety of factors, such as social context, learner personality (self-confidence, risk-taking, and anxiety), learning environments, learning process, and learning outcomes have an impact on students' attitudes and the way in which language is taught.

Social context

The social context includes the learners' families or homes, their peer groups, the community of speakers of the target language, and their cultures (Spolsky, 1989). Among the social factors to be considered are the many features of the parents, including their education, religion, culture, socioeconomic situation, place of birth, and fluency in the target language (Spolsky, 1989). These factors impact the parents' motives, goals, and priorities. In many studies looking at the parental role and the creation of attitudes toward speakers of the target language, it was found, according to Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991), that learners' attitudes reflected their parents' attitudes about the target language.

Learner personality

A good language learner receives an acceptable intake of the second or foreign language and has a low effective filter to facilitate input into language acquisition (Krashen, 1988). However, the unsuccessful language student has "neither acquisition nor learning happening to him," which could be the result of psychological factors (lack of interest in the target language and its speakers, lack of confidence, high anxiety level, as well as low aptitude or interest in grammar) (Krashen, 1988). Effective principles are the "foundation stones... on which procedures and learning material might be constructed," (Brown, 1994, p. 22). Along with the learner's attitude and motivation, personality traits like self-confidence, risk-taking, and anxiety are significant in the language acquisition process. People's Personality traits vary greatly among people, and personal traits are correlated with motivational and attitude traits. Personality is the "set of psychological characteristics to classify persons," according to Keuning (1998, p. 366-367).

Educational Context

According to research, the learners' attitudes and success are influenced by the learning environment. According to Ehrman (1996), stress and rage can have an impact on students' attitudes and motivations, especially when English language studies are required. Littlewood (2001) found a link between students' attitudes toward teachers and authorities in a nation where English is a mandated subject and their ability to participate in class discussion. Under these circumstances, the teacher dominates the classroom and the students are not exempt from this control, which demotivates and discourages the students, which leads to failure.

Empirical Study

In comparison to studies on ESL learner attitudes during the past 30 years, many research has been done to assess student attitudes about foreign language learning in general and EFL in particular.

A more recent study was undertaken by Karahan (2007) in the setting of Turkish EFL. His research was inspired by complaints expressed by parents, teachers, administrators, and most Turkish EFL students regarding their inability to acquire the requisite level of English proficiency. As a result, he performed a study to determine the relationship between linguistic attitudes and linguistic learning, which he felt was absent from discussions of the issues with English teaching in Turkey. In more detail, Karahan looked for connections between linguistic attitudes, starting age for language learning, and the location of the learner's first language in the context of EFL in Turkey. Shams (2008) looked at students' motivations, attitudes, and worries motivations, attitudes, and worries of students when learning English. As a result, it was emphasized that the learners had a positive attitude and high interest for English. This also underscores the positive attitudes most of them have toward English and its learning, highlighting the value of English's effectiveness in everyday life.

Some Iranian researchers have studied the nature and direction of motivation and learners' attitudes toward learning English and have come to different conclusions. For instance, Moivaziri (2008) claimed that learners are extremely driven to learn in both instrumental and synthetic ways. On the other hand, Vaezi (2008) contends that Iranian students exhibit extremely high motivation, good attitudes, and motivation to learn English more positively. These conflicting results prompted researchers to conduct studies with different participants and different settings. Regarding the grade variable, Al-Zahrani (2008) surveyed to determine Saudi students' attitudes toward English Statistical analysis revealed no clear difference between the three. Descriptive statistics showed the respondent had the same attitude during her three years.

Momani (2009) also investigated her attitudes toward ESL learning and reading performance as a junior high school student. The findings indicated that the respondents' attitudes toward learning English were both neutral and favorable. Additionally, reading proficiency and student attitudes toward learning English showed a significant association. According to the findings of a study conducted by Al-Tamimi and Shuib (2009) on the motives and attitudes of petroleum engineering students toward studying English, they exhibited a favorable attitude toward utilizing English in Yemeni social and educational situations. According to this study, they also had a favorable opinion of English-speaking cultures.

Ahmad (2019) investigated the perceptions and attitudes of EFL learners in Kurdistan region of Iraq towards online English courses. In this study, 100 Raparin University students from the Kurdistan region were chosen and subjected to online English language classes that were posted on Facebook.com. After that, a questionnaire with 12 questions was created and given to participants to gauge their attitudes and impressions of such an online course. The results of

this analysis were quite significant and were used in the discussion. The study concluded with the following findings: participants have positive attitudes toward using the internet to learn English; students can benefit from using the internet and applications as a platform for facilitating language learning; and social media is successful in fostering student competition.

Al-Amery (2020) looked at 235 students from two fine arts institutes in Al-Karkh, Baghdad, Iraq, and their attitudes toward using active learning methodologies in Arabic language courses and the difficulties that came with it. Learners were given questionnaire sheets. SPSS was employed. The implementation of active learning techniques in Arabic language classes in Iraqi fine arts institutes was found to be well received by respondents. It was discovered that AL methods will enhance the respondents' listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities. It was discovered, that AL techniques don't give students the same opportunities for participation in the lecture. However, it was discovered that using such tactics in classes with a large number of students is challenging.

SabbarJebur (2020) looked into how Iraqi EFL college students used mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) and their attitudes towards it. 237 students from the English department took part in this study. Two questionnaires have been used, the first of which asked students about their attitudes about mobile assisted language learning. Next, a survey regarding the use of mobile assisted language learning. The initial questionnaire analysis's findings revealed the learners' positive attitudes regarding mobile gadgets. The second study found that students frequently utilize their mobile devices for research, data collection, and language acquisition, often using them as dictionaries. In order to encourage students and actively involve them in the learning process, it is advised to use MALL as a teaching aid and additional source in the teaching and learning process.

Method

This study paper's primary goal was to answer the research questions to specify what dimensions of attitudes toward language learning Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners have in terms of their emotional, cognitive, and behavioral elements, and to examine the significant difference between Iraqi and Iranian EFL learners in terms of their attitudes toward English language learning.

Research Design

This study design was quantitative and included both descriptive and inferential statistics. As a result, a customized questionnaire was used as a measurement tool. The participants had to honestly respond to all of the questionnaire's questions, expressing their own opinions about their attitudes toward learning the English language in terms of the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of their attitudes as well as their demographic information, including their gender, year of birth, and field of study. In addition, the design of this study was a survey study to investigate learners' attitudes and specify the dimensions of attitudes toward language learning and compare their attitudes among EFL Iranian and Iraqi learners.

Participants

In this study, participants were 60 EFL students (30 Iraqis and 30 Iranian) aged 20 to 25 from Iran and Iraq participated in this study. They were selected randomly from two different universities Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran, and Public University, Diyala, Iraq. They were all BA students in teaching English as foreign language.

Instruments

In order to gather social and private data, a survey method was chosen to look into students' attitudes (Kerlinger, 1986). The study was quantitative in nature and adopted an attitude questionnaire that examined attitudes about learning English and served as the measuring tool. The following scale was employed to measure the research's variables:

Attitudes towards English Language Learning Questionnaire

The quantitative investigation used a 30-item questionnaire created by Zainol Abidin et al (2012). Both the attitude and motivation test battery created by Gardner (1985) and the attitudes questionnaire test utilized in a study by Boonrangsri et al. (2004) were incorporated into its composition (Appendix D). A 5-point Likert scale was used to collect the necessary data (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, and 4=Agree). that was broken down into three categories (5=Strongly Agree), behavioral attitudes, cognitive attitudes, and emotional attitudes (Table 3.2.). Overall, 11 negative and 19 good items are present. The alpha Cronbach test will be used to determine the reliability of the research questionnaire items; it found that (0.818) was an acceptable level of consistency (Mutar, 2019). The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for all dimensions of attitude toward language learning were shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients of Attitude toward Language Learning's Dimensions.

Dimensions	Cronbach's alpha coefficients
Behavioral	0.75
Cognitive	0.83
Emotional	0.88
General Attitude	0.97

Data Collection Procedure

To conduct this study, some instruments were prepared and used. The researcher accessed a total number of 60 EFL learners (30 Iraqis and 30 Iranians) from universities Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran, and Public University, Diyala, Iraq. They were required to complete questionnaires after selecting samples in order to gather data. The first data collection tool was the demographic profile of the sample. It was composed of some demographic information which helped speed up the research process. Then, participants were given the attitudes towards English language learning questionnaire as part of the data collection process for one month. After data collection, the results were examined by assigning numerical values to the responses that got a score of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 for highly agreed, agree, undecided, and strongly disagree, respectively. Basic and advanced statistical analyses were computed by SPSS software to analyze the research findings.

In the data collection stage, the scores of all the tests were taken for analysis. The SPSS software version 25 was used to conduct statistical analyses on the raw scores received from questionnaires in relation to the data collected over the course of one month. In fact, to provide quantitative answers to the study questions, the obtained data were examined by the SPSS software (Version 25). To analyze the collected data, descriptive statistics were used to calculate the frequency, mean, and standard deviation. Additionally, the independent samples t-test for inferential statistics was run.

Results

In the initial set of analyses, attitudes about language acquisition among EFL students from Iran and Iraq were described. This study, which represents mean, median, and standard deviation, included a frequency analysis of the descriptive data gathered from the questionnaires. As stated in Table 2, the mean value of negative attitude among EFL learners in Iran had the lowest mean (3.05), and in Iraq negative attitude among EFL learners had the highest value of mean (3.39). As presented in this table Iranian EFL learners had more positive attitudes toward language learning, but this value reported that Iraqi EFL learners had less positive attitude toward language learning.

Table 2

<i>Descriptive Statistics of Overall Attitude toward Language Learning</i>			
Variable		Mean	SD
Iraqi EFL Learners	Negative attitudes	3.39	0.69
	Positive attitudes	3.12	0.45
Iranian EFL Learners	Negative attitudes	3.05	0.81
	Positive attitudes	3.33	0.55

According to Table 3, there was a statistically significant difference in attitudes toward language learning between Iranian EFL learners ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 0.73$) and Iraqi EFL learners ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.56$); $t = -1.469$, $p = 0.001$, and the significance level of the t-test, to investigate the difference in English language learning attitudes between Iraqi and Iranian language learners was 0.001 and less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). As a result, a noticeable difference was between the attitudes toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL students. And based on the estimated averages, it could be said that Iranian learners had a different attitude toward learning English than students in Iraq.

Table 3

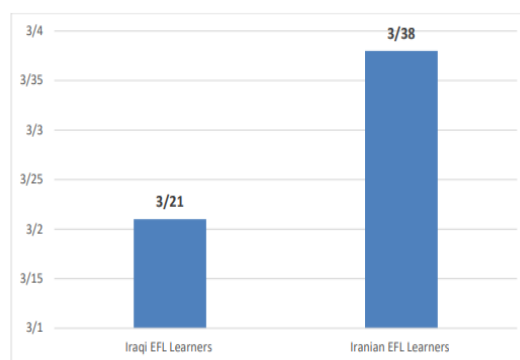
Independent Sample T-test for English Language Learning Attitude between Iraqi and Iranian EFL Students

		N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	Mean Difference	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Sig.
Attitude toward language learning	Iraqi EFL learners	30	3.21	0.56	0.09	-0.17	-1.469	58	0.001
	Iranian EFL learners	30	3.38	0.73	0.12				

According to Figure, the mean score of attitudes among Iraqi EFL learners was 3.21, and among Iranian EFL learners was 3.38. So, this figure indicated that there was a significant difference between attitudes toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners.

Figure 1

The Mean Score of Independent Sample T-test for English Language Learning Attitude between Iraqi and Iranian EFL Students



Based on the data presented in Table 4, there was a noticeable difference between behavioral dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iranian EFL learners ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.67$), and Iraqi EFL learners ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.87$); $t = -1.765$, $p = 0.001$, and the significance level of the t-test, to investigate the difference in behavioral dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners was 0.001 and less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$).

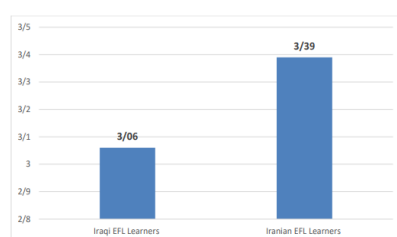
Table 4

Independent Sample T-test for Behavioral Dimensions of Attitude toward Language Learning

Dimension of attitude toward language learning		N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	Mean Difference	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Sig.
Behavioral	Iraqi EFL learners	30	3.06	0.87	0.13	-0.33	-1.765	58	0.001
	Iranian EFL learners	30	3.39	0.67	0.08				

Figure 2

The Mean Score of Independent T-test for Behavioral Dimensions of Attitude toward Language Learning



To determine whether there was a difference in the cognitive dimension of attitude toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners, an independent t-test was used. Table 5, summarized that there was a noticeable difference between cognitive dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iranian EFL learners ($M=3.56$, $SD=0.49$) and Iraqi EFL learners ($M=3.13$, $SD=0.90$); $t=-2.453$, $p=0.001$ and the significance level of the t-test, to investigate the difference in cognitive dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners was 0.001 and less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$). Figure 4 was clearly shown the level of the mean of cognitive difference among Iranian EFL learners was more than among Iraqi EFL learners.

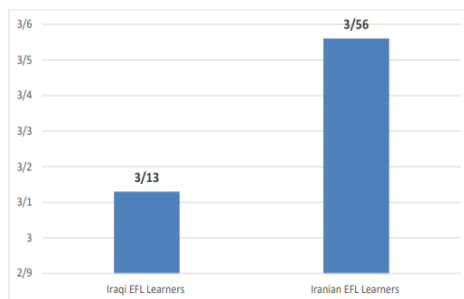
Table 5

Independent Sample T-test for Cognitive Dimensions of Attitude toward Language Learning

Dimension of attitude toward language learning		N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	Mean Difference	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Sig.
Cognitive	Iraqi EFL learners	30	3.13	0.90	0.15	-0.43	-2.453	58	0.001
	Iranian EFL learners	30	3.56	0.49	0.08				

Figure 3

The mean score of the Independent Sample T-test for Cognitive Dimensions of Attitude toward Language Learning



In order to measure the difference in the emotional dimension of attitude toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners, an independent t-test was utilized. Table 6, summarized that there was a noticeable difference between the emotional dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iraqi EFL learners ($M=3.44$, $SD=0.59$) and Iranian EFL learners ($M=3.19$, $SD=0.65$); $t=2.409$, $p=0.001$ and the significance level of the t-test, to investigate the difference in emotional dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners was 0.001 and less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$). According to the value of means in Figure 5, the level of the mean of emotional difference among Iraqi EFL learners was more than among Iranian EFL learners.

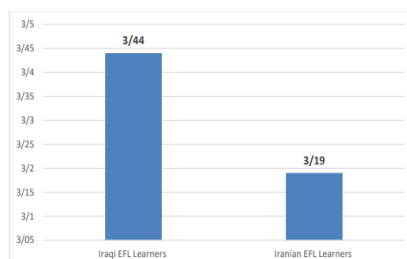
Table 6

Independent Sample T-test for Emotional Dimensions of Attitude toward Language Learning

Dimension of attitude toward language learning		N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	Mean Difference	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Sig.
Emotional	Iraqi EFL learners	30	3.44	0.59	0.07	0.25	2.409	58	0.001
	Iranian EFL learners	30	3.19	0.65	0.09				

Figure 4

The mean score of the Independent Sample T-test for Emotional Dimensions of Attitude toward Language Learning



Discussion

The current study's purpose was to compare attitudes toward learning English as a foreign language among Iranian and Iraqi EFL Learners. In essence, the results of the descriptive analysis provided some valuable information. In this study, some factors such as age, gender,

and other demographic factors weren't intended variables and weren't discussed. As the results showed the majority of Iraqi EFL learners preferred to have a negative attitude toward language learning and according to their answers on the questionnaire, it may be because their teachers didn't motivate them to learn English or didn't encourage them to be engaged in practicing English language skills. According to a study by Ahmed et al. (2021), a large number of Iraqi EFL students believed that native teachers would not make it easier for them to learn the English language. The majority of Iraqi EFL learners claimed that their teachers did not teach them to learn Standard English. Many students complained that their teachers forbade them from taking part in class discussions (Ahmed et al., 2021). So, the findings of this descriptive analysis weren't in line with some studies (Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2021; Eshghinejad, 2016; Zainol Abidin et al., 2012). However, this study was in line with some studies (Ahmed, 2015; Ali Ahmad et al., 2021; Al Noursi, 2013; Chairat, 2015; Honkonen, 2020; Mutar, 2019). The findings revealed that students have negative attitudes towards learning English.

Further, the findings of this study revealed that Iranian EFL learners had a highly positive attitude toward language learning. In fact, the majority of Iranian EFL learners believed that their teachers encouraged and motivated them to practice and take apart class activities and class discussions. The results of this study concurred with those of Chalak and Kassaian (2010), in which students' attitudes regarding the English language were overwhelmingly positive. It was clear that a lack of engagement and real-world learning materials and tasks frequently results in students developing unfavorable attitudes toward studying English as a foreign language (Richards, 2001). So, the findings of this descriptive analysis were in line with some studies (Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2021; Eshghinejad, 2016; Mutar, 2019; Zainol Abidin et al., 2012). Students were personally engaged by authentic information, which was important to them and tests their cognitive abilities. Additionally, it promoted internal motivation and curiosity. As a result of the focus on vocabulary and grammar, a lot of Iranian writings frequently have content that fails to pique students' interest (Rahimi & Nabilou, 2009). However, this study was not in line with some studies (Ahmed, 2015; Ali Ahmad et al., 2021; Al Noursi, 2013; Honkonen, 2020; Chairat, 2015). The findings revealed that students had negative attitudes towards learning English.

Additionally, there were variations in the t-scores of students' attitudes across the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral domains. The analysis of inferential statistics displayed there was a significant difference between behavioral dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iranian EFL learners ($M= 3.39$, $SD= 0.67$), and Iraqi EFL learners ($M= 3.06$, $SD= 0.87$); $t= -1.765$, $p= 0.001$, and the significance level of the t-test, to investigate the difference in behavioral dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners was 0.001 and less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$). The behavioral component is the propensity to behave in a particular way that expresses the attitude toward the thing or circumstance (Ajzen, 2005).

Therefore, according to learners' responses, a lot of Iranian EFL learners strongly concurred with the positive comments that asked for information about sharing viewpoints,

practicing English with a student who spoke the language well, how learning English enhanced their personality and the desire to be friends with many people who spoke English. Additionally, they disagreed with information about their anxiety while speaking English, putting off doing their English assignments, and feeling uncomfortable when required to speak English in class. In addition, findings revealed that when English was being taught, students were eager to attend in the classroom. This analysis demonstrated that Iranian EFL students' behavioral attitudes toward learning English were more positive than Iraqi EFL learners, and the findings of this part of the research were in the line with studies such as Faramarzi et al. (2015), Alam Khan (2016), Rahimi and Hassani (2012). A lot of Iraqi EFL learners had negative comments that asked for information about sharing viewpoints, practicing English with a student who spoke the language well, how learning English enhanced their personality, and the desire to be friends with many people who spoke English. Also, they agreed with the information about their anxiety while speaking English, putting off doing their English assignments, and feeling uncomfortable when required to speak English in class.

The analysis of inferential statistics demonstrated that there was a significant difference between cognitive dimensions of attitude toward language learning among EFL learners. According to the result, there was a noticeable difference between cognitive dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iranian EFL learners ($M=3.56$, $SD=0.49$) and Iraqi EFL learners ($M=3.13$, $SD=0.90$); $t=-2.453$, $p=0.001$ and the significance level of the t-test, to investigate the difference in cognitive dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners was 0.001 and less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$). The level of cognition among Iranian EFL learners was more than this level among Iraqi EFL learners. It indicated that Iranian EFL learners strongly agreed with the information about the value of English, how it benefited other courses, how people enjoyed using it, how it led to new knowledge and ideas, and how people who were multilingual can learn new things. On the other hand, they disagreed with three negative statements disagreed with which aimed to learn more about the goal of learning English, how to use it in real-world situations, and how satisfied you were with your performance in the English course. The finding of this study was in line with some studies such as Faramarzi et al. (2015), Alam Khan (2016), Rahimi and Hassani (2012), too, but wasn't in line with Delić (2020), and Zainol Abidin et al., (2012). Thus, it may be said that the cognitive attitudes toward learning English of Iranian EFL learners were more positive than Iraqi EFL learners. Because a lot of Iraqi EFL learners disagreed with the information about the value of English, how it benefited other courses, how people enjoyed using it, how it leads to new knowledge and ideas, and how people who were multilingual can learn new things. However, Iraqi EFL learners agreed with three negative statements disagreed with which aimed to learn more about the goal of learning English, how to use it in real-world situations, and how satisfied they were with their performance in the English course.

The analysis of inferential statistics demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the emotional dimensions of attitude toward language learning among Iraqi EFL learners ($M=3.44$, $SD=0.59$) and Iranian EFL learners ($M=3.19$, $SD=0.65$); $t=2.409$, $p=0.001$ and the significance level of the t-test, to investigate the difference in emotional dimensions of

attitude toward language learning among Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners was 0.001 and less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). The level of emotional difference among Iraqi EFL learners was more than among Iranian EFL learners. In fact, Iraqi EFL learners strongly agreed that learning English was pleasant, enthusiastic about studying English, and desired to speak English fluently. Regarding positive sensations and emotions, pride, enjoyment, and confidence are of utmost importance (Eshghinejad, 2016). Most of the Iraqi respondents strongly agreed that studying English is enjoyable and interesting for them. The plurality of them said that one of their major life objectives was to learn English.

The results also showed that Iraqi EFL students had a positive emotional attitude toward language acquisition and that Iranian participants had a positive attitude in terms of two elements, namely cognitive and behavioral. This finding was congruent with Eshghinejad's (2016) research on the cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes of Iranian EFL students toward learning English. She claimed that the students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes were positive. The results, however, differ from those of a study by Zainol Abidin et al. (2012) that looked at secondary school students' views on studying English. They claimed that all three of the respondents' attitudes were negative. According to research, attitude was a critical component of successful learning, and extensive exposure to other languages speeds up language learning. It might be difficult, but also very important, to create opportunities for students to change their views and gain more exposure to the target language.

The study's conclusions might be utilized as a starting point to offer some pedagogical implications that syllabus creators and English teachers should take into account. Language policymakers should develop resources that increase communicative exposure to the English language in order to acquaint students with an English-speaking society. By creating a positive attitude, in order to encourage bilingualism English should be highlighted as one of the most crucial forms of communication in national media and colleges, together with the national standard language. As long as students are actively participating in language learning and usage, it is advisable to switch the majority of university courses to English-based courses to support English as the primary language of instruction. Students will gain greater confidence and positive attitude and drive if these ideas are implemented in Iran and Iraq's educational systems since they will feel accomplished after graduating.

Conclusion

It is believed that attitude is an important component of language learning. In order to promote a positive attitude in students, it is crucial to create a positive classroom environment. The cognitions, emotions, and behaviors of English language learning should be taken into consideration by university instructors. If EFL students have a positive attitude and enjoy learning the language, they will perform cognitively (Zainol Abidin et al., 2012). Because of this, teachers play a crucial role in helping students learn a second or foreign language by encouraging a positive view of the intended language, English. Therefore, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher should understand that all students have a variety of positive and negative attitudes and that negative attitudes can be altered through careful teaching methods.

In this study, it was shown that Iranian and Iraqi EFL learners differed in three aspects of attitude toward language learning. In Iranian EFL learners, the mean value of the cognitive and behavioral dimensions of attitude toward learning English as a foreign language was higher than in Iraqi EFL students, but the emotional dimension of attitude toward learning English as a foreign language in Iraqi EFL students was higher than this value in Iranian EFL students. Students who had a positive attitude toward learning English were actually engaged in learning English topics and are aware of the status and significance of the language. Nevertheless, there were a number of factors that influence students' attitudes toward learning English as a foreign language in Iranian and Iraqi EFL classrooms, such as a dearth of a supportive learning environment, a lack of encouragement from English teachers, students' own fear of making errors and unhappiness, a lack of opportunities to practice English, a lack of resources, and the poor backgrounds of EFL teachers. Because experiences can change attitudes, effective language teaching techniques can motivate learners to have a more positive attitude about the language they are learning.

This research had some limitations. The first and most important delimitation of the study refers to comparing attitudes toward language learning skills such as speaking listening, writing, and reading separately. The other delimitation was affecting factors such as age, gender, and other demographic information which weren't intended variables and weren't discussed in this study. The next delimitation is that the study was carried out in a small population (60 EFL learners) from just two universities and other educational contexts such as schools and English language institutes were removed, so the sample size is small and generalizations would not be made. Finally, the limitations of this study need to be acknowledged and considered in future research.

The following reasons and recommendations, which are based on the results and limits of the current study, may give interested scholars new directions to explore in this field: To assess whether age and gender are determining factors, the same research might be conducted on these factors. Replication of this study with samples including schools, institutes, and in different areas. Replication of this study by comparing EFL learners' attitudes toward English language skills (speaking, writing, listening, and reading) separately. Since this study analyzed and compared the attitudes of Iranians and Iraqis toward English language learning, it is hoped that future research will look into how these two nations' diverse cultures affect students' attitudes toward learning English.

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