ATTITUDES TOWARDS USING CANVA IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: A STUDY OF MALAYSIAN PRIVATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AT UTAR

Jane Irene PJ Antony, Shobana Sandrasegaran, Surindar Kaur Gurmukh Singh
and Wei Chooi Yi*
Centre for Learning and Teaching, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia
*Corresponding author: Wei Chooi Yi, e-mail: weicy@utar.edu.my

Abstract. This study investigates undergraduates' attitudes at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), a Malaysian private university, toward using Canva in learning English as a second language. It examines the correlation between students' attitudes and their proficiency levels, as well as gender differences. This study contributes to understanding how the lower proficiency of learners find this instrument helpful in writing. Also, it increases commitment, inspiration and gender dynamics in ESL classroom settings. Adopting a quantitative approach, data were collected from 103 respondents using a questionnaire adapted from Gardner's (1985) Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). Respondents were grouped according to their Malaysian University English Test (MUET) results to explore potential links between Canva use and language proficiency. The findings reveal that undergraduates generally expressed positive attitudes toward integrating Canva in English learning. Students with lower proficiency levels reported stronger positive attitudes, indicating a significant relationship between students' proficiency and attitudes towards using Canva in learning the English language. In addition, female students showed more positive attitudes than their male counterparts. The study highlights the importance of supporting learners with lower proficiency when integrating digital tools in language learning practices in the second language classroom. It depicts the empirical quantitative justification in the use of digital instruments in learning ESL. It bridges the gap between conventional learning and contemporary learning with technology tools by adapting a validated AMTB framework. It also shows that attitudes vary by gender. These findings offer practical insights for the use of Canva in ESL classrooms.
Keywords: Attitudes, Language proficiency, Canva, MUET.

1. Introduction

In today's interconnected world, English serves as a global language and an essential medium of communication across cultures and borders. In the Malaysian context, English is recognised as a second language and is formally taught throughout the education system, from early schooling to higher education (Pazilah et al., 2019). As a result, developing strong English language proficiency is crucial not only during primary and secondary schooling but also at the tertiary level. Within universities, English frequently serves as the language of instruction across many courses and disciplines, making mastery of the language a key factor in students' academic achievement and overall success.

Jane IPJA, Shobana S, Surindar KGS & Wei CY [*]

In the post-pandemic society, the incorporation of technology in education has become increasingly important, especially at the university level, where digital platforms are commonly used in the teaching and learning. Universities strive to prepare students for both academic and professional demands. Thus, it is essential for students to utilise technological tools to enhance their English language proficiency. One such tool is Canva, an online platform used to create visual slides, posters, learning materials and other multimedia content widely used for educational, business, academic and even personal settings. As noted by Wijayanti (2022), Canva stands out for its flexibility, versatility, and ease of use, which can support teaching and learning. These features make Canva as a relevant tool that meets the current demands of the integration of technology in teaching English (Fitria, 2022). Thus, Canva is now a widely used tool and a popular learning aid among students.

Moreover, Zin and Yunus (2020) affirmed that students' attitude is a key factor in acquiring English as a second language. Thus, it is important to examine students' attitudes towards using Canva in learning English. Previous studies have explored the use of Canva in language classrooms, including its benefits and challenges. However, there has been limited research examining students' attitude in using Canva, particularly in the Malaysian university context. Moreover, studies that have examined gender differences remain inconsistent, which calls for more attention to study the gender differences of university students and how it affects their attitude in using this learning tool. Therefore, the present study also aims to investigate if there are any differences between males and females in relation to students' attitudes towards Canva.

Despite the wide acknowledgement of the second language's importance, many studies have reached a consensus that Malaysian students are still struggling with English fluency despite eleven years of formal language instruction. According to the Malaysian Examinations Council (2022), in the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) session 3, 0% of the candidates achieved the highest band, and merely 0.97% obtained Band 5. The majority of the candidates scored Band 4 and below. This highlights that the wider population of Malaysian university students still lack good English language proficiency skills. As technology becomes more prevalent in the English language classroom, this challenge underscores the importance of reviewing students' attitude in using Canva in shaping language learning outcomes.

Students' attitudes towards learning are crucial in any educational setting (Ahmed et al., 2021). It plays a key role in students lacking enthusiasm in the second language classroom as they do not recognise the impact and significance of English proficiency. Negative attitudes may reduce motivation and engagement, contributing to deteriorating English language proficiency in Malaysia (Zukiflei & Said, 2020). Thus, students' attitudes have risen to be a crucial area of research in the educational setting, which contributed to a plethora of studies. Most of these studies revealed that students generally have a positive attitude towards learning English as a second language using Canva across different countries (Christina & Anwar, 2021; Hadi et al.; 2021, Fitria, 2022; Rezkyana & Agustini, 2022). However, there are still limited studies that examine students' attitudes towards using technology to learn English in the Malaysian university context. Since academia in universities has been integrating technology into the teaching and learning process, particularly in the post-pandemic educational setting, it is crucial to study students' attitudes in this sphere in terms of incorporating Canva.

In addition, past studies have produced contradicting findings regarding gender differences in students' attitudes and language learning. While Duy and Trang (2021) revealed no differences between male and female students, Sabiq et al. (2021) noted that female students exhibited more positive attitudes such as greater motivation in learning English. Thus, there is a need to investigate further, especially in the context of Malaysian students and their attitudes towards using Canva.

Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the attitudes of UTAR students towards using Canva in learning English as a second language, examine the relationship between their attitudes and proficiency levels and investigate gender differences.

Specifically, there are two research objectives in this study: (1) to examine Malaysian private university students' attitudes towards using Canva to learn English as a second language based on their proficiency levels, and (2) to examine Malaysian private university students' attitudes towards using Canva to learn English as a second language based on gender. Thus, the research questions are to identify any significant difference in Malaysian private university students' attitudes towards using Canva to learn English as a second language based on their proficiency levels. Followed by any significant difference in Malaysian private university students' attitudes towards using Canva to learn English as a second language based on gender.

The novelty of the study is connected to the traditional way of learning using a digital platform. The importance of Canva is not only restricted to teaching aids but also beyond as a pedagogically insightful tool aligned with second language acquisition. Although it has been used in a common setting, it is underexplored in private universities. The novelty adds on with the gender motivation where females are more affirmative in using Canva than their male counterparts. These are the uniqueness of this study.

2. Content

2.1 Definition of Canva

Canva is a web-based platform used for graphic design, which is known for its drag-and-drop interface with access countless graphics, fonts and pictures (Wijayanti, 2022). According to Syahdan et al. (2023), these highly creative features can be used to create presentations, posters, pamphlets and other educational materials which makes learning collaborative, innovative, interactive and overall enjoyable for students. Apart from that, Canva also stands out for its user-friendly interface that allows students to create good quality projects effortlessly, which makes it a popular digital tool used in educational settings (Sugiarni et al., 2024). It is a free visual tool that is accessible through smartphones, desktops and tablets where students can utilise editable templates to generate ideas and content in groups and individually (Rezkyana & Agustini, 2022).

2.2 English as a Second Language

According to LaCosse et al. (2020), the instruction of English as a Second Language refers to learners who do not use or speak English as their native language, also known as their first language. Bergey (2018) highlighted the heterogeneity of ESL instruction as these learners vary in their ethnicity, native language, cultural backgrounds, citizenship status and even their socioeconomic background which overall affect their language proficiency.

In the multicultural land of Malaysia, English holds a prominent position as a second language across many educational, economic and social domains. As stated by Zukiflei and Said (2020) ESL is a compulsory subject in schools and it is highly prioritised in the Malaysian education system due to its significant role in education and career opportunities. However, Thirusanku and Yunus (2014) emphasised that the primary goal for second language instruction is not to imitate native-like fluency; the priority is on functional competence for learners to use the language to interact and participate confidently in the globalised world.

2.3. Theoretical framework

The present study is based on Gardner's (1985) Socio-Educational Model of Second Language Acquisition, which highlights the crucial role of attitudes and motivation when it comes to learning a language. As emphasised by Gardner, three main factors influence learners' motivation to learn a second language: Integrativeness, Instrumentality, and Attitudes (Lai, 2013). In this context, integrativeness refers to the learners' desire and their positive view of the L2 community.
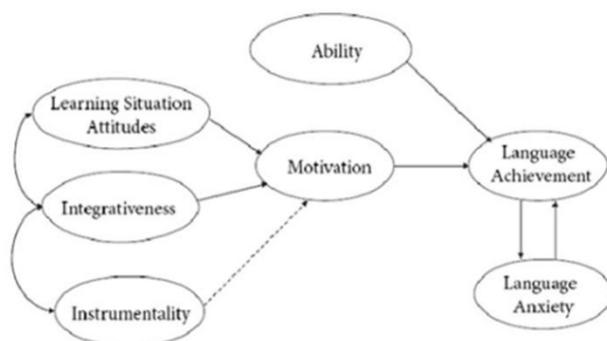
Figure 1. Gardner's socio-educational model (adopted from Lai, 2013)

Instrumentality involves learning the target language for practical goals such as jobs, a higher salary or academic results. Lastly, attitudes towards the learning context involve learners' perception of the immediate learning context which encapsulates teaching methods, lesson plans and materials. These three key components interact with one another in facilitating second language acquisition. Thus, this model helps clarify how these three components shape and influence learners' overall attitude towards using Canva to learn English as a Second Language.

To strengthen this model, Gardner created AMTB, an instrument used globally to evaluate learners' motivation level and behaviour towards ESL. Integrativeness can be defined as a learner's interest and positivity towards language learning and culture. Those with a high integration level tend to interact with the L2 community and view language as social integration. The current study relates the willingness of learners to study English in a creative and insightful way by using Canva beyond the classroom. Behaviour through learning conditions is measured through ambience, characteristics, accessibility, and efficiency that may influence having favourable attitudes towards learning English. In relation to Gardner's Model, the three combinations work dynamically towards the attitudes and motivation of learning English. By adapting the AMBT framework, the research organisedly examined integrativeness and attitudes towards the learning environment in relation to learners' attitudes towards learning English as a second language.

2.4. Technology and Language Learning

In the 21st century classroom, technology plays a significant role in the context of English Language learning and instruction. It acts not just as a supporting tool for language acquisition but also enhances interactive language learning experiences (Shadiev & Yang, 2020). Nevertheless, it is also vital to acknowledge existing and potential challenges that the new integration of technology can bring into the language classroom. In a recent qualitative study by Sari and Abrar (2024), the researchers utilised a phenomenological design to delve deeper into the technology-enhanced classrooms. The data revealed that students achieved enhanced learning experiences due to authentic learning materials, personalization and an increase in motivation. Conversely, the drawbacks were significant, which included a lack of access and literacy. Rintaningrum (2023) found that technology-integrated language learning offers numerous benefits, including enhancing students' digital skills, providing updated information and new opportunities for both students and teachers, fostering autonomous and collaborative learning, increasing test and quiz scores, and encouraging the acquisition of a new foreign language. Indeed, the study by Setiawati et al. (2024) reveals that the use of Canva has made a remarkable improvement in shaping students' interest and surging academic results in the Indonesian context. Despite having mostly benefits, the study also found a few challenges such as keeping up with the rapid updates and changes when using technology, class size, types of available technology, cost, time factors, educators' workload and experience in terms of age.

In Malaysia, many educational institutions have also introduced the use of technology in the context of second language learning classrooms. According to Sugiarni et al. (2024), the use of technology in ESL classrooms contributes to a significant source of motivation, engagement, self-esteem, understanding, comprehension of topics and authentic learning due to new opportunities in teaching and learning techniques. Conversely, it also increases students' dependence on technology leading to the restriction of their thinking skills and an increase in distractions and misuse of technology. On the same note, research done by Syahdan et al. (2023), studied Malaysian teachers' readiness in the ESL classroom and found that Malaysian English Language teachers are not ready to adapt and utilise Canva in their language classrooms due to limitation on templates and poor connectivity.

2.5. Attitude and Language Learning using Canva

In the classroom, attitude plays a pivotal role in the success of language acquisition. Ahmed et al. (2021) defines attitude as an individual's emotional state or thoughts about something. On the same note, Sharma (2022) specifies that attitude refers to a negative or positive judgement about something. Most importantly, students' attitude is a key component of language acquisition (Ahmed et al., 2021). As noted by Sabiq et al. (2021), students' academic abilities and their perception of language acquisition towards the use of Canva are affected by their attitudes. Similar findings were revealed by Putri & Rizal, 2024, stating students' affirmative remarks in using Canva in learning English. This places the attitudinal factor as a significant role player in the efficiency of target language acquisition.

This pattern is likewise observed in the context of second language acquisition. One of the most prominent factors that affects second language acquisition is attitude (Ahmed et al., 2021; Zukiflei & Said, 2020; Sharma, 2022). For instance, students who have a positive attitude towards the integration of Canva in learning English are able to learn the second language efficiently (Sharma, 2022; Putri & Rizal, 2024). In the latter's research, the students showed positive attitudes, regardless of their religion, age group, campus and sex due to their awareness of the importance of learning English not just for academic fulfilment, but also for communicative factors and diplomatic affairs. Therefore, it serves as a driving factor for the students to increase their reading habits using English magazines, newspapers and books.

Similarly, Wijayanti (2022) also found that students who have a positive attitude tend to find the language learning process easier compared to the students who have negative attitude, causing the latter more challenges. The features offered by Canva improved the students' writing skills with a designed template. This finding is further clarified by Larasati and Simatupang (2020), Husniyah et al. (2023) who observed that an individual's positive attitude enhances their motivation in using Canva which contributes to their language proficiency. This explains why a negative attitude contributes to contradicting results as the lack of motivation negatively affects motivation and engagement.

In contrast to the positive findings, Christina and Anwar (2021) conducted a qualitative study on Malaysian secondary students who have negative attitudes towards learning English. As the study aimed to identify the factors that influence their perception, the findings revealed that lessons that did not match their interest and proficiency levels are significant contributors. Despite living in rural areas and recognizing the importance of the English language, the students have expressed a lack of interest and engagement which affects their overall motivation and attitudes towards language learning. In a study done by Artini et al. (2020), although the researchers found that most of the secondary students demonstrated a positive attitude in language learning, they were also students who showed negative attitudes. The researchers attributed these negative attitudes to factors such as lack of language skills, low confidence and difficulties with English pronunciation which may consume time in using Canva especially in writing. These factors lead to students' reduced engagement and motivation in the language classroom.

In addition, findings from Gito and Martriwati (2024) quantitative study revealed that 11th grade students in an Indonesian public school expressed positive satisfaction and appraisal using canvas in the English language classroom. Further discussion from the study revealed that the strong positive perception was attributed to Canva's ease of use which makes assignments, presentations and learning materials very engaging and interesting for them. This increased students' overall motivation in the English language classroom. On the same note, Le et al. (2023) indicated positive effects of Canva-based E-portfolio on students' writing skills and demonstrated the students' positive attitudes towards their learning experience using this application. The findings concluded that these positive views, impact and experience help students to alleviate their writing anxiety and increase their motivation. In another study by Utami and Djamdjuri (2021), the researchers employed a combination of qualitative interviews with an adapted questionnaire and found both negative and positive impacts of Canva in the English language classroom. More specifically, the study revealed that despite increasing students' motivation during the writing lessons, Canva also required them to allocate more time and money to use the enhanced features in the premium account.

2.6. Gender and Attitudes in Language Learning

Multiple studies have explored gender as one of the factors that influences language acquisition. However, the results were not always consistent. According to Langat and Chepchieng (2019) and Sabiq et al. (2021), females tend to have more positive attitudes compared to males when it comes to language learning. This directly impacted other factors such as students' motivation, interest, engagement and performance in the classroom. On the contrary, Mutar (2019) noted no significant differences among genders as both males and females had the same level of attitudes towards language learning. In this study, the Iraqi non-English major students showed positive attitudes towards learning the English Language due to their awareness of the importance of using English for both academic and non-academic contexts.

This was further reaffirmed by Duy and Trang (2021) who also revealed that both genders were typically positive when it comes to learning English. Thus, the inconsistent findings and lack of research in the Malaysian context propels the present research to investigate the gender differences among university students.

Despite numerous studies highlighting the significance of attitudes in language learning, studies examining students' attitudes towards the integration of technology in learning English as a second language are scarce, particularly in the Malaysian universities' context. Thus, this study intends to fill this gap by contributing to the growing body of research on second language attitudes and technology in the 21st century language classroom.

2.7. Methodology

A quantitative research design was employed to investigate students' attitudes towards using Canva in learning English as a second language. Data was collected using a questionnaire survey adapted from Gardner's (1985) Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The original AMTB, which has been widely used in second language learning research, was modified to emphasise technology-related attitudes within the context of second language acquisition.

A purposive sampling method was employed to target Malaysian private university students from UTAR enrolled in the English Studies programme, as they are actively engaged in English language learning and possess a higher level of linguistic awareness compared to students from non-language disciplines. Their academic training involves continuous engagement with English for communication, analysis, and academic writing, making them well-positioned to reflect on the use of digital tools such as Canva in language learning contexts. Therefore, UTAR students are consider a suitable sample for this study. Hence, based on the sample size determination table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a total of 92 students were required as the sample, representing

the population of 120 students enrolled in the English Studies programme. This group was considered sufficiently representative for this study, particularly given their ongoing engagement with English language learning at the tertiary level. Their involvement was expected to provide meaningful insights into how digital tools such as Canva support second language learning in a university setting. The questionnaire was distributed to all 120 students to address the possibility of receiving invalid data.

The questionnaire consists of 20 items adapted from AMTB, whereby, according to Lai (2013), the three key components such as integrativeness, instrumentality, and attitudes interact with one another in facilitating second language acquisition. The items were modified minimally without any structural change to align with the 21st-century learning skills that navigate the modern information age with the purpose of evaluating students' attitudes using Canva in learning the English language. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Before distribution, the questionnaire underwent reliability testing, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated at 0.936, indicating a high level of internal consistency and suggesting that the items were well-suited to measure students' attitudes.

Data was collected online through Google Forms, which was chosen due to its widespread use among students. Prior to completing the questionnaire, respondents were provided informed consent. They were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential. Students were also reminded to respond as honestly as possible so that the results would accurately reflect their experiences and perspectives. From the 120 distributed questionnaires, a total of 103 valid responses were collected and used for data analysis.

The data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0. A one-way ANOVA was used to determine whether there were significant differences in attitudes using Canva in learning English among the three English proficiency levels based on their Malaysian University English Test (MUET) scores. Students with upper scores (Band 5 to 5.5) were classified as High Proficiency (HP). Those with intermediate-level scores (Band 3 to 4.5) were grouped as Moderate Proficiency (MP), while students with lower scores (Band 2.5 and below) were classified as Low Proficiency (LP). Next, a T-test was performed to examine whether there was a significant difference in UTAR students' attitudes towards using Canva to learn English as a second language based on gender.

2.8. Research Findings

2.8.1. Descriptive Analysis

A total of 103 valid responses collected from the questionnaire were analysed to generate both descriptive and inferential statistics. Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents such as gender and MUET score.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of students' gender and MUET score

Description		Frequency (n=103)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	57	55.34
	Female	46	44.66
MUET score	Band 5 to 5.50 (High)	38	36.89
	Band 3 to 4.5 (Moderate)	52	50.49
	Band 2.5 and below (Low)	13	12.62

(Source: Generated from SPSS)

In Table 1, out of a total of 103 respondents, 57 (55.34%) were male and 46 (44.66%) were female, indicating a balanced gender distribution. In terms of English proficiency based on MUET scores, more than half of the respondents (52 or 50.49%) were in the moderate proficiency group (Band 3 to 4.50). This was followed by 38 respondents (36.89%) in the high proficiency group

(Band 5 to 5.50) and 13 respondents (12.62%) in the low proficiency group (Band 2.50 and below). Overall, the results indicate that most participants demonstrated a moderate level of English proficiency.

Next, Table 2 presents the mean analysis of students' attitudes using Canva to learn English as a Second Language. A total of 103 valid responses were analysed, and the mean scores ranged from 2.24 to 3.57. Overall, the respondents demonstrated a mixed attitude towards learning English using Canva.

Table 2. Mean scores of students' attitudes using Canva to learn English as a second language

Items	N=103 / Mean
Learning English using Canva is great.	2.38
I really enjoy learning English using Canva.	2.33
English using Canva is an important part of the school program.	2.34
I plan to learn English using Canva as much as possible.	2.39
I love learning English using Canva as much as possible.	2.39
I hate learning English using Canva.	3.56
I would rather spend my time on other subjects using Canva rather than English.	3.38
I feel learning English using Canva is a waste of time.	3.51
I think learning English using Canva is dull.	3.57
When I leave school, I shall give up the study of English entirely as I am not interested in it.	3.38
Studying English using Canva can be important to me because it will allow me to meet with more varied people.	2.53
Studying English using Canva can be important to me because I will be able to participate freely in the activities of other cultural groups.	2.41
Studying English using Canva can be important for me because I will need it for my future career.	2.41
Studying English using Canva can be important for me because it will make me a more knowledgeable person.	2.24
Studying English using Canva can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a job.	2.36
I have a favourable attitude towards English using Canva.	2.48
Studying English as a second language using Canva is an enjoyable experience.	2.50
Studying English using Canva makes me feel more confident.	2.42
Learning English using Canva makes me have good emotions (feelings).	2.65
I wish I could speak English using Canva perfectly.	2.70

(Source: Generated from SPSS)

The highest mean score (M = 3.57) was recorded for item no. 9 "I think learning English using Canva is dull," indicating that some students may still perceive limitations or challenges in its use. Conversely, the lowest mean score (M = 2.24) was observed for item no. 14 "Studying English using Canva can be important for me because it will make me a more knowledgeable person," suggesting that while students recognize its usefulness, they may not strongly perceive Canva-based English learning as crucial to their personal intellectual growth. Most items related to enjoyment, confidence, and perceived importance such as item no. 1 "Learning English using Canva is really great," M = 2.38; and item no. 18 "Studying English using Canva makes me feel more confident," M = 2.42) recorded mean scores below 3.00, reflecting moderately positive attitudes toward integrating Canva in English learning.

2.8.2. Students' Attitudes Using Canva to Learn English as a Second Language based on their Proficiency Levels

A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine whether there was any significant difference in students' attitudes using Canva in learning English based on their language proficiency level. The English proficiency level is low (LP), Moderate (MP) and high (HP).

Table 3. One-way Anova results on students' attitudes using Canva to learn English as a second language based on their proficiency levels

	Proficiency Level	N	Mean	SD
Attitude	LP	38	3.19	0.60
	MP	52	2.50	0.19
	HP	13	2.07	0.15
	df		**F**	**p**
Between Groups	2		52.92	<.001
Within Groups	100			
Total	102			

(Source: Generated from SPSS)

As stated in Table 3, students with Low proficiency (M = 3.19, SD = 0.60) reported more positive attitudes toward using Canva compared to those with Moderate proficiency (M = 2.50, SD = 0.19) and High proficiency (M = 2.07, SD = 0.15). These findings suggest that students with lower English proficiency levels tend to perceive Canva as a more helpful and engaging tool for learning English, while higher-proficiency students may view it as less necessary or stimulating for their learning needs. Overall results revealed a statistically significant difference in attitude scores among the three proficiency levels, $F(2, 100) = 52.92$, $p < .001$.

In addition, post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test were conducted to further examine the significant mean differences among all three proficiency levels as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Tukey HSD Pairwise comparisons on students' attitudes using Canva to learn English as a second language based on their proficiency levels

Comparison	Mean Difference ($M_1 - M_2$)	95% CI [Lower, Upper]	p	Result
High – Low	1.12	[0.82, 1.42]	<.001	Significant
High - Moderate	0.43	[0.14, 0.72]	.002	Significant
Low - Moderate	-0.69	[-0.89, -0.49]	<.001	Significant

(Source: Generated from SPSS)

As presented in Table 4, results revealed that students with low English proficiency reported significantly more positive attitudes toward using Canva compared to those with moderate and high proficiency levels ($p < .001$), and that the moderate proficiency group also demonstrated significantly higher attitude scores than the high proficiency group ($p = .002$).

The findings indicate a statistically significant difference in students' attitudes toward learning English using Canva across English proficiency levels suggesting that proficiency level plays an important role in shaping students' attitudes using Canva to learn English as a second language.

2.8.3. Students' Attitudes using Canva to learn English as a Second Language based on Gender

An independent sample t-Test was conducted to examine if there was any significant difference in students' attitudes using Canva in learning English based on gender. Results revealed a statistically significant difference between male ($M = 2.52$, $n = 46$) and female students ($M = 2.84$, $n = 57$), $t(101) = -3.26$, $p = .002$. Female students showed more positive attitudes toward using Canva to learn English than male students.

Table 5. Independent samples T-test on students' attitudes using Canva to learn English as a second language based on gender

	Group	N	Mean	t	df	p
Attitude	Male	46	2.52	-3.26	101	.002
	Female	57	2.84			

(Source: Generated from SPSS)

2.9. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that students generally expressed favourable or mixed attitudes towards technology-based English language learning, particularly using Canva as its context involves learners' perception of the immediate learning context which encapsulates teaching methods, lesson plans and materials. This aligns with the results of Putri and Rizal (2024), Rintaningrum (2023), and Sharma (2022), who also reported favourable student perceptions of digital tools in language learning. Such attitudes reflect the importance of English as a second language and its role in academic and professional contexts, particularly in Malaysian higher education where it serves as the medium of instruction. Positive engagement with English is therefore crucial not only for academic success and career advancement but also for enabling students' participation in the global community.

The one-way ANOVA revealed a significant difference in attitudes across English proficiency levels, $F(2, 100) = 52.92$, $p < .001$. Contrary to previous studies by Christina and Anwar (2021), and Langat and Chepchieng (2019) which found that higher proficiency students demonstrated more positive attitudes, this study found that low-proficiency students expressed the most positive attitudes towards Canva, followed by those with moderate proficiency. This could be attributed to the low-proficiency students knowing the advantages of improving their English language proficiency for better future growth. This suggests that learners with lower proficiency may find technology-supported learning particularly beneficial because it offers visual scaffolding, flexibility, and interactive engagement that support their language development.

The independent samples *t*-test further revealed a significant gender difference, $t(101) = -3.26$, $p = .002$, with female students (M = 2.84) reporting more positive attitudes than male students (M = 2.52). Female students often show higher integrativeness while interacting with speakers of the target language for the purpose of understanding their culture and forming social relationships through the language because of their desire and positive views of the target language community. This finding aligns with the work of Sabiq et al. (2021) and Langat and Chepchieng (2019), who observed that female students tend to show higher motivation and a more positive response toward technology-based language learning. Such a pattern may be linked to the perception of English as an essential skill for future academic and career advancement. Nevertheless, the current result differs from the findings of Duy and Trang (2021) and Mutar (2019), who reported no significant gender-based differences. This contrast suggests that factors such as the learning environment, prior exposure to technology, and cultural context may shape students' attitudes toward technology-supported language learning.

Overall, the research findings indicate the importance of incorporating both language proficiency levels and gender considerations into the design of technology-enhanced instructional strategies. Digital tools such as Canva have the potential to offer meaningful support and motivation, particularly for students with lower proficiency and for female learners, ultimately contributing to more effective English language instruction in higher education settings.

3. Conclusions

The findings of this study offer several meaningful implications for English language teaching and learning in higher education. The findings indicate differences in behaviour in relation to the gender and proficiency level suggesting a need for differentiated and comprehensive teaching practice. Educators are recommended to design flexible activities that allow students to engage based on their preferences. For example, using Canva for collaboration encourages support from peers while individual tasks increase self-confidence. Hence, educators are encouraged to purposefully integrate digital tools such as Canva into their instructional practices to cater to students with diverse proficiency levels. When thoughtfully implemented, technology-enhanced platforms can foster interactive, visually engaging, and learner-centered experiences that provide valuable support for students, particularly those with lower language proficiency. Institutions may also consider providing training and professional development opportunities for educators to strengthen their pedagogical and technological competencies, enabling more effective use of such tools.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of considering students' proficiency levels and gender differences when designing technology-based language instruction. Tailored strategies including inclusive content development and adaptive teaching approaches could significantly enhance students' motivation and engagement. Ultimately, integrating digital learning tools like Canva into language classrooms has the potential to enrich the overall learning experience, support language learning and broader educational goals within higher education settings.

REFERENCES

[1] Ahmed, S. A., Othman, B. J., Gardi, B., Sabir, B. Y., Ismael, N. B., Hamza, P. A., Sorguli, S., Aziz, H. M., Ali, B. J., & Anwar, G, (2021). Students' attitudes towards learning English in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, *6*(3), 72–87. https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels.63.11

[2] Artini, N. N., Santosa, M. H., & Suwastini, N. K. A, (2020). Investigation of current digital divide between university lecturers and students in the English as a foreign language context in North Bali. *International Journal of Education*, *13*(2), 113–121. https://doi.org/10.17509/ije.v13i2.23828

[3] Bergey, R., Movit, M., Baird, A. S., & Faria, A. M, (2018). Serving English Language Learners in Higher Education: Unlocking the Potential. *American Institutes for Research*.

[4] Christiana, E., Anwar, K., Pd, S., & Pd, M, (2021). The perception of using Canva application as a media for English teacher virtual teaching and English learning in Loei, Thailand. *Journal of English Teaching, Literature, and Applied Linguistics*, *5*(1).

[5] Duy, T. T. P., & Trang, H. N, (2021). A study on attitude towards English language learning among non-English majored students at Tra Vinh University. *Vietnam Journal of Education*, *4*(2), 47–54. https://doi.org/10.52296/vje.2020.19

[6] Fitria, T. N, (2022). Using Canva as media for English language teaching (ELT) in developing creativity for informatics students. *ELT Echo: The Journal of English Language Teaching in Foreign Language Context*, *7*(1), 58–66. https://doi.org/10.24235/eltecho.v7i1.10789

[7] Gardner, R. C, (1985). Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation. *Edward Arnold*.

[8] https://publish.uwo.ca/~gardner/docs/SECONDLANGUAGE1985book.pdf

[9] Gito, D. F., & Martriwati, M, (2024). EFL students' perception on the implementation of Canva as learning media. *Klasikal: Journal of Education, Language Teaching and Science*, *6*(2), 393–401.

[10] Hadi, M. S., Izzah, L., & Paulia, Q, (2021). Teaching writing through Canva application to enhance students' writing performance. *JOLLT Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, *9*(2), 228–236. https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v%vi%i.3533

[11] Husniyah, H., Tabroni, I., Az, I. F., & Apriansyah, R, (2023). Media Canva: Learning media breakthrough for student learning motivation. *Jurnal Pendidikan Inovatif*, *1*(2), 61–70.

[12] Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W, (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30*(3), 607–610. https://doi.org/10.1177/001316447003000308

[13] LaCosse, J., Canning, E. A., Bowman, N. A., Murphy, M. C., & Logel, C, (2020). A social-belonging intervention improves STEM outcomes for students who speak English as a second language. *Science advances*, *6*(40), eabb6543.

[14] Lai, H. Y. T, (2013). The Motivation of Learners of English as a Foreign Language Revisited. *International education studies*, *6*(10), 90-101. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ies.v6n10p90

[15] Langat, L. K., & Chepchieng, M. C, (2019). Influence of gender on students' attitudes towards English language in Kenya. *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, *7*(4). https://doi.org/10.24940/theijhss/2019/v7/i4/hs1904-020

[16] Larasati, A. A., & Simatupang, M. S, (2020). Relationship Between English Language Attitude and Proficiency. Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, 509, 63–68.

[17] Le, A. N., Bo, L. K., & Nguyen, N. M, (2023). Canva-based e-portfolio in L2 writing instructions: Investigating the effects and students' attitudes. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *42*(1), 41–62.

[18] Malaysian Examinations Council, (2022). MUET 2022: Report and insights. https://www.mpm.edu.my/sumber/penerbitan/laporan-peperiksaan-stpm-dan-muet/2022#

[19] Mutar, Q. M, (2019). Attitudes of Iraqi students toward learning English language. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, *6*(2), 425–437. https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v6i2.650

[20] Pazilah, F. N. P., Hashim, H., & Yunus, M. M, (2019). Using technology in ESL classroom: Highlights and challenges. *Creative Education, 10*(12), 3205–3212. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2019.1012244

[21] Putri, I. S. N., & Rizal, D, (2024). Using Canva for learning English: A creative approach. *Journal of English Language Education*, *7*(1).

[22] https://journal.uinmataram.ac.id/index.php/edulangue/article/view/9065/3514

[23] Rezkyana, D., & Agustini, S, (2022). The use of Canva in teaching writing. *Proceedings Series on Physical & Formal Sciences*, *3*, 71–74. https://doi.org/10.30595/pspfs.v3i.267

[24] Rintaningrum, R, (2023). Technology integration in English language teaching and learning: Benefits and challenges. *Cogent Education, 10*(1), 2164690. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2022.2164690

[25] Sabiq, A. H. A., Arwi, S. H., Khusna, A., Adifia, D. U. S., & Nada, D. Z. Q, (2021). Investigating gender differences on the students' attitudes and motivation toward English learning. *ENGLISH FRANCA: Academic Journal of English Language and Education*, *5*(2), 233-258.

[26] Sari, N. M., & Abrar, M, (2024). Use of technology in English language learning: Challenges and benefits. *Linguistic, English Education and Art (LEEA) Journal*, *7*(2), 362–372. https://doi.org/10.31539/leea.v7i2.10034