



STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARD ENGLISH LEARNING IN A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Lizawati

Islamic University of Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
lizapbi15@gmail.com

Received: August 19, 2019

Accepted: November 30, 2019

Published: November 30, 2019

Abstract

Students' language attitude is one of important things to be successful in the language learning process. Student's attitude is classified into cognitive, behavior and emotional aspect of attitude. The purpose of this research is to identify students' attitude toward English language learning in a junior high school. This research employed survey research specifically in Junior High School X consist of 158 students as research participants. The researcher collects the data by using "Behavior Cognitive Emotional Attitude (BCEA) questionnaire consisting 45 items with five point-Likert scales from level 1 to 5. The data were analyzed by using SPSS and Microsoft excel. The findings show that Behavior Aspect of Attitude (BAA) Mean=3.304 SD=0.815, Cognitive Aspect of Attitude (CAA) Mean= 3.579 ; SD=0.829, Emotional Aspect of Attitude (EAA) Mean: 3.457 SD: 0.832 which means students' in Junior High School X have positive attitude toward English learning.

Keywords: Students' Attitude, Language Learning, Behavior, Cognitive, Emotional.

INTRODUCTION

The issue about students' attitude was explored by some researchers in Asia, such as Ahmed (2014), Anuradha & Rengaraj (2017), Eshghinejad (2016), Noursi (2013), Rukh (2014) and Tsuda (2003). Two of the them study about students' attitude which focused on it is influenced on academic achievement (Rukh, 2014; Rengaraj, 2017). Meanwhile, Eshghinejad (2016) focuses on the difference between male and female students' attitude toward English in Kashan University, Iran. In Indonesia, this issue is quite popular. There are some research related to this issue such

as (Novianti, 2015) and (Jaliyya & Idrus, 2018). Those researchers focused on the students' attitude in higher education students. The studies found that students have positive attitude toward English language. The successful English language learning is determined by students, teachers, curriculum & material and learning facilities. However, the most important factor in language learning is students' attitude (Lambert and Gardner, 1972; Fakeye, 2010; mentioned in Eshghinejad, 2016). Those researches took the data in senior high school students. Between those two studies, the researcher found that the research about students' attitude is needed in middle

school. Because internalization positive attitude earlier is very important in successful language learning. Beside of that, the characteristic of junior high school students are they have unstable mental, they have strong self-esteem and they have different experience and personalities (Long, Ming, & Chen, 2013). It is challenging to the teacher to design a proper language learning process based on the students' characters. Therefore the researcher need to research about students attitude toward English language learning in Junior High School level.

Students' attitude toward English

According to Ajzen (2005) attitude is humans' reaction either positively or negatively to an item, individual, establishment, or occasion. Hence, students' attitude can be defined as students' feeling and reaction toward an object. Moreover, Gardner (1985) found out in his research that students' attitude affects students' learning process of second language acquisition. Weinburgh (1998) as cited in Eshghinejad (2016) reinforced the previous study from Gardner, he attested that student's attitude is determined students' learning successful because it's influenced students' behavior in learning process. In addition, Rukh (2014) examines the study about how business students' attitude when learning English Language and is it correlated with business student's achievement. Furthermore, Eshghinejad (2016) studies students' attitudes such as the behavioral, cognitive and emotional aspect of English language learning of Kashan University Students. The purpose of the study was to know the different attitude of female and male in learning English. The researcher used mix method that is the qualitative and quantitative method in this research. For the qualitative method, the researcher applied descriptive and inferential design, while for the quantitative method the

researcher used AMTB questionnaire from Gardner (1985), BCEA (Behavior Cognitive Emotional Attitude) which was adapted from Jafre, Abidin, & Alzwari (2012) and Attitude Questionnaire Test from Boonrangsri et.al (2004) as the measuring instrument. In BCEA questionnaire, there are three domains that are cognitive, behaviour and emotional domain. The respondents were freshmen EFL of Khansan University.

In this study the researcher used BCEA (behaviour, Cognitive, Emotional Attitude) questionnaire as the instrument to collect the data. The instruments consist of three domains, that are cognitive, behaviour and emotional domains. The Cognitive aspect of attitude (CAA) defined as humans' process in understanding the object. Cognitive aspect involved information and perception of humans that acquired by the combination between experiences and the information. The second aspect of attitude is behavior aspect of attitude (BAA). This aspect defined as humans' action and responding in facing specific conditions. Similarly, Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) as mentioned in Chowdhury (2015) defined the behavioral aspect in attitude as the factoring persons' possibility of action toward the attitude object. The last is the emotional aspect in attitude. According to Feng and Chen (2009) as mentioned in Eshghinejad (2016) discussed that the emotional aspect of attitude is a kind of learning process.

English in Junior High School Context

Commonly, it is know that in language learning have four important aspects to learn that are speaking, listening, reading and writing. In the same context that is in junior high school, Paige and Lavell (2014) study about reading fluency, they found that English language learners improve students' reading fluency in reading English text. The research does not study about students' attitude, but it

still related to the research in junior high school. Consequently, junior high school students perceive that learning English makes them easier in reading English text book. In Indonesian junior high school (henceforth: JHS) context, English is one of the compulsory subjects in the curriculum. It means that all of the junior high school students have to study English in the school. JHS students' characteristic influence the success in English learning. The characteristic of JHS students are they have unstable mental, they have strong self-esteem and they have different experience and personalities, this study also in EFL context especially in China (Long, Ming, & Chen, 2013). It can be concluded that teaching English for Junior High School students is quite challenging. Therefore the teachers may be able to design a proper language learning process based on the students' characters.

METHOD

This research is using quantitative research (survey study). In this research the researcher chooses junior high school students, specifically grade VIII, because the students in grade VIII still have one year more in junior high school before they graduate to higher education and

they have learned English officially in grade VII. The population of this research is junior high school students' grade VIII which consists of 162 students. In this research, the researcher use a questionnaire as the research instrument. The questionnaire was adapted from the Jafre, Abidin, & Alzwari (2012), namely BCEA (Behavior Cognitive Emotional Attitude) with the validity and reliability α 0.878 . The item of the questionnaire was adapted from Attitude Questionnaire Test Employed by Boongrangsri et al. (2004) and the other item was taken from Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) which was designed by Gardner (1985). The researcher adapted the questionnaire by translating it into Bahasa Indonesia and gain new validity and reliability of this questionnaire is α 0.941.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on descriptive statistics and item statistics analysis, the researcher found that the students have positive attitude toward English learning. There are 158 respondent in this research. The lowest score of students attitude is 108.00 and the highest score is 215.00. The average of the overall data is 155.126 and the standard deviation is 18.659.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics Analysis

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Mini	Max	Mean	SD
Total Score	158	108.00	215.00	155.126	18.659
Valid N (listwise)	158				

Table 2: Item Statistics Analysis

The table below shows the statistic analysis of each item in the questionnaire.

Item Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Studying English is important because it will make me more educated	4.3101	.73927	158
Being good at English will help me study other subjects well	3.7405	.76700	158
I feel proud when studying English language	3.6519	.78137	158
I feel excited when I communicate in English with others	3.4684	.78741	158
Studying English helps me to have good relationships with friends	3.3608	.87585	158
I like to give opinions during English lessons.	3.1646	.65677	158
I have more knowledge and more understanding when studying English	3.4051	.81419	158
I look forward to studying more English in the future	4.3165	.71462	158
I don't get anxious when I have to answer a question in my English class	3.1519	.76697	158
Studying foreign languages like English is enjoyable	3.6646	.85668	158
I am able to make myself pay attention during studying English	3.1709	.62018	158
When I hear a student in my class speaking English well, I like to practice speaking with him/her	3.2911	.77627	158
To be inquisitive makes me study English well	3.5316	.80342	158
studying English makes me have good emotions (feelings)	3.0253	.74824	158
Studying English makes me have more confidence in expressing myself	3.3481	.70419	158
Studying English helps me to improve my personality	3.4430	.71822	158
Studying English helps me getting new information in which I can link to my previous knowledge	3.7848	.70793	158
I enjoy doing activities in English	3.4241	.66096	158

I wish I could speak English fluently.	4.3987	.68598	158
I am interested in studying English.	3.8987	.79960	158
In my opinion, people who speak more than one language are very knowledgeable.	3.8861	.88853	158
Studying English helps me communicate in English effectively	3.8608	.70003	158
Studying English subject makes me feel more confident	3.4241	.75960	158
Studying English makes me able to create new thoughts	3.4051	.73179	158
I like to practice English the way native speakers do.	3.2785	.72158	158
I am able to think and analyze the content in English language	3.3165	.62931	158
I wish I could have many English speaking friends	3.3861	.78784	158
English subject has the content that covers many fields of knowledge	3.6456	.73212	158
Knowing English is an important goal in my life	3.3608	.86855	158
I look forward to the time I spend in English class	3.0316	.59103	158
Speaking English anywhere makes me feel worried	3.0633	.77116	158
I prefer studying in my mother tongue rather than any other foreign language	2.8418	.89245	158
I put off my English homework as much as possible	3.4620	.87888	158
I cannot summarize the important points in the English subject content by myself.	3.0696	.77474	158
Frankly, I study English just to pass the exams.	3.6139	.88674	158
I do not like studying English.	3.6013	.92344	158
I am not relaxed whenever I have to speak in my English class	3.0949	.84302	158
I feel embarrassed to speak English in front of other students	3.0380	.82852	158

Lizawati

Students' Attitude Toward English Learning In A Junior High School Level

I cannot apply the knowledge from English subject in my real life.	3.3228	.80815	158
To be honest, I really have little interest in my English class.	3.3861	.88674	158
When I miss the class, I never ask my friends or teachers for the homework on what has been taught	3.3734	.81767	158
I am not satisfied with my performance in the English subject.	2.7975	.85778	158
I do not feel enthusiastic to come to class when the English is being thought	3.2215	.94850	158
I do not pay any attention when my English teacher is explaining the lesson.	3.2342	.84588	158

According to the questionnaire result, the researcher stated that the students in junior high school have a positive attitude toward English. The participants of this research consisted of 158 students from grade VIII of junior high school level. Based on the questionnaire result the highest score is the statement "I wish I could speak English fluently" by the result: Mean=4.39 and SD= 0.68. Meanwhile, the lowest score is the statement "I am not satisfied with my performance in English subject" by the result: Mean=2.79 and SD=0.85.

Behavior Aspect of Attitude (BAA)

In Behavior Aspect of Attitude the highest score is the statement "I don't pay any attention when my English teacher is explaining the lesson" by the result: Mean= 3.86 and SD= 0.81. It means that most of the students gave a low score for the statement or disagree with that statement. Meanwhile, for the lowest score in Behavior Aspect is the statement "I feel embarrassed to speak English in front of other students" by the

result: Mean= 3.037 and SD=0.86. It indicated some of the students consider that they were not confident to speak in front of the class.

Cognitive Aspect of Attitude (CAA)

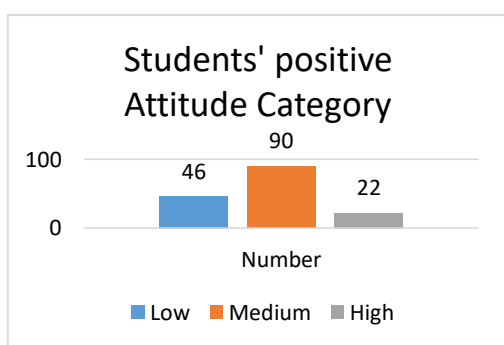
In cognitive aspect of attitude the highest score refers to the statement "I like my English class so much; I look forward to studying more English in the future." by the result: Mean= 4.31 and SD= 0.79. It can be conclude that most of the students want to study English more in the future. Meanwhile, for the lowest score in cognitive aspect is the statement "I am not satisfied with my performance in the English subject." by the result: Mean= 2.79 and SD=0.88. That statement can be implied that few of the participants were not satisfied with their performance in English class.

Emotional Aspect of Attitude (EAA)

In emotional aspect the highest score is the statement "I wish I could speak English fluently" by the result: Mean= 4.39 and SD= 0.76. It means that most of the students want to speak English

fluently. This also is the highest score in overall the questionnaire. Thus most of junior high school students hope that they may be able to speak English fluently. Meanwhile, for the lowest score in emotional aspect is the statement “I prefer studying in my mother tongue rather than any other foreign language.” by the result: Mean= 2.84 and SD=0.91, it can be implied that many students prefer to study in mother tongue than foreign language.

Students’ positive attitude categorize



The table above is the result of students’ attitude category. The table shows that 46 students are categorized as low level, 90 students are categorized as medium level and 22 students are categorized as high level of students’ attitude toward English. Based on the overall categorizing, the researcher found that the highest positive attitude intent to the Emotional aspect, while the lowest attitude reveals to the behavior aspect.

DISCUSSION

The result of data analysis unanimously shows that the respondents have positive attitude towards English learning. Having positive attitude is very important to create successful language learning as explained previously in literature review. Ajzen (2005) described human have a positive attitude if the participants chose more positive statements than the negative statements in the questionnaire. Meanwhile, in this research the

participants labeled having positive attitude if they have high score in each statement. In this research findings, the participants indicated having positive attitude in all those three domains that are BAA, CAA and EAA. In BAA aspect the highest score for positive attitude reveals that Junior High School students wish they could have many speaking friends. Moreover, CAA aspect particularly in positive attitude category the highest score demonstrated that the language learner perceived that they really like English class and they will look forward to study English in the future. Lastly, EAA aspect particularly in positive items, the highest score showed that the language learner wish they could speak English fluently.

Moreover, this findings link in with the study by Eshghinejad (2016), he found that the students had positive attitude toward English learning. He also divided the students’ attitude into three aspects and reported that the participants have positive attitude in those three aspect of attitude. In BAA aspect he obtained that the language learner like to learn English particularly as the native speakers does. Also, in CAA aspect he found that the language learners agreed that they enjoy to study English and they study English not only to pass the exam. The last in EAA aspect he found that the language learner agreed that they have a lot of interest in study English. In addition, he adapted three questionnaire as his instrument. Those three questionnaire are: AMBT questionnaire, BCEA questionnaire and AQT questionnaire and the participants conduct by EFL freshmen students. Another similar research reported by Rukh (2014), he found that the participants have positive attitude toward English. It was proven by the data of his study that was there are 97% participants agree that English learning as an indication of education. Also, Rukh adapted AMTB questionnaire

as the instrument of his study, and for the participants he observed 200 business students in Punjab University.

Similarly with Novianti (2015), she reported the findings about her study which was linked to this research findings. Based on her research, she found that the students have positive attitude toward English. She compared the high school students' attitude toward English based on the major. The result is both social and science major have positive attitude toward English learning. She found that most of the students thought that learning English is quite interesting, and they also have good motivation in learning English. Beside of that, she also found that most of the participants agreed that learning grammar is quite easy, and they said that mastering English is important for them. She collected the data of her research in Indonesian' high school students.

In the other hand, the findings of this research was contradict with the research by Jafre, Abidin, & Alzwari (2012), they study about students' attitude in English learning in secondary context. They found that the students' had negative attitude toward language learning. In BAA aspects they found that the participants don't feel relaxed when they have to speak English in the class, while for CAA they obtained that the participants agree that they cannot summarize the point in English subject by their self. The last for EAA aspect they established that the language learner prefer to learn their mother tongue than any foreign language. In their research they applied BCEA questionnaire similarly with this research instrument. However, the different of this research with theirs is in the participants. The participant of this research is Junior High School X.

CONCLUSION

This research investigated students' attitude toward English learning in junior high school context quantitatively. The researcher concluded that junior high school students' have positive attitude toward English in term of speaking skill, specifically in fluency. However, they have short of negative attitude in term of language learning priority. Furthermore, the findings have implications and suggestion for teacher and education authorities. The researcher suggest to the education authorities to modify the English learning material, because the data tend to the education authorities to add more material/topic about speaking skill. Beside of that, the teachers need to maintain mother tongue as the instructional language in the classroom or not using full English in the classroom. However, this research does not represent all the data in junior high school level because this research collect the data in reputable school. Therefore, in the future the researcher suggest to collect the data of students attitude toward English in regular school of junior high school.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, S. (2014). Attitudes towards English Language Learning among EFL Learners at UMSKAL. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(18), 6–17.
- Anuradha, V., & Rengaraj, M. (2017). Students' Attitude towards English Language Learning and their Academic Achievement among First Year Engineering Graduates: A Case Study. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 10(29), 1–6.
- Ajzen, I. (2005). *Attitude, Personality and Behavior* (Second). New York: Open University Press.
- Chowdhury, S. K. (2015). Predicting Attitude Based on Cognitive , Affective and Conative

- Components : An Online Shopping Perspective Predicting Attitude Based on Cognitive , Affective and Conative Components : An Online Shopping Perspective Introduction ; (June).
- Eshghinejad, S. (2016). EFL students' attitudes toward learning english language: The case study of Kashan University students. *Cogent Education*, 3(1), 1–13.
- Gardner, C.R. (1985). *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitude and Motivation*. (H. Giles, Ed.). London: Edward Arnlod.
- Jaliyya, F., & Idrus, F. (2018). EFL Students' Attitudes and Perception towards English Language Learning and Their English Language Proficiency: A Study from Assa'adah Islamic Boarding School, Indonesia. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, 11(3), 219.
- Jafre, M., Abidin, Z., & Alzwari, H. (2012). EFL Students ' Attitudes towards Learning English Language : The Case of Libyan Secondary School Students, 8(2), 119–134.
- Long, C., Ming, Z., & Chen, L. (2013). The Study of Student Motivation on English Learning in Junior Middle School -- A Case Study of No . 5 Middle School in Gejiu, 6(9), 136–145.
- Noursi, O. al. (2013). Attitude towards Learning English: The case of the UAE Technological High School. *Educational Research (2141-5161)*, 4(January), 21–30.
- Novianti, R. (2015). Comparing Students ' Attitudes Towards English Language in an Indonesian State High School. *Aje*, 1(1), 203–220.
- Paige, D. D., & Magpuri-Lavell, T. (2014). Reading Fluency in the Middle and Secondary Grades. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 7(1), 59–71.
- Paige, D. D., Spagnoli, V., & Wood, H. (2013). Literacy Acquisition in Indian Students: A Descriptive Study of Reading Achievement in One English Medium School Literacy Acquisition in Indian Students : A Descriptive Study of Reading Achievement in One English Medium School.
- Rukh, S. (2014). Students' Attitude towards English Language Learning and Academic Achievement: A Case of Business Students in Punjab. *Euacademic.Org*, II(4), 5596–5612.
- Tsuda, S. (2003). Attitudes toward English Language Learning in Higher Education in Japan : Raising Awareness of the Notion of Global English 1. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, XII(3), 61–75.