Language Attitude of the Fourth Semester English Education Department Students Toward Their Speaking Skill Implemented in the Classroom

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Abstract

Language attitude is considered as the key factor that influence students' motivation to learn and determine the results of studying a language. Therefore, the objective of this study is to find out the fourth semester students' language attitude toward their speaking skill implemented in the classroom and the factors affecting their attitudes. The research methodology utilized a qualitative case study design. The participants of this study were six students of the fourth semester of English Education Department at Mulawarman University which were selected by using purposive sampling. The data of this research were collected through interview and were analyzed by using Thematic Analysis adopted from Braun and Clarke (2006). The findings discovered that three students have positive attitudes and the others have negative attitudes. Ideally, student with positive attitude will have good score in speaking. However, the researcher found that P4 has negative attitude even though she has middle score in speaking. This case is caused by internal and external factors that make P4 has negative attitude. Moreover, findings also showed that students' positive attitude were mainly influenced by parents' roles, teacher's attitudes, inter-ethnic contact and some psychological factors such as self-confidence and high motivation. In addition, students' negative attitudes were influenced by lack of desire to speak English and teacher high expectation. Further research may be recommended to find out different factors that might affect student's attitude with different methodology such as conduct some observations in the classroom to see the implementation of students speaking skill which can reflect their attitude and enrich the data findings. Language attitude knowledge could help the students to motivate them in maintaining their positive attitude. Besides, parents and English teacher could support and encourage the students to increase their positive attitude in learning a language

Keywords: Language attitude, Factors affecting language attitude, Psychological factors

1. Introduction

In English Education Department, speaking skill becomes one of the main competencies to master and expose the material that the students have learned in the form of speaking performance. According to Soleimani and Hanafi (2013), some variables such as attitude, orientation, motivation, and anxiety have a contribution to learning a foreign language. They add that among these various factors, language attitude is considered as the key factor for people who learn a language. Language attitude is people personal feeling about the language that they learned. Normally, language attitude is in-between thought and act. The attitude toward a language may be positive or negative. Positive attitude will be followed by positive action which indicates a good result in studying the language. In contrast, negative attitude will be followed by negative action as well and it will show a bad result (Jendra, 2010). Therefore, students' language attitude toward speaking is important to be learned to determine the successfulness of their learning achievement in speaking English. Yazigy (1991) stated that there are two factors that affect language attitude. First is general social factors which involve parental and teacher attitude. Second is inter-ethnic contact factor which involve

special program such as Exchange Program, Excursion Program, etc. In addition, Schwarz (2005) added that psychological factors such as shyness, anxiety, fear of mistake, lack of self-confidence, and lack of motivation have been obstacles to students' speaking skill. The reason why the researcher conducted this study was based on the researcher experience as a student in which the students prefer to use Bahasa than English when they communicate with their friend in campus. Besides, after observing the speaking frequency of the fourth semester students of English Education Department for 3 months in English Students Association (ESA), the researcher found that many students of the fourth semester rarely speak English. It indicates that the students might have a problem with their attitude in learning the language. From that problem, the researcher was interested to choose this topic. Based on the statement above, the researcher intended to investigate students' language attitude toward their speaking skill implemented in the classroom and the factors that affect their attitudes

2. Literature Review

According to Glanz, Karen, Rimer, Barbarak, and Viswanath (2008), attitude is about behavioral belief. It refers to individual's beliefs about outcomes or attributes of performing the behavior, weighted by evaluations of the outcomes or attributes. A person who has strong beliefs toward positive outcomes will have a positive attitude to the behavior. Otherwise, a person who has strong beliefs toward negative outcomes will also have negative attitude. According to McKenzie (2010), the attitude concept has three components which are cognitive, affective, and conative aspects. The cognitive component covers the beliefs, thoughts or the perspectives of the attitude object. The affective refers to the person's feelings and emotions of an object. It is related to the person's like or dislike. The conative component is the adoption certain manners of learning. Based on theories above, people's attitude toward a language will determine the result of their performance in language learning. The performance will be either positive or negative depends on their beliefs about the outcome. It could be seen from people's thought, manner, interlocutor, place, and the frequency of the language is being used.

Factors Affecting Language Attitude

Yazigy (1991) stated that language attitude can be affected by the general social and inter-ethnic contact factors. General social factor includes the parental, teacher attitudes, peer pressure, community beliefs or cultural expectation, and relevance of the course. However, according to Yazigy (2015), parental and teacher attitudes are the major factors that affect students' attitude in learning a foreign language. Parents and teacher played an important role in developing students' attitude in learning a language. A research found by Gardner & Lambert (1959) showed that integrative oriented students came from homes of integrative oriented parents who showed positive attitudes to the target language. In addition, Turbull (2000) explained that teachers are the "most important stakeholders" which means teachers affect students greatly. On the other hand, special program such as "Exchange Program" and "Excursion Program" were developed to provide interactions between learners of foreign language and the members of the target language group. These programs are expected to be able to increase learners' positive attitudes to the target language. Yazigy (1991) states that inter-ethnic contact is believed to provide a kind of motivational support that is given from the probable appreciation of the target language group. Therefore, support from parents, teacher, and a program that facilitated students to interact directly with the natives would greatly affect students' attitude and their learning outcomes.

Psychological Factors Affecting Language Attitude in Speaking

Schwarz (2005) proved that psychological factors such as shyness, anxiety, fear of mistake, lack of self-confidence, and lack of motivation have been obstacles to students' speaking skill and influenced their attitude toward speaking. The feeling of shyness will directly block and intercept students' ability in speaking English. According to Baldwin (2011), the students' obsessive fear or detestation and their shyness when they speak English in public or in front of many people will make their mind go blank and they will forget what they are going to say. As stated in Cabe & Selatan (2012), students do not like to take risk in speaking English due to anxious feeling. It indicates that the feeling of anxious acts as a negative influential factor that hinder the students to master English speaking skill. Besides, He & Chen (2010) argued that the students' incapacity in speaking English is the main reason of their lack of confidence. It means that background knowledge of the students is very important to help them increase their capability in speaking English. Moreover, motivation is a fundamental element to achieve successful learning. According to Shi & Nunan (2000), students can have obstacle in speaking English because they have lack of motivation to speak. Therefore, it means that motivation influences the successful of communication.

3. Methods

Research Design

The researcher used case study as one of a design in qualitative research. Qualitative research focused on in-depth analysis of particular subject of a phenomenon. The source of the data should be in natural setting. Therefore, the researcher was the key role of the research. The main purpose of case study is to understand something unique. It includes in-depth interview to gain the detail explanation.

Research Participants

The participants of this study were six over ninety-five students of English Education Department of Mulawarman University from the fourth semester that were selected by using purposive sampling. The researcher selected six students who fulfill the criteria of this study. The criteria are; a) the participant is a fourth semester English Education Department student of Mulawarman Univeristy in academic year 2019/2020, b) the participant has taken English Speaking 1 to Speaking 3 Courses, c) the participant has a high, middle, and low score in Speaking, d) the participant is willing to be interviewed by the researcher. The criteria were made to see the difference factors that might influence students' attitude in speaking English from various students' speaking scores. The six students consist of two people who had low score, two people who had middle score, and two people who had high score in their Speaking 1 to Speaking 3 courses.

Data & Source of Data

The researcher set interview questions to obtain data of students' attitude toward speaking English and the factors that influence their attitude. The indicators to know students' attitude toward speaking English were based on three aspects of language attitude by McKenzie (2010) and some aspects such as with whom, where, and how often students speak

English. On the other hand, the indicators to know factors that influence students' attitude were based on factors affecting language attitude by Yazigy (1991).

Data Collection Technique

To collect the data, the researcher conducted the following procedures: 1) The researcher interviewed six students of English Education Department from the fourth semester of Mulawarman University who were fit with the criteria by using semi-structured interview, 2) During the interview, the researcher recorded the questions and answers by using tape-recorder, 3) Then, the researcher made the interview transcript from the tape-recorder, 4) Furthermore, the result of transcription was given some codes that determined the themes. 5) To enrich and confirm the data from interview, the researcher also verified interview data with the theories from some experts in chapter II.

Data Analysis Technique

The researcher adopted a thematic analysis by Braun & Clarke (2006) to analyze the data. There are six steps of thematic analysis; 1) Familiarization, the researcher started to familiarize herself with the data which performed some of transcription, 2) Generating Initial Codes, the researcher wrote down a code to note something interesting in the data, 3) Searching for Themes, the researcher sorted the codes into themes to make active interpretation of the codes and the data, 4) Reviewing Themes, the researcher the researcher reviewed and refined the themes have been identified in previous phase, 5) Defining and Naming Themes, the researcher named and described each of the themes have been identified in the previous step, 6) Producing the Report, the researcher wrote up a clear account of what have been done, both when it is for the research and for the analysis.

Triangulation

In this study, the researcher used theoretical triangulation. Theoretical triangulation is the comparison between the data findings with the perspective theory that is relevant. The researcher is demanded to have judgment from experts to compare the findings of research with certain theory. Therefore, the researcher verified the interview data about students' attitude with a theory of language attitude aspects from McKenzie (2010) and factors affecting students' attitude with a theory from Yazigy (2015). In addition, the researcher also verified the interview data with some expert theories available in chapter II

4. Result

The findings discovered P1, P2, and P3 have positive attitudes while P4, P5, and P6 have negative attitudes. Ideally, student with positive attitude will have good score in speaking. However, the researcher found that P4 has negative attitude even though she has middle score in speaking. This case is caused by internal and external factors that make P4 has negative attitude. Moreover, findings also showed that students' positive attitude were mainly influenced by parents' roles, teacher's attitudes, inter-ethnic contact and some psychological factors such as self-confidence and high motivation. In addition, students' negative attitudes were influenced by lack of desire to speak English and teacher high expectation.

5. Discussion

The result of interview presented that P1, P2, and P3 showed many positive attitudes in speaking English. They had commitment to speak English, they applied the prior and new knowledge in the classroom and they had high motivation to learn English more. P1, P2, and P3's positive attitudes were in line with theory from McKenzie (2010) in which the learners have fulfilled three aspects of language attitude. The three aspects are cognitive (learners' beliefs about the knowledge), affective (learners' feeling), and conative (learners' behavior and motivation). Besides, P1, P2, and P3 attitudes were in line with theory proposed by De Bot et al. (2007). This theory stated that students who have interest and tendency to communicate with other people indicate that they have positive attitude. The researcher noticed that P1, P2, and P3's attitudes were influenced by parents' roles, teacher's attitudes, inter-ethnic contact and some psychological factors such as self-confidence and high motivation. This is in accordance with a theory of Yazigy (1991) in which language attitude can be affected by the general social (include parents and teacher attitude) and inter-ethnic contact factors.

Otherwise, P4, P5, and P6 rarely speak English in the classroom. They deny the cognitive and conative aspects of language attitude. According to Gardner, Lalonde & Moorcroft (1985), normally language attitude is in between thought and act. P4, P5, and P6 stated that they like to speak English but at the same time they did not often practice to speak English which indicate they have negative attitude. P4, P5, and P6's negative attitudes were influenced by their less desire to speak English and their teacher high expectation on their learning result. They said that the rarely spoke English in the classroom because they were afraid of making any mistakes. Their attitudes were in line with a theory stated by Cabe & Selatan (2012) that the students do not like to take risk in speaking English due to anxious feeling. Cabe & Selatan (2012) added that this case is happened because the students are afraid of negative evaluation from the teacher.

6. Conclusion

The result of interview informed that basically all the participants stated that they like to speak English before they took English Education Department as their major. However, six participants gave different attitudes in speaking English. P1, P2, and P3 showed positive attitudes while P4, P5, and P6's showed negative attitudes toward speaking English. Students' positive attitudes were influenced by the support from the parents, teacher attitude, and inter-ethnic contact factor. On the other hand, students' negative attitudes were influenced by their less desire to speak English and teacher high expectation. The researcher also found that P4 which come from the middle group of speaking score had negative attitude toward speaking. It proved that not all of the students with positive attitude have high score in speaking. The researcher had been confirmed all the participants' attitudes and factors that influence their attitudes with some theories from experts in chapter IV. Finally, the researcher concluded that internal and external factors are greatly influence students' attitude toward the language they learned.

7. Suggestions

From the conclusions above, there are some suggestions which are noted as follows; 1) For students, the students should motivate themselves to have and maintain positive attitude toward speaking English by keeping practice speaking English inside and outside of the classroom, 2) For English teacher, English teacher or lecturer needs to understand students' attitudes and find suitable methods to make them increase their positive attitude such as encourage the students to do more practice of what they have learned in the classroom and reduce high expectation on them, 3) For parents, parents are recommended to often have communication with their children about their learning process. Supporting and praising children's work can be done to increase children positive attitude. 4) For next researcher, the researcher believes that this study still has weaknesses. Thus, she would like to suggest further researchers who are interested in this topic to conduct a better study such do some observations in the classroom to see the implementation of students speaking skill which can reflect their attitude and enrich the data findings.

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