

Students' Attitude in Learning English Conversations

Sury Utami^{1,*} Rahmad Husein² Zainuddin³

¹ English Applied Linguistics Study Program, Postgraduate School, Universitas Negeri Medan, Medan, Indonesia

² Universitas Negeri Medan, Medan, Indonesia

³ Universitas Negeri Medan, Medan, Indonesia

* Corresponding author. Email: suryutami95@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

English conversation is an important lesson for Senior High School students in order to face the globalization effects. Many students considered English conversation as a controversial lesson through their positive and negative attitudes toward it. This study aimed to investigate the types of attitudes of the Senior High School students in learning English conversation. The subjects of this study were 20 students consisting 12 females and 8 males at the age of 16-18 years old. The data were collected by observations and interviews then were analyzed using Interactive Models. The result showed that positive and negative attitude in learning English conversations. It was concluded that the students' attitude varied as to positive and negative ones and realized in numerous manners affected by several factors.

Keywords: *Language, Attitude, Conversations.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Conversation is an activity of asking and answering between two or more people with a particular language to talk about a certain topic. The process of exchanging information, the attitudes often appear in responding the information acquired from the other people. Furthermore, their attitude towards speaking English may play a big role in their achievement in using target language. The students were still not accustomed to speak English in the classroom. It may be caused by the different students' backgrounds and reasons when came to English Education Study Program. Some are interested in English while some are lack of interest, for at senior high school the development of foreign language learners' speaking ability is often put aside.

English conversation is one of the subjects taught in Senior High School as an extracurricular subject which in the process of teaching and learning of English conversation, the students often shows their attitudes in several ways. It means that when in teaching and learning process of English translation, some students do not participate in the classroom activities, some also do not want to speak, some others are not confident to speak, but some of them are serious in learning, and some others are also confident in speaking English. For example:

Teacher : "Good afternoon students, how are you today?"

Students : "No what what. Please, do not speak English Miss, do you? how come Indonesians use English."

Based on the conversation above, it is seen that some students give the negative attitudes by saying that "Please do not speak English Miss, do you?" it means that they do not like to use English when learning conversation.

Those findings finally brought the researcher to dig deeper about attitude and found that attitude can be modified by experience. Experiencing effective language teaching strategies can encourage students to be more positive towards the language they are learning. Thus, it makes this research becomes important as this research discovered attitude of eleventh grade students in Baitul Aziz High School towards speaking English whether they have a positive or negative attitude. Research finding gave the facts that happen in the classroom to teachers and encouraged them to build and maintain students positive attitude towards speaking English. Therefore, in line with the theory of language attitudes, this study attempts to reveal the students' attitudes toward English conversation class as English is as the foreign language for Indonesian people.

1.1. Types of Language Attitudes

1. Positive Language Attitude

The first type of language attitude is positive language. Attitude was a mental predisposition or tendencies to respond positively or negatively toward a certain thing, such as persons, events, or objects[3].

2. Negative Language Attitude

The second type of language attitudes is negative language attitude. Negative language attitude occurs when the people do not feel proud or they feel shy to use or produce a certain language. It also occurs when a foreign language is not completely understood or cannot be mastered by people in a conversation.

1.2. Attitudes

In the process of teaching and learning, the students always evaluate it process or activities in the classroom. The interaction between a teacher and students in the classroom cause the valuing of students to the teacher himself, or to the lesson that is being learnt. The evaluation can be good or bad, and it can be positive or negative. The way of evaluating or responding from the students to the subject or teacher can be called as attitudes.

The attitudes are expressed by the students can be direct or indirect, verbal or gestures, and positive or negative. So, it can be said that attitude is about feeling, opinion or the way of behaving to something or someone. In learning English conversation, there

2. METHOD

The study applied descriptive qualitative research design by describing the phenomena of students attitude in English conversation class. In this case, the answers of the research problem in this study are answered by giving explanation or describing types of students attitude. The data was the utterances of the students which gathered from the interaction done by students in the classroom. The study was conducted in SMA Swasta Baitul Aziz and the participants were the eleventh grade students. The data of this study were the transcripts of the recorded utterances which had been gathered from the conversation between students attitude in the English conversation class. The data were analyzed by applying Miles, Huberman, and Saldana analysis model which consisted of three steps namely : 1) data condensation, 2) data display, and 3) conclusion drawing and verification[4].

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the data, there are two types of students attitude used by students in English conversation class, the most dominant is positive language attitude then followed by negative language attitude.

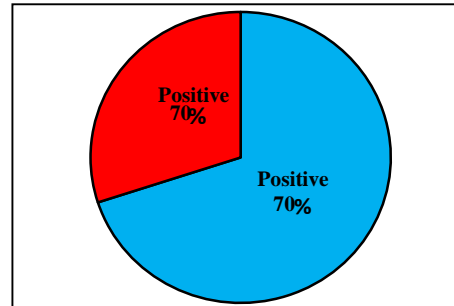


Figure 1. Analyzing data

Participant (SS) : *Ingin belajar serius karena dalam dunia pekerjaan banyak menggunakan Bahasa Inggris.*

(Want to study seriously because in the world of work a lot of people use English)

The percentages of students’ attitude in learning English conversation showed that the positive attitude was more dominant than the negative attitude.

The data were also supported by the following interview:

Data P/I/EJ

Interviewer : *Secara keseluruhan apakah anda menyukai kelas conversation bahasa Inggris?*
(Overall, did you like the English conversation class)

Participant (EJ) : **Of course I really like it.**

Interviewer : *Mengapa anda menyukai conversation bahasa inggris?*
(Why do you like English conversation?)

Participant (EJ) : *Karena bahasa Inggris merupakan bahasa yang cool, bahasa yang diperlukan di dunia kerja, dari hal itu saya sangat menyukai conversation.*

(Because English is a cool language, a necessary language in the world of work, from that i really like conversation)

From the data P/I/EJ, it is seen that the student did like English conversation class because of motivation to get the job in the future. The student also appreciated English as a cool language and he/she liked it so much. It showed a positive attitude in learning English conversation based on his/her reasons. It means that a positive language attitude was an eagerness of the student to learn the language to get something better in the future. Therefore, the positive language attitudes was considered important in learning English conversation. Another positive attitude in learning English conversation in data P/I/RPI and P/I/SS below:

Data P/I/RPI

- Interviewer : ***Apa komentar dan saran anda tentang kelas conversation Bahasa Inggris?***
(What are your comments and suggestions about the English conversation class?)
- Participant (RPI) : ***Komentar saya, kelas conversation saya suka pelajarannya, sarannya agar dikembangkan lagi pelajaran dan materinya.***

My comments, my conversation class likes the lesson, the suggestion is to develop more lessons and materials).

Data P/I/RPI showed that the student liked the English conversation and he/she also wanted that the material of English conversation should be developed. It was a positive attitude because the student has the awareness to use and develop English conversation class. Furthermore, below was another example of positive attitude.

Data P/I/SS

- Interviewer : ***Apa usaha yang anda lakukan dalam belajar conversation bahasa Inggris?***
(What efforts do you make in learning English conversation?)
- Participant (SS) : ***Ingin belajar serius karena di dunia kerja banyak orang menggunakan bahasa Inggris***
(Want to study seriously because in the world of work a lot of people use English)

Data P/I/SS showed that the student has the effort to study more about English conversation because he/she considered that English would be used more in much proficiency. As attitudes also affected by a behavior, below was the transcription of student's behavior during the English conversation.

Data P/B/EJ

- Student (EJ) : (Raising hand and interrupted) Use English full Miss?
Temannya boleh siapa aja Miss?
(can anyone be a friends Miss?)

The data P/B/EJ showed that the positive attitudes realized by the students through the students' behavior. It can be seen that Data P/B/EJ showed that student showed his/her positive behavior by giving interruption to the teacher and asking to use English fully in the classroom. It described that he wanted to use English in the classroom rather than bahasa Indonesia. It was a positive attitude because he preferred to use full English during English conversation class. The other data example of students' behavior in realizing the positive attitude towards English conversation class is as follows:

Data S/B/RPI

- Student (SS) : (Asking the teacher about what she didn't understand)
Miss bahasa Inggrisnya nanti apa?
(What's next in English Miss?)
(Rising hand and offering in fornt of the class)
We Miss.

From the Data P/B/RPI, it can be seen that student gave the positive behavior during the English conversation class. The student actively participated in English conversation learning process. This Participation belonged to the positive attitude in accordance with the indicator of positive language attitude namely using English in the classroom, active and responding the teacher. While the negative attitudes were shown by the students expressed through their utterances and their behavior. The example of utterances showing the negative attitudes from the students were as follow:

Data P/I/MKF

- Interviewer : ***Apakah anda menyukai kelas conversation Bahasa Inggris?***
(Do you like English conversation class?)
- Participant(MKF): ***Sebenarnya saya suka, cuman karena saya tidak mengerti arti***

bahasa Indonesianya jadi saya merasa bosan dan jenuh.

(Actually I like it, but I don't understand the meaning of Indonesian so I feel bored and bored)

Interviewer : ***Mengapa anda tidak menyukai pelajaran conversation Bahasa Inggris?***

(Why you don't like English conversation class?)

Participant (MKF) : ***Tidak menyukai karena saya tidak tahu arti Bahasa Inggris ke Bahasa Indonesia.***

(Dislike because I don't know the meaning English to Indonesian)

Data P/I/NHW

Interviewer : ***Apakah kamu menyukai pelajaran conversation?***

(Do you like conversation class?)

Participant (NHW) : ***Tidak, karena saya tidak suka bahasa Inggris***

(No, because I don't like English)

Interviewer : ***Apa usaha yang anda lakukan untuk belajar conversation?***

(What efforts do you make to learn conversation?)

Participant (NHW) : ***Tidak ada sama sekali***

(Not at all)

Data P/I/NHW showed that the student did not have any effort to use or studying English conversation. This was a negative attitude showed by the student because he did not like English. The student did not have any loyalty to speak English, and he also did not have any struggle to use English in English conversation class.

The data of this study were the students' attitudes of Senior High School of Baitul Aziz consisted of utterances and behavior. The following are the examples data got from interview, and observation.

Table 1. The data of Student's Utterances

No	Students' Utterances/Behavior	Types of Attitudes
1	<i>Saya suka conversation, karena conversation bahasa Inggris merupakan bahasa yang cool, bahasa yang diperlukan di dunia kerja, dari hal itu saya sangat menyukai bahasa Inggris.</i>	Positive

	(I like conversation, because English conversation is a cool language, a language that is needed in the world of work, from that I really like English.)	
2	<i>Saya tidak suka conversation karena tidak menikmatinya.</i> (I don't like conversations because I don't enjoy them.)	Negative
3	<i>Sir, pake bahasa Inggris full aja sir, biar terbiasa.</i> (Sir, just use full English sir, so you can get used to it)	Positive
4	<i>Sir, gak ngerti sir ngomong apa sih?</i> (Sir, don't know what are you talking about?)	Negative
5	Student listened and responded the teacher	Positive
6	Student talked with his friends during the class	Negative

The data were selected based on students' utterances and behavior of attitudes toward English conversation class and based on the types of attitudes realized by the students.

4. CONCLUSION

This study is concerned with the students, attitude in learning english conversations. The types of attitudes of the senior high school students in learning english conversations consist of positive and negative. The dominant types of students attitude is positive language attitude then followed negative language attitude.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

English conversation class is one of the media to analyze the language attitudes of the students. By having this English conversation class the students will express or act their attitudes. As it has stated in the background of this research, the students gave more different language attitudes in teaching and learning process of English conversation class. There are gap between the expectation and reality when the students do not desire English to be spoken in English conversation class. Then, attitudes also can be analyzed toward beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies of the students about objects, groups, events, or symbol. So, the English conversation class can be seen as object that students have the different beliefs, feelings and behavioral in the process of teaching and learning of this subject. Students who have positive attitudes are they who have the pride and loyalty to English language. Otherwise, students who have negative are they whose English language skill is weak, and prefer

to maintain their mother tongue or first language rather than English language.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Praise and gratitude to the presence of Allah SWT, for the abundance of His grace and gifts, sincere appreciation and gratitude to my beloved father Sudarwanto and my beloved mother Yusni who have conveyed love and affection and moral and material attention. May Allah SWT always bestow grace, health, gifts and blessings in this world and in the hereafter for the good that has been given to the author.

The author's appreciation and thanks go to Mr. Dr. Rahmad Husein, M.Ed. as Advisor I and Prof. Dr. Zainuddin, M. Hum. as Advisor II who has assisted in writing this. And thanks to:

Mr. Prof. Amrin Saragih, M.A., Ph.D., Mrs. Dr. Meisuri, M.A. , and also Mrs. Dr. Anni Holila Pulungan, M. Hum.

Thank you to my friends (Sylvia, Wulan, Atikah, Icak) and fellow students, especially the LTBI Masters Program who always help and encourage me.

Finally, the writer realizes that this writing is still far from perfection. Therefore, the authors ask for suggestions and constructive criticism for the sake of perfection and may be useful for all of us.

REFERENCES

- [1] Abidin, M.J.Z., 2012. EFL Students' Attitudes towards Learning English Language: the Case of Libyan Secondary School Students, Penang: *Canadian Center of Science and Education. Vol. 8. No. 2; February 2012. ISSN 1911-2017 E-ISSN 1911-2025 p.119-134.*
- [2] Martin, J.R. and David, R, 2007. *Working with Discourse, Meaning beyond the Clause.* New York: Continuum. pp. 28.
- [3] McMillan, J.H. 2000. *Subjects, Participants and Sampling.* Educational Research: Fundamental of the consumers (3^{red}ed, pp. 108-113) New York: Addison Wesley Longman.
- [4] Huberman, A. M, Miles, M. B., & Saldana, J. 2014. *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (3rd ed). Arizona State University, CA: Sage.