

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study then followed by Research Question, Purpose of the Study, and Limitation of the Study and Significance of the Study.

A. Background of the Study

Language attitude is considered as one of the key components on the success of language learning. Language attitude as defined by Ahmed (2015) is associated to the learner's passion or feeling to language use which can nurture or hinder the learning process. According to Zeinivan *et al.* (2015), language attitude is the internal stage which predispose people to do what they want to do. Brown (2000) utilizes the term of language attitude as the set of beliefs that the learner keeps. In this regards, the students who have positive relationship of passion, internal stage and also set of beliefs towards English language are more inclined to be successful. This is due to the fact that language attitude is a catalyst to have a successful language learning (Fasold, 1984:36). Moreover, it is also noted that successful learner is a learner who comprehends positive attitudes towards the target language (Prodromou, 1992).

A number of studies were conducted to understand the language attitudes of the language learners and how their language attitudes are associated to gender and socio-economic status (SES). In connection with gender, a study conducted by Ghazvini & Khajehpour (2011), for instance, which utilizes questionnaire involving 123 Iranian high school male and female students finds that female have more positive attitude toward learning English language and are more inclined to bilingualism than male. In similar vein, Aldosari (2014) discovers that females have good attitude towards English more than males. In regard to the SES, a study from Dirtya and Concilianus (2018) which applies questionnaire involving 256 participants in the lower, middle, and upper economic classes finds that the learners who come from upper class have higher positive language attitudes towards English than learners who came from lower class. A study conducted by Gayton (2010) utilizing interviews to 11 English teachers from France and Germany who

work at secondary schools indicates that SES is related with student's attitude towards English particularly in travelling abroad. Gayton emphasizes that children who have been abroad tend to have high motivation in learning English and they realize that English is important.

A study conducted by Annie *et al.* (2018), however, utilizes questionnaire and interview involving 11 Vietnamese students who have been studying in the Philippines, found that there is no significant contribution between the language attitudes of Vietnamese in regard to SES toward English language. They demonstrate that the participants who have been studying to the Philippines as exchange students, showing indifference in language attitude regardless of SES. In connection to gender, which involves 21 male and 15 female Vietnamese students, the researchers discover that the correlation between attitude and gender is not to be significant.

Having recognized that there have been varying results in regard with the study of language attitude in relation to gender and SES, therefore, there should be a further study which builds a better understanding of the relationship between language attitude and gender and SES. In a more specific, a further study which focuses on the issue of generation Z students' attitudes towards English language in Indonesian context is equally important. In addition, the research about language attitude are mostly framed within quantitative paradigm and relatively few study of language attitude uses qualitative approach. To this end, a study which considers generation Z's attitude towards English that captures qualitative paradigm is equally important to be conducted. This study was aimed at exploring Indonesian students of generation Z's attitude towards English language which specifically emphasizes on gender and SES.

B. Research Question

Having presented the background of the study above, two questions were formulated to examine Indonesian Generation Z students' attitude to English language which are needed to obtain the result as can be seen in the following.

1. What are the generation Z students' attitudes towards English Language?

2. How are their attitudes formed by their gender and socio-economic status?

C. Purpose of the Study

The major objective of this study was to investigate Indonesian generation Z students' attitude towards English language. In relation to research questions, two purposes of the study were devised in the following.

1. To know what the generation Z students' attitude in Indonesia towards English Language are.
2. To know how their attitudes formed by their gender and SES.

D. Limitation of the Study

The target of this study was certainly to be able to know the language attitude of generation Z students, senior high school students towards English language in connection with gender and SES. The scope and limitation of the study were limited into the subject and object research as follows:

1. Subject
The research subjects in this study were 16 students in 2nd year of senior high school who are divided into 3 males and 3 females, regarding SES, 10 students are splitted into 5 each whose parents have lower and middle class income.
2. Object
The research object in this study was limited on Indonesian generation Z students' language attitude towards English according to gender and SES.

E. Significance of the Study

This study was conducted to give valuable information to the readers in order to know how students react, respect or learn English language as their secondary language in their life. Three significances contributions were proposed as follows:

1. It was expected that the result of this study will be useful as a reference for EFL lecturers and also EFL teachers in order to know what students' attitude towards English so that they can conduct a better English language learning class.
2. It was expected that the result of this study will be beneficial for students, especially senior high school students, so that

they can comprehend what the language attitude is, and can be aware with their attitude towards English language.

3. This study was also expected to be advantageous for another English language teaching researchers who have the same topic – language attitude, so that they can consider this study as a reference or guidance.