

AFFECTIVE LANGUAGE ATTITUDE OF INDONESIAN FRESHMEN TOWARDS ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

As an international language, there is an increasing focus on English teaching learning process in Indonesia. It currently requires attitude to become a considerable attention in a foreign language teaching process. Attitude toward language learning is considered as the key factors for the people to learn a language. Learners' attitude can be defined as a collection of feelings regarding language use and its status in the society. Learners' feeling can foster or hinder the learning process successfully. This research, thus, aims to investigate attitude of Indonesian freshmen in English teaching learning process, in terms of their affective aspect. Affective aspect is the realm that is associated with attitudes and values. In this study, qualitative data were obtained from the structured-interview sessions. The interview processes were carried out involving 20 Indonesian freshmen who have recently started studying English as a foreign language in college. The interviewees were selected randomly. The result indicated that most of the Indonesian freshmen have positive attitude toward English, as well as they have different attitude of affective aspect towards English. Finally, this research elaborates the educational implications and the limitations of the study. It then proposes some recommendations for further research.

Keywords: Indonesian freshmen, affective language attitude

1 INTRODUCTION

English becomes a prestigious position in many countries, including in Indonesia. Wherever going a travel in a foreign city, people usually see English signs and advertisements. It means that English language becomes one of the most frequently spoken languages in the world today. As stated by Wardhaugh (2006: 59), people who speak different languages need to find a way of communicating which can be called as a *lingua franca*. In Indonesia, this language becomes one of popular languages to be studied since English becomes a choice as a foreign language which has to be studied. Consequently, there is an increasing attention on English teaching learning at all levels in Indonesia, including each school level until university level in Indonesia.

As one of compulsory subjects taught in Indonesia, English learning process currently spreads through primary school, junior high school, senior high school, and university, covering span of about 12 years. Nunan (2003) states English has been used in all colleges and universities as the main language teaching in courses under the control of, in Indonesia, the Ministry of Education and Culture.

According to Gardner (1985), in successful English teaching learning process, actually there are some factors that have been considered as significant factors. The factors are educators, students, curriculum, materials, and learning facilities. In addition, there are various factors that influence learning process in foreign language learning, such as motivation, attitudes, anxiety, learning achievements, aptitude,

cleverness, age, personalities, and so on.

Presently attitude has recently become a considerable attention in a foreign language teaching process. As stated by Soleimani and Hanafi (2013), some variables such as attitude, orientation, motivation, and anxiety contribute to foreign language learning. Among these various factors, attitude toward language learning are considered as the key factors for the people to learn a language. It can be summarized that one part that can designate the successful or unsuccessful learning of foreign language is students' language attitude.

Language attitude is getting attention for years since the study is one of core topics in today research. As stated by Bohner and Dickel (2011) in McCoach, Gable, and Madura (2013), the study of attitude is getting a core topic of research currently. In Indonesia, attitude becomes a core attention in education. It is getting obvious since 2013, there have been some changes on curriculum previously named as School Based Curriculum into 2013 Curriculum emphasizing on students' character building which has one of important aspects. This term which is a basic competence grouping is about attitude.

In spite of the fact that Indonesia government strongly encourages the citizens to learning English and also the increasing popularity of this fast growing foreign language in Indonesia, there has been insufficient research to describe the attitude of Indonesian people towards this language and its learning. In actual fact, Lauder (2008) further explains that the big problem in Indonesia is a lack of research. Moreover, knowing about attitude is significant in pedagogical capital because language attitude is a part of

important contributions of language teaching learning process. Understanding learners' foreign language attitudes is very important because it can obtain a useful insight which can be used to improve the quality of its teaching and learning pedagogy. As said by Barnes and Lock (2010), lecturers should understand their students' attitude in order to be responsive to their students' needs and enhance the success of students' learning. Therefore, research of language attitude also will give contributions for lecturers in teaching learning pedagogy. As stated by Gardner (cited in Melhim & Rahman, 2009,p.3), attitude can express some important aspects of an individual's personality, such as to express who people are and what people believe in. Besides, the attitude which serves a knowledge function will allow individuals to better understand situations and people who they associate with or people around them. Considering the above contents, this study investigates affective language attitude of Indonesian freshmen towards English.

Based on the explanation above, the problem that can be formulated as follow what are the affective language attitudes of Indonesian freshmen towards English.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed by a qualitative research design to be a procedure for data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing and verification. The strengths of qualitative data rest centrally on the competence with which their analysis is carried out. Qualitative analysis refers to Miles, Hubberman, and Saldana (2014), there

are three concurrent flows of activity. This analysis provides three main steps occur continuously. It means all steps of analysis are part of the analysis.

The instruments were concerned with affective language attitudes of Indonesian freshmen towards English. Data collection was conducting structured interviews with the respondents to elicit deep explanations.

The interview itself is exploratory in nature.. According to Warren (2002) in Bryman (2008), for a qualitative interview study to be published, the minimum number of interviews required seems to be between twenty and thirty. It is inferred from the statement, twenty random respondents were interviewed for completing the data. In conducting the interview, the interviewer explained to the respondents the purpose, scope, nature, and conduct of the interview. So that, the interviewee were left in no doubt as to what would happen during and after the interview processes.

3 AFFECTIVE LANGUAGE ATTITUDE OF INDONESIAN FRESHMEN TOWARDS ENGLISH

The affective aspect concerns aspects related to feelings and emotions towards English. It means that the inner feelings and emotions of the language learners influence their perspectives and attitudes towards English. When the interviewees were asked about their inner feelings towards English, all interviewees have very good feelings towards English. Interestingly, although they are from English Education Department, some of them said that they did not like studying the materials of education.

SW00 : What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?

IR01 : **I feel happy in studying English because of the English materials, but I feel bored when studying education materials.** Although, I study in English Education Department, I just like studying English materials, not education itself.

IR02 : I am **very excited to study English** because I like English. I also want to travel around the world, so I have to study English.

IR03 : I **really like learning English** and I am **really interested in English** because the position of the language in the world.
(Appendix)

Moreover, as shown in *Appendix*, some of the interviewees felt confident to speaking English both in front the class and with an English native speaker. Some other interviewees were confident to speak English in front of people, but they felt unconfident when communicating with English native speaker. Some of the interviewees were unconfident to speak English in front of the class and to communicate with English native speaker in an English communication. The common reasons for the interviewees why they had different feelings in speaking English are as follows: (1) their lack of English communication, (2) their self-nervousness to speak English, (3) their fearfulness in making mistakes. The following interview transcripts elaborate the points above.

- SW00 : Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
- IR07 : After that **I felt disappointed**, but until now I still **feel nervous** to speak with a native speaker.
- IR07 : When I speak English just with my friends, it doesn't matter and I feel confident, but I will feel not confident enough when I have to speak the lecturers or native speakers because **I think my English is not good enough for speaking** with them.
- IR08 : **I feel over confident to speak English in front of the class**, and I am also **confident to communicate with native speakers** because I stay in international dormitory and I have many foreign friends from many foreign countries.
- IR11 : Sometimes I **feel unconfident** to speak in English with native speakers because **I don't know what they say**, and when I speak English in front the class, I also **feel nervous** for the first time.
- IR12 : For the first time, I **feel not confident** enough because of **my lack of my knowledge**. Then I always study English and prepare all things before the class. Studying it makes me better and makes me more confident to speak in front of the class and communicate with the native speakers.
(Appendix)
- Even though, some of the interviewees felt unconfident, nervous, and afraid to speak English, they still kept trying to study English to overcome their weaknesses in speaking English. Based on the *Appendix*, most of interviewees practised many times to speak English in order to make them braver to communicate with the others, especially with English native speakers. Some speaking duties from their lecturer also contributed them to make them more confident in speaking English. In other words, the English instructions of communication skill from their lecturers can force them to be braver in English oral communication.
- Moreover, the affective language attitudes show that negative affective attitude of the respondents was low, and the positive attitude was medium (neutral). Their affective attitudes reveal some attitudes, such as they dislike whoever asking them to make an English conversation neutrally. Although, they slightly agreed to make an English conversation, studying English made them have good mood and they also like to answer English questions voluntarily in English class, regardless of whether they were right or wrong. Interesting result is that although they were eager beavers to study English, they were slight interested in English class and slight confident to speak English.
- The further explanation why they had different feelings in speaking English is as follows: (1) their lack of English communication, (2) their self-nervousness to speak English, (3) their fearfulness in making mistakes. The

following interview transcripts elaborate the points above. Although, they who were unconfident to speak English, they still kept trying to study English to overcome their weaknesses in speaking English. Besides, most of them practised many times to speak English in order to make them braver to communicate with the others, especially with English native speakers. Some speaking duties from their lecturer also contributed them to make them more confident in speaking English. In summary, the results of Indonesian freshmen have positive affective attitudes towards English.

3 CONCLUSION

Indonesian freshmen have different attitudes, in terms affective aspects of language attitudes towards English. It shows that the participants hold positive emotional attitude towards English. However, they were interested in studying English, some of them felt nervous in English class, so that some of them had a little in English class.

In light of the contribution of this study presented above, this section discusses the implications for Indonesian freshmen and for English educators. Investigating language attitude of Indonesian freshmen is significant in language pedagogy process because language attitude is a part of important contributions of language teaching learning process. The affective attitude is helpful to successful language learning, but it depends on the language attitude result of the way the learners feel. If the learning situation is a cause of negative attitudes for the learners, it likely makes the learners develop the negative attitudes also towards English. Furthermore, the learners'

interpretations about the target language can also have determinant in the learners' language attitudes towards English. Therefore, investigating language attitudes of undergraduate students as foreign language learners is essential in the process of foreign language learning. Language learners and lecturers (teachers), for example, are people whose attitudes can bear effective English language learning. The language learners have to understand what they have to do in their study by investigating the language attitudes. Understanding learners' foreign language attitudes is important because it can obtain a useful insight which can be used to improve the quality of its teaching and learning pedagogy. By probing into gender attitudinal difference, language instruction can be geared up based on the learner gender's interest. As far as gender of both female and male is concerned, there are differences shown in the learning process. The results from this study imply that English teacher or lecturers should not exercise any bias or prejudice on gender bases and they should work to improve learners' attitudes towards the target language.

Moreover, the findings have significant implications for English language pedagogy considering the fact that the results of this study exhibited positive attitudes towards English language. Thus it is recommended that this positive attitude of the undergraduate students should be exploited properly to enhance and maintain their inclinations in this regards.

Having conducted the research, the researcher would like to give some suggestions as follows. (1) The most important suggestion is addressed to Indonesian freshmen. They should

realize that their language attitude define whether their language learning is successful or not. (2) Attitudes of lecturers (teachers) towards foreign language learners can also affect the learning which takes place. The reason is that language learning is not only cognitive stage (where the learners are involved in conscious activities resulting in knowledge), but also affective factors are important and they should pay attention to them. Hence, the lecturers (teachers) of English can create a good and trustful atmosphere for their English classrooms, based on the investigation of their students' language attitudes. (3) The other researchers are suggested to develop their research in the larger area, so the research result can be generated. (4) The education institutions which provide English teaching learning should review the content and the design of the teaching learning pedagogy to meet the needs and the interest of the learners. They are recommended to consider that English foreign language learners have different perceptions about learning language due to their differences regarding gender and their years of study. Hence, taking all these issues into account will be essential to see something different concerning the activities, contents, topics, teaching practices, and the others.

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APPENDIX

The Interview Transcript of the Research

Note: SW00 : interviewer
 IR(...) : interviewee

Transcript of Interview 1	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR01	I feel happy in studying English because of the English materials, but I feel bored when studying education materials. Although, I study in English Education Department, I just like studying English materials, not education itself.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR01	Sometimes I feel confident and sometimes I am unconfident. I feel confident when speaking English in front of the class or speaking with my friends or lecturers. On the other hand, when I have to speak with a native speaker, I feel nervous. One day my friends and I had an assignment to speak with a native speaker, but when we met the native speaker, I cannot speak anything. So, at the time the camera just shot my friends who spoke with the native speaker. After that I felt disappointed, but until now I still feel nervous to speak with a native speaker.
Transcript of Interview 2	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?

IR02	I am very excited to study English because I like English. I also want to travel around the world, so I have to study English.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR02	Sometimes I feel confident, but sometimes I feel unconfident in front the class because of my bad mood. I mean that my feeling influences whether I am confident or unconfident to speak English in front the class or to speak with a native speaker.
Transcript of Interview 3	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR03	I really like learning English and I am really interested in English because the position of the language in the world.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR03	Talking about this, I really have big confidence when speaking English in front of people because I really like speaking English. I think it was really interesting because speaking English can improve our English speaking skill. I am also confident to speak English in front of the people, but sometimes when I meet people that are older than me, such as lecturers, I will be not confident enough for communicating with them.
Transcript of Interview 4	
SW00	What do you feel when

	studying English? Could you explain it?
IR04	I enjoy studying English because when I study English, I can get much knowledge about the world.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR04	I feel unconfident because I don't have English speaking ability enough. Furthermore, I think the other people have higher ability of English speaking than me and also they are more confident than me. Those make me nervous.
Transcript of Interview 5	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR05	I feel happy when studying English because my friends around me actually support me to study English more in this college. It makes me more confident to study English more.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR05	I feel confident because when I get wrong in speaking, the others can correct my speaking and it also can improve my English speaking skill. I also feel confident when communicating with a native speaker because I can learn how English words are pronounced in different dialect with me.
Transcript of Interview 6	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR06	I really enjoy studying

	English, when we can use different words in different contexts. By studying English, we can know the correct words for different context, for example the words for education will be different when we use words for social or science. But, for literature subject, sometimes I feel not interested enough in it because I don't have much imagination for interpreting each literary work.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR06	For the first time, I am not confident because I am not a talkative person. Time by time I feel confident to speak English in front of my friends, and then I am also confident to speak with native speakers because they are usually open-minded about culture. They are also very kind to share about themselves to us.
Transcript of Interview 7	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR07	I think if I can speak English fluently or when I can teach another person about English, I will feel happy because we can get much knowledge about English language.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR07	When I speak English just with my friends, it doesn't matter and I feel confident, but I will feel not confident enough when I have to speak the

	lecturers or native speakers because I think my English is not good enough for speaking with them. I mean when I speak with my friends, I think they will understand what I mean because they are around me and they also have same ability with me.
Transcript of Interview 8	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR08	Because English is my favourite lesson, so I like learning English and I like all materials that lecturers give to me. It makes me enjoyable.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front of the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR08	I feel over confident to speak English in front of the class, and I am also confident to communicate with native speakers because I stay in international dormitory and I have many foreign friends from many foreign countries. So, every day I usually speak English with them.
Transcript of Interview 9	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR09	In the first time, I feel worry and very nervous because I don't have any basic ability of English. Then, time by time I try to learn English, and then I feel enjoyable to study English, even to speak or write something.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front of the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR09	Firstly, I feel so

	nervous just to speak with the others. But, now I am getting confident to speak in front of the class and also to speak with an English native speaker.
Transcript of Interview 10	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR10	I enjoy studying English because I am interested in English. That's why I really enjoy studying the language.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front of the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR10	Sometimes if I am in front of the class for speaking in English, I feel nervous. But that happens for the first time. Afterward, I feel enjoyable to speak in front of the class, even to speak with a native speaker.
Transcript of Interview 11	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR11	Sometimes I enjoy, but sometimes I feel bored because sometimes in the class the lecturer makes me bored with her/ his teaching method because the lecturer influences my feeling in learning English. Furthermore, when the lecturer is friendly with the students, the materials that the lecturer teaches are easy to be learned.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front of the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR11	Sometimes I feel unconfident to speak in English with native speakers because I don't know what they say, and

	when I speak English in front the class, I also feel nervous for the first time. Then, because my lecturer often asks the students to speak in front of the class and the lecturer is also friendly with the students, so I am getting more confident to speak in English.
Transcript of Interview 12	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR12	I want to know about English, so I just say 'wondering about English' to express my feeling in studying English, especially when I study grammar in class then I wonder what the next materials will be. It also happens when I study about debate materials in the class. I get more knowledge about English and western culture also.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR12	For the first time, I feel not confident enough because of my lack of my knowledge. Then I always study English and prepare all things before the class. Studying it makes me better and makes me more confident to speak in front of the class and communicate with the native speakers.
Transcript of Interview 13	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR13	I enjoy studying English especially English grammar because I think English is logical knowledge. I don't like Math, but when I study English structure, I can use logical thinking to study it.

	It's like playing puzzle and I think studying is like playing games. It is so interesting for me.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR13	Honestly I feel less confident to speak in front of the class, but I try to speak in English. I try doing my best in speaking English. I think when we want to be good in speaking, we must be braver. For example, one day my lecturer asked me to interview some tourists then I went to Yogyakarta to find some foreigners. Finally we met some tourists there. Then when we wanted to start interviewing them, almost my friends felt afraid to speak with them. So, I tried to be braver to start interviewing the tourist because when the English interview process was not started, my assignment would not be finished. When I start interviewing the tourists, I was getting confident because they actually accepted what I said and my attendance. Afterwards, my unconfident feeling is getting less.
Transcript of Interview 14	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR14	For the first time, I feel enjoyable to learn English in the college, but time by time I am getting difficult to learn English because the materials are difficult.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can

	you explain why?
IR14	Actually I feel unconfident enough to speak in front of the class because I am not brave enough to speak and to communicate with the other people, especially with native speakers. Although I am still nervous to speak English, I keep trying to doing my best when speaking English to throw away my unconfident.
Transcript of Interview 15	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR15	Firstly, when I study English, I feel mostly enjoyable. On the contrary side, I feel bored to study English. I think my life is like a roller coaster, so when I have good mood, I think studying English is so exciting activity, but when I feel down, I feel bored to study English. I think studying English is not interesting at all, when I feel down in my life.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR15	It's very first time, I was an introvert person and I feel nervous to speak English, then I cannot say anything. Time by time, I try to be braver to speak in front the class and to speak with native speaker. Now, I am getting confident to speak English with all people.
Transcript of Interview 16	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR16	I feel enjoyable in studying English because English is amazing for me and I enjoy the process in studying English. I mean

	English is different from the other language. So, I enjoy studying English.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR16	I am very happy if I can speak with a native speaker because a native speaker is different from us. Actually, my English speaking is not good enough, so I still feel unconfident to speak with them. Besides, I also feel unconfident when speaking English in front the class.
Transcript of Interview 17	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR17	I am interested in English. As you and I know, when I was in Junior High School, my English is not good enough, but now my English is getting better. So, now I feel more happy and excited when studying English.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR17	I feel confident to speak English in front the class because I can explain everything in English and I also can share what I want to share. Besides, I also feel confident to communicate with a native speaker.
Transcript of Interview 18	
SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR18	I feel happy actually because I can improve my English ability, add knowledge about English,

	learn something new related to English, and also I can learn more about western culture.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR18	I feel unconfident because I think I am lack of grammar and pronunciation. So, I am afraid to make mistakes when speaking English. I am also unconfident to speak in front of the class and also speak with a native speaker.

Transcript of Interview 19

SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR19	I feel enjoyable when studying English because learning English is important for me. As we know that English is an international language, we can use English to communicate with other people in other countries.
SW00	Do you feel confident or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR19	Actually, I feel unconfident when I am communicating with a native speaker because I feel unconfident and nervous. When speaking English in front of the class, I also feel unconfident and nervous.

Transcript of Interview 20

SW00	What do you feel when studying English? Could you explain it?
IR20	I feel happy because I can learn the other language. Hence, I will try to study English because I like the language.
SW00	Do you feel confident

	or unconfident when speaking English in front the other people or when you have to communicate with a native speaker? Can you explain why?
IR20	Sometimes I feel confident and sometimes I feel unconfident when speaking English in front of the class. I feel unconfident because I am nervous when I am in front of the class. Then, when communicating with a native speaker, I feel unconfident because my language speaking skill is a little bad and not good enough.