

Learning Strategy Toward Attitudes And Motivational Orientations OF Indonesian Learners In Learning English As A Foreign Language

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Abstract. In Indonesia, where different languages co-exist and where English is used as a foreign language, the learners' attitudes and motivational orientation toward English play an important role in formulating effective learning strategies. This article aimed to examine the attitudes of Indonesian students toward learning English as a foreign language and to understand the motivational orientations that result from their attitudes. A secondary objective of this research was to find the appropriate learning strategy that can be used for high school students in Indonesian education based on the result of the research. Fifty high school students in the second grade from sciences and social sciences major were asked to respond to questionnaires that measured their attitudes and orientations. The results indicated positive attitudes toward learning English as a foreign language with a clear instrumental orientation. Hence, the study highlighted that Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) became the appropriate learning strategy. Despite a strong desire to learn English to gain access to international markets, the status of Bahasa remains secure as it is viewed as a symbol of national integration.

Keywords: Motivational Orientations, Attitudes, Instrumental Motivation, Foreign Language Learning, Learning Strategy, Self-Regulated Learning

INTRODUCTION

According to one estimate, about a billion people today are learning English as a foreign language. A foreign language is a language studied in an environment where it is not the primary vehicle for daily interaction and where input in that language is restricted. Besides, many individuals learning foreign languages other than English, such as French, Italian, Spanish, Korean, Japanese, and others, are also engaged in their learning process. Moreover, each individual always has his/her characteristics to learn the language. As the term suggests, individual differences are characteristics or traits with which individuals may be shown to differ. However, what exactly are the factors/variables that make the difference?

Johnson (2001) stated that the variables contributing to individual differences are usually divided into three broad categories. Some are called cognitive, meaning that they relate

to the person's mental make-up. Intelligence is one such factor; another is language aptitude, which refers to an ability specific to language learning and different from general intelligence. Other variables are called affective, meaning 'related to the feelings.' The most commonly studied affective variables are motivation and attitudes. The third set of factors we shall look at is the personality variables; the one that springs most readily to mind is 'extroversion/introversion.'

Attitude is considered an essential factor influencing language performance and received considerable attention. It will show the students' behaviorism in performing their English skills, not only attitude, but they also need motivation to encourage their performance. It is easy to understand that motivation is goal-directed behavior; in this context, the goal is to learn a language. Many educators research attitudes and motivation from that scope, especially in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or Second Language (ESL). According to Khalid (2016), in the Pakistani community, where different languages co-exist, it is imperative to realize that language attitudes play an important role in the lives of the users of these languages. Grosjean (1982) (in Khalid, 2016) says, "Wherever languages are in contact, one is likely to find certain prevalent attitudes of favor or disfavor towards the languages involved." These can have profound effects on the psychology of the individuals and their use of these languages and, hence, on the learning processes of these languages. Therefore, how an individual views another language group affects not only his or her reasons for learning that language but also his or her motivational intensity.

There are two kinds of motivational studies: integrative and instrumental motivation. Someone is called integratively motivated if they learn a foreign language and passionately learn more about the culture, language and people to integrate more within the target-language society. Meanwhile, instrumental motivation involves learning in order to achieve some other goal. Moreover, Burstall (in Johnson, 2001, p.132) found consistently more integrative motivation in girls. One reason is that girls appear more confident in parental support for language learning. Some parents recommend their daughter study languages, Whether right or wrong, easy or difficult. Conversely, the boys are encouraged to take subjects like engineering, which some might regard as more 'macho.'

Students' attitudes and motivation influence their learning strategies — the better and higher the attitudes and motivation, the more strategies they use to learn the language. Strategies determine how and how well students learn a foreign language. Learning strategies are defined as "specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques" such as seeking out conversation partners or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task used

by students to enhance their own learning" (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). When the learner consciously chooses strategies that fit his or her learning style and the L2 task at hand, these strategies become a useful toolkit for active, conscious, and purposeful self-regulation of learning.

Thus, the main aim of this study is to highlight the learners' attitudes toward and motivations for learning English to ensure that language and education policies and learner needs and motivations are in sync for better education in the country. Moreover, this study also aims to analyze the effects of these attitudes on the motivational preferences of these learners; that is, this study also aims to identify and determine the learners' motivational orientations.

A secondary yet important objective of this research is to find the appropriate learning strategy that can be used for high school students in Indonesian education based on the result of the research. Hence, this article is a starting point in the much-needed research into the role and status of English in Indonesia.

METHOD

The design of this study is descriptive qualitative. It was conducted in the actual setting of the phenomenon (Hamied, 2017). However, the objectives of this study are not intended to generalize students' attitudes and motivational orientation. In other words, present findings and interpretations were not about representing a whole value, or related activities taken later in other circumstances could lead to the emergence of new different perspectives (Sugiyono, 2013). Throughout the research study, the emphasis was on using multiple data collection tools.

In addition, the participants of the study are 50 high school students in the second grade of science and social science majors. Particularly, purposive sampling is used because it helps the researcher find out the intended finding, so this study, as Creswell (2012) suggests that in a descriptive qualitative study, sampling refers to the researcher's intention to select participants and sites to understand the central phenomena. The site selection rationale is because of the easy accessibility to get the information.

Patton (1990) claims that when investigating human behavior and attitudes, it is most fruitful to use various data collection methods, as the researcher can build on the strength of each type of tool and minimize the weaknesses of any single approach. Concerning the advantages of using questionnaires, Wilson and McLean (1994) postulate that questionnaires provide structured data, are easy to administer without the presence of the researchers, and are often straightforward to analyze. In addition, the research interview provides important

qualitative data, and Patton (1990) suggests that when interviews are structured and well organized, they are effective data collection tools.

Direct questionnaire (Likert-type scale). A well-known direct measure is the Likert-type scale (a method of summated ratings). According to Dawes and Smith (1985), a Likert-type scale consists of declarative statements and a number of categories on which the respondents rate their agreement or disagreement. The most common number of categories is seven, with a neutral category if required. A total of 30 items were selected to provide a well-rounded view of the participant's attitudes toward the target language. This questionnaire was adapted from Khalid (2016).

Direct questionnaire (orientation index). The orientation index was designed to elicit information about the learners' reasons for studying English and determine whether their orientation would be considered integrative or instrumental. This measure was based on a questionnaire developed by Gardner and Lambert (1972). Six integrative and six instrumental reasons were randomly ordered. The participants had to indicate the importance of each reason by marking off one of five possible judgments for each reason, ranging from "most important" to "not at all important."

Indirect Identity Scales. Indirect Identity Scales were developed by Spolsky (1969) to measure attitudes. Spolsky (1969) and Oller et al. (1977) suggest that integrative-instrumental orientation may be better measured by this technique that expresses the concept of a continuum between the two orientations. These Indirect Identity Scales were thought to indirectly indicate a student's attitudinal orientation. Oller et al. (1977) suggested that if a student rates a certain trait more highly on the ideal self-scale, it indicates a positive valuation of that trait.

Indirect questionnaire (identity scales). The Indirect Identity Scale used in this study consisted of four identity scales: ratings for self-concept, ideal self-concept, the Bahasa-speaking community, and the English-speaking community. Each part had the same set of 16 traits on a Semantic Differential Scale (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957). Participants were required to mark the bi-polar traits on a 5-point scale. To protect against order effects, the traits were randomly ordered on the page, with a different order for each part, so participants would be forced to respond to each part separately. Negative and positive traits were also counterbalanced in the two columns. This questionnaire was adapted from Khalid (2016).

The data gained were analyzed qualitatively using the data analysis technique proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) who set the analysis through three procedures: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

1. Data reduction

The data gained from the questionnaire were reduced by selecting and classifying students' attitudes and motivational orientation based on the statement's results.

2. Data display

After classifying students' attitudes and motivational orientation based on the statement's results, those were calculated in the form of percentages. The overall data were then displayed in the table.

3. Conclusion drawing/ data verification

The data in the form of percentages were interpreted and concluded to answer the research question, which was strengthened by the perspectives obtained from the interview.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study's results addressed both research questions and highlighted Indonesian foreign language learners' language attitudes and orientations.

One of the most important findings was that the study revealed highly favorable attitudes toward English and the English-speaking community. These were observed on both the direct and indirect measures as discussed below and indicated positive attitudes toward learning English.

A comparative analysis of attitudes toward the Bahasa-speaking and the English-speaking communities indicated that the English-speaking community was rated lower than the Bahasa community by 90% of the learners. This research revealed that although Indonesian learners hold highly favorable attitudes toward English, the positive attitudes are not at the expense of Bahasa.

Regarding specific traits, the Bahasa-speaking community was rated considerably higher on integrative traits such as "interesting, confident, reliable, capable, socially graceful, open and most similar to self." The traits on which the English-speaking community was rated higher were mainly instrumental ones such as "modern, successful, independent, happy, high standard of living, bright future, and impressive."

Refer to Table 1 for the results of the questionnaire. The results indicated that the participants strongly agree 66% that proficiency in both Bahasa and English is an advantage. Although they believed that proficiency in English is advantageous and important, a vast majority felt more comfortable using their first language in everyday situations.

As for their views about the importance of Bahasa, the results indicated that 40% of the students believed in promoting Bahasa to preserve their culture and felt that the use of Bahasa should be promoted throughout the country as it had a strong role to play in the development of Indonesia.

Concerning attitudes toward the English community and learning English, the research indicated that the students had highly positive attitudes. Fifty-two percent of the students strongly agreed that proficiency in English had direct positive influences on getting a good job and succeeding in their professional lives. Moreover, the majority agreed when asked whether English should always be used on public signs, notices, and advertisements in everyday life.

It was interesting to note that although English was assigned such a high status and given so much importance by the students, 50% of the students strongly disagreed when asked whether they identified with the values and culture of the target language community. They agreed that English has been and continues to be advantageous for Indonesia, yet they still need to make up a significant part of their history and identity. Thus, learning English is undertaken purely for utilitarian purposes.

Table 1. Attitudes toward Bahasa and English using the Likert-Type Scale.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Item Measured	Percentage of Students				
1	66	30	4		
2	68	26	6		
3	14	18	58	12	
4	12	36	44	12	
5	22	40	34	2	
6	38	40	18		2
7	36	38	20		4
8	10	34	32	10	2
9	4	24	40	18	14
10	52	36	14		
11	18	20	30	26	4
12	24	38	24	12	2
13	22	38	40		
14	4	22	50	22	2
15	44	44	12		
16	18	26	36	20	2
17	8	22	36	34	
18	48	30	38	28	
19	56	40	4		
20	34	46	18	2	
21	10	40	34	10	4
22	24	42	30	4	2
23	26	34	36	6	
24	22	48	26	6	
25	4	14	48	26	6
26	40	46	12	2	
27			8	64	26
28	8	18	62	4	6
29	14	20	50	12	4
30	12	32	32	6	

Hence, according to the results regarding students' motivational orientations, the most important instrumental reasons were "it is the working language of my future career," "reading advanced technical literature," and "getting a good job" (refer to Table 2).

The two integrative reasons with the lowest scores for learning English were "thinking and behaving like the English-speaking community" and "being friendly with the English-speaking community." This displays little or no desire on the part of the learners to identify themselves with the English community or to integrate with them at the expense of their own community and identity. When the reasons for the low scores were analyzed, it was revealed that in the students' views, these reasons imply a clear rejection of the norms of Indonesian society and question their loyalty to their own community, which the students find pretty unacceptable.

Table 2. Motivational Orientation in Rank Order.

Instrumental Orientation	No of students who rated "most important"	Integrative Orientation	No of students who rated "most important"
• It is the working language of my future career	27	• Thinking and behaving like the English-speaking community	0
• Reading advanced technical literature	30	• Being-friendly with English-speaking community	2
• Traveling abroad	5	• Becoming more modern	20
• Getting access to international books and journals	5	• Acquaintance with people in touch with the latest trends in the West	7
• Coping with university classes	6	• To improve my social status	3
• Getting a good job	15	• Acquiring new ideas and broadening one's outlook	10

This research study also indicated this trend toward English-medium instruction. The students displayed highly positive attitudes toward English as a medium of instruction. They were of the view that a change from Bahasa-medium to English-medium education does not indicate any negative attitudes toward Bahasa or a lowering of its prestige. According to the students, this change is simply a necessary requirement if Indonesian students are to compete on an equal footing with the students from the rest of the world.

At this point, it is essential to note that when students preferred being given the opportunity to choose their medium of study, 60% of them indicated that they would choose English over Bahasa. This reinforces the finding that English is now the preferred medium of instruction. Other than the apparent reason regarding the status of English as a lingua franca and its role in opening doors for future opportunities for the students, the interviews revealed that students have other reasons for their preference.

Overall, the study revealed that Indonesian students display positive psycholinguistic distinctiveness. The learners seem to strive to achieve a positive identity by not only seeking dimensions that afford favorable comparisons with outgroups but also regard their own language as something worth having and necessary for their national identity.

Based on the result that students tend to have instrumental orientation, the appropriate strategy for high school students in Indonesia is Self-Regulated Learning (SRL), which can help students fulfill their willingness to learn English. According to Vassallo (2011), Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) is defined as a learner's proactive engagement with the learning process through various personal management strategies to control and monitor cognitive and behavioral processes towards a learning outcome that uses both retrieval practice and study planning.

CONCLUSION

It has been evident that Indonesian students' attitudes have changed radically, from ambivalence and hostility to English as a symbol of colonial rule during the first few decades after independence to enthusiastic acceptance of English today. Not a single learner in the study rejected English on the basis that English is the language of the colonial masters—the English people.

Based on the study, a two-language formula catering to the different needs of the learners appears to be suitable: (a) Bahasa for national identity and as a link language, and (b) English as a world language and as a language for development.

Finally, a detailed larger-scale study into Indonesian students' attitudes, orientations, motivational intensity, and achievement levels is recommended to shed more light on this important issue. This will result in gathering data that will assist in drafting workable language and educational policies. A clear language policy that aims to promote the learning of English for instrumental purposes will be the right step in the direction of resolving this issue.

It is important to remember that the aim here is not to replace one language with another but to adopt a better approach of a parallel language system, with the caveat, however, that the roles of these languages be demarcated and defined to avoid any instances of dominance of one language over another leading to a language shift. Hence, we need a policy that removes the communication impasse and creates an egalitarian society with equal rights to education, employment, and good living, as illustrated by the views and attitudes that the students in this study displayed.

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