

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

People use English for international communication more than any other language in the world. No doubt that English is enjoying a prestigious place as a global language. English is recognized as the lingua franca for communication across nations and cultures, and is the most desired second or foreign language in most countries in the world. There seems to be a consensus among many people that knowing English and being able to communicate in it can be a vital factor that can influence their lives as individuals or professionals.

In Indonesia, English is regarded and taught starting from Junior High School until University Level. At the University level, many non-English departments require that students take one or two semesters of English for two hours per week. The widespread use of English has had significant influence on language policy-making and practices concerning English education in Indonesia. The selection of the language of instruction is a vital decision for academic institutes and learners as well.

Some of school and institution use English as medium instruction during teaching-learning process. Such decisions impacts learners' academic performance in all subjects including STAI-JM (Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Jam'iyah Mahmudiyah) Tanjung Pura especially for Islamic for Economy majority. In 2015, STAI-JM held a new program that is International Class Program in which every college-student has to use English and Arabic as medium

instruction during teaching-learning process. English is used for every subject except Islamic subject. The college-students in STAI-JM realize the importance of English for their future development. They are extrinsically motivated by the factors such as the desire to get good grades, opportunities to further their study and career advancement to improve their English.

In fact, even the policy of international class program in STAI-JM has obliged their college-students to speak English during teaching-learning process in the class but some of them are still reluctant to use it. Some of them said that it was difficult for them to speak English in the class even though their class program requires them to use English as often as possible. For example, when they held a discussion on such topic in the group discussion, they were still mix between English and Indonesia.

Situation 1 (the conversation occurred at 15 December 2015). It was made when a group discussion presented their topic in front of the class. The subject is Pancasila)

The presenter : Well, for the first season we open for two questionnaires (English)

The respondents : I want to ask you, *ada tidak hubungannya antara HAM dan Pancasila* as the source of Indonesia? (mix English-Indonesian)

The presenter : we try to answer the question for sister Dewi that is there relationship between Human right and Pancasila. Yes, there is. In Pancasila there is the fourth *sila yang mengajarkan kita sebagai warga Negara untuk memiliki kesetaraan diantara sesama manusia. Jadi, pokoknya HAM ada dalam kandungan Pancasila tersebut.* (mix English-Indonesian)

Based on the conversation above, it can be assumed that both of presenter and respondent did not interest in speaking English even they tried to speak English and mix between English and Indonesia. This phenomenon refers to lack of ability to preserve his idea through English and may be they have difficulties to speak English. The problem that was found is about their attitude towards foreign language in this case English as the medium instruction during teaching-learning process. It showed that the students have negative attitude toward English. Negative attitude to language can happen when foreign language is not completely understand or cannot master by people in conversation. This is happen when teacher or students gradually abandon to use English in teaching activities in the classroom. A learner with negative attitudes may deem themselves weak and possibly give up verbalizing their thoughts or improving their speaking skill. When compared with the students who hold positive attitude towards speaking, a significantly greater proportion of students with negative attitude perceived their levels of oral proficiency as average or lower.” (Zakaria Bziker, 2015)

Attitudes are mental phenomenon which cannot be examined and cannot be observed directly. But they are manifested in people’s action or reaction (Baker, 1992). People attitude towards language can be seen from how they think about the language, how they use the language, with whom, where and how often they use it. Language attitude studies will determine that people’s attitude towards language might be positive or negative (Chalak&Kassaian, 2010). Positive or negative attitude to language can be happen when the people do /do not feel proud of foreign language. In this case when college-students do not use English fully or

mixed language during teaching-learning process in the classroom. (UNESCO, 2003).

Furthermore, the negative attitudes were also shown by interviewing the college-students.

Student : I like to study English more, because English is International language but I think education *tidak harus menggunakan bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa pengantar di dalam kelas. Because for me, Arabic is more interesting than English. Walaupun kadang-kadang I have to speak English in the class.*

Based on the interview above, it can be drawn that the student has negative attitude toward English not only from his explanation but also from his language use. It also can be seen that the student did not interest in using English during teaching learning process. He preferred Arabic than English as medium instruction during teaching learning process. Indeed attitude plays a significant role in learning a language. It is in line with the theory which stated that second language learning contexts, factors like age, gender, language background, type of school attended, and peer influences are some of the variables that influence language acquisition and attitudes (Merisou-Storm, 2007).

Attitudes of language learners are some of the indicators that affect language policy and language learning (Snow, 2007; Young, 2006). It is stated that attitude towards language learning plays a crucial role in language learning as it influences learners' success or failure. The learner's language attitude is a key factor contributing to the learner's acquisition of the language. Therefore, studies on attitudes of language learners are of crucial importance for both language education researchers and language policy makers.

Chamber (1999) asserts that learning occurs more easily, when the learner has a positive attitude towards the language and learning. Student's attitude is an integral part of learning and that it should, therefore become an essential component of second language learning pedagogy. Attitudes toward learning are believed to influence behaviors such as selecting and reading books, speaking in a foreign language etc. Especially in education, if the students have positive attitude towards any subject, they can achieve many things in that specific area. Attitude can help the learners to express whether they like or dislike the objects or surrounding situations. It is agreed that the inner feelings and emotions of foreign language learners influence their perspectives and their attitudes towards the target language.

Some studies have been conducted to investigate attitudes of learners toward the English language in different parts of the world (e.g. Butler, 2007; Deterding, 2005; Friedrich, 2000; Matsuda, 2000; Riney & Inutsuka, 2005; Scales, Wennerstrom, Richard & Wu, 2006; Timmis, 2002). The overall findings have shown that learners have positive attitudes toward the Standard English, which refers to English spoken in the English speaking countries; whereas, they have negative attitudes toward other varieties of English.

Based on the condition above, the researcher is interested in conducting the research relates to the language attitudes among college-students towards English in STAI-JM Tanjung Pura. This study takes this topic because the phenomena of language attitude towards English occur in International Class Program.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the problem above, the study was focused on the following problems as follows:

1. What is the attitude of college-students in STAI-JM Tanjung Pura towards English?
2. How are the levels of attitudes by the college-students at STAI-JM Tanjung Pura towards English realized?
3. Why do they have the attitude such the way it is?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

According to the problems identification, the objectives of the problem were:

1. To identify the attitudes of the college-students in STAI-JM Tanjung Pura towards English.
2. To describe the level of attitudes realization of the college-students in STAI-JM Tanjung Pura towards English realized.
3. To explain the reasons why the college-students have such attitude towards English.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

This study focused on the attitudes of the college-students towards English in STAI-JM Tanjung Pura. There were 25 college-students in STAI-JM Tanjung Pura chosen as the subject of the research. All the subjects were from International Class Program for Islamic Economics Major. In this research, the

researcher will focus only to describe the attitudes of the college-students towards English in STAI-JM Tanjung Pura.

There were three main aspects that observed in this study. First, the attitude of the college-students in STAI-JM Tanjung Pura towards English. Second, the levels of attitudes by the college-students in STAI-JM Tanjung Pura towards English. Third, the reasons why the college-students have the attitude just way it is.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

Findings of this study were expected to be useful and relevant theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the findings to provide new contribution to the theory of the language attitude by college-students which non English major. In addition, the findings are expected to add more horizons on language planning issues.

And for practically, the findings were expected to awake of college-students which non English major to aware the attitude in English language. Then, the findings were expected to be relevant and useful to language planners, language practitioners (linguist) and related institutions in efforts to develop the importance of English as foreign language.