

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

"English is Not the Language of My Ancestors" is a representative expression of a negative mindset that has been adopted and was used as a view of life by students related to the English learning process. This mindset is used as a refusal statement to show that the speaker is not interested in English. It is also used in certain situations when students have to deal with a difficult English assignment, listen to English conversation, or listen to various kinds of English music. It sounds like, "Ahhhhh, why is this assignment so difficult?" It is even not the language of my ancestors. So, I have no reason to give more effort to deal with it, right?", "Come on, look at them. What are they talking about? I don't understand; that is not the language of my ancestors, and no one cares. They're supposed to finish it as soon as possible!" or "What kind of music is this? That is not the language of my ancestors. Just skip it!".

In addition, this mindset takes the "steering wheel" of students' paths in learning English and leads the students to produce some negative outcomes that will be shown by their behavior, decision-making, perceptions, and feelings. For example, students become unmotivated to learn English, they become indifferent and irresponsible, or sometimes they refuse the learning and create a feeling of nervousness when faced with some issues related to the learning of English. As a result, the learning process in the classroom becomes hampered.

Mindset is used to describe various beliefs in people's minds that have the ability to influence their outcomes. "The view you adopt for yourself profoundly affects the way you lead your life." (Dweck, 2017, p. 6). It shows that mindset plays an important role in people's lives and determines their behavior, decision-making, perception, and feelings. In addition, "It is a particular way of thinking. It is a mental attitude shaped by our beliefs. I called it the mental operating system that drives our actions and results" (Justin, 2016, p. 42). It means that mindset is formed by various beliefs that are adopted by people, and mindset has the power to control all of those actions and determine what kinds of results will be gained by someone. It is in line with another explanation that says that mindset is a set of points of view that are expressed through one's actions (Barry & Halfmann, 2016, p. 50). So, it can be concluded that mindset is the way of thinking created by individuals and able to control all of the individuals' outcomes, such as actions, decision-making, perception and feelings.

"English is not the language of my ancestors" is categorized as a fixed mindset. Students who adopt this mindset consider that their intelligence related to English is stagnant and does not have the possibility to develop. "The fixed mindset limits achievement. It fills people's minds with interfering thoughts, it makes effort disagreeable and it leads to inferior learning strategies" (Dweck, 2017, p. 64). It shows that mindset is directly related to the students' school achievement including English learning, which means students who adopt this negative mindset are not able to manage their actions to fulfill their responsibilities as students, do self-management to formulate learning strategies

and learning targets, and also do not have self-awareness to motivate themselves in developing their English knowledge and skills.

Nowadays, students are expected to develop a growth mindset for themselves related to English learning. Learning is a very essential activity and plays a crucial role in the education sector. It includes developing students' knowledge, skills, and understanding. (Long, Wood, Littleton, Passenger, & Sheehy, 2011, p. 48). English learning is an activity that involves students' efforts to develop skills and comprehension in English. It shows that students have the responsibility to ensure they are able to master English by designing their own learning strategies and learning targets and consciously developing self-awareness in order to develop their interest in English.

English has become an important skill for students because it is used in many aspects, including business, education, industry, technology, health, and international relations. In addition, English is also used as an official language in many countries, predominantly in the business sector, and half the information created on the internet is in English (Reddy, 2016, p. 181). English is not stagnant; the development of English is increasing consistently day by day (Ilyosovna, 2020, p. 22). It means students have to follow the development of English by becoming more active and learning seriously. However, dealing with English is not as easy as imagined; someone has to dedicate themselves and practice consistently. (Crystal, 2008, p. 3). That is why developing a growth mindset is the best choice for students.

Unfortunately, students in SMP N 1 Sitolu Ori, North Nias, have been adopting a negative mindset, "English Is Not The Language of My Ancestors," that is categorized as a fixed mindset and creating an abnormal situation where students tend to avoid or refuse the English learning and produce some negative responses toward English. As a result, the English learning in the classroom does not reach the students.

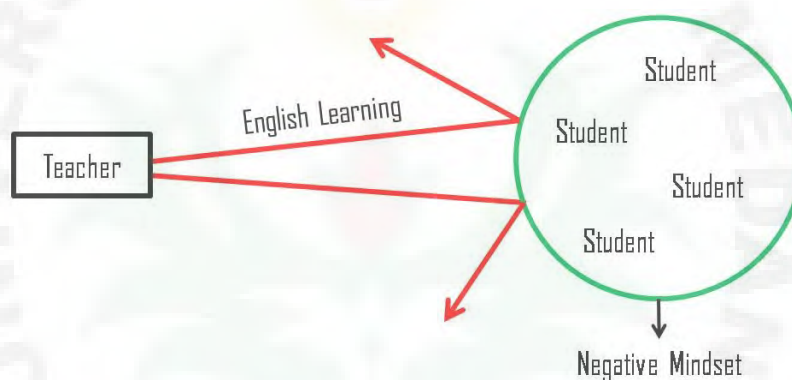


Figure 1.1 Obstruction on Knowledge Transfer

In line with the results of the distributed questionnaires on January 28, 2023, in SMP N 1 Sitolu Ori, North Nias. There are 23 students from IX-A who are involved in answering the questionnaires, and all of them are familiar with this mindset. Some students have known this mindset since elementary school, and others have known it for a long time but did not know the specific time. Respondents also agreed that it is usually used as an excuse when they face issues related to their English learning. In addition, they also agreed that this mindset affects their perception, motivation, and responsibility to learn English.

Based on the problem described above, the mindset "English Is Not the Language of My Ancestors" becomes an essential problem that endangers the

process or activity of English learning for students in SMP N 1 Sitolu Ori, North Nias. Therefore, a study entitled **FIXED MINDSET IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING: "ENGLISH IS NOT THE LANGUAGE OF MY ANCESTORS" IN ENGLISH LEARNING IN SMP N 1 SITOLU ORI, NORTH NIAS** is conducted.

### **B. Problems of the Study**

Based on the previous background of the study, the problems in this study can be formulated as follows:

1. Why does the mindset “English Is Not The Language of My Ancestors” still exist among the students in SMP N1 Sitolu Ori, North Nias?
2. What are the negative impacts caused by the mindset “English Is Not The Language of My Ancestors” for students in SMP N1 Sitolu Ori, North Nias?

### **C. Objectives of the Study**

In line with two problems of the study raised above, the objectives of this study can be described as follows:

1. To describe the reasons why the mindset “English Is Not The Language of My Ancestors” still exist among the students in SMP N1 Sitolu Ori, North Nias.
2. To elaborate the negative impacts caused by the mindset “English Is Not The Language of My Ancestors” for students in SMP N1 Sitolu Ori, North Nias.

#### **D. Scope of the Study**

This study only focuses on describing why the mindset "English Is Not The Language of My Ancestors" still exists among the students and what are the negative impacts caused by the mindset "English Is Not The Language of My Ancestors" for students in SMP N 1 Sitolu Ori, North Nias, especially for grade IX-A.

#### **E. Significances of the Study**

The significance of this study consists of two parts: theoretical and practical.

1. Theoretically

The results of this study are expected to provide scientific information related to the role of mindset, especially fixed mindset, in English learning activities.

2. Practically

- a. For English Teacher

The results of this study are expected to become the basis of information for teachers to foster a growth mindset related to English learning for students by designing proper English learning approach and students enrichment activities.

- b. For Students

Through this study, students are expected to obtain valuable comprehension related to the negative impacts of a fixed mindset.

So, students are able to develop their desire and self-awareness to master English and ensure this phenomenon does not occur again in subsequent generations.

c. For Parents

This study is expected to open parents' eyes to the negative impacts of a fixed mindset and help them become one of the parties who actively foster a growth mindset for their children by facilitating and fulfilling their children's needs related to the process of mastering English.

d. For Other Researchers

This study is expected to provide meaningful information that they can use as references for the next study.