

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This section consists of the background of research, research limitation, research questions, and research objectives.

A. Background of Research

English is the most dominant and recognized language by the international communities. The language, which today is viewed as the most international language, becomes even more central than it has ever been (Suwartono, 2021, p. 586). In almost 70 countries, English has become the official language in addition to the primary languages (Rao, 2019, p. 68). Furthermore, Rao (2019, p. 66) said that English occupies a dominant place in the world as a global language since the language has spread internationally in almost every field such as science, technology, engineering, trade, commerce, research, medicine, education, tourism, banking, business, advertising, movie industry, transportation, pharmacy, internet and more.

In the area of education, Jayanti & Norahmi (2014); Smith (1991) in Atmojo & Nugroho (2020, p. 52) said that English has become a worldwide school subject and mastering the language provides an economic benefit as nowadays, being able to understand the language is a requirement to have a bargain in various job positions such as tourism and business. In more than 100 countries such as

Brazil, China, Egypt, Spain, and Russia, the English language is currently the most widely taught foreign language (Crystal, 2003, p. 5). Mohammed (2020, p. 7) said that proficiency in the English language allows one to understand the basic skills that are needed in modern life such as computer and driving, and attaining proficiency in English provides someone with the perfect opportunity to understand modern society as, with the technological advancement, English remains the dominant language of communication for many people.

Knowing its popularity, dominant role, and importance in various fields such as science, technology, etc., it should be understandable if the English language was given close attention by the education institutions and policymakers. Chang (2006) in Rahimi & Hassani (2012, p. 66) said that, when it comes to foreign language learning, English language has been the prevailing foreign language in the curricula of educational institutions. In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language and has become a compulsory course to be taught in secondary schools and tertiary despite the language is considered difficult to learn and master by the Indonesian English learners (Suwartono, 2018, p. 287).

When it comes to second language learning, there are some aspects that should not be ignored such as learners' attitudes. Eshghinejad (2016, p. 2) defines attitude as the opinion and feeling that everyone has about something. Getie (2020, p. 4) said that the attitude of the learners is an integral part of learning according to most researchers who investigated the topic of the first and second language.

Furthermore, Mohammed (2015, p. 202) said that the researchers on foreign language learning have long been aware that language learning is often associated with effective factors such as motivation and anxiety which are seen to be some of the important predictors of foreign-language performance.

Liu (2014, p. 1252) said that attitude, which is related closely to motivation, is a pattern of beliefs that are developed over time in a given socio-cultural context, and in the learning process, these beliefs play a critical role. According to Liu (2014, p. 1250), motivation is essentially an inside state that provokes one's desire for a goal and sustains their efforts in a given direction. Furthermore, Abu-Snoubar (2017, p. 18) supported the idea that language learning can never be separated from the attitudes of the learners since positive ones can be supporting and motivating to the students and heavily demotivating when the learners harbor negative attitudes.

Knowing the importance of the English language as well as learners' attitude and motivation in foreign language learning, this study aims to find out the attitude and motivation of a group of Indonesian junior high school students towards English in hope of adding further data and generalization to the overall study of attitude and motivation towards English learning.

To prevent unascertained delays, this research would only focus on the students from five junior high schools in Purwokerto. Furthermore, to avoid unnecessary widening of the discussions of this study, the researcher chose to only

adopt two-non intelligence factors affecting students' learning process; attitude and motivation as two variables of this research.

B. Research Questions

1. How is Indonesian junior high school students' attitude towards the English language?
2. How is Indonesian junior high school students' motivation to learn the English language?

C. Research Objectives

1. To investigate Indonesian junior high school students' attitudes towards English
2. To investigate Indonesian high school students' motivation to learn English