

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter discusses the concepts and findings reviewed from related literatures which are expected to contribute the findings of the research.

### **2.1. Attitude and Its Components**

In many studies observing attitude in the context of gaining knowledge and skill of language, there have been many definitions of attitude from different points of view. Gardner (1980: 267) defines attitudes as the sum total of a man's instincts and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, fears, threats, and convictions about any specified topic. From this perspective, attitude pervades not only the aspect of human's cognition but also the affective values towards particular object. Hence, attitude significantly influences what is going to be done as a part of behaviour when someone faces certain condition. Furthermore, Gardner (1985) also points out that attitude links to a person's values and beliefs and promotes or discourages the choices made in all realms of activity, whether academic or informal.

Azjen (1998: 18) argues that an attitude is a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution or event. This definition gives an idea that someone's attitude is what he tends to behave as a response, whether it shows either approval or disapproval, towards specific entity, individual, organization, or phenomenon. More specifically, this implies that judgement on a

person's attitude can only be done after the result of thoughts emerges in one's action(s).

Baker (1998) in Hosseini and Pourmandnia (2013: 6) states his wide view on attitude, elaborating attitude as dimensional rather than bipolar – they vary in degree of approval or disapproval. One's attitude thus is not absolutely positive or negative; but it can be both positive and negative in some distinct points. However, in relation to this study, the researcher categorized students' attitude to language learning based on their tendency to have positive or negative attitude. Baker further adds that attitude predisposes a person to act in certain way, but the relationship between attitudes and actions is not a strong one. How people behave is clearly not only affected by their attitude but also the condition which they are in. He also says that attitude is learnt, not inherited or genetically endowed. Attitude is actually not innate; but it, though tends to persist, can be changed or modified by experience.

Brown (2007) presents ideas about attitude that is not very different from those of Baker's (1988). He argues that attitudes develop in early childhood and are the result of parent's and peers' attitudes, of contact with people who are different in any number of ways, and of interacting different factors in the human experience. So the establishment of attitude evokes from environmental conditions – from the closest one: family, to the larger society: social milieu – and accumulation of personal experience.

Referring to the elaboration about the definition of attitude above, the researcher assumed that attitude is a set of reaction given by an individual to a particular

object as a result of his deep feelings, thoughts, and conviction. The reaction itself consists of values e.g. agree or disagree, and like or dislike.

In common, attitude is constructed by some distinguishable aspects. Wenden (1991) divides attitude into three components namely cognitive, affective and behavioural. Those three components greatly interrelate to one another. This means that one component reciprocally influences the others before an attitude is strongly built. In order to make the components of attitude clearer and explain its significance in language learning, the researcher provides the elaboration in the following section.

The first one, cognitive component consists of the beliefs and thoughts about an object, people, behaviour, and event. This component seems to affect the learning very much since it relates to one's mind, in this case, perception. If a student's cognitive component of attitude is negative, the process of learning will be hampered. When the student believes that learning English is too complicated, for example, he therefore will not be eager to attempt to understand more about the lesson. He will close his mind to approve any input about the object. As a result, the learning process will come to failure.

The second one, the affective component covers the person's feelings towards an object. This affects one's preferences such as to stand for or against, or to like or dislike. If the student has negative emotion in the class towards the teacher, for instance, he will pay less attention to the teacher's elaboration while the process of learning is going. The one who dislikes the teacher will not fully appreciate

what the teacher teaches in the class. This condition obviously disrupts the English learning.

The last one, the behavioural aspect deals with an individual's actions or disposition to take up and practice special behaviour(s) when one is in certain situation. When a student has positive behavioural component of attitude, he tends to feel comfortable and enjoy getting involved in the activity. Furthermore, the student will be more active in the classroom. Conversely, negative attitude will lead the student to relatively be reluctant to be engaged in doing any classroom activity. He then will be discouraged to join whatever the English teacher has planned to undertake in the class. This can clearly be an obstacle in the learning process.

In this study, the three components of attitude elaborated above are taken as components that construct students' attitude to language learning. In collecting the data, the questionnaire involves those components of attitude since they must be in unity to form the existence of attitude to language learning.

## **2.2. Attitude to Language Learning and Its Role in the Process of**

### **Learning**

Learning is a changing process in which an individual undergoes an enhancement in terms of knowledge and skill. Through learning, a person who is formerly not able to find a main idea in a text, for example, he then will have capability of doing so. Other instance is that when someone who cannot speak fluently in front of public, he will have possibility to be skilful in giving excellent speech after being coached in an instructional process.

As a common term, learning covers a wide range of fields. One of the fields is language. Learning a language can be assumed as a process of change where language learners are given treatment by the instructor so that they can comprehend what people say in the language, speak by using the language, understand the contents in a reading selection constructed in the language, and communicate what is in his mind using the language through sentences on paper.

As the researcher has pertained before in chapter one, language learning belongs to one of the three kinds of attitude in relation to language acquisition. Attitude towards language learning is the conviction, feeling, and response emerged by the language learner to any item, material, situation and even the teacher while the process of learning language is occurring. Soleimani and Hanafi (2013) state that attitude to second language learning affects the ability of the learners to master the language. This is reasonable since attitude to language learning relates not only to the subject or lesson itself, but also to the condition of the classroom instruction and the one who facilitates the learning process. Liuolienė and Metiūnienė (2006) also argue that positive attitudes towards the learning situation will likely produce greater enjoyment in the study of the language, desire to learn the language, and effort expended in learning the language.

From the explanation above, it is obvious that attitude towards language learning plays a crucial role that contributes the success or failure of the language learning. If a student's attitude to language learning is positive, the student will be encouraged in learning process. He will appreciate the teacher more and try to pay more attention to the lesson. On the contrary, when a student has negative attitude,

he will be irresponsive during the learning. His attention to the subject and the teacher is not full. More badly, his/her interest to the task given by the teacher will not be favourable. This situation seems very disadvantageous because it absolutely disrupts the learning process.

### **2.3. Notion of Reading**

Whenever people read, they are always in contact with certain piece of passage. In the process of reading, the reader obviously needs to know first about the written symbols and, of course, the language in order that he can realize the message contained in the text. Thus, it can be assumed that reading is an interaction between reader and text and requires efficient knowledge to world and given topic also an efficient knowledge of the language (Grabe, 2009).

Smith (1982: 166), in the meanwhile, provides one definition of reading based on his own point of view. He says that reading is a matter of identifying letters in order to recognize words to get the meaning from what is read, involving making connection among words and ideas presented in the text and the readers' own background knowledge. From this perspective, in reading, the background knowledge of the readers has significance since it influences readers' ability to receive the content of the written text. If their background knowledge is inadequate, then they will find hindrance in comprehending the text.

Reading, as stated by Nuttall (1982), can also be defined as the meaningful interpretation of printed or written verbal symbols. This idea implies that while one is reading, he/she passes through a process of making sense the text that

he/she interacts with. Reading, as one of the receptive skills in learning language, in fact is not simply saying out loud what is written and printed, but it involves the capability to comprehend the text. Thus, here emerges the idea of reading comprehension. Harris et al. (2004: 321) state that reading comprehension is the process of understanding the message the author trying to convey. The writer communicates the ideas in his mind through text and the readers grasp the message the author intends to express.

Other notion about reading comprehension is also proposed by Day (1993: 43). He believes that reading is using knowledge to come to comprehension. Comprehension can be recognized as an ability to understand the meaning of the reading material or the knowledge acquired as the result of obtaining particular meaning. Similarly to the previous idea, Clark and Silberstein (1987: 21) argue that reading is an active cognitive process of interacting with printed material and monitoring comprehension to establish meaning. In reliance to the statement, reading involves an ongoing observation towards text so that the points in it can be achieved.

Several elaborations of reading above build an assumption that reading is actually far more than being able to know letters and words but it is also an active process of discovering information and ideas from a written text whereas in finding the message of the text, sufficient background knowledge is necessary.

Reading, indifferently from the other three skills of language: listening, speaking, and, writing, actually has some distinct characteristics. There are some aspects that a reader must fulfil if he/she wants to really conceive a written work. Nuttall (1985) believes that there are five kinds of reading skill at which the readers need to be completely proficient in order to deeply comprehend a text. The skills of reading cover the elements in understanding certain reading material(s). Those skills –thus can be called as the aspects of reading– are (a) identifying main idea, (b) identifying details, (c) determining inference, (d) understanding vocabulary, and (e) reference.

First, recognizing main idea is the skill of conceiving and discovering the key point of a reading selection by encompassing the text. Finding out the main idea of a particular text is obviously significant to readers. By knowing this, they can comprehend the outline of the text since it illustrates what the story is mainly about. Generally there are three objectives of main ideas: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain. Informative idea tells readers certain information that sometimes they have not known already. This sort of idea can easily be found in texts of news, letter, and announcement. Persuasive idea contains the tendency to have power to induce readers to act as what the author wants to. Texts that can be considered having persuasive idea are analytical exposition and hortatory texts. In contrast, entertaining idea leads to some entertainment that may cause readers to feel amused. Idea which is aimed at entertaining the readers can be seen in, among others, anecdote and spoof texts.



Second, identifying details means grasping the additional ideas and facts which elaborate the main idea. Supporting details provide the readers with more information about the main idea or subject of a passage. Details are actually information that assists readers to more completely understand the passage. In addition, they may guide them to find some answers to specific questions.

Third, inference refers to the reasoning involved in drawing a conclusion or making a logical judgment on the basis of circumstantial evidence and prior conclusions rather than on the basis of direct observation. Thus, inferring is establishing what is beyond an idea, sentence, or group of sentences by collecting hints and using knowledge and experience the readers already have. Determining inference is necessary because a text will not always provide some perfectly detailed information. Sometimes, readers therefore need to conclude the passage by themselves.

Fourth, understanding vocabulary means comprehending the real meaning of words in a text. Nation (2001: 241) in his study demonstrated that vocabulary knowledge is one of the best predictors of reading ability and the ability to acquire new information from texts. This implies that the knowledge of words and their meanings contributes to readers' level of comprehension. So, when one does not know what words mean, he cannot catch what the text actually informs.

Fifth, reference deals with the relation between a word or phrase and the object or idea it refers to. Referring is thus the process of identifying to what object, people,

or idea the particular word represents. This seems important to readers since writers usually use references in order that their works will flow smoothly. Some words are commonly represented in shorter forms by using pronoun or other groups of words. Readers hence have to be able to know what the referents truly express.

Obviously, aspects of reading are inseparable competencies that readers should have in order to fully comprehend a passage. They help readers find out the information and knowledge that an author presents in his written works. In relation to this study, the aspects of reading are in consideration of constructing the reading comprehension test.

#### **2.4. Attitude towards Language Learning on Reading Comprehension**

In a study investigating the influence of students' motivation and attitude towards their reading comprehension carried out by Herawati (2011), the role of attitude on the students' reading comprehension is evidently significant. This seemingly occurs as the way students perceive positively or negatively the process of learning language will influence the attempt to study about everything associated to the subject including improving their reading comprehension.

When the students feel that the learning process is joyful, they will produce more effort to achieve knowledge and skill learnt during the lesson. In learning reading comprehension, they will be eager to both directly and indirectly learn about identifying main idea and details, vocabulary, inferring and referring. Students

with positive attitude therefore will have bigger possibility to be skilled at getting messages contained in a piece of reading selection. Differently, students with negative attitude will remain not serious at getting involved in understanding passage. As a result, their reading comprehension achievement will remain unsatisfactory.

Other research conducted by Novianti (2006) on the correlation between students' attitudes in language learning and their achievement implies that attitude towards learning a language has relationship with students' reading comprehension. Although the study only focused on attitudes during the learning, assumingly it can be regarded as a representation that the students' attitude towards language learning consisting of the cognitive, affective, and behavioural aspects has an effect on their reading comprehension.

## **2.5. Theoretical Assumption**

The elaborated literature reviews above make the researcher presumes that students' attitude to language learning correlates with their reading comprehension. The students' attitude towards language learning will influence how they behave in the class whether favourably or unfavourably. More favourable learners will pay more attention to the teachers' explanation, relish the activities during English learning, and give more effort to improve their proficiency. In contrast, those who have unfavourable attitude will not fully care about the teacher as well as the subject and will be indolent to accomplish exercises. Those situations will absolutely lead to differences in the students'

reading comprehension. Students who possess positive attitude to English learning will have greater possibility to be more successful in their reading comprehension, whereas those with negative attitude towards learning English will achieve lower grades in the reading test.

## **2.6. Hypothesis**

Based on the theoretical assumption above, the hypothesis of this research is there was correlation between students' attitude to language learning and their reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 1 Sumberejo.

This chapter has elaborated concepts and findings reviewed from related literatures which are expected to contribute the findings of the research, including attitude and its components, attitude to language learning and its role in the process of learning, reading, and attitude to language learning on reading comprehension.