

1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background behind the problem, research questions, objectives, uses, and scope of the research. Definitions of terms are provided on the last part of this chapter to hinder inappropriate comprehension.

1.1 Background of the Problem

English language teaching has become one aspect of life that cannot be separated in the globalization era nowadays. The role of it seeks to develop learners' English proficiency for study, work, and leisure in order to provide them the opportunities for personal development in particular circumstances. It also helps non-English speaking countries to overcome the challenges of the rapidly changing and competitive knowledge in broader society. This perspective also enhances people knowledge and experience of life through the English medium. Hence, the area within teaching and learning process of English has become one special interest.

English is one of the foreign languages existed in Indonesia. English designated as the first foreign language in accordance with the decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 096/1967 December 12, 1967 (Wahyuni, 2011). The election of English as a first foreign language in Indonesia, among other foreign languages is based on several considerations. Rachmajanti (2008) states that our

national language cannot currently be used as a means of communication with the outside world in the context of foreign policy and to develop relationship with other nations. The fact that English is the language of international communication, the language of science, modern technology, trade, politics, and used in almost all fields, force us to be able to communicate in English. Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia gives a clear priority towards English among other languages to learn in school.

The role of English expected by the government will possibly be achieved well if the education system and its component working well. Rachmajanti (2008) believes that education plays an important role in improving the quality of human resources, which supports the development of the nation. Related to that, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia implies it in law (Undang Undang) Number 20 on 2003 on National Education System Chapter II, Section 3; National Education aims to develop potential students to become a man of faith, devoted to Almighty God, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, independent, and become democratic and accountable citizens. In addition to those goals, education is also expected to build proficient, professional, and aware of the universal development.

The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia had clearly realized that one way to achieve those goals could be implemented through English Learning in school nationally. Talebinezhad (2001) claims that English is one of the most important means for acquiring access to the world's intellectual and technical resources. This perspective provoke the society especially students to consider

English as a part of social aspect to comprehend world development progress better. Unfortunately, there is a difference between the objectives and its achievement of English learning results and process. There are many issues of English language learning to be fixed well by related sectors. Many studies had been addressed to found out where the problems rely. Yet, the findings barely cover and offer the best solution to the whole diversity of the problems faced by the students especially in Indonesia.

English in Indonesia has been taught since elementary school level up to the high school level. At least a student has gone through three levels of education namely elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school. Hence, it can be assumed that a single student in Indonesia has been studying English for nine years. Ideally, those years of learning experience could have created significant improvement in English usage, active or even passive. In fact, very few students achieved English well as expected by the curriculum. Moreover, based on the researcher experience during teaching practice, the researcher still found senior high school students who have difficulties to work on junior high school exercise. This phenomenon reflects a piece of problem appeared in Indonesia.

Maximizing the learning results of our English learning, many ways have been developed and improved, including language teaching techniques, learning theories, teaching materials, teaching approaches and methodologies, syllabus design, lesson plan etc. Though similar research of students' attitude has been undertaken in many ways, most of them are strongly investigated under western cultural assumptions (Lin, 1998). The researcher believes that there is little research that has been linked to the topic of how teaching and learning

environment affectively influenced students attitude especially in Indonesia. This fact may at least lead to the result that English language learning problems remain unsolved for certain time up to this moment. Moreover, students' attitude towards English learning has never been investigated well, which clearly creates such a misconception of what curriculum expected, especially teachers and students expectation.

In the field of foreign language teaching especially English, one aspect that occasionally becomes a foundation is student's attitudes toward target language. Kara (2009) assumes that attitudes understood as a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment. This may lead to how students respond English as a new strange matter in their life from the very first beginning. From the researcher's experience with foreign language teaching, it would appear that the role of student's attitudes is often having denied by the teacher. Hence, this denial creates a problem with the process and the results expected at the end. It appears as a bonus if the teachers drive themselves to find time to explore a bit of student's attitude toward target language being learned.

The issues of how student deal with English is a burden for the teachers, whether they work with students in classrooms considering English is something they do not want to learn or with students who are psychologically interested in English but experientially and physically having difficulties in it. Many researchers have tried to address it along the same issues, including Gardner and Lambert (1972) in Norris-Holt (2001) who says that learners may have two basic kinds of motivation. The first is integrative motivation, which refers to the desire of

language learners to acquire the language to communicate with in it satisfactorily and to gain closer contact in English. The second is instrumental motivation, which refers to the functional need for learners to acquire the language in order to fulfill some utilitarian purpose, such as applying a job, or a place at a university. The fact shown on the field is based on students' willing on learning English as mentioned before, but vice versa. Most of Indonesian students consider English as something terrible that they do not want to face. Numerous responses come as a feedback when teacher deny how students react inside their mind confronting English, English Language Teaching, and native speaker of it. Finally, each response students have will affect their achievement in second language learning.

The topic in this research emphasizes that the student's attitude and their activity in English language learning as a unity. Their attitudes are something that needs to be reviewed first in the language learning classroom before starting the learning and teaching process. Moreover, cultural differences and family background of the learners may contribute tremendously to the English learning. Tang (1999) assumes that in language learning, culture is a part of society often relegated at the end of a language teaching plan. She also explains that the obstacles may include the differences of learning conditions and teaching styles of the teacher in the previous school and learning styles differences between each students and differences in needs for language use by the students afterwards. Therefore, in order to improve the quality of second language learning, the researcher believes that those aspects should forcibly be taken care well by the teachers across this nation.

Learning second language require greater efforts since it covers many aspects in it. Tang (1999) states that language is culture. When someone decides to learn French, for example, he or she is not merely absorbing the linguistics aspects of the language, but everything to do with French and France. The same characteristics also happen to English language learning. The researcher assumes that the target language being learned by the learners may come with some cultural associations attached. By speaking the language, therefore, a learner automatically aligns themselves into the culture of the language (Tang, 1999). To speak a language correctly, one has to be able to think in that language, and thought is extremely powerful. The essence of this assumption would be greater if learners put themselves into the correct understanding of that language. It is merely difficult or even impossible if learners could not achieve English in his life. Therefore, to learn something new in students habit is needs further investigation on how they deal with it on the very first place.

Students' attitudes towards English considered as learning critical foundation to achieve some possible beneficial impacts start from the beginning of the course, during the process, and the outcomes expected written in syllabus and lesson plan. The diversity of the learners' cultural background and the various forms of English around the world is a reality (Talebinezhad, 2001). By the statement above, the researcher assumes that the teacher should prepare the effective way of teaching and learning as an initiation on handling it. The issues of like and dislike appears from the students should forcibly undergone nicely by the teachers for the sake of effective teaching and learning process and the goals of English language learning. In addition to that, teachers have some sort of choice as to whether

students' attitudes are to be included in the English language teaching or not. The researcher could agree no more that English language teaching and student's attitudes are extremely linked, and therefore it may be pointless and perhaps even impossible to make them learn English without considering how they feel towards it.

Learning English has its own standard of whether someone has acquired it well or not. Wu (2009) claims that Native speakers have tended to be regarded as the model of how English is used well. Native English speakers are often viewed around the world as the embodiment of the English standard. On the other words, non-native speakers are expected to have the native speaker's vocabulary, grammar, idioms, and culture. This paradigm is adopted in terms of the goal how English is should be mastered by the learners. Yet, it is difficult to find native speaker teaching English in Indonesia especially in Lampung Province. Even if there is, it is difficult for us to find them understand the appropriate way of teaching English in this nation. Most of students recognize English native speaker through the advance of technology covering movies, entertainment, advertisement, songs, magazines, etc. This phenomenon built constructive idea about English and the speaker of that language. Moreover, the issue of administration of National Examinations in Indonesia which is considered as the milestone whether students are going to graduate or not is dilemmatic problem for senior high school students. English is one of the subjects included in National Examinations. For the past few years, students are forced to be able to answer and pass the test. Unfortunately, the test only covers limited amount of English aspects

learned in schools: listening, structure, and reading. Therefore, it creates such different paradigm of how English is should be learned from the very beginning.

This research try to found out causes that may greatly become sort of English learning obstacles in Lampung, especially in Gisting subdistrict since the role of English education systems across regions are similar. Through short survey data analysis, students' attitudes about English, English language learning and native speakers of English in students' previous experiences are documented. It is the researcher's belief that better attitudes towards English and its aspects can have a beneficial impact on the process of attempting to help language learners in mastering English as a foreign language.

1.2 Research Questions

Concerning students' attitudes on English language learning, the researcher poses two sets of formulation of the problems as follows:

1. What are the students' attitudes toward English, English language learning, and native speaker of English at second grade of senior high schools students in Gisting subdistrict?
2. What factors influence the students' attitudes toward English, English language learning, and native speaker of English at the second grade of senior high schools students in Gisting subdistrict?

1.3 Objective of the Research

The research addresses exclusively the formulation of the problems above mentioned briefly as follows:

1. To figure out students' attitudes towards English, English language learning, and native speaker of English at second grade of Senior High Schools in Gisting subdistrict as the students' feedback of the teaching and learning that they encounter during academic career.
2. The second objective of this research is to investigate some factors that may have influenced students' attitudes toward English, English language learning and native speaker of English at the second grade of senior high schools students in Gisting subdistrict.

1.4 Use of the Research

In this study, the researcher investigates student's attitudes towards English, English language learning, and native speaker of English in Gisting subdistrict. There are two uses which are considered contributive factors briefly described as follow.

Theoretically, this research figures out certain attitudes from the students as feedback of teaching and learning process. Furthermore, their attitudes toward English, English language learning, and native speaker of English are considered as valuable information of the results of teaching and learning of English. It may reflect the quality of English teaching and learning in Gisting subdistrict area or even wider. Therefore, the results of this research became a logical consideration for the next research. In addition, it also can be used as a reference for the next researcher who will concentrate on students' attitudes, students' participation in teaching learning process and teacher teaching performance.

Practically, the use of the research is expected to become one important input for the teachers to improve their understanding towards students in terms of English as a feedback on the quality of the teaching that they encounter during their basic academic career. Additionally, the results of this study may have become one essential consideration on how the process of English language learning can be developed under the real condition of the students. Therefore, it will provide contributive thoughts on how the strategy and development in planning in implementing English language learning become effective and efficient in achieving the goal simultaneously.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research will investigate students' attitudes toward English, English language learning, and native speaker of English at second grade of four senior high schools in Gisting sub-district. It also figures out some causes that may have influence them. The object of the research covers four senior high schools with different background which will be further explained in the third chapter. The four senior high schools are SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Gisting, Madrasah Aliyah Mathla'ul Anwar Gisting, SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Alip, and SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Gisting. This goal becomes the notion of asking students to provide feedback on the quality of the teaching that they encounter during academic career.

To answer the first research question, the researcher in this study presents 30-item questionnaire designed specifically to examine students' attitudes. The questionnaire consisted of three parts, targeting the first research questions in this study. The first part included 10 items, investigating students' attitudes towards

English. The second part is also consisted by 10 items exploring students' attitudes towards English Language Learning. The rest of the last part concerns on their attitudes towards native speaker of English. Then, the results of the questionnaire will show us which students from which senior high schools have positive or negative attitude. Furthermore, five students with the highly negative attitude and five students with highly positive will have interview session. The interview session is taken to answer the second research question related to their attitude.

1.6 Definitions of Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, definitions or terms are provided as follows:

1. Attitude refers to the human tendency involving certain feelings in responding to an object and it is born as the effect of experiences (Mamun, 2012).
2. English refers to the international language as lingua franca of the past century and considered as dominant language or in some instances even the required international language of communications, science, information technology, business, advertisement, aviation, entertainment, and diplomacy.
3. English language learning refers to the conscious process of mastering English through various facilities necessarily required to provoke better acquisition of the language.

4. Native speaker of English refers to someone who has learned and used English from early childhood as the primary means of concept formation and communication. (Wong, 2009).

In this chapter, the researcher has explained several points as the main reason of why this study should be conducted. To be clearer, this chapter is divided into sub-points; they are background of the problem, formulation of research questions, objectives of the research, uses of the research, scope of the research, and definition of terms.