PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATION OF STUDENTS’ MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENGLISH LEARNING: A STUDY IN SURABAYA SHIPBUILDING STATE POLYTECHNIC (POLITEKNIK PERKAPALAN NEGERI SURABAYA/PPNS)

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Abstract, Gardner and Lambert mentioned that attitude and motivation could be the key to successful language learning. Most learners have a positive attitude and high level of motivation to be successful in developing proficiency in English. Student’s motivation and attitude towards the successful acquisition of English is complex. There are a number of factors which contribute to increase motivation such as the teacher and the learning method. Speaking is regarded is the most important skill to master. In order to increase students’ participation in learning, it is regarded important to make some adjustments in teaching English such as redefining the target of learning, improving method and approach of learning.

Keywords: attitudes, English, learning

Actually, the issue of students’ attitude in language learning is not new at all. But it still makes me curious to find out what my students think about English which is one of compulsory subjects taught in polytechnic. All students think that English is important but still there is assumption about English lesson that English is one of difficult subjects together with mathematics. English bears a negative stigma for an unclear reason. Psychologically it makes language learning less successful because the existence of personal barrier inside.

There is no doubt that in the field of engineering English language is of paramount importance in the academic and professional lives of the engineering students. For example, Pendergrass (2001) point out that English is an essential tool in the engineering education and, therefore,” integrating English into engineering, science and math courses is an effective way to improve the performance of engineering students in oral and written communication”. However, at Shipbuilding Polytechnic (PPNS) engineering students have been described as low-competent in the English language which is viewed based on preliminary TOEIC and result of Industrial Advisory Board meeting about industry requirement on qualified graduate of PPNS. As a result of their poor performance in English, most of them have been rejected when applying to work. They may be accepted but in low level salary jobs.

There are many factors that might cause the students’ proficiency in English achieved. Foreign language learning might be influenced something from inside of the learner (internal factor) and something from outside of the learner himself (external factor). Not only internal and external factors, but also there is assumption about what makes some students acquire the
language easier and better than others. A possible variable would lie on the issue of gender differences whereby girls learn better than boys which the rough assumption is based on the fact that the girls are more talkative than the boys.

One internal factor is called as the motivation factor (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardener, 1985). It is believed to play an important role. They mentioned that attitude and motivation might be the key to successful language learning. Evidence for positive correlation of English proficiency with positive attitude and being highly motivated towards learning English has been accumulating, for both instrumental and integrative (Brown, 2007). So, it can be concluded that some people who have good quality attitude and motivation towards the language will acquire the language better and easier than the others who do not have the same good quality.

The external factors could be the teacher, learning materials, learning interest, social need or even parental background. Studies of motivation in second/foreign language show that student motivation is influenced by factors like teachers, classroom climate and assessment (Ghengdesh, 2010; Kikuchi, 2009). Unfortunately, the skill of motivating learners to learn second/foreign language is reported by many teachers as the most important but difficult skill in teaching, after managing classroom (Dornyei, 2001).

Beyond those aspects, generally, teaching and learning language in Asian culture is different from one from Western culture. Teaching foreign language especially in Asia, including Indonesia, is characterized by teacher-centered learning, rote learning, which students expected to be passive recipient of knowledge and memory-based learning are still being practiced (Richmond, 2007). Even Ng Aik Kwang in Richmond (2007) stated that passive education is applied mostly in Asia because of Asian characteristics. The Asian person is psychologically dependent on the in-group where social order and harmony are ultimate. Personal uniqueness is regarded less important than the group or communal identity. These have been thought to be obstacles for students to develop their initiative to learn independently since they have less opportunity to practice and analyze critically. This also makes them unable to apply their knowledge in the real contexts.

**ATTITUDES**

Since attitude also play an important role in the success of language learning. It is better to discuss what is meant by attitude in this paper. Wenden (1991) proposed a definition of the concept “attitudes”. He states that the term attitudes includes three components namely, cognitive, affective and behavioral. A *cognitive* component is developed from of the beliefs and ideas or opinions about the object of the attitude. The *affective* one refers to the feeling and emotions that one has towards an object, 'likes' or 'dislikes', 'with' or 'against'. Finally, the *behavioral* component is comprised from one's consisting actions or behavioral intentions towards the object.

From a different side, McGuire (cited in Oscamp, 1977) analyzed the relation between those three components. He suggests that they are so closely interrelated as “that theorists who insist on distinguishing them should bear the burden of providing that the distinction is worthwhile”. This made Van Els (1984) concludes that “it does not really matter whether all or only one of the three components are measured; the relationship between the components is so close that sufficient information on an attitude can be obtained by measuring only one component, no matter which learning a language is closely related to the attitudes towards the languages (Starks & Paltridge, 1996).
PROCEDURE
When questionnaires are handed to pupils, researchers also carried out the interviews. The interviews were carried out with one pupil at a time. Before the interviews, the interviewees were told that the interview would be recorded and that nobody else would listen to the tape since it would be destroyed after being studied and analyzed. All interviews took place in a school environment. This might be considered a rather stiff and unsocial environment for carrying out interviews, but it actually turned out well and we managed to create a quite relaxed and pleasant atmosphere. Opened and relaxed way of meeting the pupils contributed much to the success of the interview. But the pupils own very open and enthusiastic way of responding to the work is also supporting, which resulted in a good communication between researcher and respondent.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Concerning the students’ English language attitudes, interesting findings were obtained. With regard to their attitudes towards the social value of English, the findings reveal that most the students responded positively to the idea that “English is important for their future”. It is not surprising that the students agreed that English language is very important to the future welfare economically at least. In short, people with English competency will get bigger salary, more money, than ones who are without it. Because they might be aware of the international role English language has been playing on the world arena as the language of technology and science, business, industry and commerce, tourism, international diplomacy, advertising, communication and the internet. English is still badly needed in Indonesia for the purposes of communicating with the world, education, acquisition of technology and development at large.

In regards to the students’ attitudes towards the educational status of English, the results revealed English should be the medium of instruction in the tertiary schools. Such results revealed that engineering students wished to use English as a medium of instruction in universities. This might stem from the students’ needs, particularly in scientific sections like engineering, to be equipped with a good level in English prior to entering higher education. For example, one student during the interview clearly admitted that because they finished secondary schooling with poor level in both language and communication skills they failed to cope with the academic requirements at the university.

To identify the students’ attitudes towards English language learning, the respondents were asked a list of statements in the questionnaire. The results showed that over 100% of them considered “Studying English is important” with several supporting reasons like to study international language, to get good jobs, to get knowledge, to continue studying abroad, etc. 43% of the respondents get relatively negative impression towards learning English since they were in elementary school until senior high school. Their negative impression is because of the teacher, difficulty in learning grammar, lack of self confidence, vocabulary and speaking practice.

The result reflected that students believed that speaking is the most important skill to master. Even they wish they could speak English fluently as they thought that speaking ability is the most important thing to learn foreign language (80.6%). But most of them think that English is too challenging for them to competent because of some difficulties such as: lack of opportunities to use English in their daily lives. Grammar and vocabulary are regarded as the most difficult aspects to understand in language learning (88.7%).
Students will react to difficulties of learning by asking teacher (24%), asking friends (38%), learning independently more (22%), taking course (2%) and ignoring them (14%). These reactions show how students try to get solution when they got problems in English learning.

As adult learners, students also have opinion about how to learn English effectively. The research shows what important things in learning English such as patient and motivated teacher, strong willingness to learn, face to face learning, games and films, listening and speaking practice, increasing vocabulary, etc.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The study findings can be used as a beginning point for providing some pedagogical implications that should be taken into consideration by both English instructors and syllabus designers. The implications are as follow:

a. Curriculum and syllabus

The study showed that engineering students are instrumentally motivated. Therefore, English language courses should be designed to fulfill this purpose. Students should take English courses which enable them to function effectively at both their academic and occupational settings. So, to fulfill these requirements English in Surabaya Shipbuilding State Polytechnic needs to redefine English learning.

English used to be taught into English 1 (semester 1), English 2 (semester 2) and English 3 (semester 5). English for engineering purposes is taught in English 1 and 2. English 3 is focused on professionals needs such as one for meeting, presentation and job interview.

The result of the research suggests improvement on the design of syllabus. Students need to be able to fulfill requirement from stake holders to have certain score of international English tests such as TOEIC and TOEFL. Not only fulfilling that requirement, but also they still need language skills to work. So, English needs to be taught for academic and professional purposes. The answer of the needs is implemented into changing of English teaching. English needs to be taught for general purposes in English 1 and English 2 in semester 1 and 2 also. Then, English for specific purposes will be explored in English 3 and 4. This changing is important to give more time of learning, more material to master and more time to maintain students’ skill.

b. Learning material and method

Students need a lot of practice to use the language, especially speaking. So, the composition of language skill to teach need to be adjusted. Speaking will get more allocated time to practice than other skills. This policy is applied in English 1. This is not only to give more opportunity to speaking practice but also to improve student motivation and attitude, since ability to speak English is expected to increase motivation and attitude of student. English 2 will focus on speaking and reading skills but it still gives portion to writing and listening because integrated skills teaching is regarded the best method to apply. The difference of English 2 from English 1 is on the smaller portion of speaking practice. Students learn more reading. Students will learn all skills in the same portion in English 3 and 4.

Students need intensive communication with the teacher, not only communication in the classroom. To fulfill this need, learning may be facilitated with technology. Electronic learning (e-learning) using internet or social media is potential to increase communication. This will require teacher’s creativity to develop material and to adjust teaching method. On the other hand, this may attract students’ attention more to learn because of broader access to learning sources.

To sum up, the current study had been conducted to identify engineering students’ motivation and attitudes toward the English
language. The findings indicated that the students have certain reasons for learning the language and hold significant attitudes toward the use of English language that should be considered by English instructors and syllabus designers in preparing their materials, curriculum and teaching methods.

REFERENCES