

Conference Paper

The Attitudes of Junior High School Students Towards Indonesia Language

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Abstract

Aims of the research are to ascertain: (1) the belief and knowledge of Junior High School students towards Bahasa Indonesia; (2) the assessment of Junior High School students towards Bahasa Indonesia; and (3) the trend of Junior High School Students in acting by using Bahasa Indonesia. The research samples were 120 students of public Junior High School in Surakarta with closed questionnaire. The validity of instrument applied to construct and empirical validity by doing the estimate applying the formula of Product Moment Correlation whereas the reliability of the instrument was assessed by using the calculation of Alpha. Data analysis was conducted descriptively through the following steps of (1) coding the data; (2) tabulating data to calculate the frequency of the answers; (3) calculating the percentage of each answer; and (4) interpreting or giving meaning. It can be concluded that students of Junior high School: 1) have positive belief towards Bahasa Indonesia, 2) have positive assessment towards Bahasa Indonesia, and 3) have a tendency to take positive action by using Bahasa Indonesia.

Keywords: attitudes, junior high school, the assessment, the trend

1. Introduction

The role of Bahasa Indonesia (BI) as a means of knowledge, technology, art, and the expression of other elements of culture in the life of Indonesian people provides an illustration of the importance of the language to our society [1]. Therefore, the efforts of coaching and developing Bahasa Indonesia needs to be improved and effective. The efforts of fostering are addressed to the speakers whereas the efforts of developing are addressed to the language in each aspect.

The fostering of language includes two main problems, namely the improvement of the skill in using the language and the positive attitude towards Bahasa Indonesia. The fostering target, covers two directions, which are vertical direction and horizontal direction [2]. The vertical direction of fostering target is addressed to the young

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generation, including junior high school students. The horizontal direction of fostering target is addressed to the wide community.

Language attitude is closely related to language behavior. Language attitude is important in predicting language behavior of a person [3]. An attitude towards language, according to Oppenheim is not the only factor which determines behavior, but it influences someone's speech behavior [4]. This perspective is supported by Eastman, Fasold, and Edwards [5-7].

According to the above statement, the effort of understanding the attitude of Junior High School students towards Bahasa Indonesia becomes a significant thing, both for the interest of language education and teaching at a school, language counseling, and various interests related to National language policy.

Nowadays, the research about the attitude of Junior High School students towards Bahasa Indonesia has not been conducted much yet. As far as the author's knowledge, a thorough research about language attitude has only been conducted, which examined language attitude among university students and bachelors in Jakarta [8]; language attitude in Islamic boarding school [3]; and language attitude in the university in Jakarta towards new vocabularies of Bahasa Indonesia [9]. This becomes the main reason which encourages the researchers to conduct this research. Moreover, there are a number of reasons encouraging in conducting this research. First, there are many people who think that the important position of Bahasa Indonesia is not due to the quality but as a system of communication, or due to its richness of vocabularies, or due to its flexibility in its sentence order but because of the consideration of politics, demography, and economy [1]. Second, students have a role which really determines in providing efforts so that Bahasa Indonesia will be able to play its function.

This research will provide the real description of the attitude of Junior High School students towards Bahasa Indonesia. The result of this research hopefully can be used as a valuable input towards the efforts to realize effective teaching and fostering of Bahasa Indonesia.

2. Methods

The research was conducted in public Junior High Schools in Surakarta by applying survey method and aimed at giving attitudes of Junior High School students towards Bahasa Indonesia. The population of this research was all students of public Junior High School in Surakarta. The research samples were 120 students which were determined by applying the technique of multi-stage cluster random sampling.

The technique of data collection applied was a closed questionnaire. The validity of instrument applied to construct and empirical validity by doing the estimate applying the formula of Product Moment Correlation whereas the reliability of the instrument was assessed by using the calculation of Alpha.

Data analysis was conducted descriptively through the following steps of (1) coding the data; (2) tabulating data to calculate the frequency of the answers; (3) calculating the percentage of each answer; and (4) interpreting or giving meaning.

3. Results

The main findings in this research were classified into three findings related to 1) the belief and knowledge of Junior High School students towards Bahasa Indonesia, 2) the assessment of Junior High School students towards Bahasa Indonesia, and 3) the trend to take action by using Bahasa Indonesia. The following is the description of each finding.

3.1. The belief and knowledge of junior high school students towards Bahasa Indonesia

The belief of students towards Bahasa Indonesia is reflected from their responses towards some statement as seen on the table 1. The students' answer to the statement number 1 hints a positive belief towards the complete vocabularies of BI. If it is related to the response of students towards the statement number 2, it can be said that students have positive attitude related to the democratic attitude of BI. Related to the students' response to the statement number 3, it shows that students have positive belief in the ability of Bahasa Indonesia to become the language of instruction of knowledge. There is 8.3% of students who disagree with the statement number 3. It is possible because on the subject of English language most of the students find it difficult searching for the equivalence of English vocabularies in BI.

The responses of students towards the statement number: 4, 5, and 6 support the beliefs which are reflected in the responses over the statement number 1, 2 and 3. Students believe that the good mastery of BI will make it easier for them in getting a job. Those beliefs result in a faith that to improve the quality of the users, BI needs to be fostered through various media. Related to those efforts, 66.7% of students disagree towards the statement number 7. The tendency to disagree can be interpreted as their loyalty towards BD as the mother tongue. This finding is in accordance with Suhardi's

statement which stated that there is a strong emotional binding in someone towards his mother tongue [8]. However, the statement of 33.3% students who agree does not necessarily describe their negative attitude towards BD, because as mentioned by Garvin and Mathiot, positive attitude is shown by the existence of 3 related things such as loyalty, pride, and the awareness of language norm [10] From the above description, it can be said that students have positive belief towards BI not only to BI itself but also to BI in its relation to BD and English.

3.2. The assessment of junior high school students towards Bahasa Indonesia

The positive attitude of students which is reflected in their belief towards BI results in some assessment towards BI. Those assessments can be described through the students' answer towards a number of the following statement on table 2.

The responses of students towards the statement number 8 show that there is a positive assessment towards BI. When traced, it shows that this assessment is strongly related to the students' belief towards the statement number 5. The students' assessment towards the advantages of learning language is based on their assessment of the statement of the habits of using language inappropriately will damage BI. This reality indicates that students are aware that there is norm which must be obeyed. This finding is in accordance with the statement of Garvin and Mathiot that the awareness of the existence of norms will encourage someone to use language carefully, appropriately, and properly [10].

Other factors which cause students to have positive assessments towards the effort of learning BI is that there is positive assessment towards grammar rules, spelling order, and the completeness of BI. That assessment brings up an unhappy feeling of students if BI does not absorb many vocabularies of a foreign language. This finding is in accordance with the statement of Garvin and Mathiot, loyalty of language encourages someone to maintain his language independence [10]. From the analysis of the above findings, it can be stated that students have positive value towards BI.

3.3. The tendency to act

belief and the assessment of someone towards language are strongly related to the tendency of someone's behavior in using language [11, 12]. Language attitude, either positive or not, determines someone's tendency in having behavior by using language

[3]. The language attitude of Junior High School students can be traced from the result of research towards their tendency in having behavior by using language as explained on table 3

Referring to the students' responses towards statement number 16, it can be stated that students have the tendency to act by using positive BI. This causes students tend to more prioritize BI than a foreign language. This is in accordance with the statement of Oka that the existence of BI teaching in the middle of society, one of them, is to be media of BI fostering [13]. Ten students who less agree towards the statement can be suspected due to the existence of International schools.

The positive assessment towards BI results in the tendency of 91.7% and 8.3% students obey the rules when using language. This finding is in accordance with the statement of Suhardi (1996:134) that the attitude of language is tightly related to the activity of using language and the awareness of norms in using language. Also, it is in accordance with the statement of [4-7], they state the attitude towards language will influence someone's speech behavior. Students show the tendency of positive acting using BI through the willing to translate foreign language books into BI, to eliminate the elements of foreign language on the nameplate on the road and to do programs of translating on a foreign language TV program. From the above findings, it can be concluded that Junior High School students have the positive tendency of using BI.

4. Conclusion

Based on the discussion of research result above, it can be concluded that: (1) Junior High School students have positive belief and knowledge towards Bahasa Indonesia; (2) Junior High School students have positive assessment towards Bahasa Indonesia; and (3) Junior High School students have the positive tendency of acting by using Bahasa Indonesia. Based on the conclusion, it can be suggested that (1) positive attitudes need to be implemented towards Bahasa Indonesia to students of Junior High School through counseling; and (2) the counseling is better to be done through various media and be conducted continuously.

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