

Research Paper

# Students' Attitudes towards the Concept of English Mastery for the 4.0 Industrial Revolution Era

Indah Sari

University of Pembangunan Panca Budi, Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia

---

## ABSTRACT

The study is aimed at describing the attitudes made by 2nd semester students majoring in Cultivation of Plantation Study Program, School of Agricultural Science in Plantation Agribusiness when they are faced with the concept of 4.0 Industrial Revolution Era and have to challenge with the English mastery to face such era. There were 100 subjects involved in the study, who were registered at 2018/2019 academic year; they were chosen using the proportioned random sampling technique. Meanwhile, the data collection for obtaining primary data used questionnaires. The results showed that the students' attitudes to face the 4.0 Industrial Revolution era were positive in which they possessed all the three attitudes in the learning process, namely cognitive, affective, and conative attitudes.

**Keywords:** Attitude, Mastery, English, 4.0 Industrial Revolution

## INTRODUCTION

The 4.0 industrial revolution brings various changes in all fields as well as impacts on every aspect of human life not only in developed countries but also in developing countries like Indonesia. Graduates of Higher Education in Indonesia are required to become strategic agents for developments which bring Indonesia into competitive, diverse, advanced and civilized nation. The Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education is given the duty to oversee Indonesian universities to prepare generations who are able to be competitive, adaptive, flexible, creative, and highly innovative nationally and internationally; they are also hoped to be agents of change, possessing Indonesian cultural characters.

The revolution is also indicated by an increase in the digital manufactures driven by four aspects, namely: 1) the increase of data volume, computerized power, and connectivity; 2) the emergence

of analysis, capability and business intelligence; 3) the occurrence of new forms of interaction between humans and machines; and 4) repairs. Changes can be gradual or systematic and one of the most obvious forms of change is globalization. In addition, interactions among individuals, communities, and nations do occur rapidly.

Such a rapid industrial revolution will encourage to increase the skills of human resources who must acquire the information technology and master the international languages, especially English. Language mastery is very important because, during the 4.0 industrial revolution, interactions among countries would happen using English in the communicative process. Learning individuals from different cultural backgrounds requires a medium of communication. A goal of second language (L2) and foreign language (FL) is to facilitate better communication and understanding among them coming from different cultural backgrounds and

languages (Yashima and Zenuk-nishide, 2004).

English has become a dominant language in business, finance and banking, science and technology, popular culture and international relations around the world. It is widely accepted that fluency in English is a key to success in life. A student's attitude toward learning English is a leading predictor of success (Nuri, 2010). English language skills that a person must have in the communication process are listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Mastery of English is closely related to one's attitude in learning it. Learning attitude is a tendency to make a response in certain ways to the surrounding world, both in the form of individuals and certain objects.

Language skills in the curriculum in schools usually cover four skills and each skill is closely related to each other in a variety of ways. The four skills are basically a single entity, or commonly called in Indonesia as *catur tunggal*. Furthermore, each skill is also closely related to the thought processes that underlie the language. A person's language reflects his mind and the more skilled a person speaks the brighter and clearer the mind has he. Skills can only be mastered by practice and practice, so practicing language skills also means thinking skills.

## RESEARCH APPROACHES

### Attitude

Motivation and attitude provide primary breakdown learning language 2 (hereafter L2) and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process (Oroujlou and Vahedi, 2011). Attitude is an act that is based on the establishment and is one of the important factors in supporting the activity process. Attitude can be defined as a predisposition or tendency to make a response in certain ways to the surrounding world, both in the form of individuals and certain objects.

Attitude gives direction to a person's act. But, in this case, it does not mean that

all his acts are the same during his activities. Attitude is an effective internal symptom in the form of a tendency to react or respond (or it is commonly called *response tendency*) in a way that is relatively fixed to the object of people, goods among others.

Students' attitudes to a lesson may be negative or positive, depending on their experiences (Nur, 2010). Positive attitudes can be reflected in the acts of paying attention, having approaches, showing likes, expecting certain objects and receiving conditions. For negative attitudes, the students' tendency is that they do not pay attention, stay away, hate, do not expect something in accordance with the existing object and refuse. All this can lead to student learning difficulties since these negative attitudes do not expect something desired according to the object that exists and they refuse or do not want to accept. In addition, the attitude is a stimulus in which a tendency means to react in a certain way to a stimulus or situation faced, both concerning the people, objects, or situations being relevant to him.

To better explain the context of attitudes, it needs to be distinguished in advance the function of attitudes and events. The characteristics of the attitude include the evaluation aspect that comes from the affective components, while the incident is not included in the emotional evaluation. Therefore, the attitude is relatively constant and rather difficult to change. If there is a change in attitude means there is a strong pressure and can cause changes in attitude through certain processes. Furthermore, it can be said that attitude is a collection of thoughts, beliefs and knowledge. But, in addition, it has negative and positive evaluations that are emotional in nature, which are caused by components of affection.

The attitude can be positive and/or negative; the first refers to a tendency to approach, like, and expect a certain object while the second is linked to a tendency to move away, avoid, hate, and dislike certain objects. People behaving in a certain way

tend to accept or to refuse, which is based on the assessment of certain objects, either useful or valuable, or not. If someone considers an object "good", for example, meaning he/she has a positive attitude, but if the object is considered "bad for me" then he/she has a negative attitude. Positive attitude is associated with academic success, yet it does not guarantee academic success. Even if the students' attitudes towards the course are positive, they may not be successful all the time. Unsuccessful students having positive attitudes may not be enough for them to be successful (Sari, 2008). Furthermore, it is found that girls have more positive attitudes toward learning English than boys; girls are also more inclined to bilingualism (Dabbagh and Khajehpour).

The components of attitude are principally cognitive, affective, and behaviour. The cognitive may relate to what is believed and what someone thinks about certain objects, facts, knowledge, and beliefs about objects. The affective consists of all feelings or emotions of an object, especially judgment. The growing sense of pleasure of one's reality towards the object of attitude. The deeper the affective is, the more happy people will be towards the object of attitude. The last component can link to someone's readiness to react or to his tendency to act on objects. When someone is pleasant to an object then he/she has the tendency to approach it.

The attitude has the following functions, such as, as the *self-adjustment*, in which people tend to develop attitudes that will help achieve their goals maximally, as the *self-defense*, in which attitude can protect a person from the threat of acknowledging the reality about him, as the *value for expression*, in which attitude expresses positive basic values of a person,

exhibits image, and self-actualization, and as the *knowledge*, in which attitude helps someone set a *standard* evaluation of something. The standard describes the rules, clarity, and stability of a person's personal framework in dealing with objects or events around him.

The levels of student learning attitudes are divided into receiving, responding, and valuing. Receiving is associated with willingness to participate in a phenomenon or in a special stimulus, for example, in learning process in class. The operational words that can be used for formulating indicators are to ask, to mention, to follow, and to select. Responding may be described when students not only attend a phenomenon but also react to it. Valuing may mean that students are subject to to a particular object or phenomenon.

The factors that influence the attitude of learning may come from internal and external factors. The internal factors can be understood when someone cannot capture all external stimuli through his perception. Therefore, through the surroundings he must choose which stimulus will be brought near and which one will be shunned. This choice is determined by the motives and tendencies that exist in him. Therefore, someone forms a positive attitude towards something and arranges a negative attitude towards others. In this case, the internal factors influence someone to feel. The external factors that determine the attitude include the *nature of the object* proposed by the attitude goal, the *authority* of people who express attitudes, the *nature of the people or groups* that support this attitude, the *communication media* that are used to convey attitudes and the *situation* when the attitude is formed.

Table 1. Indicators of attitude

Variable	Indicators	Descriptors
Student's attitude	Cognitive	To believe, to have ideas, to master, and to comprehend concept.
	Affective	To learn seriously, to like reading and learning.
	Connative	To ask, to do assignments, and to respond to questions.

## Language Learning Attitude

Language, especially English, is a significant instrument in the fields, such as,

scientific communications, business world, cultural interchange, political issues among others. It is widely accepted that fluency in English is a key to success in life. Motivation, attitudes, and set of beliefs, about learning are factors that can influence the efficiency of students in language classes. Language is directly associated with success in language classes and students believe that they can have obstacles if they cannot learn language successfully. Negative attitude and lack of motivation can lead to obstacles in learning a language. But a student's negative attitudes can be changed and turned into positive ones to get a positive result. Having a positive attitude towards learning a language is a good start to learn a language.

Some important elements that characterize the notion of learning are: Learning is a change in behavior in which the changes can lead to a better behavior, but it also is likely to lead to worse behavioral possibilities. In addition, learning is a change that occurs through training or experience, in the sense, that changes caused by growth or maturity are not considered as learning outcomes. There are several variables that affect language learning, namely: level of learner development, age, attitude, and motivation.

Learning is an experiential process through exercises experienced by individuals from having no knowledge to knowledgeable. In addition, learning is the process by which an individual changes his/her behavior as a result of experience. The followings are the main elements playing roles in the learning process:

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of learning begins because there is a goal to be achieved and it appears to fulfill a need. Learning act is directed towards achieving purpose and to fulfill something needed. Something to do with learning will be efficient if it is directed towards individual's clear and meaningful goals.

### **2. Readiness**

To be able to do a learning act, either a child or an individual should have both physical and psychological readiness, leading to readiness in the form of maturity to do something, as well as mastery of knowledge and skills which can be called as the underlying skills.

### **3. Situation**

Learning activities take place in learning situations that involve the place, the surrounding (or environment), the tools and materials studied, the people involved in learning activities, and the conditions of students who learn. The smoothness and results of learning are influenced by the situation, although for individuals and at certain times something aspect of this situation is more dominant while in other times or individuals other aspects are more influential.

### **4. Interpretation**

In dealing with situations, individuals make interpretations, for example, they see the relationship between the components of the learning situation, understand the meaning of the relationship and connect it with the possibility of achieving goals. Based on these interpretations, they may arrive at a conclusion that they cannot reach the goal.

### **5. Response**

Stick to the results of the interpretation whether individuals may or may not achieve the expected goal, then they respond. The response might be a *trial and error*, or careful efforts and planning, or they may stop their efforts to achieve goals.

### **6. Consequences**

Every effort would gain result or consequences of success or failure; the response or student learning efforts undergo the same. If students succeed in their learning, they will feel happy, satisfied, and will increase their enthusiasm to do the next learning endeavor.

### **7. Reaction to failure**

In addition to success, other possibilities obtained by students in learning are failure. This causes feelings of sadness and disappointment. Students' reactions to learning failures can vary. Failure can

reduce enthusiasm and minimize the effort in the next learning but failure arouses enthusiasm that multiplies to redeem and covers up the failure.

Factors that influence students' learning are endogenous and exogenous factors as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Endogenous and exogenous factors in the learning process**

No.	Factors influencing learning process	
1.	Endogenous factors	physic, psychology, intelligence and interest, talent, motivation, maturity, and personality
2.	Exogenous factors	a. family (economic conditions, emotional relationship between parents and child, and way to educate child); b. school; c. other environmental factors.

## METHOD

This study used a qualitative descriptive design and there were 65 subjects who were students of plantation agribusiness plantation study program; they were given questionnaires during the research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the study (see also Table 3) it was found that all respondents studied English for more than 5

years and promised that they would not stop learning even after they finished college. They believe that learning, reading, and using English everyday increased their mastery in the international language. In addition, most of the respondents stated that they were bored when they studied subjects they did not like; however, they were happy with English lesson. When they finished answering the exams correctly, they could erase their difficulties.

**Table 3. Percentage of Students' Responses to Questionnaires**

No.	Questionnaire Items	Percentage
1.	Study English in more than 5 years	100%
2.	Believe that study English will improve the English skill (Yes)	65%
3.	Stop studying English after graduation (No)	100%
4.	Believe that reading English texts will improve English skill (Yes)	100%
5.	Get bored with the un-favorite lessons	88%
6.	Believe that English can be applied daily	89%
7.	Like to study English	78%
8.	Answer the test correctly (Happy)	92%
9.	Feel happy when teacher explains the lesson	87%
10.	Study truely	82%
11.	Accomplish the assignment (Yes)	100%
12.	Ask for questions frequently	71%
13.	Be active when having difficulties in learning (approaching teachers)	68%
14.	Accomplish the assignment before the lesson begins (Yes)	83%
15.	Do the assignment when the lesson begins (No)	47%

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

### Conclusions

The respondents have indicators in the learning attitudes that are cognitive attitude, which they believe that learning English can improve their ability to master the international language and most respondents understand the concept of learning English. With reference to the affective attitude, most students are serious in learning and love to read or to learn English in class and at homes. In case of conative attitude, most respondents often try to seek solution if they have difficulties regarding the materials taught by lecturers,

always complete the task, and always respond to answer the lecturer's questions.

### Suggestions

Three suggestions can be drawn; first, students should develop their cognitive attitudes and self-reliance when they learn English, and should understand the concept that learning English can improve their ability to master this international language which is very important in the current era of 4.0 industrial revolution. Second, students should be more affective to increase the level of seriousness and fondness of reading English material. Last, students should be more aware of their attitude in learning English because awareness can increase

their sense of responsibility which should be owned by students when they have to complete the assignments given by lecturers. More importantly, they should actively ask for questions when they have difficulties and should work harder in answering / responding to their English lecturer's questions.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to deliver gratitude to the University of Pembangunan Panca Budi as well as to the Cultivation of Plantation Study Program, School of Agricultural Science in Plantation Agribusiness, which gave moral support to carry out this research. The author also thanks Muhammad Ali Pawiro who has proofread and edited the earlier version of the manuscript into the English version.

#### REFERENCES

- Dabbagh, S. and M. Khajepour, "Attitudes and Motivation in learning English as

Second Language in high school students," *Procedia - Soc. Behav. Sci.*, vol. 15, pp. 1209–121.

- Nur, S. Ö. Ö. "The relationship between the attitudes towards mathematics and learning styles," vol. 9, pp. 644–648, 2010.
- Nuri, M. "An evaluation of students' attitudes toward English language learning in terms of several variables," vol. 9, pp. 913–918, 2010.
- Oroujlou, N. and M. Vahedi, "Motivation, attitude, and language learning," *Procedia - Soc. Behav. Sci.*, vol. 29, pp. 994–1000, 2011.
- Sari, Indah. 2008. "Students' motivation and attitudes towards learning a second language.
- Yashima, T. and L. Zenuk-nishide, "The Influence of Attitudes and Affect on Willingness to Communicate and Second Language Communication," no. March, pp. 119–152, 2004.

How to cite this article: Sari I. Students' attitudes towards the concept of English mastery for the 4.0 industrial revolution era. *International Journal of Research and Review*. 2019; 6(8):369-374.

\*\*\*\*\*