

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents: (1) the background, (2) the problems of the study, (3) the objectives of the study, and (4) the significance of the study.

#### **1.1. Background**

English is used in many activities in life. Nowadays, English is a global communication that is used by people around the world for many activities. According to Richard (2007), English is the language of globalization, international communication, commerce and trade media, and also pop culture. Crystal (2004) argues that English plays an official or working role in the proceedings of most other major international society gatherings, in all parts of the world. Therefore, it is important for people to learn English, because English is used in every aspect of the society life.

Furthermore, English becomes one of the important subjects to be mastered in Indonesia. Matarrima and Hamdan (2011) state that teaching English has increasingly become important as a first foreign language in Indonesia. In addition, Sari and Saun (2001) state that English has become an important subject from junior high school up to senior high school. It is undeniable that English is regarded very important to be mastered so that English is taught from Elementary to University level. It can be concluded that English is an international language and its position is foreign language too

There are some factors affecting learning the language. Shams (2008) says that in foreign language learning context, there are various factors that influence the learning process such as motivation, attitudes, anxiety, learning achievements, talents, skills, age,

individuality, etc. Dehbozorgi (2012) claims that attitude is a directly unobserved hypothetical construct and must be inferred from a measurable response which reflect and evaluate positive or negative attitude. According to Bartram (2010), in the case of attitudes, socio psychological research has indicated that learners holding positive attitudes towards the second language, its speakers and its culture are more likely to succeed in acquiring the second language than those learners who hold negative attitudes. Moreover, learners with positive attitudes are likely to have these attitudes strengthened by success in the acquisition of the second language, whereas negative attitudes may be reinforced by a lack of success. To conclude, the language attitude is one of the most important factors in English learning process.

Language attitude is an attitude toward a language and the speakers of that language. According to Crystal (1997), language attitude is the feelings people have about their own language or the language of others. Fasol (1984) argues that in other words, language attitude is distinguished from other attitudes through their object. Huguet & Madariaga (2005) say that people pondered on the role and meaning of language since the beginnings of civilization. Language attitude is a disposition to react favorably or unfavorably to a class of objects. In addition, Garret (2010) concluded that an attitude is an evaluative orientation to a social object of some sort, whether it is a language, or a new government policy, etc. In short, language attitude is internal states that influence what the learners likely to do.

Language attitude is one of the factors influence foreign language learning. According to Dalvit and Klerk (2004, p. 6), if someone has a positive attitude to a language, he or she is more likely to learn it well. Thus, attitude is one of the factors

Influence foreign language learning because how much effort students put into language learning depends partly on attitude. Further, Reid (2003) declared that attitude is important because the students cannot be neatly separated from study. In short, achievement in a target language relies not only on intellectual capacity, but also the students' attitude which affected in learning English to enhance the language performance.

Therefore, the language attitude is important in English learning. According to Roos (1990), a language attitude is more than an attitude toward the language only since the language attitude reflects the attitude towards the particular cultural group. Garret, Coupland, and Williams (2003) argues that the language attitude have three components, they are cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. They are cognitive in that they contain or comprise beliefs about the world (for example, that learning the English language will help me to get a better job). They are affective in that they involve feelings about an attitude object (for example, enthusiasm for poetry written in the English language). And they are systematically linked to behavior, because they predispose us to act in a certain way (for example, to learn English). According to Garret, Coupland, and Williams (2003), language attitude is behavior, that is to say that language attitude will create language behavior, and then the positive language will also create positive language behavior. Thus, student's attitude could incorporate in language learning because it may influence their performance in acquiring the target language.

The language attitude is one of the important factors in learning language. According to Fakeye (2010), the matter of learner's attitude is acknowledged as one of the most important factors that impact on learning language. The attitude may be positive

or negative toward the language. When someone learns a language and his attitude is positive, the attitude will be followed by a good action and indicate a good result in studying the language. Jendra (2010) says that in contrast, the negative attitude is followed by negative action. Thus, the result of language study will be surely bad. At all, the students' positive attitude can encourage the students to learning language. Meanwhile, if the students have positive attitude it will give impact for the learners in the process of learning.

In this research, I observed the language attitude of student's junior high school in Palembang towards English. Khoir (2014) stated that the students seldom use English as a communication tool with their classmates. The statement showed that that the students have problem with the attitude towards the language which is being learnt by them. Although, they learn English in school, it does not mean they have positive attitude towards the language. They may have negative attitude.

Also, either it is positive or negative attitude, both will sometimes occur in a teaching-learning process due to some factors toward an object or situation. Long (2016) stated that every attitude has different function or role, but it always relates to one another. Linked with the idea stated regarding attitudes, it also can be seen as real phenomena toward teaching and learning process in the school based on the experience of the writer. I noticed that some students join the class enthusiastically and enjoyably which can be proven with the good interaction with the teachers. For example, the discussion between the teachers and the students are active, and some students also show good performances and achievements. Additionally, some students also tend to be silent or passive and less of enthusiasm and discipline in the learning. For example, the

students only join the class and do not involve in the discussion, or some students do not do the assignments or homework. With that phenomenon, learning process in class does not achieve satisfying result since students have those kinds of attitudes. Therefore, it can be concluded that every student in that class might has different attitudes in learning English regardless it is positive or negative. Revealed form the phenomenon about various attitudes showed by students, it raises researcher's curiosity to explore more about student's attitudes in learning English as a foreign language. However, in my preliminary study show that the fact. Some students have enthusiasm to join the class of English learning. That can be seen with the good interaction between teacher and students. And some students have tendency to be quiet and not interested in language learning. Where this research purpose is investigating the attitude of students and aiming the students to have a good way of learning English to achieve the successful.

There is a previous related study concerning to students' attitude in English learning. Shameen (2015) revealed that the learners are not confused as to what they want or expect from English language class, so the student's success or failure in in their own hands. On the other hand, the attitude is a vital factor to success the English learning.

From the problems occurred above, in the consideration of theories discussed previously, I predicted that the student's language attitude is the cause of these problems. Thus, the writer is interesting in conducting a research entitled "The Language Attitude of Students Toward English Language Learning: A Survey of Six Junior High Schools in Palembang".

## **1.2 Problems of the Study**

In this study, the problems are formulated with the following questions.

1. How was the students' language attitude of six junior high schools in Palembang toward English?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study to find out:

1. To know the students' language attitude toward English of six Junior high schools in Palembang.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study is hoped will be beneficial for teachers as their reference on how they should teach the student considering the student attitude. Thus, the students' quality in six junior high schools will have improvement. Next, for the students, it is hoped to help them to know their attitude rate toward English in order they can take decision wisely how they should behave to the language that is being learned and applied in the classroom. And, for the school, the research about the language attitude at school has not been studied yet. Hopefully, the result of the study will be additional information when they construct a curriculum, a policy, or a teaching plan in junior high school. For the other researchers, hopefully, this study will give information and inspiration in conducting other studies. And for me, this study hopefully can be beneficial to apply the knowledge obtained by me during the course in the English language majors and can increase the knowledge of the author and also it can be one of the requirements to complete the English study program.

