

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

Being able to speak more than one language is beneficial; especially for Indonesian people, those who can speak English are supposed to be bilingual and multilingual. Accordingly, they should speak at least three languages: the Indonesian language, English, and their mother tongue or local language such as Javanese, Sundanese, Bataknese, and so forth. Unfortunately, fewer and fewer Indonesian people speak their regional languages/mother tongue because they have been shifted into Indonesian, especially when children start school. This paper thus investigates language attitudes of university students toward their regional languages, Indonesian and English: how they value those languages, and their use of the languages. To answer those questions, the writer distributed a questionnaire to 22 students from three universities in Jakarta and conducted some interviews with five of the participants. The results indicate that all students have positive attitudes toward those languages. However, the positive attitudes toward the regional languages are not congruent with the language use. Lacking regional language users and its exposure is why students feel difficult to apply their regional language. As for the Indonesian language, it is the most valued and used as the unifying national language. The English language is considered more comfortable for those who can speak English because there is no difference for language users to talk to their interlocuter's level. For example, in English, the pronoun "you" can be referred to anyone regardless of their age or status. In Indonesian, we have to differentiate between Kamu (you) and Anda (you) depending on whom we talk to. To our parents, we cannot say Kamu nor Anda; but we mention it daddy or mommy, and the like. Finally, while the Indonesian government has successfully implemented Indonesian as the unifying language of the nation (Paauw, 2009), the government is also expected to encourage more on the use of regional languages into the school curriculum to enforce its usage.

Keywords: regional languages, positive attitudes, language use, the Indonesian language, unifying language

ABSTRAK

Mampu berbicara lebih dari satu bahasa sungguh bermanfaat. Khususnya untuk orang Indonesia, mereka yang bisa berbahasa Inggris seharusnya bisa berbicara dwibahasa atau multibahasa. Jadi, orang Indonesia seharusnya bisa berbicara setidaknya tiga bahasa, yaitu bahasa Indonesia, bahasa Inggris, dan bahasa daerah seperti Jawa, Sunda, Batak, dan sebagainya. Sayangnya, semakin sedikit orang Indonesia yang mampu berbicara dalam bahasa daerah mereka karena telah bergeser ke bahasa Indonesia, terutama ketika anak-anak mulai bersekolah. Makalah ini menyelidiki bagaimana sikap mahasiswa terhadap bahasa daerah mereka, bahasa Indonesia dan bahasa Inggris: bagaimana mereka menghargai bahasa tersebut, dan bagaimana penggunaan bahasa tersebut. Untuk menjawab pertanyaan-pertanyaan itu, penulis menyebarkan kuesioner kepada 22 mahasiswa dari tiga universitas di Jakarta dan melakukan beberapa wawancara dengan lima partisipan. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa semua siswa memiliki sikap positif terhadap bahasa-bahasa tersebut. Namun sikap positif terhadap bahasa daerah tidak sejalan dengan penggunaan bahasa tersebut. Kurangnya pengguna bahasa daerah dan keterpaparannya menyebabkan mahasiswa merasa kesulitan dalam mengaplikasikan bahasa daerahnya. Adapun bahasa Indonesia merupakan bahasa yang paling dihargai dan digunakan sebagai bahasa pemersatu bangsa. Bahasa Inggris dianggap lebih nyaman bagi mereka yang bisa berbahasa Inggris karena tidak ada perbedaan bagi pengguna bahasa untuk berbicara dengan level lawan bicaranya. Misalnya, dalam bahasa Inggris, kata ganti "Anda" dapat dirujuk kepada siapa saja tanpa memandang usia atau status mereka. Dalam bahasa Indonesia, kita harus membedakan antara Kamu (kamu) dan Anda (kamu) tergantung dengan siapa kita berbicara. Kepada orang tua kita, kita tidak bisa mengatakan Kamu atau Anda; tapi menyebutnya ayah atau ibu, dan sejenisnya. Akhirnya, meskipun pemerintah Indonesia telah berhasil menerapkan bahasa Indonesia sebagai bahasa pemersatu bangsa (Paauw, 2009), pemerintah juga diharapkan lebih mendorong penggunaan bahasa daerah ke dalam kurikulum sekolah untuk menegakkan penggunaannya.

Kata kunci: bahasa daerah, sikap positif, penggunaan bahasa, bahasa Indonesia, bahasa pemersatu

INTRODUCTION

As an archipelagic country, Indonesia has over 13,000 islands stretching along the equator between Southeast Asia and Australia and has many distinct ethnic groups (Paauw, 2009), and has more than 700 vernacular languages (Dearden, 2014). The diversity of the Indonesian country's population needs a language that unites the nation, and that unifying language is the Indonesian language. As for English as the international or global language, in Indonesia, it has a status as a foreign language that is taught in school classrooms as one of the subjects in the school curriculum.

Based on the Indonesian linguistic background described above, Indonesian people who can speak English are supposed to be bilingual and even multilingual. They should at least be able to speak three languages: Indonesian, English, and their mother tongue or ethnic language such as Javanese, Sundanese, Bataknese, and so forth. And being bilingual or multilingual must be advantageous.

Unfortunately, fewer and fewer Indonesian people can speak their ethnic languages. Most of their mother tongues or ethnic languages have been shifted into Indonesian, especially when children start school. It is because the students come from a multilingual background, thus, the medium of instruction in schools should be the unifying language, that is, the Indonesian language. As stated by Hamers and Blanc (2000), school language influence more than the mother tongue. Accordingly, the students become subtractive bilingual, in that the students learn "the dominant language as L2 and are more likely to experience some loss of ethnic identity and attrition of L1 skills" (Saville-Troike, 2012). Consequently, they are not able to speak their ethnic languages anymore.

The present study would like to investigate students' attitudes toward languages: their mother tongue/ethnic language, Indonesian, and English. The following research questions would guide this study:

1. What are the students' attitudes towards languages they acquired, learned, and use? Indonesian, English, or their mother tongue (e.g. Javanese, Sundanese, Bataknese, Flores, etc.)?
2. How do they value each language? And Why?

The study is expected to bring students' awareness of the richness of the Indonesian culture so that they would not ignore their identity due to globalization.

Language Attitudes

It is said that to become successful bi- or multilingual, positive attitudes toward languages are significant. Because of its significance, first and second language researchers have given considerable attention to what so-called attitudes (Getie, 2020). What is an attitude? According to Smith (1971, as cited in Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011), an attitude is "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or a situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner" (p. 997). It means that people have their own choice, whether to like it or not like it. As also stated by Oroujlou and Vahedi (2011), an attitude can be learned or unlearned; and because it can be learned, it thus can be taught.

According to Wenden (1991, as cited in Getie, 2020), attitudes have three components, i.e., cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The cognitive component includes beliefs, ideas, or opinions; the affective component covers the feeling and emotions; and the behavioral refers to actions towards the object (Wenden, 1991, as cited in Getie, 2020). On the other hand, Baker (2001, as cited by Ginting, 2018) postulates that attitude is a mental phenomenon that cannot be examined nor observed directly but can be manifested in the form of action.

Then what does it mean attitudes toward languages? As defined by Moreno Fernández (2000 p. 180, as cited in Choi, 2003) "Language attitudes are a reflection of psychosocial attitudes about languages that convey the social, cultural and sentimental values of the speakers; therefore, they are to be 'valued and evaluated according to the status or social characteristics of the users.'" However, Schoel et al. (2012) differentiates language attitudes into attitudes towards speakers and attitudes towards languages. They provided an example from Cargile and Bradac (2001, as cited in Schoel, 2012), that "traditional research on language attitudes implicitly assumed that a speaker's language first triggers an attitude towards this language in the perceiver, which then leads to the evaluation of the speaker" (p. 22). Positive attitudes toward languages are not only significant for second language learning (Getie, 2020), but also for the heritage language (e.g. Extra & Yagmur, 2010; Oh & Fuligni, 2010; Prevoo, Mesman, Van Ijzendoorn, & Pieper, 2011; as cited in Kasstan et al., 2018).

While a positive attitude toward second language learning may result in faster L2 acquisition, a positive attitude toward heritage language is expected to result in language maintenance. It means that if one has a positive attitude toward a language (heritage language or L2), he or she perceives that the language is significant. As stated by Sapriati (2020), language ideologies are significantly shaped by beliefs on the importance of the languages embraced by bi- or multilingual families. For example, in the Indonesian context, English is considered "as a vehicle to reach successful academic both in the country or abroad, path to get a social prestige as well as a better future life" (Sapriati, 2020, p. 137), while the national and heritage languages are used to maintain the relationship with family and society (Sapriati, 2020).

However, it turns out that a positive attitude toward a language alone is not sufficient to maintain a language. As revealed by Kasstan et al. (2018), attitudes toward languages, be they positive or negative, indicated a weak effect on the success of bilingualism. Based on their research, they conclude that language attitudes interact with macro and micro sociolinguistic variables.

Furthermore, according to Choi (2003), positive attitudes toward languages are not always congruent with the languages' use. It means that although one has a positive attitude toward a language, it does not mean that he or she speaks that language. As revealed by Choi (2003), plenty of researchers discover inconsistencies between attitude and language use (Baker, 1992; King, 2000; Lyon & Elis, 1991; Paulston, 1994, as cited in Choi, 2003). According to Grosjean (1982, as cited in Khalid, 2016) that wherever languages are in contact, one may find certain prevalent attitudes of favour or disfavour towards the languages involved.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by adopting a mixed research methodology. According to Indeed Editorial Team (2021), mixed research includes both qualitative and quantitative data. It states that qualitative research involves nonnumerical data such as interviews, while quantitative depends on numerical data. The data analysis involved counting the questionnaire results (quantitative) and the interview analysis (qualitative).

Subjects

The participants of this study are 22 undergraduate students from three universities in Jakarta. The age range is 18-20 years old, and the participants were chosen randomly. All 22 participants would be required to fill in a questionnaire, and four of the participants would be interviewed.

Data

The data analyzed are derived from participants' responses to the questionnaires distributed regarding their attitudes toward languages and their language use toward regional, Indonesian, and English languages; and interviews of several of them.

Instruments

The instruments of this study are questionnaires and interviews regarding attitudes toward languages (i.e., regional, Indonesian, and English). The questionnaire consists of opinions about languages, feelings toward languages, and language use. The interview explores more profound about the language attitude and language use.

Procedure

After the participants filled in the questionnaires, the writer examined the demographic data of each participant and analysed their opinion, their feeling, and their language use. After that, the writer chose four of the participants to be interviewed.

Data Analysis

The writer calculated each item to determine how many participants ticked strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree toward opinions and feelings about languages; and always, often, rarely, and never toward language use. After that, each of the responses was a percentage.

FINDINGS

This section presents and analyse the findings from the questionnaire results and the participants' interviews. There are four Tables to present the questionnaire results in this section: Table 1 shows the demographic information of each of the participants: gender, age, place of birth, their parents' ethnicities, and their languages background. Table 2 shows participants' opinions toward languages, table 3 shows participants' feelings toward languages, and table 4 shows the participants' language use. The interviews complement the questionnaires.

The demographic data

The demographic data below shows that the participants' ethnic backgrounds vary, which results in the richness of Indonesian's regional languages such as Java, Batak, Sunda, Flores, Toraja, and Nias. The

demographic data revealed that all participants admit that their first language is Indonesian. Those who can speak their regional languages acknowledge that their second languages are their ethnic languages, such as Batak or Java. For those who cannot express their local languages, their second language is English. On the other hand, the different languages besides Indonesian and English more vary. One of the participants even admits his other language apart from Indonesian, and English is not the regional language of their parents. Still, the Indonesian slank and other participants' languages besides Indonesian and English may be Javanese, Batak, Sundanese, Melayu, Korean, German, Dutch, French, even Hindi.

Table 1. Participants' demographic data

No	Name Initial	Gender	Age	Place of birth	Father's ethnicity	Mother's ethnicity	Father's ethnic language	Mother's ethnic language	My first language	My second language	Other languages I speak
1	SCP	M	20	Jakarta	Java	Flores	Java	Lamaholot	Indonesia	English	Indonesian Slank
2	OLN	M	18	Jakarta	Java	Flores	Indonesia	Indonesia	Indonesia	-	-
3	IYC	F	18	Jakarta	Batak	Batak	Batak	Batak	Indonesia	Batak	English
4	PRH	F	18	Jambi	Batak Toba	Batak Toba	Batak Toba	Batak Toba	Indonesia	Batak Toba	English
5	VAR	F	18	Jakarta	Betawi	Java	Betawi	Java	Indonesia		English
6	ASR	M	21	Jayapura	Biak	China-Serui	Biak	Biak	Indonesia	English	-
7	SP	F	18	Jakarta	Java	Sunda	Java	Sunda	Indonesia	English	Sunda
8	RC	F	21	Jakarta	Nias	Flores	Nias	Laran-tuka	Indonesia	English	Korean
9	ATH	F	19	Bojonegoro	Tiong-hoa	Tiong-hoa	Hokkien	Hokkien	Indonesia	Java	English
10	ADA	F	18	Jakarta	Java	Java	Java	Java	Indonesia	English	-
11	AF	F	18	Jakarta	Toraja	Java	Toraja	Java	Indonesia	English	-
12	BSM	F	19	Tunuata	Flores	Flores	Ma'u, Flores	Ma'u, Flores	Indonesia	Flores	English
13	BAS	F	18	Makasar	Java	Medan	Java	Batak	Indonesia	English	-
14	FN	M	23	Jakarta	Sunda	Batak	Sunda	Batak	Indonesia	English	Medan Sunda
15	GMS	F	18	Bekasi	Batak	Batak	Batak	Batak	Indonesia	English	Batak Java
16	KH	M	19	Namo-halu	Nias	Nias	Nias	Nias	Indonesia	Nias	English
17	DNF	M	20	Jakarta	Flores	Toraja/Manado	Kupang	Manado	Indonesia	English	German
18	AA	M	19	Jakarta	Flores	Flores	Kupang	Maumere	Indonesia	English	-
19	NAT	M	18	Jakarta	Batak Toba	Batak Toba/Tiong-hoa	Batak Toba	Batak Toba	Indonesia	-	Java, Batak Toba, English Dutch, French
20	PS	F	19	Jakarta	Java	Java	Java	Java	Indonesia	English	-
21	RBS	M	19	Sophia, Bulgary	Java	Java	Java	Java	Indonesia	English	Hindi, French
22	DTR	M	20	Riau	Batak	Batak	Indonesia	Indonesia	Indonesia	English	Batak, Melayu, Minang, Java

Participants' opinion on languages

Table 2 shows participants' opinions on languages. The data reveal that all of the participants have a positive attitude toward regional languages, and also agree that regional languages are essential to their cultural identity. They all also believe that regional languages should be preserved.

Table 2. Participants' opinion on languages

No.	Opinion on languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Regional languages are essential to my cultural identity.	15 = 68,18%	7 = 31,82%	0	0
2	The Indonesian language is essential for broader communication.	17 = 77,27%	5 = 22,73%	0	0
3	English is the international language.	15 = 68,18%	7 = 31,82%	0	0
4	In my opinion, regional languages should be preserved.	17 = 77,27%	5 = 22,73%	0	0
5	In my opinion, Indonesian is more important than regional languages.	6 = 27,27%	12 = 54,55%	4 = 18,18%	0
6	In my opinion, English is significant.	8 = 36,36%	14 = 63,64%	0	0
7	In my opinion, my local language is easy to learn.	4 = 18,18%	4 = 18,18%	12 = 54,55%	2 = 9,09%
8	In my opinion, the Indonesian language is easy to learn.	6 = 27,27%	11 = 50%	5 = 22,73%	0
9	In my opinion, the English language is easy to learn.	1 = 4,55%	12 = 54,55%	9 = 40,91%	0

As stated by one of the participant named BSM who came from Flores whose mother tongue is Ma'u language who has positive attitude toward her ethnic or regional language:

“In my opinion, the regional language must be preserved. Moreover, this language is the language of ourselves or our own soul that makes us unique and unique, especially if we meet other people using our local language, we can talk with our fellow regions and people. They would say, "Wow, their language is very unique" So in my opinion this regional language must be preserved, especially since regional language makes us unique, especially in our country has so many regional languages, especially in Flores. However, we are fellow Flores people, but the language is still different, such as Manggarai, Maumere, and Ende, even though Flores has many areas in it, such as Maumere and all kinds. However, our languages are different. So in my opinion, this regional language should be preserved because it is so unique, extraordinary, and characteristic of each region. It must be loved by the people who live in the area. They also have to know the customs, regional language, and all kinds of things in the area,” said BSM.

Although all the participants have a positive attitude toward regional languages and believe that local languages should be preserved, they all admit that the Indonesian language is essential for broader communication. This is in line with what has been stated by Paauw (2009), that the Indonesian government has successfully implemented the Indonesian as the national language.

As stated by one of the participants named SP, who can speak Sundanese:

“In my opinion, Indonesian, and regional languages, they are both important. But Indonesian is already included as the national language, so surely everyone uses it, especially in Indonesia or areas where the dominant language is Indonesian because the regions rarely use the regional languages,” said SP.

In a similar vein, BSM who originate from Flores also agrees that although ethnic or regional languages are important to be preserved, she admits that the Indonesian language is more important, as she says:

“The Indonesian language is used on official occasions, and as the language of instruction in the realm of education, as well as to communicate across ethnic groups, while the regional language as mother tongue is used in everyday conversation with family, relatives, or friends who come from the same area as me. So in my opinion, Indonesian is more important than regional languages, especially because we live in Indonesian country, so we must know Indonesian language. Also, if we want to go to an area, we certainly can't speak the local language there, because we are from different regions, so we use Indonesian, so Indonesian is a language of unity.”

As for the English language, all participants acknowledge that English is an international language, and all of them also agree that English is significant. As stated by RBS:

“English is the language of the world. Therefore, if we want to write an essay, write a song, the resources on Google are mostly in English.”

Regarding the easiness of the languages, more than 50% of the participants do not agree that their local/regional languages are easy to learn. As for the Indonesian language, more than 70% of the participants believe that the Indonesian language is easy to learn. For English, those who regard English as easy to understand also outnumber those who say that regional languages are easy to learn. It means that regional or ethnic languages are considered the most difficult to learn.

Participants’ feelings toward languages

Table 3 shows participants’ feelings toward languages. The data reveal that more than 90% of the participants are proud if they can speak the local/regional languages. However, those who prefer to speak Indonesian over the local/regional language are quite significant, that is around 85%. Hence, less than 15% prefer to speak local/regional languages over the Indonesian language. As for English preference for speaking over Indonesian, more than 50% disagree.

When expressing their feelings, less than 50% of the participants are more comfortable using local languages, while those who feel more comfortable expressing their feeling using Indonesian are the most. As for English, more than 50% of participants prefer to express their feeling using English rather than Indonesian or local languages.

Table 3. Participants’ feelings toward languages

No.	My Feelings towards the Language	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I am proud to be able to speak the local language.	14 = 63,64%	7 = 31,82%	1 = 4,55%	0
2	I prefer to speak Indonesian to the local language.	10 = 45,45%	9 = 40,91%	3 = 13,64%	0
3	I like to talk in English than Indonesian.	4 = 18,18%	5 = 22,73%	12 = 54,55%	1 = 4,55%
4	I prefer to express my feelings using the local language.	2 = 9,09%	8 = 36,36%	11 = 50%	1 = 4,55%
5	I prefer to express my feelings using Indonesian.	6 = 27,27%	12 = 54,55%	4 = 18,18%	0
6	I prefer to express my feelings using English.	2 = 9,09%	12 = 54,55%	7 = 31,82%	1 = 4,55%
7	In my opinion, regional languages are excellent.	8 = 36,36%	10 = 45,45%	4 = 18,18%	0
8	In my opinion, Indonesian is superb.	12 = 54,55%	9 = 40,91%	1 = 4,55%	0
9	I think English is incredible.	5 = 22,73%	16 = 72,73%	0	1 = 4,55%

According one of the participants named RBS, expressing feeling using English is more comfortable because in English there is no different when talking to older person, as he says:

“I like to express myself, my feelings, in English because English is not too dramatic compared to Indonesian. In English, I rarely use Slank. Slank in English is different from Indonesian. Indonesian, whether it’s slang and formal language, sometimes this is difficult for me because sometimes I am confused whether I should use Indonesian slang or Indonesian standard as usual. Meanwhile, in English, there is only the formal that I use. It’s different from Indonesian if I think of Indonesian slang, for example with "lo" "gue", and speak rudely. But we can't express it in harsh Indonesian or non-standard Indonesian. must use polite Indonesian especially to certain people. so everyone in us when we talk to each person is in a different,” said RBS.

In valuing languages, the majority of the participants have positive attitudes toward them, in that more than 50% of the participants perceive that regional languages are excellent. As for the Indonesian language and English, more than 90% regard those languages are superb.

Participants' languages use

Table 4 shows participants' languages use. The data reveal that more than 50% of the participants rarely use local/regional languages in their family environment, and even around 18% never use it. Less than 5% always speak the local/regional languages in the family environment. When communicating with people from the same area, less than 50% use their local languages. On social media, only around 9% often use regional languages.

On the other hand, the use of the Indonesian language occupies the highest ranking, in which more than 90% of the participants constantly communicate using Indonesian in their family environment. When communicating with people not from the same with the participants, more than 80% always use Indonesian. On social media, the use of Indonesian is also considerable, more than 60% always use it. As for English, as it is a foreign language, none of the participants always use it in their family environment. There are only around 22% often (not always) use it. While communicating with friends, less than 40% use English.

With respect to fluency, around 40% of participants admit that they are fluent in communicating in local/regional languages. For the Indonesian language, most of the participants admit to be fluent in using the Indonesian. As for English, less than 40% admit to be eloquent using English.

Table 4. Participants' languages use

No.	Language Use	Always	Often	Rarely	Never
1	I use the local language in the family environment.	1 = 4,55%	5 = 22,73%	12 = 54,55%	4 = 18,18%
2	I use the regional language with people who are in the same area as me.	2 = 9,09%	7 = 31,82%	9 = 40,91%	4 = 18,18%
3	I use the local language on social media.	0	2 = 9,09%	9 = 40,91%	11 = 50%
4	I use Indonesian in my family environment.	20 = 91,91%	1 = 4,55%	1 = 4,55%	0
5	I use Indonesian when communicating with people who are not from the same area as me.	19 = 86,36%	3 = 13,64%	0	0
6	I use Indonesian on social media.	14 = 63,64%	5 = 22,73%	2 = 9,09%	1 = 4,55%
7	I use English in a family environment.	0	5 = 22,73%	11 = 50%	6 = 27,27%
8	I use English with friends.	1 = 4,55%	7 = 31,82%	11 = 50%	3 = 13,64%
9	I use English on social media.	1 = 4,55%	7 = 31,82%	13 = 59,09%	1 = 4,55%
10	I can communicate fluently in the local/regional language.	5 = 22,73%	4 = 18,18%	10 = 45,45%	3 = 13,64%
11	I can communicate fluently in Indonesian.	19 = 86,36%	3 = 13,64%	0	0
12	I can communicate fluently in English.	3 = 13,64%	8 = 36,36%	11 = 50%	0

Furthermore, there is a participant named RBS who can speak English, French, and Hindi for his father was once stationed in some foreign countries. However, although his parents are Javanese, he cannot speak Javanese. When the writer asked whether he was not motivated to learn Javanese, he said he was, as he says:

“As someone born in a Javanese family and as a Javanese, and will spare my life as a Javanese, I am very motivated, motivated and have a very high desire to be able to learn Javanese. I still hope to learn the Javanese language to pass on to the generations who don't forget their culture. But this is very difficult for me because I don't have friends who can speak Javanese, I don't have information in Javanese, and I'm not required to talk in Javanese either.”

As aforementioned by RBS, although he is eager to learn Javanese, he is much less exposed to Javanese, and no language policy or condition forces him to acquire Javanese. Then the writer asked what he would do to acquire the Javanese language. He responded:

“Maybe I should watch more people who use Javanese on YouTube; in movies, many use Javanese phrases, for example, in the film *Tilik*. I really like that movie. The film introduced me to various Javanese expressions. I don't know, and I think why the Javanese language is very motivated and highly motivated is because the Javanese language has different dialects when we are in other places. For example, the Javanese in Solo and the Javanese in Purwokerto are very different or usually the Javanese in Surabaya. He is a little rude when we go to Solo; it is also different. But have the same language family. I hope to have friends who can speak Javanese well and correctly and introduce me to Javanese and other Javanese languages. Javanese is also very necessary for me. For example, if it is me, I am placed to work in a place where there are many Javanese people, or I work in Java, I must be able to speak Javanese. Therefore I am very motivated,” said RBS.

To maintain all the languages that he acquired such as English, French, and Hindi, RBS states:

“I have had a tough time maintaining my ability to speak English. Because during my stay in Indonesia I don't use English very much. But I have the determination to keep it. First, I always set up my phone; my cellphone uses English and my laptop, so I am always exposed to English every day, secondly, I add to my network especially at university with friends who are bilingual too and use English everyday. I happen to have 2 friends at the Faculty of Law who always uses English when talking to me. Yes, it's a mix, but with them, I can speak English again, and what's no less important is that you never forget to read and watch movies in English. It is crucial because watching and reading articles, journals, or news in English will increase our vocabulary, improve our pronunciation, and, most importantly, our accent because my accent is Indonesian. But if we want to be less American, for example, we have to watch a lot of people who speak English with an American accent.”

In addition, there is a participant of Batak ethnicity who was born in Riau and admits that he can speak four ethnic languages: Batak, Malay, Minang, and Java. When the writer asked how he acquired those languages, he revealed that he acquired the Batak language from his parents and his surroundings, then Batak became his daily language. He said that he learned the language through listening. Then, because he once lived in Pekanbaru and the majority of the people were Malay and Minang, he acquired those two languages from the surroundings. As for the Javanese language, he acquired it from his aunt. To preserve all the languages he has acquired, he admitted not speaking Indonesian all the time but mixing the language. He said it has become his habit to mix the language, which means that he does not speak Indonesian all the time.

DISCUSSION

The findings in this study reveal that although all of the participants (100%) view that regional languages are significant for their cultural identity. However, the findings also reveal that only less than 30% use the regional languages in their family environment. It means that positive attitudes toward the regional languages are not congruent with its languages use. It is in line with what has been stated in Choi's (2003) study that linguistic attitude is not always reflected by linguistic behaviour. According to Choi (2003), positive attitudes towards a language should increase its use, and therefore, it results in the maintenance of that language. On the other hand, a negative attitude may inhibit language use, and accordingly, can result in the abandonment of the language or language loss (Choi, 2003). Choi (2003, based on Baker, 1992; King, 2000; Lyon & Elis, 1991; Paulston, 1994) also argues that many researchers also found inconsistencies between attitude and behaviour, in particular in situations where there are two or more languages in contact.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, all the participants perceive their mother tongue or ethnic languages are significant for identity. However, Indonesian as the unifying national language is the most frequently used. To maintain the languages they have acquired, the habit of reading, listening, and speaking should be done to preserve the languages acquired.

The writer admits that this research was limited to only a small number of participants. Accordingly, the results of the findings cannot be generalized. Thus, future research should be conducted with a larger number of participants. However, it has provided insight that the young generation still perceived regional languages as significant to be preserved as part of the country's richness of culture.

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