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## THE ATTITUDES OF ACEHNESE YOUTH TOWARDS THE ACEHNESE LANGUAGE (A CASE STUDY IN LANGSA)

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### Abstract

*This study deals with the attitude of Acehese youth towards Acehese language .It employs qualitative research design with a case study. This study aims to describe: (1) How the Acehese youth attitude toward Acehese language (2) What The factors that motivated the the Acehese youth to have the positive attitude toward Acehese language. The subjects were 20 Teenagers from Acehese family, which the age of subjects ranges between 13-19 years old. The instrument used in this study was interview. The interview was used to obtain the teenagers attitude and the factors that influence them. The data were analyzed by interactive models of Miles and Huberman's technique. Based on data analysis, It was found that the teenagers have positive and negative attitude , there are ten children ( 50 %) have positive attitude and there are ten children (50 %) who have negative attitude. There are three factors that motivated the teenagers positive attitude in Acehese language, namely; ethnic identity, prestige and communication success.*

**Keywords:** Language attitude, Acehese youth, Acehese language.

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a multicultural country which has varieties of language and culture which is separated in all provinces. In using a language as communication in intercultural communication in one region and other region which has different culture and ethnic it should be aware with the custom that used in each region because every region and every tribe has difference way in express their feeling and attitude by using a language.

Language is an important marker of ethnic identity. Language can identify ethnic identity and tribe of speaker. Attachment to language is as strong as people regard of themselves as a social group, which is influenced largely by how the larger society regards them. A negative ethnic identity contributes to the low prestige of the ethnic group. It makes, the ethnic group is not highly valued their language because of the status of the minority language in a variety of domains; it shifts into a high prestige language, one of an important way to maintain language is by having a positive attitude about language.

Attitude about language occur when the user of language has a positive feeling and attitude way toward their language especially vernacular language. Language attitudes are opinions, ideas and prejudices that speakers have with respect to a language. For example, it is often said that in order to learn a language is better to have a positive attitude towards that language.

Attitudes cannot be observed directly but are demonstrated through actual behavior – for example, how people treat speakers of other languages (avoidance, approach), or in their desire (or

not) to learn another language. The convergence of one's speech to conform to another's speech suggests a "positive attitude" toward the other's speech. By the same token, divergence suggests an intention for the opposite outcome. Scotton (2006, p. 110) also argue that attitudes about languages as assessments that speakers make about the relative values of a particular language. Attitudes are largely unconscious, but this doesn't mean that people can't make judgments or action the basis of their attitudes.

Attitude toward vernacular language is also occurring in order to maintain a vernacular language among teenagers in Langsa as one of province in Aceh. Langsa is a city which has a multicultural ethnics which live and stay in that place, such as: Acehese, Padangnese, Javanese, Batakese, etc. The variation of ethnics make the language vary among the language speaker, in one case teenagers as third generation keep using the vernacular language and in other case they shift to national language. Therefore, in order to keep maintaining Acehese language, the researcher need to investigate the attitude of Acehese youth towards Acehese language and the factors that motivated them to have positive attitude towards Acehese Language.

## **METHOD**

This study was conducted in qualitative research design. According to Guba and Wolf in Bogdan and Biklen (1992, p. 62) qualitative research is frequently called naturalistic because the researcher frequents places where the events he or she is interested in natural occur. The subjects in this study were 20 children and this study was located in Langsa, Langsa Barat district is chosen because of this district is the researcher born place. In this study the subjects are chosen from five villages in Langsa Barat district and those villages are included to the largest villages in Langsa Barat district. They are: Lhokbanie, Matang Seulimenng, Seuriget, Sungai Pauh, and PB. Bramo. The instrument that used in this research is interview

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Attitude can be affect to language maintenance, attitude is a simple terms, language attitude refer to the feelings people have about their own language or the languages of other. Attitude also a crucial factors influencing language shift. Holmes (2001, p. 61) points out, some aspect contribute language shift; not highly valued of the language, and the language is not seen as the symbol of ethnic identity. He also assumes that positive attitudes of speakers support efforts to use the ethnic language variety of domains, these attitudes help people resists the pressure from the majority group to shift to their language. The positive and negative attitude on using the language is extremely affect to the existence of mother tounge in communication, As what showed by teenagers in my research location in Langsa society, The attitude toward language equivalent with the use of language it self in communication, some of them have a positive language ideology toward the language but do not practice at home the language and other have a positive attitude both of language ideology and language practice but they never get sopport to use the language.

The attitude of participants can be positive and negative, when each participant where asking about their feeling about Acehese language , the majority of participants that indicating a positive attitude said that they were proud to be Acehese people and speak Acehese language, from 20 participants there are 10 of them have positive attitude, an answer from interview result also very diverse, some of them who felt proud to be Acehese, because of Acehese culture and ethnic identity, and other didn't have logical reason of why they proud to be Acehese. Figure 1 below shows that 50 % teenagers have positive attitude to be Acehese young generation.

The participants also have varieties motivation behind the language attitude. According to Fasold (1984), the motivation behind the language attitudes are vary. If the knowledge of a language is a marker of prestige, then the motive acquisition of the language it is called instrumental. If someone wanted to learn the language in order to identify himself with members of the public speakers, this motif is called integrative. However, the motivation could also arise from a sense of academic success or of a sense of accomplishment communicative. All this motivate someone to learn and speak a foreign language or a second language. It also occur to the teenagers in Langsa as an observation place in this study, it was found that from 50 %or 10 teenagers who have positive point of view about Acehese language have varieties motivation behind those. Figure 2 below shows teenagers' motivation behind language attitude.

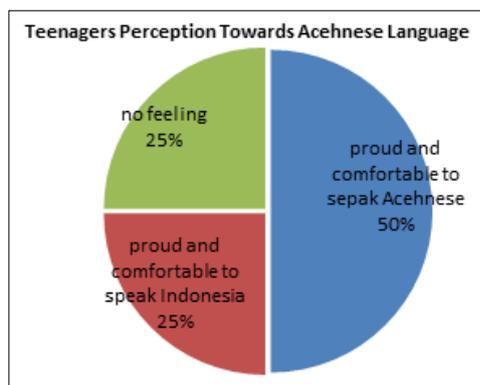


Figure 1. The teenagers' perception towards Acehneselanguage.

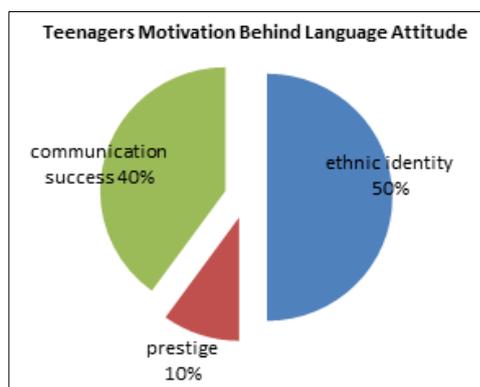


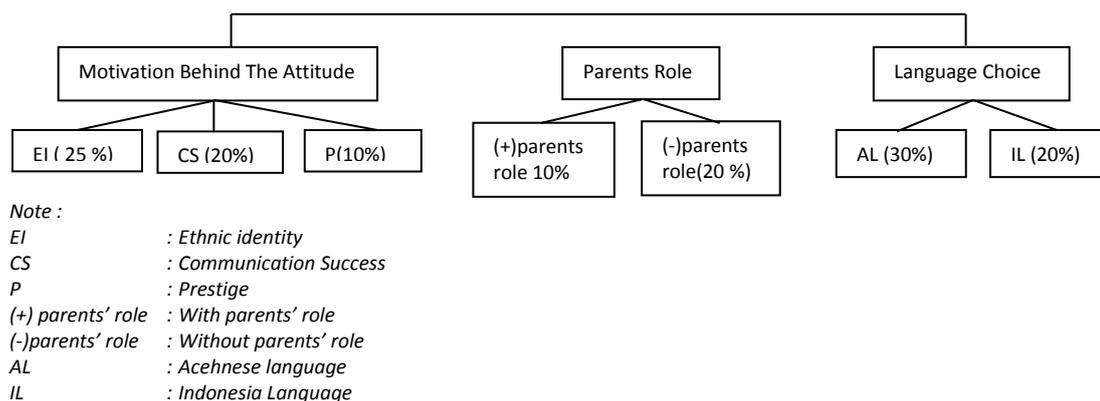
Figure 2. Teenagers' motivation behind language attitude.

Parental attitude also influence the children attitude of acquiring a language because children imitate what language their parents use and make decision about their use of language based on what they perceive. Luo and Wiseman (2000) found out that parents, especially mothers, serve as important language model for shaping children's language behavior when they have good family relation. When children saw their parents or other family members attach importance or encourage them to maintain the ethnic language, they showed favor in it as well. The conclusion from their study stated that maintenance of proficiency in an ethnic language was principally associated with adult language practice in the home, Wu (2005, p. 5).

The result of interview found that there are about 2 children who have encouragement from their parents to use Acehnese Language and 18 children did not have encouragement from both of their father or mother to use Acehnese language. Acehnese language maintain by teenagers about 30 % or 6 teenagers and 70 % or 14 teenagers use Indonesia language as their first language acquisition.

Parental attitude can be as an indicator to know the way how parents influence their positive or negative attitude. The relation between Attitude, parents role and the language choice by member in family it's really influence children in maintain the language. When parents think of a language in a certain way and choose to speak it, such behavior of the use of language itself acquired by their children. Figure 3 below is a description of relation between language attitude, parents role and language choice.

From the following Figure 3, it can be seen that the teenagers motivation behind language attitude bigger than the parents role at home, but it does not mean that the majority of teenager acquiring Acehnese language and choice Acehnese language as their first language at home. When the researcher interview them and asked who encourage them to use Indonesia language, the teenagers admit that their parents never encourage them to use Acehnese language, they let them to choice they own language, therefore most of teenagers do not acquire Acehnese language well, this phenomenon occur because there is no language policy at home.



**Figure 3.** The relation between teenagers' language attitude, parents' role, and language choice.

### CONCLUSION

The teenagers' language attitude that analyze from 20 participants in Langsa Barat district found that 10 teenagers have positive attitude and 10 teenagers have negative attitude. Positive attitude that showed by those teenagers motivated by three factors, namely: ethnic identity, communication success and prestige. The result of interview found that not all the teenagers full acquire Acehnese language even though they have a positive attitude toward Acehnese language, from 10 teenagers who have positive attitude, six of them admit that they use Acehnese language in all domains in society and 4 teenagers seldom use Acehnese language as their language for communication in society. Language policy does not build by parents at home, most of children acquiring vernacular language not from their parents but they learned and heard from their environment such as; their neighbors and friend at school, this condition make children do not know the important of acquiring vernacular language or to use vernacular language for showing their ethnic identity and also as communication in society.

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