

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contained an overview of the problems to be discussed. The introduction consisted of four sub-chapters, including the background of the study, Statement of the Research Problem, Objective of the research, Significance of the research, Scope of the Research, and Operational Definition.

1.1 Background of the Research

Attitudes were known to play an essential role in language learning. According to Gardner's socio-educational model, attitudes toward second language learning were influenced by three main factors: integrativeness, instrumental orientation, and personal motivation (Gardner, 1985). Integrativeness referred to the desire to integrate with speakers of the target language and their culture. Instrumental orientation referred to the practical benefits of learning the language, such as better job prospects. On the other hand, personal motivation was related to students' self-esteem and satisfaction from learning a second language.

Furthermore, Brown (1994) explained that stimulants led to student attitudes in learning, namely positive and negative attitudes. Students with a positive learning attitude were enthusiastic and actively involved. Meanwhile, students with a negative attitude toward learning tended to get fewer results.

This was evidenced in research by Schiffman and Kanuk (2004). People with a negative learning attitude experienced anxiety in learning, found it challenging to enjoy lessons, and got bored quickly. This showed that having a bad attitude complicated the learning process. Several studies on students' attitudes toward English learning had been conducted. Setiyawati (2021) studied examined students' attitudes toward English lessons in vocational high schools. It showed that most students had a positive attitude towards English learning and desired to improve their English skills to be able to follow lessons and develop skills according to their fields. However, the findings also found some obstacles, such

as the learning system that needed to be more appropriate and related to what they would use in the world of work later. On the other hand, research conducted by Ahsanti (2018) in her research discussed the differences in attitudes of Vocational High School students in business majors in class XI students of SMK N 1 Demak in the 2017/2018 academic year. The results of this study showed that although students tended to have a more positive attitude, some students had a negative attitude toward learning English, which, of course, affected their learning outcomes.

Previous studies had generally shown positive attitudes among SMK students towards learning English. However, negative results had been observed in certain conditions and groups. It was worth noting that previous research primarily focused on examining all samples collectively or on specific sample types. In contrast, this study aimed to investigate the attitudes of students from two different majors, namely marketing and accounting, towards learning English. In SMKN 1 Kudus, there are several majors which are office management, Islamic finance, culinary management, marketing, fashion design, and accounting.

The researcher decided to choose Marketing and Accounting as the research object. The decision of these two majors was based on the researcher's observation during the PPL program, where this phenomenon was observed. Moreover, the study would be conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Kudus, a reputable vocational school, which provided an opportunity to gather data from a diverse pool of participants. This comprehensive analysis of attitudes towards learning English within the context of vocational education would offer valuable insights for curriculum development and instructional strategies specifically tailored to SMK students. There were reasons why the researcher chose this topic. Accounting and marketing were the most popular majors for SMK students in Indonesia, and students in these fields needed good English skills to succeed in their future careers.

However, no research had found and compared the attitudes of students in these majors toward learning English. The researcher examined students majoring

in marketing and accounting at SMK Negeri 1 Kudus. Second, the aspect of differences was significant: A comparative study between accounting and marketing students in their attitudes toward learning English could provide insight into the factors influencing their propensity to learn English. The different characteristics and needs of the two majors might affect students' preferences and willingness to learn English. Today's growing international business made English the primary international language for communication. Therefore, students majoring in accounting and marketing needed to understand English sufficiently to prepare themselves to become competent in the global business workforce. Seeing the vital role of English in students' development, English was a language that needed to be mastered in communication to create good relationships and an efficient understanding of information. Because that was an essential aspect of studying marketing and accounting for vocational students. Through previous explanations, the researcher's purpose in this study was to determine students' attitudes toward English learning in marketing and accounting majors. Thus, this research was expected to provide practical benefits in improving English learning quality for accounting and marketing students.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of study that has been explained, the statement of the research in this study is:

1. What are the attitudes of students towards learning English for students majoring marketing and accounting at SMK Negeri 1 Kudus?
2. How are the similarities and differences students' attitudes towards learning English between students majoring marketing and accounting at SMKNegeri 1 Kudus?

1.3 Objective of the Research

The researcher addressed exclusively the formulation of the problems above mentioned briefly as follow:

1. To find out the student's attitude towards learning English of students majoring marketing and accounting at SMK Negeri 1 Kudus.
2. To compare the student's attitude towards learning English of students majoring in marketing and accounting at SMK Negeri 1 Kudus.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The study's findings have substantial implications for the following parties:

1. Practically, the significance of research was expected to become for some important inputs as follow: By comparing students' attitudes toward learning English in these two fields, the study was able to identify any significant differences in their attitudes and the factors that might have been responsible for these differences.
2. This research was expected to provide new insights into the attitudes of accounting and marketing students who learned English. Furthermore, this research could also contribute to the existing literature on attitudes towards learning English, especially in vocational high schools.
3. The findings of this study could provide valuable guidance for teachers in designing and implementing English language teaching that was tailored to the unique needs and attitudes of students majoring in marketing and accounting. Teachers

1.5 Scope of the Research

The scope of this research was limited to investigating the attitudes toward learning English among students majoring in accounting and marketing at SMK Negeri 1 Kudus. The study employed a comparative research design to explore differences in attitudes toward learning English between these two groups of students. Comparative research design involved comparisons and contrasts of groups, variables, or settings to gain an understanding of similarities and differences (Creswell, 2018).

1.6 Operational Definition

The operational definition for this research title would be:

1. Attitudes towards learning English

For this study, attitudes towards learning English referred to the overall feelings and beliefs of students majoring in accounting and marketing at SMK Negeri 1 Kudus towards learning English.

2. Students majoring in accounting and marketing This referred to the vocational high school students who were pursuing majors in accounting and marketing at SMK Negeri 1 Kudus.

3. Comparative study This referred to a research design that aimed to compare and contrast two or more groups or variables, in this case, the attitudes towards learning English among students majoring in accounting and marketing.

