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## STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE INDONESIAN LANGUAGE COURSE

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### Abstract

Directorate General of Higher Education Ministry of Education and Culture Republic of Indonesia issued a decree named *SK Dirjen* Number 43 regarding the implementation of the personality development course in higher education. The vision of teaching those courses, including teaching Indonesian language, is to provide source of values and guidelines in the development and implementation of study programs to lead students to establish their personality as Indonesian people. The study brings comprehensions about students acceptance of teaching the course and be useful for study programs that offers ELE. The programs can use the findings as a reference how they have to design their curriculum to meet students' needs as well as in line with the government regulations. this study applied a phenomenology under the qualitative approach. Based on the result of the data analysis to capture students of English Language Education (ELE) perceive the teaching of *Bahasa Indonesia* course at the university level, the researchers put into two major themes. The first theme is students' positive perceptions *Bahasa Indonesia* course, while the last is students' negative perception towards similar course.

**Keyword:** *Students, Perceptions, Indonesian Language, Course*



### Abstrak

Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia mengeluarkan SK Dirjen Nomor 43 tentang Penyelenggaraan Mata Kuliah Pengembangan Kepribadian Di Perguruan Tinggi. Visi penyelenggaraan mata kuliah tersebut, termasuk pengajaran Bahasa Indonesia, adalah memberikan sumber nilai dan pedoman dalam pengembangan dan pelaksanaan program studi untuk mengantarkan mahasiswa membentuk kepribadiannya sebagai manusia Indonesia. Kajian ini memberikan pemahaman tentang penerimaan siswa terhadap pengajaran kursus dan berguna untuk program studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Program studi dapat menggunakan temuan sebagai referensi bagaimana merancang kurikulum untuk memenuhi kebutuhan mahasiswa serta sejalan dengan peraturan pemerintah. Penelitian ini menggunakan fenomenologi dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Berdasarkan hasil analisis data untuk menjangkau mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris memandang pengajaran mata kuliah Bahasa Indonesia di tingkat universitas, peneliti mengelompokkan ke dalam dua tema besar. Tema pertama adalah persepsi positif mahasiswa terhadap mata kuliah bahasa Indonesia, sedangkan yang terakhir adalah persepsi negatif mahasiswa terhadap mata kuliah sejenis.

**Kata kunci:** *Siswa, Persepsi, Bahasa Indonesia, Mata Kuliah*

### Introduction

The Indonesian government under the Law Number 20 Year 2003 has clearly stated that the national education system for the higher education curriculum must include compulsory subjects. Those subjects are religious studies, citizenship studies, and language studies. For the language studies, the curriculum of higher education must contain Indonesian language (*Bahasa Indonesia*) and English. In line with that law, the Indonesian Ministry of Education issued a decree under the Decree of the Minister of National Education Number 232/U/2000. The decree related to guidelines for curriculum preparation for higher education as well as assessment of student learning outcomes. Under the decree, the aforementioned subjects are grouped as personality development courses that the university in Indonesia must comply with and offer to students in the curriculum of each study program. The failure to pass those compulsory courses enables students to graduate and prohibit them to get their bachelor degree.

Based on these considerations, the Directorate General of Higher Education Ministry of Education and Culture Republic of Indonesia issued a decree named *SK Dirjen* Number 43 regarding the implementation of the

personality development course in higher education. The vision of teaching those courses, including teaching Indonesian language, is to provide source of values and guidelines in the development and implementation of study programs to lead students to establish their personality as Indonesian people. In addition, Indonesian language courses are required to help students strengthen their personalities so that they are consistently able to manifest a lifelong sense of nationality and love for the homeland in mastering, applying and developing their science, technology and art with a sense of responsibility. Further, the aim of teaching Indonesian language at the university level is to create scientists and professionals who have positive knowledge and attitudes towards Indonesian as the state language and national language. The graduates are expected to be able to use Indonesian language properly and correctly as part of expressing nationality and love for the homeland. Further, *Bahasa Indonesia* course can serve a tool for needs in the fields of science, technology, art as well as other related fields.

The previously mentioned paragraphs proves how important teaching *Bahasa Indonesia* at the university level. Regardless program of study or department where students pursue their career at the university, they have no option not to take *Bahasa Indonesia*. Students who take English Education Program wanting to be an English teachers also have to take *Bahasa Indonesia* course. However, based on the study conducted by Nursyaidah & Siregar (2019), it is found that students pay less attention and consider *Bahasa Indonesia* course is unimportant. In addition, the study also explained that the teaching of *Bahasa Indonesia* course was not in accordance to the nature of teaching this course as explained in the previous paragraph. These concerns affect the position of *Bahasa Indonesia* as a course that leads to the lack of love for *Bahasa Indonesia*. On the other hand, a study conducted by Ansori, et al (2011) concerning students' attitude towards the teaching of *Bahasa Indonesia* found that students still believe that *Bahasa Indonesia* needs to be taught. The contradict findings brings an insight that there was a gap in the form of descriptions of what students were interested in and not interested in and what was useful and important in learning *Bahasa Indonesia* as a course taught at higher education level. To fill in this gap, this study emerged to find out how students of English Language Education (ELE) perceive the teaching of *Bahasa Indonesia* course. The study brings comprehensions about students acceptance of teaching the course and be useful for study programs that offers ELE. The programs can use the findings as a reference how they have to design their curriculum to meet students' needs as well as in line with the government regulations.

## **Research Methods**

In order to answer the goal of the study, this study applied a phenomenology under the qualitative approach (Creswell, 2002). The approach is taken considering the research subject, data sources, and data collection

techniques. This research aims to capture the behavior and perceptions of students studied by means of descriptions in the form of language in a natural context.

The subjects of this study were students of English Education Program at Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Malang. By the time this study was conducted, the institutions sit at the top ten best Islamic-based university in Indonesia. Among other program, English Education Program was one of the programs offered to students who wished to continue their education at the university level. From the participants, the researchers took the data sources that consisted of primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources are taken from students who are currently or have taken Indonesian language courses. While the secondary data sources were taken from lecturers in the English Education Program where the study was conducted.

To collect the data, the researchers used data collection instruments in a form of observation and interview. The observation aims to collect data in the form of students' behavior towards *Bahasa Indonesia* as a course seen from their participation during teaching and learning, students' interest in taking *Bahasa Indonesia* course and their enjoyment in participating in *Bahasa Indonesia* course. On the other hand, the interviews have a purpose to collect qualitative data in the form of student opinions to describe students' needs and interests *Bahasa Indonesia* course.

The data analysis followed three steps. They are data collections, data reductions, and concluding step. The data collection involves 137 students who were students of the English Education Program from two Islamic Universities in Malang. After that, the data obtained is grouped and reduced based on the answers from the observation and interviews. After grouping and reducing the data, the researchers drew a conclusion as an answer to the research questions. The technique of checking the validity of the data is carried out in two ways as follows and they are comparing data from observations with interviews and comparing the results of the interviews with the findings taken from related documents.

## Results and Discussion/Hasil dan Pembahasan

Based on the result of the data analysis to capture students of English Language Education (ELE) perceive the teaching of *Bahasa Indonesia* course at the university level, the researchers put into two major themes. The first theme is students' positive perceptions *Bahasa Indonesia* course, while the last is students' negative perception towards similar course.

### ***The Positive Perceptions of ELE Students' Towards Bahasa Indonesia Course***

Based on the results of the data analysis, there are several reasons why students have positive perceptions towards *Bahasa Indonesia*.

### **The Need for Indonesian for Daily Communication**

The data shows that students consider *Bahasa Indonesia* is important because they need it for daily communications between regions and for formal communications in the field of education. Below are some of the excerpts taken from the data collected

*Iya, karena meskipun bahasa indonesia adalah bahasa sehari hari yang sering kita lakukan, tetapi bahasa indonesia memiliki keragaman yang harus diketahui dan dipelajari secara mendetail, agar supaya penggunaan bahasa indonesia yang biasa kita gunakan menjadi baik dan benar.(R1/P1/1).*

*Sangat penting karena di era globalisasi seperti ini. Jika tidak ada mata kuliah bahasa indonesia maka mahasiswa akan kesulitan untuk berbicara bahasa Indonesia secara baik dan benar. Karena bahasa Indonesia diperlukan saat kita bekerja dan berkomunikasi antar daerah.(R1/P1/2)*

*Bahasa Indonesia penting karena bahasa nasional ini dipakai dalam segala kegiatan formal dan kelembagaan, termasuk segala kegiatan di bidang pendidikan.(R1/P1/3)*

*Penting, karena saat ini penggunaan bahasa indonesia sangat membantu untuk komunikasi dalam segala bidang.(R1/P1/4)*

*Merupakan bahasa ibu bagi sebagian orang, kota perlu melestarikannya karena bahasa untuk menyatukan bangsa agar dapat berkomunikasi satu dengan yang lainnya, mata kuliah tidak kalah penting dari mata kuliah lainnya karena masih banyak juga pelajar atau mahasiswa tidak mengerti konsep bahasa, baik bahasa baik dan benar ataupun kaidah berbahasa, jadi mata kuliah bahasa indonesia itu penting. (R1/P1/5)*

Based on these findings, it is known that *Bahasa Indonesia* is necessary for daily communications. This is in accordance with Raharjo (2007) which states that without successful communications, it is impossible for an organization to be able to form discourse. Even further, creating success in communications is the first step towards success because with success in communicating, people will be able to avoid failure in communication, which can lead to

misunderstanding. Purwanti (2020) states that communication is built through language. They can be through spoken language or written language, either verbal or non-verbal. Language and communication are a combination of conveying thoughts, which are very important in today's communication.

Communication needs continuous attention to create accuracy in responding to messages received through language, namely those that are verbal and non-verbal. In other words, the existence of language in a communication functions effectively as a perfect expression of the speaker's thoughts.

### ***The Need for Indonesian Language for Scientific Writing***

Based on the results of interviews and questionnaires given to students, it is known that students consider *Bahasa Indonesia* is important because they need it to help writing scientific papers.

*Sangat penting, untuk mempelajari tentang penulisan yang benar sebagai bekal penulisan skripsi.(R1/P2/1)*

*Penting untuk digunakan untuk menulis proposal dan lain2.(R1/P2/2)*

*Penting karena ketika menyusun penelitian ilmiah, kita bisa menggunakan ilmu yg telah dipelajari pada matkul bhs indonesia. (R1/P2/3)*

These findings tell that teaching *Bahasa Indonesia* as a compulsory course is necessary for writing scientific papers. This is in accordance with the results of Barowi & Fazat's (2015) research, which states that it is important to understand Indonesian correctly so that someone can speak properly and accurately. Nurhidayah (2006) also states that in order to comprehend the linguistic principles, students need to understand the choice of words, terms, sentence formation and good paragraphs in scientific writing.

### ***The Need for Indonesian Language for Non-Scientific Writing***

The data also show that students consider *Bahasa Indonesia* is necessary because students need *Bahasa Indonesia* to write non-scientific works.

*Menurut saya penting sekali. Saya masih memiliki kekurangan ketika menulis cerita atau tulisan yang Berbahasa Indonesia. Sedangkan saya sangat ingin menulis novel untuk menghasilkan karya berupa buku.(R1/P3/2)*

This finding is in accordance to Ratnasari (2013) which states that writing skills are important for productive and expressive activities. In addition, writing skills can support students' performance because it is a complex skill. With writing skills, students are also able to convey knowledge and information to the general public.

#### ***The Needs for Bahasa Indonesia to Grow Knowledge of Bahasa Indonesia Rules***

The data collected reveal that students consider *Bahasa Indonesia's* teaching at the university level is necessary since because students consider *Bahasa Indonesia* to grow knowledge of *Bahasa Indonesia* rules.

*mata kuliah tidak kalah penting dari mata kuliah lainnya karena masih banyak juga pelajar atau mahasiswa tidak mengerti konsep bahasa, baik bahasa baik dan benar ataupun kaidah berbahasa, jadi mata kuliah bahasa indonesia itu penting. (R1/P3/1)*

*Saya masih kurang paham dengan PUEBI, jadi ketika saya menulis, terkadang saya masih ragu benar atau tidaknya kalimat yang saya gunakan. (R1/P3/2)*

The above findings is in line with Mansyur (2018). Mansyur states that a good and correct understanding of *Bahasa Indonesia* is needed so that students have a positive attitude in using *Bahasa Indonesia*. In other words, without knowing proper rules, students' productions of using the language result in messy structure that can decrease their assertiveness towards the language.

#### ***The Needs for Bahasa Indonesia as A Mean Cultivate a Positive Attitude Towards Bahasa Indonesia***

Based on the results of interviews and questionnaires given to students, the researchers draws a conclusion that students consider *Bahasa Indonesia* is deemed necessary and must be taught due to its importance to foster positive attitudes towards *Bahasa Indonesia*.

*Sangat penting karena dapat menumbuhkan sikap bahasa yang positif terhadap bahasa Indonesia.(R1/P4/1)*

*Penting, karena Bahasa Indonesia merupakan bahasa utama atau bisa disebut juga sebagai bahasa ibu bagi negara Indonesia, karena Bahasa Indonesia adalah bahasa pemerstau bangsa Indonesia. Selain itu banyak jurnal tugas kuliah yang membutuhkan kemampuan dalam Berbahasa Indonesia.(R1/P4/2)*

*Penting, karena Bahasa Indonesia merupakan bahasa utama atau bisa disebut juga sebagai bahasa ibu bagi negara Indonesia, karena Bahasa Indonesia adalah bahasa pemerstau bangsa Indonesia. Selain*

*itu banyak jurnal tugas kuliah yang membutuhkan kemampuan dalam Berbahasa Indonesia.(R1/P4/3)*

*Diajarkannya mata kuliah Bahasa Indonesia di berbagai universitas dan perguruan tinggi memiliki tujuan umum yang meliputi. Menumbuhkan kebanggaan terhadap bahasa Indonesia, yang nantinya diharapkan mampu mendorong mahasiswa mengutamakan bahasanya.(R1/P4/4)*

This finding is in accordance with Mansyur (2010) which states that a good and correct understanding of *Bahasa Indonesia* is needed so that students have a positive attitude in using *Bahasa Indonesia*. In addition, Madia (2018) also brings the same idea that *Bahasa Indonesia* has become one of the nation's strengths as well as a national identity that shows it as a modern language. Therefore, it is necessary to positively appreciate the existence of *Bahasa Indonesia*.

#### ***The Needs for Bahasa Indonesia to Prepare For The Work***

Students admit that they need to prepare themselves for work that mastering *Bahasa Indonesia* is crucial. Students are fluent in speaking the language, but they admit that they still need exposure upon the use of the language so that they will not too 'surprised' when they have to use them for their future career. The below excerpts tell the details,

*Menurut saya mata kuliah Bahasa Indonesia itu penting, saya sendiri pun mengakui bahwa kemampuan berbahasa Indonesia saya masih kurang. Dengan adanya mata kuliah Bahasa Indonesia yang di ajarkan oleh Dosen yang ahli saya rasa ini akan sangat berguna untuk masa depan. Tidak di pungkiri dalam dunia kerja bukan hanya penguasaan bahasa asing yang di nilai namun juga penguasaan Bahasa Indonesia yang baik dan benar.(R1/P5/1)*

*Penting, karena termasuk dari usaha mempertahankan keontetikan Bahasa Indonesia. Terkhusus dikalangan mahasiswa yang mulai mempelajari bidang diskusi, debat, administrasi, dsb.(R1/P5/2)*

*penting, karena akan berguna jika kita akan membuat CV saat melamar kerja maupun bergabung dengan beberapa organisasi.(R1/P5/3)*



*Sangat penting, karena dewasa nanti saya akan semakin sering menggunakannya di pekerjaan ataupun kehidupan sehari-hari.(R1/P5/4)*

*Juga penting. Karena kita bisa belajar apapun untuk kedepannya memakai bahasa Indonesia.*

*Contoh membuat lamaran,surat rujukan dan lain lain*

*Disisi lain,bahasa Indonesia adalah bahasa resmi Indonesia yang harus tetap di gunakan agar tidak kalah dengan bahasa asing atau bahasa gaul.(R1/P5/5)*

This finding is in line with Rabiah (2016) who stated that *Bahasa Indonesia* is needed for promotion and opening job opportunities in accordance with the profession being carried out. Proficient in *Bahasa Indonesia* is required for professions that directly interact with the general environment, while in a limited work environment; intermediate level *Bahasa Indonesia* language skills are required.

#### ***The Need for Bahasa Indonesia to Preserve Culture***

Based on the results of interviews and questionnaires, students argue that they speak *Bahasa Indonesia* since they want to preserve the culture of their country. Below are the excerpts that proves so,

*Bahasa nasional bagian dari budaya yang perlu dilestarikan.(R1/P6/1)*

*Bahasa nasional identitas budaya.(R1/P6/2)*

*Iya, karena bahasa nasional kita dan perlu di lestarikan.(R1/P6/3)*

#### ***The Negative Perceptions of ELE Students' Towards Bahasa Indonesia Course***

Apart from the positive perceptions towards the teaching of *Bahasa Indonesia* course at the university level, the data shows that the ELE students also perceive negative attitude towards the teaching of *Bahasa Indonesia*. They believe that this language is not necessary to be taught at their level. Instead of learning *Bahasa Indonesia*, they prefer to deepen their mastery of English as they are under English Education Program. The excerpts below show the negativity of students' acceptance towards teaching *Bahasa Indonesia* at university level.

*Tidak penting.(R2/P1/1)*

*Yes and no.*

*Ya. Penting karena masih banyak kosakata atau hal hal yang kurang*

*dipahami dan terkadang salah dalam mengucapkannya.*

*Tidak. Karena saya anak jurusan Pendidikan Bhs Inggris yang dituntut untuk tau dasar dasar dan segi bahasa Inggris bukan Indonesia.(R2/P1/2)*

*Tidak,karna saya lebih tertarik bahasa luar atau asing.(R2/P1/3)*

## Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it was found the perspective of students from the English Education Program towards *Bahasa Indonesia* course taught at university level. The first is a positive perspective towards *Bahasa Indonesia*. Students consider towards *Bahasa Indonesia* course is important because they need it for daily communications purposes, to produce scientific writing, and non-scientific work. In addition, *Bahasa Indonesia* course is needed to foster knowledge of the rules of *Bahasa Indonesia*, to support positive attitude towards *Bahasa Indonesia*, prepare students for their future career, and to preserve culture. The negative perception of students towards *Bahasa Indonesia* also emerge as students believe that *Bahasa Indonesia* is not important. They argue that because studying *Bahasa Indonesia* is far from their program. Therefore, this study suggests that the future research should develop teaching materials for *Bahasa Indonesia* course that are in accordance with the higher education curriculum and student needs for Indonesian especially for students who pursue the English Language Education Program.

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