

**THE EFFECT OF ADAPTABILITY OF 2014 ACADEMIC YEAR
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS TOWARD THE LEARNING OF EFL IN
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT FACULTY OF HUMANITIES JEMBER
UNIVERSITY**

(Dampak dari Kemampuan Beradaptasi Mahasiswa Asing Angkatan 2014 terhadap Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing di Program Studi Sastra Inggris Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Jember)

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Abstrak

Pokok artikel ini ialah kemampuan beradaptasi mahasiswa asing angkatan 2014 di Program Studi Sastra Inggris Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Jember. Di dalam konteks proses pembelajaran, khususnya mahasiswa asing, kemampuan beradaptasi berperan penting karena memungkinkan mahasiswa asing tidak hanya belajar berinteraksi dengan teman-teman seangkatannya tapi juga mendorong mereka untuk memperoleh proses pembelajaran yang lebih baik. Dalam teori sosio-kultural milik Lev Vygotsky (1978) disebutkan jika aktivitas kognitif individu lebih banyak diperoleh melalui interaksi sosial dengan lingkungan sekitar bukan hanya mengandalkan kinerja otak individu itu sendiri secara neurobiologis. Selain kemampuan beradaptasi, artikel ini juga mengulas tentang ‘bakat berbahasa’ (language aptitude) dari mahasiswa Thailand tersebut. Pembahasan mengenai ‘aptitude’ ini didasari oleh asumsi mahasiswa Thailand tentang ketidakberhasilan mereka di dalam proses pembelajaran pada tahun pertama di Program Studi Sastra Inggris. Tujuan dari penelitian ini ada dua, yaitu (i) mengklarifikasi asumsi mahasiswa Thailand tentang ketidakberhasilan pembelajaran mereka melalui tes PLAB; dan (ii) mengetahui efek dari kemampuan adaptasi mahasiswa Thailand terhadap proses pembelajaran mereka. Selain teori sosio-kultural milik Lev Vygotsky, kajian ini juga didukung beberapa teori lain seperti ‘aptitude’ milik Paul Pimsleur. Hasil dari kajian ini ialah asumsi tentang ketidakberhasilan di dalam proses pembelajaran hanya terbukti pada dua mahasiswa asing perempuan. Sedangkan untuk mahasiswa laki-laki, asumsi tersebut sedikit merendahkan kemampuan berbahasanya. Selain itu, kemampuan beradaptasi ternyata memiliki dampak di dalam proses pembelajaran mahasiswa Thailand tersebut.

Kata kunci: kemampuan beradaptasi, ‘aptitude’, mahasiswa asing, proses pembelajaran

Abstract

The main idea of this research is the adaptability of 2014 academic year international students in English Department Faculty of Humanities Jember University. In the learning process, especially for foreign students, adaptability has an important role because it encourages the foreign students not only to learn to interact with their peers but also to gain better learning process. The sociocultural theory of Lev Vygotsky (1978) claims that while human neurobiology is a necessary condition for higher order thinking, the most important form of human cognitive activity develops through interaction within the social and material environment. Besides adaptability, this research also discusses the language aptitude of the students. The discussion is encouraged by their own presumed unsuccessful learning process during the first terms in the English Department. The goals of this research are: (i) to clarify the presumed unsuccessful English language learning process by measuring their English language aptitude using PLAB; (ii) to elucidate how their adaptability affects their present learning EFL in English Department Faculty of Humanities Jember University onto their remaining periods of study. The result of this study clarifies the unsuccessful learning of the two female respondents while the only

male's avoids the clarification. Besides, the adaptability of those international students does affect their EFL learning.

Keywords: adaptability, aptitude, international students, learning process

Introduction

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue or first language (Ellis, 1997:3). In practice, learning a second language is a complex undertaking because learners need to struggle facing a new language, a new culture, and a new way of thinking. Thus, learners might possibly find problems during the acquisition of second language.

This also happens to Thai students of 2014 academic year in English Department Faculty of Humanities Jember University. They consist of three students: one male and two females. As the respondents of this research, the researcher gives initial name to each of them, i.e. R1, R2, and R3. R1 is the male student while R2 and R3 are the female.

Based on the personal interview which is conducted by the researcher on 23 April 2015, all Thai students told that most of their final scores of English skills' subjects are placed below the standard of passing grade. They assume that their learning process can be said as an unsuccessful process. In addition, they also state that they are still not able to translate Bahasa Indonesia into their own language, both Thai language or Bahasa Melayu. Therefore, they have some difficulties during the study, e.g. misunderstand the assignments requirements. Besides their difficulties in acquiring Bahasa Indonesia, they also have problem in their socialization. They tend to keep distance to communicate with their peers in English Department Faculty of Humanities Jember University. Even when they have problems in language learning toward certain subjects, they choose to solve their problems on their own. Based on the observation of the researcher, their socialization is limited to the Thai students community.

The new regulation in Jember University asks the students of 2014/2015 academic years (local and foreign) to finish their study in five years. Hence, those Thai students have to be successful in the learning process by achieving maximum score in every single academic subject so that they are able to finish their study on time.

At this point, the researcher highlights the language skills scores as the achievement measures in the upcoming analysis. Those scores are expected to represent the foundation of learner's language skills. Language skills consist of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Those kinds of language skills are also applied in English Department Faculty of Humanities Jember University.

The Thai students' assumption about unsuccessful learning process earlier leads to the consideration that it might be affected by their individual differences (IDs). In the course of this research, the researcher is fascinated to take *language aptitude* as the main factor of the individual differences (IDs) to be conducted. Language aptitude can be defined as a natural ability for learning an L2 and is believed to be in part related to general intelligence (Ellis, 1997:73). It is interesting to measure the language aptitude of the respondents since they are foreign students in their

university. Although their home country, Thailand also uses English as foreign language same with Indonesia, the researcher convinces that their L2 learning process will not be the same as the local students because what they experience in daily is surely different.

Besides considering language aptitude, the researcher also take into account the adaptability in which the respondents build their relationship. Norton and Toohey (2001 cited in Lightbown and Spada, 2006:56) argue that, even when individuals possess some of the characteristics that have been associated with the 'good language learner', their language acquisition may not be successful if they are not able to gain access to social relationships in situations where they are perceived as valued partners in communication. It does make sense since having opportunities to engage in communication with peers, colleagues, and even teachers will make learners gain better understanding because they have larger interaction to help them solving some problem in the learning L2 process.

Hence, the researcher argues that their adaptability contributes the successful of their learning process as foreign students. Adaptability is the internal ability of human as individuals or groups to adapt in a new cultural environment and/or situation by changing their behavior to be fit and compatible with their society successfully. Such emerges since learning second language implies the learning of a second culture as well.

Therefore in this research, the researcher interests to measure the language aptitude of 2014 academic years Thai students of English Department Faculty of Humanities Jember University through the PLAB (Pimsleur Language Aptitude Batteries). Only after getting the score of PLAB, then the researcher can clarify the Thai students' assumption about their unsuccessful learning language process by seeing the linear achievements from PLAB's score and the transcript score of English skills in the first and second semester. Second, it is a must for the researcher to use interviews as another tool to elicit the adaptability of Thai students during their learning process. The researcher believes that their adaptability gives certain amount of effect in their study in English Department Faculty of Humanities Jember University.

Research Design and Method

There are three kinds of data used in this research. First, the researcher puts English skills scores of 2014 academic years Thai students of English Department Faculty of Humanities Jember University in the first and second semester. The second data are the scores of PLAB. The scores are gained based on how many correct answers that they can achieve from the test. The last data are gained through semi-structured interview. The interview is recorded and transcribed. The transcription contains some questions of the interviewer and the answers of the interviewees.

To process the data, the researcher first, confirms respondents' aptitude. By using two scores, i.e. (i) scores

of formal assessment; and (ii) scores of PLAB. The researcher collects the assessment of English skills and PLAB of each respondent and correlates it to make a conclusion about their aptitude. Second, the researcher sorts data from interview. After the researcher has the interview transcription, the researcher needs to sort and group the answer of the respondents based on the idea of interview's questions.

Lastly, the researcher analyses the data. The first analysis is the clarification of respondents' assumption about unsuccessful learning process. For this analysis, the research triangulates three kinds of data: (i) the research uses English skills' scores from academic assessment, (ii) PLAB scores, and (iii) the respondents' assumption. In addition, some theories are used as the verification tool toward the researcher's interpretation in order to present the valid elaboration about Thai students' adaptability.

Result

R1 is not the one classified as student with unsuccessful learning because his English skills' score and his score in PLAB show linear assessment i.e. *good* grade. In addition, his GPA i.e. 2.29 is still assumed as safe score. Moreover his motivation in learning L2 is high. The rest of respondents, i.e. R2 and R3 can said unsuccessful learning because their scores of PLAB test and English skills scores are equally *poor*. Besides, their GPA decreases in the second semester 2.14 to 1.97 for R3 and 2.09 to 1.63 for R2. Their difference is only about their level of motivation. R2 has higher motivation than R3. Therefore, the respondents' assumption about their unsuccessful learning process is only valid to R2 and R3. R1 is still categorized as successful student.

Besides, the researcher judges that Thai students' adaptability does affect their learning L2. The researcher has already elaborated that they passed culture shock in successive stage and also they showed negative attitude toward Indonesian peers. In addition, the respondents said that their personal feeling has affected their learning L2.

Discussion

Discussion in this article is divided into two parts, i.e. language aptitude of respondents and the elucidation of effects of respondents' adaptability. In the first part, the researcher expounds the transcript scores of English skills to denote the respondents' learning ability during their first-year-semester using table of standardization of assessment from Academic Guidance Book Faculty of Humanities Jember University (henceforth AGBFHJU). The denotation is determined in their second semester's scores. It goes under the consideration that the second semester is the latest achievement as data in this study. Besides, level of difficulty in the second semester is greater rather the first semester which gives more challenges to the students. The following table contains the respondents' score:

Table 4.1 The Grouping English Skills Scores

| English skills' subject | R1 | R2 | R3 |
|-------------------------|----|----|----|
| LC.01 | C | C | C |
| LC.02 | C | D | D |
| S.01 | C | B | B |
| S.02 | B | C | C |
| W.01 | C | D | D |
| W.02 | B | D | D |
| RC.01 | D | D | D |
| RC.01 | A | B | B |

Source: Transcript Scores Published by Faculty of Humanities, 2016

The following step is the researcher expounds those English skills scores based on the table of standardization of assessment from AGBFHJU to typify the respondents' learning ability. Since the achievement scores of R2 and R3 are the same, thus the assessment for those respondents is also the same. Following that assessment, the researcher develops assured points that R2 and R3 are *poor* in listening comprehension and writing, *good enough* for speaking, and *good* for reading comprehension. Meanwhile, R1 achieves *good* for speaking and writing, *good enough* in listening comprehension, and *excellent* for reading comprehension.

After having the formal assessment of respondents, the researcher conducted PLAB which was divided into six parts. First, in part 1, the researcher asked the respondents to write their GPA of the first and second semester. Second, part 2 deals with level of interest in learning English. The respondents must indicate their degree of interest on the 5 boxes provided. The researcher has written that number 1 is the lowest and number 5 is the highest level. Later, in part 3, the respondents were provided with 25 English words as the questions. They had to find the synonyms of the four word options which have approximately the same meaning. Forth, the respondents had to choose the right answer in part 4 i.e. language analysis. This part is divided into three units i.e. (i) countables and uncountables, (ii) pronouns, and (iii) some and any.

Afterward, in part 5 i.e. about sound discrimination, the researcher provided five recordings in one set of listening record which are recorded stories of different topics. In each recording, they must indicate the mentioned words which are spoken by the speakers. There are three similarly sounding words that are provided for the respondents to choose. One recording is used to answer three questions. There are fifteen questions in this listening section. The last part in PLAB is a listening section about sound-symbol association. The respondents had to listen one to three-syllables-English words from the recording. The researcher set 30 English words as the questions. The respondents had to simply indicate which word was spoken by the speaker from the four printed alternatives.

In an attempt to elaborate the result of PLAB, the researcher needs to assess score of the test of each respondent. As it has been discussed, the total scores of PLAB and AGBFHJU are 100 points, so that the researcher decides to use the assessment from AGBFHJU. The total score of PLAB is the accumulation scores of each

part of the test i.e. 25 points for part 3, 30 points for part 4, 15 points for part 5, and 30 points for part 6.

R1, the male respondent got 78 points in this test. He is able to gain 20 points in part 3, 21 points in part 4, 14 points in part 5, and 23 points in part 6. In part 1, which is about the achievement in the first and second semester, R1 reported 1.77 for his first semester and 2.29 for his second. Meanwhile, the question of interest in foreign language learning was answered by giving a tick in tick box number 3. In the meantime, R3 obtains 51 total points. She got 7 points for part 3, 17 points for part 4, 8 points for part 5, and 19 points for part 6. In part 1, she wrote her GPA i.e. 2.14 for the first semester and 1.97 for the second semester. In addition, in part 2, in a five-point scale of interest in foreign language learning, she gave a tick in tick box number 2.

R2 got away with the same score as R3 did. She reached 51 total points for her test. Yet this score represents different wrong answer reference. R2 received 5 points for part 3, 15 points for part 4, 7 points for part 5, and 24 points for part 6. Meanwhile in the first part, she reported 2.09 for first semester GPA and 1.63 for the second. In the next part, i.e. part which asked about the level of interest in foreign language learning, she has the same level of interest with R1. She ticked the box number 3.

Through the results of PLAB, the researcher is going to confirm the level of the proficiency of the respondents in English. Dornyei (2005:31) said that aptitude is a strong predictor of academic success. To do so, the research uses triangulation method i.e. English skills' scores from academic assessment, PLAB scores, and the respondents' assumption. Based on the standardization of assessment from AGBFHJU, R2 and R3's scores in PLAB i.e. 51 falls between the ranges score 50-59.9 and are categorized as *poor*. Further, seeing their table, the researcher can draw a point that R2 and R3's score in PLAB works linear with their achievement in English skills. Meanwhile, the score of PLAB of R1 i.e. 78 is located in the score scale 70-79.9 and is categorized as *good*. Besides, in R1's table, it is obviously seen that his achievement in English skills correlates with his score in PLAB.

GPA which is listed in each respondent's table is used as one of another criterion to predict the performance in foreign language courses. Rees (2000 cited in Dornyei, 2005:36) states that GPA is not only the best predictor of the achievement criterion but it is also a better prediction than the total PLAB scores. Based on Academic Guidance Book from Jember University (2011:45), students will be evaluated in the second semester to decide whether they deserve or not to continue their study through seeing their GPA. For Sarjana Degree, students must have at least 16 credit semesters without E score and $GPA \geq 2.00$.

Therefore, the assessment of GPA for R3 (1.97) and R2 (1.63) is classified as *poor* because their GPA is lower than the standard score of the second semester evaluation. On the other hand, GPA of R1 i.e. 2.29 is assessed as *good enough* because he is able to reach higher score from the standard score.

The last item in each respondent's table is *degree of interest in foreign language learning*. Pimsleur (1966 cited in Dornyei, 2005:36) says this item is the measurement of learner's motivation because it is a cognitive ability that would qualify to be a component of the aptitude complex. In other words, the researcher is able to infer that the higher respondent put his/her interest, the higher his/her motivation learning L2. Therefore, the general opinion which can be pulled out is that R1 and R2 have high motivation because they ticked the tick box number 3. Little bit contrary to them, R3 has quite high motivation because she ticked the tick box number 2.

For the second part, the researcher elucidates the result of interview. The first interview with R1 and R2 was on March, 8th 2016 at 8.47 am in the front of Academic Office Faculty of Humanities Jember University. The interviewer spent 47 minutes 12 seconds to record the whole interview. Meanwhile, the second interview with R3 was held on March, 9th 2016 at 2.17 pm in the front of English Department Office Faculty of Humanities Jember University. The interview was recorded for 38 minutes 45 second. Both of interviews, the researcher secretly recorded the session. The important points during the interviews are grouped based on the similar heading as follows:

a) Effect on Respondents' Achievement

R1 stated that he got low score. Nevertheless, he added that his scores was not only the responsibility of himself but also the lecturers. R1 stated that there are only four lecturers who helped him and the other respondents learning English while the rest of the lecturers supposed them as having the same ability as local students in English Department Faculty of Humanities Jember University. In same context, R2 and R3 described that they got 2 point something for second semester and 1 point something for the first. In addition, they also agreed with R1's statements that lecturers helped them a lot in learning process.

In general, they suppose that the lecturers' help is important for their learning process. From their statement, the researcher concludes that they need the role of lecturers at most to help them learn EFL better. According to Lantolf and Throne (2006:199), those respondents reach *other-regulation* stage in SCT, i.e. a stage which human needs implicit and explicit mediation (involving varying levels of assistance, direction, and what is sometimes described as *scaffolding*) by parents, siblings, peers, coaches, teachers, and so on to help them gain success in the learning process. In this case, they need the *scaffolding* from lecturers to support their learning process.

b) Effect on Indonesian Peers' Assistance

R1 and R2 argued that they felt the difference treatment in terms of help from Indonesian peers in the first and second semester. That experience was recorded and written as below:

R2 : "Kalo semester satu itu banyak tapisekarang gaada."
(*Chuckling*)
("There are many help from peers in the first semester, but it is contrary now.") (*Chuckling*)
Interviewer : "Oh gitumalahan?"
("Oh, seriously?")
R2 : "Iya"

("Yes, it is.")

Interviewer : "Sering? Dulu? Semester dua? Masih sering dibantu teman-teman?"

("So, is it often for your peers to help you in second semester?")

R2 : "Ya, semester dua itu sudah masing-masing. Punya temen baru gitu." (*Chuckling*)

("Yes, it is. But in second semester, we took different classes so that each of us has already had new friends.") (*Chuckling*)

In many cases during the interview, R2 often slipped a laugh at the end of her utterances. Nevertheless, the researcher prefers to define her laugh as an act to dismiss something embarrassing or unfortunate through making a joke of it. Meanwhile, R1 smiled and looked upset when he heard her statement. Therefore, from this situation, the researcher concludes that both R1 and R2 felt bad for the changing attitude in terms of providing assistance from Indonesian peers.

The decreasing help from peers is also agreed by R3. She convinced that her Indonesian peers often helped her to do assignment when they were in the first semester. Occasionally, she also joined a group discussion with them. Within that discussion, she was often taught to finish the assignment. Nevertheless, R3 faced a different treatment from her peers in the second semester. She said that she needed to ask to her peers first if she had problem in doing assignment. They did not offer any help again to her as in the first semester.

c) Effect on Respondents' Learning Process

The researcher infers that during their first semester, R1 and R2 did a lot of study by themselves. It makes sense since they agree with the statement of the researcher that they certainly have to be study hard by they own. They reason that they are not familiar with Indonesian peers well. This attitude is supposed as the result of they way they interact with Indonesian which is inconvenience.

Additionally, they rarely to have group discussion with Indonesian peers. They will have it if only they have particular assignment to do in group. They convinced that group discussion does not give much contribution to them in term of learning process. In fact, group discussion is a good forum to develop their academic skills and also their adaptability with their peers. Within this forum, indirectly, they have to engage themselves personally and emotionally with how their peers react to them.

d) Effect on Respondents' Interaction with Indonesian Peers

The researcher asked about how the attitude of Indonesian peers toward the respondents during their two years living in Jember. In the first interview, the researcher finds that the R1 and R2 felt disappointed with the change of attitude from Indonesian peers. Under the same topic, R3 convinced the same statement. She then emphasized that she truly needed her peers a lot to motivate her study. She also needed them to help her overcome any obstacles during learning process. In short, R3 expects the *scaffolding* from peers during her learning process to better her achievement. Besides, she really wanted to hang around with her peers, just like what she did with Thai peers. Further, the researcher also highlights how the Indonesian peers

reaction affects the way they build their adaptability.

The researcher makes certain that the attitude of Indonesian peers disturbs the respondents personally. It is proven through their opinions as below:

Interviewer : "Menggangu ga kayak gitu itu?"
(Does it disturb you?")

R1 : (*Chuckling*)

(*Chuckling*)

Interviewer : "Ngerasa kayak gimana gitu?"
(Do you feel any hurt feeling?")

R2 : "Iya"
(Yes, I do")

It took a long time for R1 and R2 to answer the researcher's question. They inhaled, looked at each other and smiled. In that situation, the researcher felt an awkward moment because both of them showed seemed to be under great pressure face. Therefore, the researcher knew for sure that they truly felt intimidated with the attitude of Indonesian peers.

Similar experience is felt by R3 with Indonesian peers in terms of adaptation occurred in the class. She argued that mostly, she preferred to be silent. She did not talk if her friend did not ask to her. She was ashamed to join her friend's conversation. In Indonesian language, she reasoned "*Bahasanya, (silent)*". The researcher took a long time to hear R3 utters her next statement. Besides, she lowered her voice and then laughed. In that time, the researcher also notices that her face turned to be red. Those are indications that someone is ashamed with her/his doing. In this case, R3 was embarrassed to mention that she had problem to communicate with her peers, i.e. language.

Additionally, in the second interview, R3 declared that she never hung out together her Indonesian peers during her first year semester because she was never invited with them. The one and only moment she remembered was when she had fast-breaking event with them in Ramadan month of 2014. In that time, she attended that fast-breaking with R2. R1 was absent because he went home to Thailand. Then, the researcher also discover that they never hang out with those peers after their fast-breaking meeting. Even, they did that kind of agenda more often with their Thailand peers. It is ironic to see that they seemed pulling back themselves to build their adaptability within Indonesian peers environment.

During the interview, all respondents argued that in the first semester, there were some Indonesian peers who came to their boarding house to visit them and other Thailand students. Unfortunately, the numbers of Indonesian peers who visited them decrease in the second semester. The researcher supposes that this kind attitude of Indonesian peers is caused by the euphoria to have foreign friends. They were encouraged to know more about Thai students so that they visited the house of Thai students to have more intimate communication.

R3 also explained that she ever visited her Indonesian peers in her boarding house. She came there with her friend. They did not come there to do any assignment but to have fun. Unfortunately, that was the first and the last time of her visit. She did not come there again. She did not give any reasons. She only laughed when the

researcher asked about it. From the way she laughed, the researcher infers that she was ashamed and/or felt uncomfortable to visit her friend's house again. This fact is an unexpected thing that is done by R3 because of her characters i.e. she is a shy person. The researcher argues that in that time, R3 developed her adaptability by trying to interact more intimately with her peers.

All these matters convincingly affected their motivation in learning L2 in English Department Faculty of Letters Jember University. R3 explained her opinion in the interview's transcript as below:

- R3 : "Ya, kan kalo ada teman bantu itu enak. Tapi kalo nggak itu ga enak."
("It feels good when many people try to help me and it feels bad when it happens the other way.")
- Interviewer : "Ngerasa berat sendiri ya?"
("Do you feel bad about this?")
- R3 : (*Smiling*)
- Interviewer : "Meskipun ada dosen yang bantu gitu, perasaannya tetep sama? Maksudnya tetep ngerasa butuh punya temen ya?"
("Although there are some lecturers who help you, do you feel the same? I mean, do you feel that you need more friends?")
- R3 : (*Smiling*)

In many cases, when R3 did not answer the researcher's question, the researcher caught an intended meaning that she was afraid to say yes. So she pretended to keep silent instead of directly declaring 'yes'. In addition, she always looked like wanting cry in every single question about Indonesian peers who have changed in the second semester. Further, R3 realized that this situation affected her personal feeling.

- R3 : "Iya ga enak. Kadang mikir mau pulang, saya mau pulang."
("Yes, it feels bad. Sometime, I think that it is better to go home. I just want to go home.")
- Interviewer : "Kapan, mulai kapan SL ngerasa kayak gitu?"
("When do you start to feel that way?")
- R3 : "Semester 2."
("In the second semester.")

During that conversation, R3 laughed a lot when she uttered her statements. Nevertheless, she also looked misty-eyed at the same time. Besides, she answered the researcher's question fast, even when the question did not finish to be asked. Therefore, the researcher assumes that she understood so well about the goal of the question and also was waiting for this kind of question so she could tell about this to someone else. R3 added her explanation by saying that R1 and R2 also felt the same as her. Her statement is true since in the R1 and R2's interview, R2 mentioned that she wanted to go home to her home country because of these. In Indonesian language, R2 uttered "*Ndak tau, mau pulang.*" while lowering her voice and looking misty-eyed. Besides, R1 also showed sad face after seeing that R2 started to cry.

Fortunately, when R2 told to someone who is considered as the leader from Thai's organization in Jember, she was advised to keep her spirit and learn as best as she can although there were so many obstacles during

her process. Even if, it seems to be R2's problem only, but seeing how R1 responded, the researcher speculated that it was his too. The conversation about this topic is also found in R3's interview. It is described that R3 had the same advise as R1 and R2 had, i.e. to keep learning until it is done.

Here, it appears that all respondents have passed two of four successive stages of culture shock by Brown (2007:195). Brown acknowledges the stage 1 as a period of excitement and euphoria over the newness of the surroundings. Earlier, the researcher is able to define that in the respondents' first semester, they were excited to know that many Indonesian peers and lecturers care about them. Nevertheless, it changed when they moved to second semester. In this semester, the researcher believes that they pass the second stage of culture shock, i.e. a condition which individuals feel the intrusion of more and more cultural differences into their own images of self and security (Brown, 2007:195). Brown adds that in this stage, individuals rely on and seek out the support of their fellow countrymen in the second culture, taking sympathy in complaining about local customs and conditions, seeking escape from their unpleasant experiences. Due to this, it has been proved from previous elucidation that they suppose themselves as unexpected individuals by their Indonesian peers and then they told about their experience to their fellow countrymen. The researcher assumes that they want to look for protection and/or support.

From researcher's point of view, the changing attitude from Indonesian peers, in fact, does not affect the attitude of the respondents. The researcher reasons that the respondents' attitude does not change since in the first semester i.e. they do not ever initiate to interact with their peers. Therefore, if in the second semester their attitude is the same, it means that even though their peers make less interaction, the respondents does not show the changing attitude toward that. In short, they do not do something for the sake up maintaining the good relationship with peers. In general, this kind of attitude is categorized as negative because they let the communication with their peers to getting worse without any initiative to ask or just keep in touch with their peers. Based on the study of John Oller and colleagues' research (see Oller, Hudson, & Liu, 1977; Chihara & Oller, 1978; Oller, Baca, & Vigil, 1978 cited in Brown, 2007:193), second language learner can gain benefit if they have positive attitudes while negative attitudes may lead to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency.

Additionally, during interview, R1 and R2 reasoned that they seldom looked for the Indonesian peers so that their peers started to keep distance with them. Here, the respondents suddenly lowering their voice. In addition, the gesture from them also demonstrated the unwilling to talk about something. Further, for this topic, the researcher gained the evidence that the respondents tended to give short answer and took a breath.

Obviously, they blamed themselves for why Indonesian peers keep distance from them. They positioned if they were the ones who need to ask to them.

Nevertheless, a point that needed to be highlighted is their attitude is also affected by the reciprocal attitude from

Indonesian peers. Some inconveniences during their adaptation process encourage them to react accordingly.

Meanwhile, R3 argued in Indonesian utterance, "*Mungkin, saya nggak ngerti bahasanya. Bahasa Indonesia, Bahasa Inggris juga. Saya nggak sering ngobrol sama teman-teman.*" The translation of that utterance into English is "*Maybe, I do not understand the language both Indonesian and English language. I rarely have a chat with them.*" Previously, the researcher asked her about what kind of action she must do in order to improve her scores. She answered that she must be brave to raise more questions to her peers. Unfortunately, she was too ashamed to being around with the Indonesian peers although she ever had good communication with them in the first semester. In Indonesian utterance, she reasoned, "*Ya dulu, kalo sekarang nggak. Temannya ga terlalu dekat. Yang dekat jadi jauh.*" or in English utterance "*It was true that I ever had good communication with them but it does not like that anymore. They tend to keep distance with me now. Those who were close become far.*" At the time R3 verbalized that statement, the researcher noted that she almost shed her tears while was chuckling. A point which can be inferred is that R3 felt bad experience and emotional pain that it must be very hard.

Conclusion

Conclusion deals with the answers of research questions. The first question is about respondents' assumption that they had unsuccessful learning process for the first year semester. Therefore, to make it comprehensive, the researcher uses triangulation methods: (i) the recorded confession of respondents' assumption about unsuccessful learning process; (ii) formal evaluation from institution; and (iii) result of PLAB.

For the first method, in April 2015, the researcher has already had personal interview with those Thai students. Within the interview, they confessed that they had unsuccessful learning process because much of their scores were below the standard of passing grade. The second method is formal evaluation from institution. From the transcript score, R1 got better assessment in each English skill subject compared to R2 and R3 i.e. *good enough* (C) for listening comprehension, *excellent* (A) for reading comprehension, and *good* (B) for speaking and writing. Meanwhile, R2 and R3 got *poor* (D) for listening comprehension and writing, *good* (B) for reading comprehension, and *good enough* (C) for speaking. Later, for the third method i.e. PLAB test, the researcher concludes that R1 was able to get 78 score whilst R2 and R3 were able to get 51 out of 100 total scores. These PLAB scores from those Thai students are surprisingly similar to their formal evaluation, i.e. R1 has higher achievement rather than R2 and R3. Thus, the first question is obviously answered that the unsuccessful learning process is only valid to two respondents i.e. the females while the only male is not.

The second question is about whether the respondents' adaptability gives effect to their learning EFL or not. The change attitude refers to the less-given helps

from peers in the second semester. This differs from the peers' attitude in the first semester in which they often help the respondents to do the assignments and/or anything related to learning needs. Therefore, the reaction from respondents toward this fact is they had lower-motivation in the second semester rather in the first. Further, indirectly, the change of peers' attitude also affects respondents' personal feeling. Through the interview, they convince that they felt bad for this condition. Moreover, R2 and R3 said that they want to go home. From these evidences, the researcher is able to say that respondents' adaptability cannot develop owing to how their Indonesian peers react to them. However, the respondents also argue that it is their mistake too when their peers start to keep distance with them. They blame that they rarely to look for them so that it is normal for them if their peers react in that way. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the adaptability of those Thai students does affect their EFL learning.

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