

**LANGUAGE ATTITUDE AND IDENTITY OF THE SIXTH  
SEMESTER STUDENTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY  
PROGRAM AT SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY**

**A thesis by**

**FADILLAH RACHMAWATI**

**Student Number: 06011282025015**

**English Education Study Program  
Language and Arts Education Department**



**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION  
SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY**

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**06011282025015**

**English Education Study Program**

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**SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY**

**2024**

**Approved by:**



**Prof. Soni Mirizon, M. A., Ed.D.**

**NIP 196711041993031002**

**Certified by:**

**Coordinator Of English Education Study Program**



**Eryansyah, M. A., Ph. D.**

**NIP 19748022002121001**




**Language Attitude of the 6th Semester Students of English Education Study  
Program at Sriwijaya University**


**Fadillah Rachmawati**  
**Student Number: 06011282025015**

**This thesis was defended by the writer in the final program examination and  
was approved the examination committee on:**

**Day : Monday**

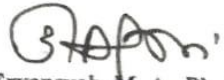
**Date: May 20, 2024**

1. Chairperson: Prof. Soni Mirizon, M. A., Ed.D. (  )

2. Member: Dr. Ismail Petrus, M. A. (  )

**Indralaya, May 20 2024**

**Certified by  
Coordinator of English  
Education Study Program,**

  
**Eryansyah, M. A., Ph. D.**  
**NIP 19748022002121001**



## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned,

Name	Fadillah Rachmawati
Student Number	06011282025015
Study Program	English Education

Certify that the thesis entitled "Language Attitude and Identity of the Sixth Semester Students of English Education Study Program at Swriwijaya University" is my own work and I did not do any plagiarism or inappropriate quotation against the ethic and rules commended by Ministry of Education of Republic of Indonesia Number 17, 2010 regarding plagiarism in higher education. Therefore, I deserve to face court if I am found to have plagiarized this work.

Indralaya May 2024  
The Undersigned



Fadillah Rachmawati  
0601122025015

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Susi Widayani and Ahmad Juya, who always love and support me unconditionally and to my only brother, Fachrul Effendi, who always gives me his advices.

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**ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study explores language attitude and identity by examining students' language attitude towards English and how the attitudes play a role in constructing their identity. Through case study approach, data were collected from the 6th semester students of English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University using questionnaire and interview. Data analysis revealed that students have positive language attitudes towards English where attitudes play a significant role in constructing students' identity as competent English speakers who are loyal to their mother tongue. The results suggest insights into how identity shapes students' language learning experiences. This study enhances the understanding of language attitude and identity by examining English education students' attitudes toward English and how they perceive their own identities in this context. Future research could further explore these findings.

**Keywords:** *Language Attitude, Identity, English Student*

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the background of the study, the problems of the study, the objectives of the study, and the significance of the study.

### **1.1 The Background of the Study**

The world is now in an era of globalization where people from different parts of the world can communicate with each other. Moreover, digitalization has made communication even easier without the need to think about language barriers. However, even though technology has made inter-language communication easier with machine translation, a common language that connects these parties is still needed. In linguistics, this is known as a *lingua franca*, which is a language that is mutually understood and spoken by people who use different languages and do not understand each other's languages. Encyclopædia Britannica defines *lingua franca* as “a language used as a means of communication between populations speaking vernaculars that are not mutually intelligible.”

In many different contexts where a neutral language is needed, English has emerged as the *de facto lingua franca* of the globe. English is spoken and written by 1.5 billion people for the purpose of communication (Bajracharya & Phoochareonsil, 2020). It is employed, for instance, in commerce, international transportation, the media, the Internet, entertainment, science, and education (Jaramillo et al., 2020). Therefore, as an international language, English plays an important role in global communication, serving as a connecting language between people from different countries with different languages.

The spread of English as a global language is the result of exploration, colonization, and cultural exchange. According to Kalfried Knapp (2015), the role of English as an international language is due to several factors, such as the expansion of the British Empire, the power of the United States in international politics, economics, science, and technology since World War II, and the ease of learning English because it does not have a complex morphological structure.

Another reason why English has spread throughout the world is the creation of the World Wide Web in America (Akbar, 2016).

As a consequence of the widespread use of English, non-native English-speaking nations try to establish an English environment in every school as the first stage in learning English from an early age (Hasanah & Utami, 2019). This is due to the fact that English is needed in the workplace, as many companies or recruiters require English as one of their qualifications. Thus, English has been studied from elementary school to senior high school. Parents who are aware of the importance and benefits of English even enroll their children in English tutoring. One of the keys to successful language learning is having a positive attitude towards it.

Attitude towards language is defined by McKenzie (2010, p. 19) as a general feeling towards individuals, objects, institutions, events, and abstract ideas such as language. There have been many studies that discuss language attitudes towards English. Most of the research results show a positive attitude towards English, as expressed by Ong (2020) in his research on high school students, and Pham and Nguyen (2021) and Pham and Huynh (2023) on non-English major students. Although some studies show results where students' attitudes vary between positive and negative (Kemala & Bukit, 2022) and even mostly negative in the case of the Sundanese language community (Wati & Zulaikha, 2019), studies of EFL students (Yuliani et al., 2023) and English language students (Fitri et al., 2021) show positive attitudes towards English. These studies also reveal that language attitude is important because it is one of the determinants of successful English learning (Fitri et al., 2021). Furthermore, Fitri et al. (2021) emphasized that research on language attitudes in English students is important because it can show the quality of English department students in the teaching and learning process.

Exploring language attitudes is important in the language learning context because of its various roles. Besides language maintenance, bi/multilingualism, language planning and policy, language attitude is important for its role in identity construction (Li and Wei, 2022; Salmon and Menjívar, 2019). Language identity

is essential in second language learning since it influences the learning experience (Mashadi et al., 2021). Furthermore, learners' identity affects their views about themselves and others' ideas regarding them.

Considering the importance of language attitude and identity in second language learning, there is still no research on both in the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University. Thus, this present study will explore the students of the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University, particularly the 6th-semester students, in relation to their attitude and identity as second language learners.

## **1.2 The Problems of the Study**

The problems of the study are formulated in the following research questions.

1. What is the language attitude of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester students' of English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University?
2. How does the attitude of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester students of the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University play a role in identity construction in English learning?

## **1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

In relation the background above, the objectives of this study are:

1. to find out the language attitude of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester students' of English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University,
2. to find out how the attitude of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester students of the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University play a role in identity construction in English.

## **1.4 The Significance of the Study**

The study aims to investigate students' attitudes towards English to offer important insights into the effectiveness of Sriwijaya University's English Education Study Program. By better meeting students' needs and preferences through the design of curriculum, support systems, and teaching strategies,

educators can improve the quality of education by considering the attitudes of their students. Gardner (in Getie, 2020) stated that attitudes toward language acquisition have a big impact on students' motivation. Consequently, motivation also influences proficiency levels. This knowledge can guide the creation of more successful interventions and strategies for language learning.

Exploring how students' attitudes towards English contribute to their identity construction is crucial for understanding the complex interplay between language, culture, and identity. Insights gained from the research will also be useful for students in the English Education program, helping them understand their identities as language learners. By reflecting on their attitudes, beliefs, and experiences with language learning, students can gain insights into their own identities and how these identities are shaped and expressed through language.



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