STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE USE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN EFL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

This present study was aimed at discovering students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in EFL classroom, students' difficulties in dealing with authentic materials, and students' favorable authentic materials. There were 34 of the eighth-grade students in Bandung participated in this research. The data were attained through students' questionnaires, students' interviews, and classroom observation. The mean score of students' questionnaire result was 51.09. It indicates that students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials are positive. This result was also supported by the two observers involved in this study who agreed that authentic materials could give positive impacts on all students' element of attitudes which are cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements. Then, according to the result of students' interview, there were five difficulties that students encountered when dealing with authentic materials: unfamiliar vocabularies appeared in authentic materials, advanced speaking fluency and intonation, low-quality of authentic materials, students' low self-confidences, and unfamiliar authentic materials. The last, from twenty kinds of authentic materials listed in the questionnaire, songs and movies were considered as the most favorable authentic materials for EFL students.

Keywords: students' attitudes; authentic materials; EFL students

INTRODUCTION

Students in some public schools in Indonesia show less interest in learning English. English is considered hard to be understood and learned since the status of English in Indonesia is as a foreign language, so they rarely use it in their daily lives. This circumstance makes them unfamiliar with English and they have low motivations to learn English due to its complexity. Regarding this, some teachers feel apprehensive about using higher level materials in the classroom because they assume students will not enjoy the class and cannot grasp the learning well. Therefore, some teachers decide to only follow every activity in the textbook given by the school.

However, the use of textbook in teaching learning processes can lead to a monotonous and meaningless learning and give impacts on the deterioration of students' quality (Belaid, 2015). Consequently, students learn English only to comply their responsibility as students to achieve sufficient grades in their schools without knowing the real importance and purposes of learning English. Looking at this matter, teachers should be able to choose appropriate materials which can enhance students' interests and introduce them to the existence of English in their daily lives.

Material is one of the vital components in teaching learning processes. It may assist both teachers and students to achieve learning objectives stated in the curriculum. Read (2001) states that teaching and learning materials are critical ingredients for learning processes, and the intended curriculum cannot be successfully run without them. Therefore, materials used in the classroom will give a huge influence on the process and the result of teaching learning activities. In line with this regard, teachers should be able to design and select appropriate materials utilized in the teaching learning activity since materials can be a help or a danger for teaching learning processes. If the materials are not chosen properly, they can lead to major problems. Moreover, there are several steps which should be taken by teachers when designing materials; those are finding, selecting,

evaluating, and adapting processes (McGrath, 2002). Hence, designing and selecting materials are a big challenge for the teachers.

Furthermore, Belaid (2015) declares that the use of textbook as the only source for learning without finding other supporting materials can induce a monotonous learning. He adds this kind of teaching method may highly influences quality of students. Students will easily feel bored and they only know the vocabularies without knowing the application on the context. Moreover, he further explains that students can lose their motivation to learn because the learning is not meaningful. Eventually, their purpose of learning English is not to communicate but only for achieving a sufficient grade in school.

These trends make some teachers realize the need of context in teaching English. Regarding this, some teachers have tried to build real-life situation in the teaching learning by using authentic materials as supplementary materials in teaching learning activities to aid the main source. The use of authentic materials in the classroom especially in EFL classroom is expected to restore the real purpose of learning a foreign language in school which makes students able to use it in the real world (Hamed, 2014).

Nevertheless, the use of authentic materials in EFL class is not a new method since teachers started to implement it as a result of the existence of communicative language teaching in 1970s. Hamed (2014) defines authentic materials as materials which bring real-life settings as an exposure to the real language usage in order to prepare students to deal with real world situation. Authentic materials, according to McGrath (2002) are divided into two types which are printed and spoken materials. The example of printed and spoken materials usually introduced to the students in the classroom are brochure, short stories, magazines, radio channel, weather forecasts, newspapers, list of menus, television programs, and recipes (Hedge, 2000; Soliman, 2013).

Various studies which have been conducted regarding the use of authentic materials are believed can give positive influences not only on the course itself but also on the teachers and the students. Nevertheless, applying authentic materials in EFL classroom can be a major challenge for students since authentic materials contain real life purposes which are quite challenging for EFL students especially for lower level students.

It may give arise to different attitudes of EFL students towards the use of authentic materials in teaching learning activities. Furthermore, since there is only a few studies in Indonesia which has investigated students' attitudes regarding this issue and considering that students are one of the essential elements in teaching learning processes, therefore; the intention of this present research lies in the urge to find out eighth grade students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in EFL classroom, the difficulties encountered by them in dealing with authentic materials, and also their favorable authentic materials.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Definition of Attitudes
This study deals with attitudes towards the use of authentic materials depicted by students in EFL classroom. Attitude is commonly defined as someone's personal view towards an object as a result of combination between feelings, thinking, and demeanors (Katz, 1960; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Guskey, 1989; Hayakawa, 1994; and Rahim, 2013). This term has been familiar in daily life, so various definitions have been stated regarding this matter. Attitude, according to Katz (1960), is a suppositious idea that reveals an individual's belief towards a particular concept, object, or circumstances. Nevertheless, in some cases, people can also be neutral which means they retain both positive and negative attitudes towards an object.

In addition, Fazio (1986) defines attitudes as generally positive or negative views of a person, place, thing, or event. He also comprehensively adds attitude is a state of readiness as a result of experiences. It gives impacts on individual's response to a particular object which includes events, concepts, conditions, or issues. This also goes with the point of Rahim (2013) who argues attitudes, in general, are favorable or unfavorable judgments granted to activities, ideas, or certain environments. Regarding this, Hayakawa (1994) points out that definition of attitudes can be broader than another related term like perception or belief

since attitudes cover complex elements which are distinct from perception and belief.

Elements of Attitudes

Attitudes are generally structured into three major elements or dimensions: affective, behavioral, and cognitive (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Schau,C., 2003; Kim, 2001; Kinicki, 2004; Gilmor, 2007).

The first element of attitudes is affective which refers to individual's feeling, evaluation or preference towards an object (Eagly & Chaiken, as cited in Jain 2014). The affective element can get influences from emotional responses. As asserted by Kinicki (2004) if someone has a preference towards something, it will establish his or her affection. He further explains that affective has a strong relation to emotional experiences or preferences which could form positive or negative attitudes. This is supported by the point of Pike and Ryan (2004) who state that positive and negative attitudes create an independent contribution to satisfaction or dissatisfaction judgments towards an object. For instance, in the teaching learning activity, students will have various feelings and emotions towards a particular learning method.

Then, the second element of attitudes is cognitive element. Gilmor (2007) defines cognitive component has to do with someone's thinking, understanding, and learning about people, situations or objects. Cognition relates to beliefs, ideas, and perceptual responses about an object. He further explains that cognitive aspect is the process of knowing and perceiving a particular object in which in the teaching learning situation, cognitive aspect relates to the students understandings about the materials and how they perceive the materials brought by the teacher.

Meanwhile, the third element of attitudes is behavioral or conative element. As asserted by Azwar (1995), behavioral element refers to how a person tends to act, or is expected, to act towards an object. The behavioral element is consistent with beliefs and feelings which can generate individual attitudes. A behavioral factor as stated by Fazio and Olso (2003) is connected to a person's vivid actions towards an object. They also add that students' involvement or engagement in the classroom could be one factor to measure behavioral element of attitudes. For instance,

students' involvement in the classroom whether they are keenly engaged in the classroom or not will depend on the situation or atmosphere set up by the teachers. From the figure 2.1, it can be seen that affective, cognitive, and behavioral elements can influence someone's attitude.

To sum up explanation above, attitudes are personal view or judgment towards something as a result of experiences or observational environment. In addition, attitudes have three major elements: affective (feel), cognitive (think), and behavioral (act). Hence, students' attitudes in the classroom are considered as one of the essential roles in teaching learning processes which will influence learning outcomes. Finally, in this present research, students' attitudes are how students perceive the use of authentic materials in teaching learning activities.

Measurement of Attitudes

Attitudes are strongly related to individual possession, so it cannot be measured by directly observing persons' physical attributes (Souza & Marcos, 2010). Measuring someone's attitudes is frequently associated with measuring someone's behavior. However, according to Krosnick (2005), measuring someone's attitudes is more than just judging their behaviors. This goes with Christensen (2009) who states that measuring attitudes is a complex action since attitudes is an ultimate result of combination between three internal elements consisted of affective, cognitive, and behavioral elements which are triggered by stimulus.

Likert Scale is an attitudinal scale which is widely used to measure characters and personality traits including preferences which originally developed by American renowned sociologist namely Dr. Rensis Likert in 1932 through his notable report entitled *A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes*. Furthermore, Harry and Deborah (2012) states that Likert's Scale exhibits the level of agreement or disagreement towards a particular object by providing set of questions or statements, and the alternative responses consisting of strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1).

Thus, due to the importance and intention of the study, this present study employed description as the approach and

Likert Scale as the technique with an adaptation by Clason and Dormody (1994) to measure students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in EFL classroom.

The Role of Attitudes in Teaching Learning Processes

Attitudes are believed play an eminent role in teaching learning processes due to its significances on various studies over years. Not only does attitude affect students' developments but also it affects the fruitfulness of the particular subject (Rahim, 2013). This is in line with Woofolk and Margetts (as cited in Salome, 2013) who profess that teaching learning processes become more powerful when students have high interests, enjoyments, and excitements on the activities or subjects. Regarding this proposition, Deboer (1987) crystallizes that attitudes in teaching learning processes give substantial impacts on students' achievements. She further states that it is important for students to have positive attitudes towards teaching learning processes because students with positive attitudes will easily get motivated to keep on performing well in the process of learning, so it can generate a high learning achievement. This goes hand in hand with Mwamwenda (as cited in Michael, 2010) who declare pupils with positive attitudes tend to denote a better learning performance than pupils with negative attitudes.

Defintion of Authentic Materials as a Tool for Teaching Learning Processes

Authentic materials are documents originally created by native speakers and particularly designed for native speakers' usage as a necessity of communication in social life in the form of printed or spoken materials. As asserted by Genhard (1996), authentic material means anything related to communication in the real life situations. This idea is as well uttered by Little et al. (as cited in Guariento & Morley, 2001) who declare that authentic materials are used for some social purposes in the language context where they are produced.

The similar idea is also mentioned by Kilickaya (2004) who promotes that authentic materials are an exposure to the real context of everyday life language and how native speakers use it for their daily lives purposes.

She also highlights that the most important role of authentic materials is as an exposure to real usage of English in a particular community.

Departing from that point, Bacon and Finnemann (1990) defines authentic materials as texts produced by and intended for native speakers for non-pedagogical purposes. This goes hand in hand with the point of Polio (2014) who expresses the same feeling toward authentic materials. She states that authentic materials are initially not created for educational language purposes.

Actually, as revealed by Polio (2014) authentic materials are not designed to be used for pedagogical purposes. Yet, recently, authentic materials are believed can be a decent tool for teaching English to students due to its authenticity. Although they are designed for real-life goals and communication of native speakers, authentic materials are still considered eligible to be employed as learning materials in the classroom to support teaching learning processes. As asserted by Tamo (2009) who argues that introducing students to authentic materials can get them motivated to learn English since it exposes a real life purposes of English in the real society

Types of Authentic Materials in Teaching and Learning Processes

Authentic materials are commonly categorized into four types: audio materials, visual materials, printed materials, and *realia* (Genhard 1996; Maxim 2002; Alkhuli 2006; Polio 2014). These sundry materials can be used differently depending on the objectives of learning. Moreover, Otte (2006) describes variety types of authentic materials utilized in the learning processes can render the teaching learning activities more fascinating for the students.

The first type of authentic materials is audio materials. Audio materials as asserted by Alkhuli (2006) consisting of all materials to which students' should listen to get the main information. Some examples of audio materials are radio programming, taped conversation, song, advertisement, announcement, and sundries. Maxim (2002) indicates that offering students to the authentic audio material is significant for their learning progress since it guides them to get used to the way native speakers speak English

including their vocabulary, intonation, fluency, and pronunciation.

The second type of authentic materials is visual materials. Polio (2014) defines authentic visual materials are those materials in which students can obtain information by seeing the materials. The samples of authentic visual materials are pictures, photograph, post cards, schedule boards, street signs, and wordless picture books. Then, Polio further declares that authentic visual materials become the most suitable materials to be applied for lower level students to catch their attentions and interests.

The third type of authentic materials is printed materials. These materials according to Genhard (2006) are all materials in the form of books, sheets, or set of papers. The examples of them are magazines, newspapers, restaurant menus, movie reviews, memoranda, diaries, greeting cards, story books, brochures, telephone books and song lyrics. Genhard further elaborates that bringing authentic printed materials to the classroom is believed can make students realize that a high number of stuffs have been produced in the real life which use English as the language.

The last type of authentic materials is *realia*. According to Herre and Jordan (as cited in Kheider, 2012) *realia* is a term which refers to tangible things and concrete objects that are used in the classroom to construct real life situations in the classroom.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Authentic Materials in EFL Classroom

There are various advantages can be obtained from using authentic materials in EFL classroom. First, authentic materials as asserted by Kilickaya (2004) give students exposure to learn English because students were introduced to the real usage of English in social environments. Then, Martinez (2002) declares another advantage of applying authentic materials. She states authentic materials can be a trigger for students to practice the four skill components which are listening, reading, writing and speaking.

In addition, Peacock (as cited in Soliman, 2013) highlights authentic materials provide variety types of materials which are rarely attached in the school textbook, so it can prevent students from getting bored during the teaching learning process.

Furthermore, Richard (2004) informs authentic materials help students to engage with real world situations and make them familiar with the existence of English in daily life. He also adds since authentic materials deal with stuffs in the real life situation, so it is believed that authentic materials can catch students' interests as well as their motivations.

Regarding this matter, Polio (2014) indicates the use of authentic materials in EFL Classroom implicitly introduces information and culture across nations because authentic materials has been designed by and for native speakers, so it influences the content of authentic materials itself. Hence, students' knowledge can be broadened through the information they get from authentic materials.

Moreover, as asserted by Tamo (2009) authentic materials present realistic contents which can enhance students' motivation to learn. Also, authentic materials make students getting used to English and assist students in preparing themselves to face real interaction in society.

Using authentic materials, however, can lead to several challenges. First, according to Herrington & Reeves (2003), the content attached on authentic materials can be culturally biased. This kind of materials can be a challenge for students to grasp the information from authentic material.

Similar idea has been uttered by Gilmore (2007) who argues that authentic materials frequently employ high level of vocabularies and contain complex sentences. This state of affairs make students have to think harder and even can make students demotivated to learn due to frustration.

Aforesaid statement goes hand in hand with Guariento & Morley (2001) who reveal that teachers need extra efforts to prepare authentic materials since it is quite complicated to define authentic materials which are suitable with students' needs and abilities and appropriate for learning objectives at the same times. It needs selection, adaptation and also evaluation to make the materials valid to be used (McGrath, 2002).

In conclusion, teachers and students will gain sort of benefits and experience several drawbacks from using authentic materials in the classroom. Therefore, some teachers may

feel apprehensive about using authentic materials in the classroom, especially for lower level students; yet, actually if the teacher is able to introduce it to students precisely, more benefits will be obtained by both students and teachers.

Selecting Authentic Materials for Teaching and Learning Processes
There are eight major categories should be followed to appropriately select authentic materials for teaching learning processes. Those categories are relevancy to the school textbook and students' need, topics based on students' interests, cultural appropriateness, logistical consideration, cognitive demands, linguistic demands, quality of materials, and exploitability.

However, it does not mean an authentic material which is presented in the classroom should conform to all categories (Genhard, 2006; Tamo, 2009; and Kheider, 2012), yet at least the teacher should consider several categories when selecting authentic materials to be used in the classroom.

METHOD
This study employed descriptive method in particular to investigate students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials, students' difficulties when dealing with authentic materials and students' favorable authentic materials. This is supported by Polio and Duff (1994) who inform that descriptive method describes, records, analyzes and interprets circumstances exists in particular group. Moreover, this goes with the point of Gay (2009) who states that descriptive research deals with attitudes, behaviors, or other characteristics of a group of subject.

In line with the intended objectives of this present study which was to discover students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in EFL classroom, students' difficulties when dealing with authentic materials, and students' favorable authentic materials; then descriptive qualitative method was considered nodal and eligible to be employed.

Participants
The participants were eighth grade students. For the research purpose, there were 33 students that involved in the research.

Data Collection
Data collection is an eminent aspect of any type of research study. According to Wyse (2011), qualitative research is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. Hence, this research had gathered the information needed through three data instruments: questionnaire, observation, and interview. Those data instruments hopefully could assist the researcher to investigate the issue of this present study.

Data Analysis
In this research, observation and interview data were elaborated descriptively while questionnaire data was elaborated statistically since it provided the calculation result from students' answers.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS
Students' Attitudes towards the Use of Authentic Materials in EFL Classroom
Based on the calculation from students' questionnaires, more than half students who were participated in the research indicated positive attitudes towards the use of authentic materials with the percentage of 76% (38% for extremely positive attitudes and 38% for positive attitudes). Meanwhile, 24% students denoted negative attitudes towards the use of authentic materials and 0% student revealed extremely negative attitudes towards the use of authentic materials.

It has been calculated that the mean score was 51.09 which meant students showed positive attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in EFL classroom.

Derived from what has been presented and discussed before, it could be concluded that students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in EFL classroom are positive.

This result is further described in detail in the following sections.

The following description is about the elaboration of the result of students' questionnaires based on the elements of attitudes which are cognitive, affective, and behavioral or conative (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Schau,C., 2003; Kim, 2001; Kinicki, 2004; Gilmor, 2007). As asserted by them, these three elements of attitudes play prominent roles to generate someone's

attitudes. Therefore, in order to make the explanation more tangible, each statement in the questionnaire were classified and analyzed based on those elements of attitudes.

Students' Cognitive Attitudes towards the Use of Authentic Materials in EFL Classroom

Based on the calculation from the students' questionnaires supported by the interview and classroom observation, in terms of cognitive aspect of attitudes, students agreed with the use of authentic materials in the English classroom since it is obviously beneficial to support them in comprehending the learning materials. Therefore, in terms of the cognitive elements of attitudes, students show positive attitudes.

Students' Affective Attitudes towards the Use of Authentic Materials in EFL Classroom

Based on the calculation from the students' questionnaires supported by the interview and classroom observation, in terms of affective element, students are positive with the use of authentic materials in the English classroom since it noticeably catch their interests in learning. Therefore, similar with the result of cognitive elements of attitudes, students, in term of affective elements, also reveal positive attitudes.

Students' Behavioral Attitudes towards the Use of Authentic Materials in EFL Classroom

Based on the calculation from the students' questionnaires supported by the interview and classroom observation, in terms of behavioral element, students are positive with the use of authentic materials in the classroom since authentic materials can trigger their motivation, participation, and confidence in learning English. Thus, similar with both cognitive and affective elements, students in term of behavioral element also express positive attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in EFL classroom.

Students' Difficulties in Dealing with Authentic Materials in EFL Classroom

There were five difficulties experienced by the students when dealing with authentic materials: unfamiliar vocabularies appear in authentic materials, advanced speaking fluency and intonation, low-quality of authentic materials, students' low self-confidence; and unfamiliar authentic materials. These difficulties can be prevented if the teacher can select authentic materials suitably by considering students' needs and abilities. More importantly, both students and teachers should cooperate to make teaching learning activities going well.

Students' Favorable Authentic Materials

The most favorable authentic material was movies with the value of central tendency 90%. It indicates that movie can catch students' interests as well as their motivation to learn. The students claimed "extremely positive" to the use of movies in teaching learning activities because movies were quite closed to their daily life. It also implies that almost students like watching movies. However, the teacher should choose an appropriate movie for the students based on their interests, need, and ability. Although movie was kind of authentic materials the students favor the most, teacher should keep considering students' background when choosing the movies since movies could turn to unfavorable if the teacher choose inappropriate movies.

Meanwhile, as exemplified in the preceding paragraph, the most unfavorable authentic material was brochure with the amount of central tendency 54%. It signifies that students have low interest in learning by using brochures. The students stated "fair" to the use of brochures as teaching materials. Nevertheless, this result did not mean that students have to be prevented from learning through brochure. Yet, the teacher should be able to create enticing activities which can make students interested to learn by using brochure.

Based on the prior elucidation, it could be concluded that students' favorable towards authentic materials would influence students attitudes' towards the use of authentic materials in EFL classroom. Therefore, the teacher should be careful in selecting authentic materials which were intended to be used in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the research questions of this study, there are at least three main

conclusions are asserted in this section. First inference is related to the first research question which is about students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in EFL classroom. The result of the first research question was obtained from students' questionnaires as the main instrument and espoused by students' interview and classroom observation. Based on the results elaborated in the findings and discussions section, students have positive attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in EFL classroom.

These positive attitudes were generated by elements of attitudes which are cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements exhibited by the students during the implementation of authentic materials in the classroom. In relation to the cognitive element of attitudes, the students believe that the use of authentic materials is beneficial for them to comprehend the learning materials well. Besides, to do with affective element of attitudes, students express that the use of authentic materials makes the learning more attractive. Lastly, in relation to the behavioral element of attitudes, students denote that the use of authentic materials can encourage them to be more engaged with the teaching learning processes and give high learning participations.

Subsequently, the second conclusion is drawn based on the second research question of this study which discusses students' difficulties when dealing with authentic materials. The results of this research questions were acquired mainly through students' interview and invigorated by students' questionnaires and classroom observation. The results reveal that there are five difficulties faced by the students when dealing with authentic materials. They are: 1) Unfamiliar vocabularies appear in authentic materials; 2) Advanced speaking fluency and intonation; 3) Low-quality of authentic materials; 4) Students' low self-confidence; and 5) Unfamiliar authentic materials.

Nevertheless, indeed the students can be prevented from experiencing those difficulties if the teachers are able to select authentic materials suitably by considering students' needs and abilities. More importantly, both students and teachers should cooperate to make teaching learning activities going well.

Eventually, the last conclusion is in accordance with the results of the third research question which portray students' favorable authentic materials. The results of this research questions were gained from students' questionnaire as the primary instrument and bolstered by the results of students' interview and classroom observation. There were twenty kinds of authentic materials listed in the students' questionnaire including all types of authentic materials which are audio, visual, printed, and *realia* materials. The results were categorized into three categories based on the score given by the students which are extremely favorable, favorable, and fair. Based on the results, authentic materials which gained "extremely favorable" are song lyrics, photography, television programs, songs, cartoons, picture story, movie, and video. Then, favorable authentic materials are *realia*, menu, paintings, magazine, radio channel, announcement, poetry, advertisement, and maps. Meanwhile, students denoted fair for authentic materials such as procedural text, brochures, and daily articles.

Thus, from those results, it can be concluded that songs and movies as the most favorable authentic materials for the students. These authentic materials attain the highest score with the same score. Then, brochure which got the lowest score compare to the other authentic materials is considered as the most unfavorable authentic materials for the students.

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