Research Paper Linguistics

The Foreign Students Perception of Speech in Malay Language

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses over the foreign students perception of speechinMalay language. This study is conducted based on the Socio-psychology LearningLanguage Theory by Gardner and Lambert (1972). There are three aspects of the study put forth by the researcher, namely the perception while-speaking, individuals involved in the speeches and the place where the speeches take place. Five foreign students learning in Universiti Putra Malaysia were randomly selected as the respondents of this study. This study involves the survey method by using the questionnaire form as our primary analysis material. Data were obtained from the questionnaireforms which were analyzed quantitatively using the Statistical Package For Social Science(SPSS) software, version 21. The study finding establishes that the perception of foreign students on the Malay language in speeches is moderate.

KEYWORDS foreign students,perception, Malay language

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, a lot of foreign studies coming to further their studies in Malaysia. This is evident either at the Public Institutions of Higher Education or Private Institutions of Higher Education or Colleges. They come from various countries like China, Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan and so on.According toMohamedKhaledNordin(2010), theforeign students atpublic and private universitiesin this countryis anopportunity for usin the efforts todevelop theMalay language.

According to Rohaidah Mashudi & J. Sham Wahid (2010), when Ministry of Higher Education makes it compulsory for 65 thousand foreign students learning inboth the Public Institutions of Higher Education and Private Institutions of Higher Education in Malaysia to take the Malay language subject, language fighters in the country have perceived this as repositioning the language in the higher education system in this country.

Sidek Baba (2011) stated that the main institutions of Higher Learning in Malaysia has long made the Malay language as the medium of instruction in all subjects.By making it compulsory among the foreign students then they can perhaps, understand the local culture better and simultaneously expand and add to the number of Malay language speakers at the international level.

There are many studies about the perception. However, studies such as the study by Zaiton Md. Isa et al. (2006) is limited to the local perception of the Japanese and Korean languages. Study by Natsue Hieda & Maserah Shabudin (2012), focuses on the Japanese perception. Meanwhile, a study by Mohammad Yusof Arshad & Nurul Haini Zakaria (2010) and Nooraini Othman & Lee Bee Theng (2009) focuses on the Englishlanguage.

This shows that the researcher more conducting a study on the perception English and another language than Malay language. Therefore, the foreign students perception of speech in Malay languagemust be known in order to elevate the Malay language.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

There have been many studies done on perceptions. However, the studies are limited to the local students' perception on foreign languages. This demonstrates that there is a paucity of studies on the perceptions of foreign students on the. Therefore, this study has left a gap for researchers to know the foreign students perception of speech in Malay languagein the effort to empower the language.

OBJECTIVE

To identify the foreign students perception of speech in Malay languagewhile they speak.

METHODOLOGY

The design of the study used in our current work takes a descriptive form which serves as one that will describe the information and data obtained using the field survey method. This study is conducted based on the Socio-psychology Learning Language Theory by Gardner and Lambert (1972). 10 foreign students learning in the University Putra Malaysia (UPM)were chosen at random as the respondents of this study. They were six male students and four female students aged between 25 and 40 years old. The respondents were chosen as they have followed the Malay language as their foreign language subject. This study involves the survey method using questionnaire form as the main analysis material. The questionnaire form that was used contains two sections.

Part one contains the demographic information of the respondents and part two contains15 questions on the perception while speaking. The questionnaire in this study has been modified from the questionnaire form adopted the study of Yong Chyn Chye (2012).Data were obtained from the questionnaire forms which were analyzed quantitatively using the Statistical Package For Social Science(SPSS) software, version 21. The descriptive statistical method is used in the data analysis which form is of the Likert scale.To facilitate the data analysis process, the Likert scale is categorised as shown in Table1. The Table 2 is shown the level of mean value for identify the foreign students perception of speech in Malay language.

TABLE – 1
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LIKERT SCALE METHOD

Rating Scale	
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree

5	Strongly Agree

Source: Yong Chyn Chye, 2012

TABLE – 2
LEVEL OF MEAN VALUE

Mean	Level
1.00-2.33	Low
2.34-3.67	Moderate
3.68-5.00	High

Source:Chua Yan Piaw, 2012

FINDINGS

TABLE – 3
PERCENTAGE AND MEAN OF THE PERCEPTION DURING SPEAKING

No	Item	1 SD %	2 D %	3 N %	4 A %	5 SA %	Mean
1.	I prefer speaking in Malay language compared to other foreign languages.	20	30	50	00	00	2.30
2.	I have fun speaking Malay language.	10	10	20	50	10	3.40
3.	Speaking in Malay language is easier than reading and writing in this language.	20	10	20	10	40	3.40
4.	Speaking in Malay language has made me love this language.	10	10	30	40	10	3.30
5.	Speaking in Malay language can improve my pronunciations.	10	20	10	50	10	3.30
6.	Speaking in Malay language can make me master it.	00	20	20	30	30	3.70
7.	I am confident in speaking in Malay language even though my vocabulary is limited.	30	40	00	30	00	2.30
8.	I am not shy when my pronunciation is wrong while speaking in Malay language.	00	10	20	30	40	4.00
9.	I will practice speaking if there is any oral test or examination.	00	10	00	70	20	4.00
10.	I like to listen to other people when they speak in Malay language.	10	10	40	10	30	3.40
11.	I will speak in Malay language when someone else greets me first in this language.	00	10	10	70	10	3.80
12.	I will speak in Malay language when I need to ask questions.	10	10	20	50	10	3.40
13.	While having conversations, I will ask questions if I do not understand any word.	10	10	10	40	30	3.70
14.	UPMmembers/ students are friendlier when I speak in Malay language.	00	00	30	40	30	4.00
15.	I will continue speaking in Malay language even though I have completed my studies.	40	10	10	20	20	2.70
	Mean Average	3.38					

Table 3 shown the distribution of respondents following the percentage and mean of the perception during speaking. The level of high mean score on the perception when speaking is between 3.70 and 4.00 whereas the low mean score is 2.30. The analysis outcome shows that the overall mean average obtained is3.38. This shows that the perception of the foreign students when speaking is moderate.

The study finding suggests that items8, 9, and 14 have noted the highest mean, which is4.00.Item 8 which is "I am not shy when my pronunciation is wrong while speaking in Malay language" shows that respondents were open in practicing to speakingMalay languagein their daily lives. For item 9, which is "I will practice speaking if there is any oral test or examination" it shows that the respondents will make an effort to speak the right way to get good marks. Item 14, which is "UPM members/students are friendlier when I speak in Malay language", shows that they will speak in Malay languageto form closer ties with people in campus.

Item showing the lowest mean, which is2.30 is represented by items 1 and 7.Item 1 is "I prefer speaking in Malay languagecompared to other foreign languages" and item 7 "I am confident in speaking in Malay languageeven though my vocabulary is limited". This shows that respondents prefer to use other foreign languages when speaking. Other than that, respondents need to have more vocabulary in order to gain more confidence in speaking.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the study findings are able to show that the foreign students perception of speech in Malay languageare moderate. Researcher finds that there are three main factors to these, where respondents prefer to use other foreign languages when speaking, respondentsnot being confident tospeak in the Malay languageas their vocabulary is limited, and they do not use the Malay languageas the language of speech after they complete their studies. This can be seen through the mean value forall the three low factoris 2.30 and 2.70.

Based on the findings of this study, researcher also finds that the orientation of students in this study is instrumental in form as their purpose is to learn the second language that mirrors their utilitarian value (they will practice speaking if there is a test or examination). This is in line with the Socio-psychology Learning Language Theory by Gardner and Lambert (1972). This is because, according to them, the second language learning has divided motivation into two types namely integration and instrumental motivations.

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