

***STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF L1 IN ENGLISH
CLASSES BY TEACHERS AND STUDENTS AT SMAN 2
PEKANBARU***

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***Abstract :** This research is aimed to find out the students' perception on the use of L1 in English classes by teachers and students at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru in the academic year 2017/2018. This is a survey research. The participants answered questions administered through questionnaire which consisted of 34 questions. The population of this research is 772 students of SMAN 2 Pekanbaru. The sample is 34 students of X IPS 3 class, 34 students of XI IPS 3 class, and 38 students of XII MIPA 1 class. The total is 106 students as the sample. The data of this research were collected by giving questionnaire to the students which then was measured on a Likert scale on scale of 1-5. The results of data analysis showed that the teacher often use English during class and still include Bahasa Indonesia as L1 in a limited portion. The students agree about the inclusion of L1 by teachers when necessary. The students also agree if they are allowed to use Bahasa Indonesia during class. The inclusion of L1 help the students learn more motivated and enjoyable. It was found that there is an improvement in the students' English skill when English is the language mostly used during class. The students agree that the more they practice using English, the more their English improved.*

Keywords: Perception, Survey Research, L1

PERSEPSI SISWA TERHADAP PENGGUNAAN BAHASA INDONESIA DI KELAS BAHASA INGGRIS OLEH GURU DAN SISWA DI SMAN 2 PEKANBARU

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Abstrak : Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui persepsi siswa terhadap penggunaan Bahasa Indonesia di kelas Bahasa Inggris oleh guru dan siswa di SMAN 2 Pekanbaru pada tahun akademik 2017/2018. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian survei. Siswa diberikan kuesioner yang terdiri dari 34 soal untuk dijawab. Populasi pada penelitian ini adalah 772 siswa SMAN 2 Pekanbaru. Sampel pada penelitian ini adalah 34 siswa kelas X IPS 3, 34 siswa kelas XI IPS 3, dan 38 siswa XII MIPA 1. Total sampel adalah 106 siswa SMAN 2 Pekanbaru. Data penelitian ini dikumpulkan dengan memberikan kuesioner kepada siswa yang kemudian diukur dengan skala Likert 1-5. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahwa guru sering menggunakan Bahasa Inggris dalam kelas dan masih menggunakan Bahasa Indonesia dalam porsi yang terbatas. Siswa setuju terhadap penggunaan Bahasa Indonesia oleh guru ketika dibutuhkan. Siswa juga setuju jika mereka diperbolehkan menggunakan Bahasa Indonesia selama pelajaran. Penggunaan Bahasa Indonesia menolong siswa lebih semangat dan senang belajar Bahasa Inggris. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa siswa mengalami perkembangan dalam Bahasa Inggris ketika sering menggunakan Bahasa Inggris selama pelajaran. Siswa setuju bahwa semakin banyak mereka mempraktikkan Bahasa Inggris, semakin baik perkembangan Bahasa Inggris mereka.

Kata kunci : Persepsi, Penelitian Survei, Bahasa Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

English as a foreign language in Indonesia has been taught at schools even from Elementary to University level. *Bahasa Indonesia* is the first language (L1) in Indonesia, while English is a foreign language (EFL). The language used in an EFL classroom may seem to be an inappropriate place if we observe the students' first language (L1) being used, yet it is a phenomenon that exists in today's classrooms around the world. Allowing, or even promoting, the use of the students' L1 in the EFL classroom remains a contentious issue; an issue which deserves further consideration by open-minded teachers and researchers alike (Cook, 2001).

Controversies on incorporating first language (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms have been a longstanding discussion in the current literature. Many arguments which are for and against the use of L1 were made by a significant number of professionals; some have considered L1 to be beneficial in EFL classrooms, whereas some have considered it to be a hindrance. Other researchers suggest L1 in English class with reservation. In other words, they agree with the inclusion of L1 in EFL classrooms, though seeking a limit for its use (Auerbach 1993). However, there is a common perception that seems to dominate educational institutions that the use of L1 should be avoided in EFL classrooms (Krashen, 1987), and many institutions have an *English-only policy*. This idea is often supported by the view that learning of L2 (English) is strongly determined by maximum exposure to that language, so L1 should be banned from classrooms. However, several researchers have criticized this perception, and a movement toward the inclusion of L1 in L2 classrooms has begun to attract attention. Insisting on using L2 during complex linguistic and cognitive tasks means denying learners' right to use a beneficial and valuable cognitive tool they possess (Swain & Lapkin 2000). All these conceptions, however, seem to be rather naïve as there is neither a persuasive body of research nor satisfying empirical work indicating that abandoning or allowing the use of L1 in EFL classrooms would better contribute to students' learning of an L2.

Based on the observation and small survey that had been done by the researcher at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru, the researcher found that there were different perceptions on every students about the use of L1 in English classroom. Some students prefer mixed English and Indonesia (Bilingual), both the teachers' talk and the students' talk (Snorradotir, 2014). Because when the teacher is talking in full English, the students may feel confuse and even misinterpret about what the teacher is talking about. To make English more understandable, teachers eventually use first language in English class (Tang, 2002). This phenomenon attracts the researcher's attention to know more and to proof what is exactly the students' perception in using L1 in an English classroom. The researcher is going to find out the students' perception on the use of L1 in English classroom; whether or not the students were comfortable and what they found was useful or not useful in their teacher's choice of language.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru. The data were collected from January 22nd to January 26th 2018. . The population of this research is 772

students of SMAN 2 Pekanbaru. The sample is 34 students of X IPS 3 class, 34 students of XI IPS 3 class, and 38 students of XII MIPA 1 class. The total is 106 students as the sample.

The design of this research is survey research design. In survey research design, the participants answer questions administered through questionnaire. The researcher used questionnaire with items measured on a Likert scale on scale of 1-5.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 = Strongly Agree (SA) | 1 = Always |
| 2 = Agree (A) | 2 = Often |
| 3 = Neutral (N) | 3 = Sometimes |
| 4 = Disagree (D) | 4 = Rarely |
| 5 = Strongly Disagree (SD) | 5 = Never |

The writer prepared an anonymous paper format questionnaire which aimed to gather quantitative data on language use in the English classrooms and on students' perceptions towards L1 (*Bahasa Indonesia*) and L2 (English) use. The questionnaire was adapted from a questionnaire written by Snorraddottir (2014) whose research is about language use in English classroom; the role of students' first language in grades 9 and 10 in English classrooms in Iceland. English is a foreign language in Iceland. The questionnaire had a total of 34 questions with 7 indicators that shown in this table.

Table 3.3. Blueprint of the questionnaire

Students' Perception on the use of L1 by the Teachers in English Classes at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru			
No	Indicators	Item Numbers	Total
1.	Frequency of language used during English lessons	1	1
2.	Students' perception towards the use of <i>Bahasa Indonesia</i> by the teachers during English lessons	7, 9, 10, 15, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 31, 32	15
3.	Students' understanding while communicating to teacher in English Lessons	28, 29, 30	3
Total Questions			19
Students' Perception on the use of L1 by the Students in English Classes at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru			
No	Indicators	Item Numbers	Total
1.	Frequency of language used during English lessons	2, 3, 4, 5, 6	5
2.	Students' perception towards the use of <i>Bahasa Indonesia</i> by the students themselves during English lessons	23, 8, 18, 21, 33	5
3.	Students' wellbeing during English lessons	24, 26, 25, 27, 34	5
Total Questions			15

Responses were on a five-point Likert scale. This way, the participants' attitudes and perceptions were measured by choices, which for example were arranged from a level of complete agreement to complete disagreement.

The researcher used descriptive analysis technique. Descriptive analysis is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena and to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. Particularly, in analyzing the data, the writer will use the Likert analysis way.

Firstly, because the questionnaire has 34 questions which divided in 6 indicators, it is needed to find the Mean in each indicator that the respondent chose. After that the data was tallied in order to get the exact total in each indicator. Secondly, the data was counted with the formula as follows:

$$T \times P_n$$

Next, the writer found the highest and the lowest score of the data in order to get the interpretation result. This assessment means that we can determine the panelists' assessment score to be counted for each indicator. The formulas are as follow:

Y (The highest score) = the highest Likert score x total of respondent

X (The lowest score) = the lowest Likert score x total of respondent

After we find the the highest and the lowest score, we will find the interval of each scale in order to determine the assesment of each indicator.

The formula as follows:

$$\text{Interval Formula (I)} = \frac{100}{\text{Total Likert score}}$$

Finally, after all the data are completed, we can asses each of the indicator and find each percentages. The formula that we used is index formula as follows:

$$\text{Index Formula \%} = \frac{\text{Total score}}{Y} \times 100$$

THE RESEARCH FINDING

The writer finds the interval of each Likert score in order to determine the assessment for each indicator.

Y (The highest score) = the highest likert score x total of respondent

$$Y = 5 \times 108 = 540$$

X (The lowest score) = the lowest likert score x total of respondent

$$X = 1 \times 108 = 108$$

Interval Formula (I) = 100/Total Likert Score

$$I = \frac{100}{5} = 20$$

From the result we got, the interval for each Likert score is 20. Because this study we use the percentage, the Interval is between 0% and 100%. The interval in this study as follows:

- 0% - 19,99% = Never (N) / Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 20% - 39,99% = Rarely (R) / Disagree (D)
- 40% - 59,99% = Sometimes (S) / Neutral (N)
- 60% - 79,99% = Often (O) / Agree (A)
- 80% - 100% = Always (A) / Strongly Agree (SA)

1. Students' Perception on the Use of L1 by the Teachers in English Classes at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru

The interpretation of students' perception on the use of L1 by the teachers in English classes at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru will be explained below the table 4.39.

Table 4.39 Sums of students perception on the use of L1 by the teachers in English classes at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru

1. Students' Perception on the Use Of L1 by the Teachers in English Classes at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru		
1.1. Frequency of language used during English lessons		
No	Question/Statement	Percentages
1.	How often does the teacher speak English during lessons?	77,78%
1.2. Students' Perception Towards the Use of <i>Bahasa Indonesia</i> by the Teachers During English Lessons		
7.	I think it is important that the teacher speaks only English during lessons.	74,07%
31.	I think it is better that the teacher speaks bilingual, English and then translate to Bahasa Indonesia so that all students can understand.	87,03%
9.	I think instructions for assignments should be in Bahasa Indonesia.	65,55%
10.	I think the teacher should use Bahasa Indonesia when he is explaining something difficult, for example grammar or vocabulary.	80,18%
11.	I think the teacher should use English-only to discipline students.	58,14%

12.	I think the teacher should use English-only when he is talking with students about things that are not class related.	53,33%
13.	I think the teacher should use English-only when he is assigning homework.	60,55%
14.	I think the teacher should use English-only to ask students questions.	67,03%
15.	I think the teacher should use Bahasa Indonesia to praise or correct students.	67,59%
22.	I think the more English the teacher speaks, the better the students will be in English.	77,40%
16.	I often do not understand what I am supposed to do when the teacher only explains in English.	64,07%
32.	I don't understand many vocabularies when the teacher speaks English only.	65,92%
17.	It is harder to learn the language if the teacher speaks only English.	65,37%
19.	I think my grammar has become better because the teacher mostly speaks English.	69,62%
20.	I think my vocabulary has improved because the teacher mostly speaks English.	74,25%
1.3. Students' Understanding while Communicating to Teacher in English Lessons		
28.	I can understand what the teacher is saying in English.	66,29%
29.	It is difficult to talk to the teacher and get to know him because I mostly have to speak English with him.	59,81%

Findings on the indicator 1 about the frequency of language used during English lesson shows that the teachers often use English during English lesson (77,78%). It can be seen that L1 is also used by the teachers in a very little percentage. Tang (2002) stated that to make English more understandable, teachers eventually use first language in English class. The finding of this indicator will be related to the discussion of the students' understanding and confidence in the next section.

Secondly, the findings from statements number 7, 9, 10, and 31 show that it is important that the teachers use English during English class, but the inclusion of L1 is preferred by the students. These findings are consistent with findings of Hidayati (2012)

Next, although statements number 13 and 14 show that the students agree if the teachers use English-only when assigning homework and asking students questions, statements number 16, 17 and 32 show that it is hard for the students to understand what the teacher is saying when they use English-only. Statements number 11 and 12 shows that the students neither agree nor disagree if the teachers use English-only in certain circumstances. These findings support the previous finding of Pablo et al. (2011) who claimed that "There is not a perfectly attainable balance between when and how to use the L1; rather, there is a dynamic decision-making process that occurs

within the two groups of participants: the teachers and the students". These findings show that the students agree if the teachers use L1 when necessary.

Additionally, statements number 19, 20 and 22 show that there is an improvement in the students' English skill when English is the language mostly used during class. The students agree that the more English the teachers speak, the better the students' vocabulary and grammar will be. These findings suggest that it is important to expose English more than L1. The exposure of English as the target language is important to help the improvement of the students' English skill (Ellis, 2005).

The highest percentages which classified as strongly agree in these indicators are statements number 31 and statements number 10. The percentage of statement number 31 is 87,03% which means that the students strongly agree that it is better that the teacher speaks bilingual, English and then translate to Bahasa Indonesia so that all students can understand. In addition statement number 10 has 80,18% which means that the students strongly agree that the teacher should use Bahasa Indonesia when he is explaining something difficult, for example grammar or vocabulary. It seems that the students tried to link the L1 norms with the TL norms while learning English as the target language (interlanguage). Cook (2001) stated that although teachers try their best to separate the first language from the second language in their teaching, learners will usually make connections between the vocabulary, syntax, and phonology of their first language in their own minds. Many teachers use the first language to convey meaning and check the meaning of new words with their students.

The lowest percentages in these indicators are 53,33% and 58,14% which are classified as neither agree nor disagree. Those are statement number 12 and statement number 11. The students neither agree nor disagree that the teacher should use English-only when he is talking with students about things that are not class related and neither agree nor disagree that the teacher should use English-only to discipline students.

Indicator 1.3. shows the detail about the students' understanding while communicating to teachers in English lessons. The students agree that they can understand what the teacher is saying in English. Refers to indicator 1.1 about the frequency of language used by the teachers, the inclusion of L1 can be the reason why the students can understand what the teacher is saying. It is reported that the students neither agree nor disagree that it is difficult to talk to the teacher and get to know him because they mostly have to speak English. The students seem not to be sure whether it is difficult or not to talk to the teacher and get to know the teacher because they mostly have to speak English.

In conclusion of indicator 1 about the students perception toward the use of L1 by the teachers during English class at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru, the students agree that the teachers use L1 when necessary to help the students understand what the teacher is saying. The students' perception on the use of L1 by teachers in class is positive.

2. Students' Perception on the Use of L1 by The Students in English Classes at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru

The interpretation of students' perception on the use of L1 by the students in English classes at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru will be explained below the table 4.40.

Table 4.40 Sums of students' perception on the use of L1 by the students in English classes at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru

2. Students' Perception on the Use Of L1 by The Students in English Classes at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru		
2.1. Frequency of Language Used by the Students During English Lessons		
2.	How often do you speak English during lessons?	52,59%
3.	How often do you ask the teacher in English?	49,26%
4.	How often do you answer the teacher in English?	54,26%
5.	How often do you speak English with your peers during lessons?	47,97%
6.	How often do you speak English with your peers during pair- or group work?	45,18%
2.2. Students' Perception Towards the Use of Bahasa Indonesia by the Students Themselves During English Lessons		
23.	I think I have to speak English during lessons to really learn the language	68,88%
8.	I think the students may speak Bahasa Indonesia during lessons.	74,81%
18.	It is easier for me to speak English because I get a lot of practice at school.	60,74%
21.	I think my English accent has improved because I get to practice speaking English during lessons.	71,67%
2.3. Students' confidence to speak English		
24.	I most often feel good during lessons.	70,93%
26.	I feel confident to speak English.	62,22%
25.	Sometimes I feel bad or uncomfortable for having to speak or read English in front of the whole class.	62,77%
27.	I am afraid that other students will make fun of me when I speak English.	56,29%
34.	I feel bored during English class.	50,55%

Compared to frequency of English used by the teachers, the students used less English than the teachers during class. Finding of question number 2 shows that the students sometimes used English during class. It means that the students include L1 in the class. This finding is similar to the findings of Sharma (2006) which conducted a study on the use of the Nepali language in Nepal's secondary schools. It was found that the students used L1 more than the teachers did.

Next, students were asked about how often do they use English to their teachers and to their peers? The result shows that they sometimes used English to their teachers and their peers. The percentage of using English to teachers is higher than the percentage of using English to their peers. This findings seem to confirm the findings of Anton and Dicamilla (1999) and Slavin (2006) which stated that whether it is admitted or not, learners, especially the low-level ones, tend to use their L1 during collaborative work at different degrees to scaffold new information and understand difficult concepts.

The result of indicator 2.2. shows that the students agree to use English a lot to really learn the language with allowance to use Bahasa Indonesia as the L1. These

findings confirm the finding of Atkinson (1993) who stated that for many learners, particularly adults and teenagers, occasional use of the L1 gives them the opportunity to show that they are intelligent and sophisticated people.

These findings also confirm the previous research by Hidayati (2012) who conducted a study on the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* in English class. This research found that the students claimed that their interaction was higher when the first language was used because they felt less lost during class, and that with a familiar language, they were better able to understand, communicate, and participate during class.

Specifically, statements number 18 and 21 show that practice English a lot during English class has improved the students' speaking ability and their English accent. It is important to expose the target language as much as possible (Turnbull, 2009).

Findings of indicator 2.3. about students' confidence to speak English show that the students feel good during English class and they are confident to speak English. But they sometimes feel uncomfortable when they have to speak or read English in front of the whole class. From the results of frequency of language used by the teachers, it is shown that the teachers often used English and rarely used Bahasa Indonesia. The writer tries to analyze the correlation of the frequency of the language used by the teachers and the students' confidence during class. Based on the data and direct observation during English class, the teachers used L1 when it is necessary to help the students understand what the teacher is saying. This shows that the use of L1 could be useful to create a relaxing atmosphere in the classroom (Polio and Duff, 1994). Burden (2000) found in his research that starting with the L1 provides students with a sense of security and activate the learners' motivation, allowing them to express themselves. The learner was then willing to experiment and take risks with English (Burden, 2000). This can be the reason why the students agree that they most often feel good during English class. The judicious use of L1 by the teachers and the allowance of L1 used by the students help them feel more comfortable and motivated to learn English.

These findings also confirm the previous finding of Auerbach (1993) who found in her studies that the use of L1 had a successful effect in lowering the students' anxiety levels and other affective barriers for students. If the students cannot understand what has been mentioned, they will not be comfortable in proceeding with a task or retain it in their mind. Quality of bilingual education provides students with knowledge and literacy in their first language, which indirectly help them as they strive for English proficiency (Krashen, 1987).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

After conducting this research entitled "Students' perception on the use of L1 in English classes by the teachers and the students at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru", some conclusions can be drawn. Based on the data analysis from the research, it can be seen that teacher often use English and students sometimes use English during class. This means that the teachers also include L1 during class in a minimum percentage. While the students still use L1 in a similar percentage with the percentage of English used

during class. This frequency of language used refers to the students' perception on the use of L1 during class.

It can be shown that the students' perception on the use of L1 by the teachers and the students in English classes is positive. They agree that the inclusion of L1 should be permitted with the exposure of English as the target language should be more than the exposure of L1. The use of L1 can make them feel good during class and motivated to learn English. It is hard for the students to understand when the teachers explain using English-only, especially when the teachers explain something difficult like grammar and unfamiliar vocabulary. The use of L1 during English class was helpful in the class only when it was used judiciously with more exposure of English. Several benefits when the class use mostly English are to improve their vocabulary, grammar and English accent.

Recommendations

Based on the result, it is clear that students at SMAN 2 Pekanbaru agree the inclusion of L1 during English classes. Writer would like to give some recommendations about the language use and the inclusion of L1 in English class based on the findings of the research.

1. For the Teachers

a. Use English as a predominant language

The writer recommends that the teachers use English as a predominant language during class. The students agree that using mostly English help the students improve their English skill. Teachers should translate English into Bahasa Indonesia when necessary to help the students understand what the teacher is saying. When the students already understand what the teacher said, later the teachers don't need to translate again when the words are already memorized by the students.

b. Do not force English-only

The writer recommends that the teachers don't need to force the students use English-only. Because the students will try to link the L1 norms with the TL norms while learning English as the target language (Cook, 2001). Burden (2000) used an "English only approach" for his classes, however he noted that he began to feel "remote" from the students as individuals because there was little natural conversational interaction. It is recommended that teachers don't need to force the students to use English-only.

c. Set classroom rules for language use

The writer recommends that the teachers should set classroom rules for language use. It is important to limit the use of L1. If teachers rely too much on using the L1, it can discourage students so they will have less need to understand English and acquire it (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). Teachers need to

set classroom rules for language use so that the students will be more involved and aware of their language use.

d. Encourage the students to use English

Teachers should motivate the students to use English as the target language. Teachers can reward students when they use English. The rewards can be additional score or any other rewards set by the teachers. Teachers can also give penalty if the students use full L1 or mostly L1 than the target language. This system may encourage students to expose English more.

2. For the Students

a. Realize that English is your own need

Students need to realize that learning English is not just for good score in the report paper. English is a need for everyone in this globalization era. By mastering English, the students have more chance to learn many things worldwide since English is an international language. By realizing this, the students will try to master English step by step, start by mixing the language (codeswitching) until they can master English and use English-only. Allowing L1 during English class is just a media to help students learn English. The final target is mastering English like a native.

b. Don't be afraid to speak English

Students should expose English as much as possible. Mistakes are common in learning. Learning is a process. So the students don't need to be afraid to use English. When stuck with an unfamiliar word, L1 is allowed. Teacher or other students as your interlocutor may help you find the English word of the unfamiliar word you want to say.

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