

# ***A STUDY ON STUDENTS' PREFERENCE OF ENGLISH LECTURERS' LANGUAGE USED IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS***

***Sonia Lisia, Jismulatif, Masyhur***

*Email: sonia.lisia0574@student.unri.ac.id, jismulatif@[lecturer.unri.ac.id](mailto:lecturer.unri.ac.id),*

*masyhurr20@yahoo.com*

*Contact: 0822-8372-8826*

*Student of English Study Program  
Language and Arts Department  
Teachers Training and Education Faculty  
Universitas Riau*

***Abstract:*** *This research investigates the use of L1 in English Study Program, University of Riau. This study aims to know students' preference, the frequency used and students' reasons for the use of L1 in English classrooms. This study applied survey designed. The population of this research was the second-fourth-sixth-semester students of the English study program of Teachers' Training and Education Faculty of Universitas Riau with a total number of population is 344 students. The number of the sample in this research was 120 students. Data was collected by using an online questionnaire and interviews. Data was analyzed by using Microsoft Excel. The results showed that the majority of students suggested English must be used and a small percentage of students suggested using L1 to make them easier to understand the materials taught by lecturers.*

***Key Words:*** *English, English classrooms, L1, Students' Preference, Students' Reason*

# **STUDI TENTANG PREFERENSI MAHASISWA TENTANG BAHASA YANG DIGUNAKAN DOSEN BAHASA INGGRIS DI KELAS BAHASA INGGRIS**

**Sonia Lisia, Jismulatif, Masyhur**

Email: [sonia.lisia0574@student.unri.ac.id](mailto:sonia.lisia0574@student.unri.ac.id), [jismulatif@lecturer.unri.ac.id](mailto:jismulatif@lecturer.unri.ac.id),  
[masyhurr20@yahoo.com](mailto:masyhurr20@yahoo.com)  
Contact: 0822-8372-8826

*Mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa dan Seni Program Studi Bahasa Inggris  
Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan  
Universitas Riau*

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini menyelidiki penggunaan L1 dalam Program Studi Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Riau. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui preferensi siswa, frekuensi yang digunakan dan alasan siswa untuk penggunaan L1 di kelas bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menerapkan desain survei. Populasi penelitian ini merupakan mahasiswa semester 2-4-6 dari program studi Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Riau dengan jumlah populasi sebanyak 344 siswa. Jumlah sampel dalam penelitian ini adalah 120 siswa. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan kuesioner online dan wawancara. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan Ms. Excel. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas mahasiswa menyarankan bahasa Inggris harus digunakan dan sebagian kecil mahasiswa menyarankan menggunakan L1 untuk membuatnya lebih mudah memahami materi yang diajarkan oleh dosen.

**Kata Kunci:** Alasan Mahasiswa, Bahasa Inggris, L1, Preferensi Siswa, Ruang Kelas Bahasa Inggris

## INTRODUCTION

English is the main language that is used by an English teacher in English classrooms. English is a foreign language that should be learned by students. English is a compulsory subject from elementary until university level. Then, it has become the third or fourth language for Indonesian after their first language. However, at English Study Program in the University of Riau uses English as the target language in the teaching and learning process. So, English is the proper language to be used to fulfill the needs of learning and acquiring English.

In the process of learning English as a foreign language, there must be supporting and opposing ideas of the use of English and L1 that cannot be separated in learning English (Surayatika, 2020). The belief of someone to the use of L1 and the denial of using L1 is called preference. Preference is about someone's choice that firstly comes in their mind or perspective to the phenomenon that happened (Mkonto, 2015). Preference comes up when someone realizes something appropriate or inappropriate in social interactions. Preference is the way students recognize their beliefs, acceptance, refusal, or agreement about a phenomenon that happened in their lives then it shapes their knowledge and provides students with a meaningful and useful understanding about the world and can have their preference to the social and interaction needs more than their personal needs (Duran & Sert, 2019).

The researcher found English was not entirely used (100%) at English classrooms. It was shown by the students and English lecturers that used L1 freely in discussion, talking, and interaction. Based on that situation, the researcher interested to conduct a research about the preference of language used included L1. A studies on the use of L1 has been conducted from some countries such as Arab, Iran, Iraq, Turkey and other countries (Al-Ta'ani, 2019; Aminifard, 2019; Duran & Sert, 2019; Galali & Cinkara, 2017; Yenice, 2018). Some research dealing with the use of L1. The first, the study was about the use of Turkish and teachers and students' views on the use of Turkish in English classes by Yenice (Yenice, 2018). Next, the usefulness and function of Mother tongue in English classes by Paker Turan, et., al (Paker & Karaağaç, 2015). Then, the study was from Haryanto Atmowardoyo and Murni Mahmud (2016) at Universitas Negeri Makassar. This study dealt with University English teachers' and the students' views on language choice in English classrooms. The last study was students' preference for the use of Mother tongue in English classes by Emre (Debreli & Oyman, 2015). The research mentioned above examined the use of L1 in teaching English as the Foreign language.

Based on the issue, the researcher was interested to find out; 1. What are students' preference of L1 used in English classrooms? 2. What are the frequency used of L1 in English classrooms? 3. What are students' reason of L1 used in English classrooms?

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### a. Population and Sample

The population was 344 English students. They were English Study Program students at Semester 2, 4 and 6 who were experienced in learning English in the whole English classrooms. The sample of students who actively participated in this study was as many as 120 people. The sample selection based on non-probability sampling, quota sampling. According to Sugiono (2017), non-probability sampling is an election based on the needs of researchers (Komar, 2019). This research was conducted at English Study Program, University of Riau.

## b. Research Design

This research used survey design. The authors used questionnaires to collect quantitative data and class observations by giving participants some questions. The authors used questionnaires because they were more practical and faster if the research samples were large (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2013).

## c. Data Collection

Data collection was done by using online questionnaires in the form of Google form and class observation through interviews. The author used three procedures. The first, the author shared a Google Forms link with students. The second, students were asked to fill in questions within 10-15 minutes. Finally, answers were sent to Google Form and data was processed for research results and some students were asked to answer questions through interviews.

## d. Data analysis

The data were analysed using Microsoft Excel to determine the frequency of questionnaires and interviews. The data was gotten from the questionnaire and was processed by using Microsoft Excel with the formula that was adapted from Pratiwi (2020) as below:

$X$  = total score of questionnaire item  
 $\sum YZ$  = the sum of scale points

Then, to know the percentage of the data or items, the writer used the formula:

Where:

$$\% = \frac{ni}{N} \times 100$$

% = percentage

$ni$  = score for item ke-items

$N$  = Total score from each questionnaire item

$$X = \sum YZ$$

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

### 1. Research Question 1: What are students' Preference of the use of L1 in English classrooms? (Questionnaire)

Table 1. Students' Preference of L1 Used in English Classrooms

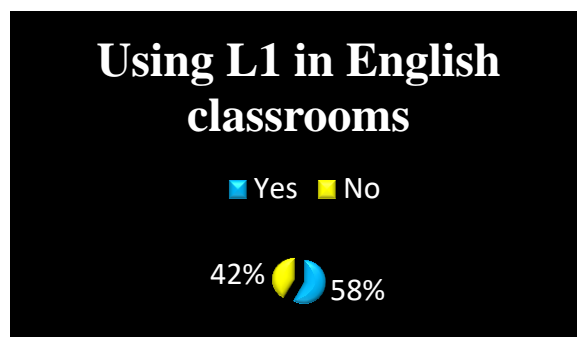


Table 1 showed that 70 (58%) students who answered "Yes" to use L1 in English classrooms and 50 (42%) students who responded to "No". It can be concluded that the highest score referred to 70 (50%) students who answered "Yes".

Table 2. Students' Preference Using L1 in Grammar, Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking classes

Lecturer	a. Grammar		b. Reading		c. Listening		d. Writing		e. Speaking	
	E	L1	E	L1	E	L1	E	L1	E	L1
Give instruction	10	6	14	8	1	9	4	6	7	9
Feedback	8	1	6	2	6	8	2	5	3	4
Checking understanding	7	9	10	12	9	6	1	7	9	6
Vocabulary	5	6	7	0	5	8	0	6	16	12
Grammar build	0	8	5	0	0	7	0	8	0	8
Engagement	19	5	3	4	7	6	13	7	21	9
Assignment	6	9	4	6	4	6	15	6	4	2
Giving information	7	8	3	9	6	7	4	4	1	6
Error correction	0	6	2	2	5	3	12	7	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>56</b>

Table 2 identified that there were any students' perceptions in English Study Program. In short, the majority of students agreed to use English showed by 64 (53.3%) respondents chose English in Speaking class, 62 (51.6%) preferred English in Grammar class, 56 (46.6%) took English in Reading class. On the other hand, 60 (50%) respondents chose L1 in the Listening class and 53 (44%) agreed to use L1 in writing classes.

## 2. Research Question 2: What are the frequency of L1 used in English classes? (Class Observation)

Table 3. When the students need L1?

Occasions	Frequency				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
a) explaining complex grammar	34 (28.3%)	42 (35%)	31 (25.8%)	10 (8.3%)	3 (25%)
b) defining new vocabulary	7 (5.8%)	26 (21.6%)	21 (17.5%)	23 (19.1%)	43 (35.8%)
c) giving instructions	35 (29.2%)	33 (27.5%)	28 (23.3%)	18 (15%)	6 (5%)

d) explaining difficult concepts or works	0 (0%)	25 (20.8%)	19 (15.8%)	24 (2%)	53 (44.1%)
e) giving feedback and suggestion	32 (26.6%)	22 (18.3%)	30 (25%)	22 (18.3%)	14 (11.6%)
f) making a joke in the classroom	11 (9.1%)	24 (2%)	18 (15%)	39 (32.5%)	28 (23.3%)
g) motivating students	37 (30.8%)	34 (28.3%)	23 (19.1%)	17 (14.1%)	9 (7.5%)
h) Drawing attention	33 (27.5%)	12 (1%)	44 (36.6%)	15 (12.5%)	16 (13.3%)
i) Having better engagement	12 (1%)	27 (22.5%)	21 (17.5%)	19 (15.8%)	41 (34.1%)
AVERAGE	1.6%	2%	2%	1.4%	2%

Table 3 illustrates that 34 (28.3%) respondents voted "Never", 42 (35%) 'Rarely' - 31 (25.8%) chose "Sometimes" - 18 (15%) answered "Often" and 6 (5%) selected "Always" to use L1 in the first statement "explaining complex grammar".

In the second statement "defining a new vocabulary" - 7 (5.8%) respondents took "Never" - 26 (21.6%) said "Rarely" - 21 (17.5%) respondents chose "Sometimes" - 23 (19.1%) selected "Frequent" and 43 (35.8%) chose "Always" for L1 used in defining a new vocabulary.

Third, 35 (29.2%) respondents answered "Never" - 33 (27.5%) voted "Rarely" - 28 (23.3%) answered "Sometimes" - 18 (15%) took "Often" and 6 (5%) respondent filled out "Always" for statement c) gives instructions.

Fourth, there are 0 (0%) respondents who declared "Never", 25 (20.8%) answered "Rarely" - 19 (15.8%) filled "Sometimes" - 24 (2%) answered "Often" and 53 (44.1%) chose "Always" of using L1 "explains difficult concepts or works".

Fifth, "giving feedback and suggestions" - 32 (26.6%) chose "Never" - 22 (18.3%) took "Rarely" - 30 (25%) > "Sometimes" - 22 (18.3%) selected "Frequent" and 14 (11.6%) said "Always".

Sixth, the statement "making jokes in class", 11 (9.1%) said "Never" - 24 (2%) took "Rarely" - 18 (15%) chose "Sometimes" - 39 (32.5%) told "Frequent" and 28 (23.3%) selected "Always".

Then, the respondents answered to the statement "motivate students" for the use of L1, there were 37 (30.8%) said "Never" - 34 (28.3%) took "Rarely", 23 (19.1%) picked "Sometimes" - 17 (14.1%) chose "Often" and 9 (7.5%) filled "Always".

Furthermore, item "attract attention", 33 (27.5%) took "Never" - 12 (1%) said "Rarely" - 44 (36.6%) voted "Sometimes" - 15 (12.5%) picked "Frequent" and 16 (13.3%) preferred "Always".

Lastly, 12 (1%) voted "Never" - 27 (22.5%) selected "Rarely" - 21 (17.5%) ed "Sometimes" - 19 (15.8%) chose "Frequent" and 41 (34.1%) took "Always" in the statement "may participate properly".

It can be concluded that the highest frequency refers to "Always"; "Explaining difficult concepts or works" 43 (35.8%), "defining new vocabulary" 43 (35.8%) and 41 (34.1%) "can participate well".

### **3. Research Question 3: What are students' reasons for L1 used in English classes? (Interview)**

Table 4. Why do you think L1 can be used in English classes? (Interview)

Interview results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant 2 "L1 is helpful to make learning English runs smoothly while learning process"</li> <li>• Participant 3 "L1 can be used to get clear explanation in Listening class during the class"</li> <li>• Participant 5 "L1 helps students understand the difficult concepts and new vocabulary while learning in writing class"</li> <li>• Participant 6 "I think it is better to me and English students to have English during speaking class"</li> <li>• Participant 12 "I think, L1 can explain the difficult concepts in listening class"</li> <li>• Participant 14 "L1 can help beginners understand new vocabulary and they will be engaged in learning English"</li> <li>• Participant 15 "L1 is needed by me myself especially in the learning process in grammar, speaking, and reading classrooms."</li> <li>• Participant 17 "L1 help students have a better understanding the ideas in listening class"</li> <li>• Participant 25 "L1 can make students and lecturer have good relationship.."</li> <li>• Participant 27 "English must be more used in Speaking, Grammar, and reading class for mastering English."</li> <li>• Participant 28 "I feel comfortable if English used in Speaking class"</li> </ul>

It can be concluded from the table above that students needed L1 during the learning process in English classes especially on the grounds of understanding difficult concepts, getting to know new vocabulary and students participating during the learning of English in Listening and Writing class. But, they also agreed to use English better in process of acquiring English as the target language.

## **DISCUSSION**

The first research question aimed at determining students' preference of L1 used in English classrooms. The result revealed that students agreed to use English in English classrooms. This result is supported by researchers (Al-Buraiki, 2008; Al Shammari, 2011; Campa & Nasaji, 2009; Hidaytati, 2012; Hung, 2006; Kim & Petraki, 2009) in (Latsanyphone, 2018; Yenice, 2018) that English should be applied in English classrooms.

The second, based on the result in point 2 for the frequency of L1 used in English classrooms, the majority of students chose English, especially in Grammar, Reading and Speaking classes. It assumed that English students recognized the use of English further used in English classes. But, a minimum of students agreed with the existence of L1 can help them in learning at Listening and Writing classes including the interview result and the frequency of "Always" answers.

The last research question identified students' reason for L1 used in English classrooms. The findings indicated that students' reasons were in understanding difficult concepts, defining new vocabulary and translating new words. This was also supported by other researchers that had similar result in understanding difficult concepts (AlTarawneh & AlMithqal, 2019; Boud et al., 2016; Latsanyphone, 2018; Qiong, 2017; Utami & Rahmawati, 2019). Thus, students' reasons were based on their needs in the real situation and phenomenon happened in English classrooms. Then, supporting results shown by Qiong (2017) and Şahin (2005) said that students' reasons could be influenced by their social cultures, environments and first idea came out in their mind.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusions**

From the research conducted, conclusions can be explained as follows. First, the diagram percentage showed for students' preference was agreed to use English in English classrooms. The students in English Study Program recognized the use of English should be used in English classrooms.

The second, the percentage identified that students chose "always" for using English in Grammar, Reading and Speaking classrooms. It is said that students use English as much as possible for the subjects mentioned above.

The result of students' reasons for the L1 used showed that students need L1 for helping them to understand the difficult concepts, defining new vocabulary and translating the words in English. It means L1 is still needed by students for some reasons that were explained previously in the result of students' reasons for L1 used. Therefore, English is required to be used by both English teachers and students in order to get English exposure and acquisition in English classrooms.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the results and conclusion of this research, the researcher proposes recommendations that can be considered by further researchers. First, it is hoped that students will develop their speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills in the classrooms. Second, the students have to increase their motivation and confidence in English classrooms to make them



able and fluent in English. Then, students need to encourage themselves to get involved in English classrooms. Students have to participate actively and use English more than non-English students. Students have to increase their fluency, accuracy, confidence, and desire in English classrooms. Students are expected to learn a lot and increase their skills and ability in English classrooms.

Next, it is suggested for the next researchers to use another instrument to find out students' perceptions and reasons for the language used in English classrooms. Moreover, it is proposed for future researchers to conduct similar research about students' perception by using larger and more samples. Further researchers also can investigate the other languages such as Minangness, Malay, Batakness, etc. used in English classrooms which dealing with students' mother tongue because we have the diverse students in English Study Program and the samples should be more involved to make the result of the data more clear, so that the implementation of the study will be effective and efficient applied in the classroom.

Last, it is suggested for institution and classroom rule to provide and to put a policy to use English or mother tongue in the English area. English should be employed by lecturers and students in English classrooms. It is very good and important to be applied, because it may support students' motivation and participation in English classrooms and in their daily lives. The authors suggest for further researchers, associate the use of Mother tongues such as Minang language, Malay language, Javanese language, and other languages to see the students' perceptions of the use of these languages in mastering English which is a foreign language.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Afzal, S. (2013). Using of the first language in English classroom as a way of scaffolding for both the students and teachers to learn and teach English. *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences*, 4(7), 1846–1854.
- Agus, W., & Syam, S. (2009). *Pengembangan Kurikulum Program Studi*. (232), 83–100.
- AlTarawneh, M. Q., & AlMithqal, E. A. (2019). Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Using L1 in the ESP Classroom: A Case of Medical English at an Applied Medical College in Saudi Arabia. *Online Submission*, 2(3), 19–35. <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt.2019.2.3.4>
- Aminifard, Y. (2019). *Mother Tongue Use in Young Iranian EFL Learners ' Classroom : Helpful Scaffold or Debilitating Crutch ?* 19(2), 77–85.
- Çelik, S. (2008). Opening the Door: AN EXAMINATION OF MOTHER TNGUE USE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS YABANCI DİL SINIFLARINDA ANADİL KULLANIMININ İNCELENMESİ. *Fakültesi Dergisi (H. U. Journal of Education)*.
- Debreli, E., & Oyman, N. (2015). Students' Preferences on the Use of Mother Tongue in English as a Foreign Language Classrooms: Is it the Time to Re-examine English-only Policies? *English Language Teaching*, 9(1), 148. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n1p148>
- Duran, D., & Sert, O. (2019). Preference organization in English as a Medium of Instruction classrooms in a Turkish higher education setting. *Linguistics and Education*, 49, 72–85. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2018.12.006>
- Galali, A., & Cinkara, E. (2017). The Use of L1 in English as a Foreign Language Classes: Insights from Iraqi Tertiary Level Students. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 8(5), 54. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.all.v.8n.5p.54>
- Haryanto, E., Sulistiyo, U., Khairani, M., & Wulan, R. (2016). Indonesian or English? EFL Student

- Teachers' Preference and Perception on the Language Use in the Classroom. *IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education)*, 3(1), 46–59. <https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v3i1.3941>
- Julianti, R., Atmowardoyo, H., & Mahmud, M. (2016). University English Teachers and Students' Perceptions of Language Choices in EFL Classroom. *Elt Worldwide*, 3(2), 204–220.
- Khatai, A. R. (1970). When and Why of Mother Tongue Use in English Classrooms. *Journal of NELTA*, 16(1–2), 42–51. <https://doi.org/10.3126/nelta.v16i1-2.6128>
- Klinken, G. Van. (2016). *Chapter 4*. (April 2008).
- Komar, P. (2019). *No 主観的健康感を中心とした在宅高齢者における健康関連指標に関する共分散構造分析Title*. 373426.
- Latsanyphone, S. (2018). English Language Teaching. *Sustainable English Language Teacher Development at Scale : Lessons from Bangladesh*, 2(3), 186–193. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350043503.0013>
- Mak Wai Kin, Wenqing, H., Zhen, L., Enke, L., Qin, L., Dongbao, S., ... Aceh, kue tradisional khas. (2015). *No 主観的健康感を中心とした在宅高齢者における健康関連指標に関する共分散構造分析Title*. *World Agriculture*, 1(May), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Navarro-Rivera, J., & Kosmin, B. A. (2013). Surveys and questionnaires. *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, (July 2018), 395–420. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203154281-35>
- Neokleous, G. (2017). Closing the Gap: Student Attitudes Toward First Language Use in Monolingual EFL Classrooms. *TESOL Journal*, 8(2), 314–341. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.272>
- Paker, T., & Karaağaç, Ö. (2015). The Use and Functions of Mother Tongue in EFL Classes. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 199(August), 111–119. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.494>
- Pratiwi Rahmadhani, A. (2015). Techniques in teaching vocabulary to young learners at LIA english course. *TELL-US Journal*, 1(2), 1–8.
- Seyyed Ali Ostovar-Namaghi, & Shabnam Norouzi. (2015). First Language Use in Teaching a Foreign Language: Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Findings. *US-China Foreign Language*, 13(9), 615–622. <https://doi.org/10.17265/1539-8080/2015.09.001>
- Surayatika, D. (2020). Students' Perception of Teachers' Bilingual Language Use in EFL Classroom. *Global Expert: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra*. <https://doi.org/10.36982/jge.v8i2.963>
- Wahyuni, S. (2016). Curriculum Development in Indonesian Context the Historical Perspectives and the Implementation. *Universum*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.30762/universum.v10i1.225>
- Walker, T., Liyanage, I., Madya, S., & Hidayati, S. (2019). *Media of Instruction in Indonesia: Implications for Bi/Multilingual Education*. (June), 209–229. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14386-2\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14386-2_12)
- Yenice, Z. E. (2018). *The use of L1 in EFL classroom s in the context of Turkey*. (1983). <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.14476.82563>