



## STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TEACHER'S BILINGUAL LANGUAGE USE IN AN ENGLISH CLASSROOM (A case study at SMK 1 Wonosobo)

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aimed to investigate the perception of students toward the use of teacher's bilingual language in English Classroom and to find out its weakness and benefits for students in English learning. The descriptive qualitative approach was employed in this study. The participants of this study were 36 students, 10 students in 10th grade, 10 students in 11th grade, and 16 students in 12th grade at SMK 1 Wonosobo. A questionnaire that consists of 10 questions was distributed to the students to get primary data. This study reveals that (1) students show their positive perceptions to the use of bilingual language used by the teacher as language instruction in their English classroom; (2) there were two weaknesses of teacher's bilingual language use for students in learning English; students' lack in mastering their speaking ability in EFL, students mostly not accustomed to the English language in the class. (3) there are some benefits of teacher's bilingual language: making them easy to understand what the teacher explained especially some difficult material such as English Grammar, feeling comfortable during the class, easy to understand new vocabularies in English, helping them to do exercises and to read something in English correctly.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

English is a tool of communication that is used to communicate among many countries as a global language. It is also used to communicate with other people especially in Educational field. Mastering English is also very important to gain success in facing the global era.

English is a compulsory subject that has to be learned by students In Indonesia. It is taught from primary school until university. Magdalena (2018) Learning English becomes more challenging for students in Indonesia compared to other countries where English is a second language. Most students do not use it in their daily communication, as a result, they become passive language learners in the classroom because they feel that they are difficult in using and understanding English. Other problems that most likely occur when students spend more time to get the meaning either from the teacher's explanation or from their own textbook. Those problems make students' motivation decrease in attending the lesson since they think English becomes their difficult lesson. Facing those situations, teacher techniques in teaching of course are needed.

Bilingual language is a method the researchers chose to overcome the problems. Satya Sri Durga (2018) stated this method allows the teacher and pupils to use two languages; one is the target language to be learned and the other is mother-tongue which is used to achieve the target language English. Cook (2001) posited that a new language can be taught best when bilingualism is allowed in the classroom, particularly because code-switching occurrence in English language teaching is unavoidable. The teacher frequently reads and transforms the text into the mother tongue of the pupil. By using the method the researcher assumed can make students easier to understand the lesson well. Alenezi (2010) revealed that since students recognize their first language as a tool to assist their learning and to raise their understanding of materials, they view teachers' code-switching or use of the first language positively.

This study was conducted to get a deeper insight concerning vocational high school students' perceptions of teachers' bilingual language use in English classrooms. The results of this study were hopefully helpful to teachers to understand when to use Bahasa Indonesia and when not to. Such an understanding can help them to know the best way to teach the students in English class. With the background problems mentioned, the research problem was formulated as follows: "What is students' perception of teacher's bilingual language use in an English classroom in SMK 1 Wonosobo?", "What is the benefit and weakness of teacher's bilingual use in English classroom in SMK 1 Wonosobo?"

Mussen (1973) defines perception as the process of how the information is acquired through the sensory receptors (e.g. eyes, ears, nose, and skin) which is transformed into a perception of what we think, see, hear, smell, taste, or touch. Moreover, Kumar (2010) explains the concept of perception from the perspective of philosophy, psychology, and the cognitive sciences that "perception is the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information". Furthermore, he also defines that perception as the process of selection, organization, and interpretation of stimuli by someone to be a coherent and meaningful picture of the world. In other words, by passing the perceptual process, people can interpret their idea meaningfully based on what they see, hear, taste, smell, and touch. According to Walgito (2001), perception which is begun by the process of feeling, of measuring something which is also the process of accepting stimuli by individuals through sense organs, or it is also called sensory process. Therefore, it can be concluded that perception is the process of stimuli received from someone through sensory receptors and producing it to become a meaningful thing either idea or picture of something. Furthermore, According to Harnad (1987), there are two aspects of perception. The first aspect is cognitive. This aspect emphasizes on understanding and making sense of things. It includes reasoning, arguments, logic, and perception. The cognitive aspect can be examined by seeing the results of how emotion, experience, and intelligence contribute to the understanding and responses. Meanwhile, the second aspect is psychology

aspect. Harnad (1987) also mentions that in the psychology aspect, it only focuses on the relation of experience that influences stimulation, and then the result of it affects the perception itself. In addition, Handini (2014) says that those aspects have roles in determining and affecting someone's perception. Meanwhile, students' perception is the process of preferential treatment of students toward information they get from an object, in this study is teacher's bilingual language use in English classroom.

In EFL classroom, the teachers sometimes use bilingual language, they teach English using first language (L1). It has some advantages and disadvantages for students in developing their English skills. These studies show the advantages of using L1 in the classroom. Teachers' use of L1 can help students to use the limited time efficiently with productive or communicative activities (Atkinson, 1992: 351 in Miles 2004). It means the interference of using L1 by the teachers can help students to use valuable class time efficiently. For the students, teachers who teach using L1 can help them find a new word in the target language. This is in line with a statement from Swain and Lapkin (1998) who state that L1 can assist in the comprehension and memorization of L2 vocabulary. Furthermore, the use of L1 in the classroom as a translation technique also can avoid misleading. This is because L1 translation is usually clear, short, and familiar, qualities that are very important in effective definitions. In addition, students also gain the benefit of the use of L1 in the classroom. They can clarify unfamiliar vocabulary and communicate grammar points especially when the teacher delivered it by using L1 in the teaching process (Storch and Wigglesworth, 2003). Based on the above studies, it can be assumed that the use of L1 by the teacher creates less threatening atmosphere in English classroom. This situation also brings an advantage for both teacher and students to decrease students' language anxiety in communication. Besides, the use of L1 also encourages students' motivation to learn English. It also helps students to understand the expression used by the teacher. However, there are also several disadvantages of using L1 in the classroom based on the following studies, the use of L1 also shows some disadvantages to the English teaching process in the classroom. Fillmore (1983) explained that the students who are used to hear their teachers using L1 will tend to ignore the target language. When the teacher used L1 in the learning process, the students will be accustomed to the use of L1 and will wait for the translations. This situation can lead to the failure of the maximum use of English. Miles (2004) explained that the use of L1 by teachers can oversimplify differences between two languages, create laziness among students, and a failure to maximize English use in the classroom. Furthermore, Zacharias (2003) stated that L1 can be seen as a barrier to English exposure. This could be the main disadvantage of teaching a foreign language towards teachers who apply the direct method model assisted by the FonBi application in learning to present observation report texts.'

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

In order to deal with the purpose of the present study, a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2009) with the case study method (Merriam, 1998; Creswell, 2009) was used as a basic framework for this study. This study used a questionnaire as data collection about students' perception of teacher bilingual language in English classroom. The questionnaire included 10 questions classified according to students' interests and perceptions about the teacher's use of Indonesian in English lessons. The questions were written in Indonesian to allow students to understand the questions and instructions given. The questionnaire was distributed to 36 participants consisting of 10 students in 10th grade, 10 students in 11th grade, and 16 students in 12th grade at SMK 1 Wonosobo. The collected data were analyzed using the descriptive analysis technique by employing Microsoft Excel. It was used to calculate the frequency and percentage indicated by student responses.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following was the analysis result of students' perceptions on the use of Indonesian by teachers in English classrooms. The results come from the questionnaires that have been distributed. There are two parts of the discussion, the first is about students' feelings on the use of Indonesian by the teacher in the classroom, the second is the students' opinion about the use of Indonesian by the teacher in the classroom.

#### a. Students' Feelings on The Use of Indonesian by the Teacher in The Classroom

No	Statement	SA		A		D		SD	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	I prefer or choose the teacher to convey and provide explanations in Indonesian when learning English.	7	19.44	26	72.22	3	8.33	0	0
2.	I find that it is easier to understand the material presented by the teacher when the explanation is given in Indonesian.	11	30.56	24	66.67	1	2.78	0	0
3.	I find that it is easier for me to understand new vocabulary in English when the teacher explains the material in Indonesian.	7	19.44	25	69.44	4	11.11	0	0
4.	It is easier for me to understand the English sentence patterns explained by the teacher in the Indonesian	6	16.67	26	72.22	4	11.11	0	0
5.	It is easier for me to understand the contents of reading texts explained in Indonesian	9	25.00	27	75.00	0	0	0	0
6.	It is easier for me to understand easier to understand the meaning of sentences explained in Indonesian.	12	33.33	23	63.89	1	2.78	0	0
Average		9	24.07	25	69.90	2	6.01	0	0

**Gambar 1.** Students' preference on the teacher's teaching activities in Indonesian when learning English

Based on a survey of student responses to the statements above as displayed in table 1, the students tend to choose the teacher to provide all the teaching activities in Indonesian when learning English 24.07% of students chose strongly agree, 69.90% agree and 6.01% disagree. From the results, it can be concluded that the students prefer teachers to explain English material using Indonesian. They felt that using Indonesian in teaching activities helped them to understand the materials, the new vocabularies, the sentences' pattern, the meaning of sentences, and the reading text content well. In order to create equitable learning for all students, teachers must combine the use of Indonesian and English in learning to facilitate 6.01% of students who disagree with the statement.

**b. Students' opinion about the use of Indonesian by the teacher in the classroom**

No	Statement	SA		A		D		SD	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
7.	I think that the use of Indonesian by my English teacher helps me in learning English	12	33.33	23	63.89	1	2.78	0	0
8.	I think that my speaking ability in English is not optimal because I prefer to use Indonesian in English class	18	50.00	17	47.22	1	2.78	0	0
9.	I prefer to use English in class rather than Indonesian in order to get used to use the target language.	11	30.56	18	50.00	7	19.44	0	0
10.	I find that English lesson is more fun with the bilingual method	19	52.78	15	41.67	2	5.56	0	0
Average		13	41.66	17	50.69	7	9.26	0	0

**Gambar 2.** Students' perception or opinion on the use of Indonesian by the teacher in the English classroom

Based on the results of students' responses to the statements, it was found that the students thought the use of Indonesian in English class was very helpful for them 33.33% of students strongly agree, 63.89% agree, while 2.78% disagree. They felt that the learning process was more fun with the bilingual method 52.78% of students strongly agree, 41.67% agree, and 5.56% disagree. However, the students thought that the use of Indonesian in English class made them difficult in increasing their speaking ability the result mentioned that 50.00% of students strongly agree, 47.22% agree, while 2.78% disagree. They also felt that the use of Indonesian made them didn't get used to use the target language that is English 30.56% of students strongly agree, 50.00% agree, while 19.44% disagree. For those results it was easier to understand the material if the teacher explained it in Indonesian. It can be seen through the student responses 30.56% strongly agree, 66.67% agree and 2.78% disagree. Thus, students who prefer teachers to explain English material in Indonesian are 97.22%, while those who disagree are only 2.78%. From those results, we know that the use of the bilingual method is very helpful for students in learning a second language and is more enjoyable for them. However, this also causes the rest to be unfamiliar with English and even the use of English itself.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to determine students' perceptions, the benefit, and the weakness of using the bilingual method in learning English. The data shows that students give positive response 97,22 %. Almost all students feel that using the bilingual method makes it very easy for them to understand English well. Students also think that using the bilingual method was very helpful for them to learn the language and the learning atmosphere feels more fun. Those become the benefit that the study found. Furthermore, the data shows 2, 78 % students disagree, we can say that they give negative response of using bilingual method in teaching and learning process. The students think the use of the bilingual method makes them unable to use English well, especially in mastering speaking ability in EFL and even they feel strange to the English language. Those are the weakness that the researcher found in the study. Thus, teacher can use bilingual language in English classroom to facilitate students in learning English. However, to fulfill the willingness of students who disagree with the use of bilingual language in teaching and learning process, we, sometimes, can apply English in classroom.

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