

Secondary High School English Teachers' Perception toward English as Medium Instruction

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Keywords: Perception, secondary high school teacher, English as Medium Instruction (EMI).

Abstract: The insufficient previous studies on the use of English as Medium Instruction (EMI) in EFL classrooms in Indonesia encourage the present study. Ideally, English teachers are obliged to teach English subjects using English in order to provide authentic learning. The present study aims to explore how English teachers perceive English as Medium Instruction in EFL classes at two Secondary High Schools in Palangka Raya, Indonesia. 7 teachers who teach English both partially and entirely in English from the selected schools were exposed to questionnaires, were interviewed and were observed. The result of the study showed the insignificant effect of EMI within ELT as the result of the use of English as foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia. Despite the low frequency use, the teachers have a positive response toward their own English and are aware the importance of conducting teaching and learning process using English. Finally, it is recommended for the teachers to utilize various teaching strategies and policy makers to provide trainings on effective teaching methodology.

1 INTRODUCTION

English as Medium Instruction (hence EMI) is defined as the use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English” (Dearden, 2015). Previous studies on EMI in Indonesia mostly focuses on describing the use of EMI in the teaching of content subject, such as science and Math and not in English subject (Aritonang, 2014; Floris, 2014; Haryanto, 2013, Rahmadani, 2016; Sultan, 2012; Indriani, 2012; Ibrahim, 2001; and Muttaqin & Ida, 2015). The result of the study indicates the teachers’ reluctance in teaching content subject using English as the result of lack of knowledge, reference and experiences.

In conducting the research, the writer assumes the negative perception toward EMI and reluctance in teaching using English should not occur in classes whose teachers with English as their educational background. In line with this Artini (2013) believes of the occurrence of learning problems as the result of the use of language beyond the students’ understanding. Students will not be able to get the

message or information which are tried to transfer by the teacher.

The study aims to explore how English teachers perceive EMI in Secondary education in Palangka Raya. Two research questions are listed for the aims of this paper: how do English teachers perceive EMI in English subject at secondary education? What are their views about using English in their daily English subject instruction?

2 METHOD

This article is a research conducted with mixed-approach in two recommended senior high schools in Palangka Raya. The selected schools present the public image of the qualified schools; in terms of teachers’ educational background and schools’ accreditation score; and offer a number of English programs for their students. The subjects chosen for this study were English teachers who are teaching entirely or partially in English. The subjects were taken purposefully (Patton, 2002). In purposive sampling, the focus was to select information-rich cases for study in depth (Patton, 2002: 230), which

are likely to illuminate the questions under study. At the end of the questionnaire respondents are asked whether they willingly took part in interviews.

To meet the ethical criteria of research, since the beginning the researchers have conveyed the identity of researchers, as well as declared the intention and purpose of research to both schools' managers. Research proposals were submitted to schools' leaders and teachers to be an early consideration in providing answers to the posed research questions. The research proposal was also presented in a seminar on research proposals of Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Palangka Raya, April 2017 to test the feasibility of the research proposal.

Data collection was conducted both for the quantitative and qualitative data. The research was conducted in four stages: distributing questionnaire, observing classroom and conducting interview. Furthermore, two-month extension of research was conducted in May and June 2017 to check again on two matters, they are, the condition of schools in Palangka Raya City area that has the same criteria, and checks on the same research subjects in the same school. So it can be ascertained that the obtained data were valid data. The last part of the research carried out triangulation to check the validity of data through presentation. Once again, to ensure the data validity, it was carried out by focus group discussions through peer meetings in the same research conducted at Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Palangka Raya in October 2017. All of them were conducted in order to ensure that research has explained the phenomenon of the research problem

3 FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result of questionnaire

The response to questionnaires leads to the importance of providing English teaching using its authentic target language, which is native English like. When the school does not provide native speaker for the students, then teachers are obliged to provide English-like environment by teaching English using the target language.

a. The use of English in respondents' school

This section provides information about the frequency of English uses in the schools. From the 10 (ten) items there are 4 (four) items (1, 2, 3 and 10) asking about the external factors contribute to his/her frequency of English use, namely the institution, their colleagues support and overseas experience. Then there are 6 (six) items requiring

the teacher's own use of English both inside and outside class. The average score of the ten items regarding the frequency was 2.40 or at the *fairly low* category. It means that most teachers utilize English mostly in classes and is in combination with Bahasa Indonesia. It is quite surprising due to the qualified school, sufficient quantity and quality of facilities, teachers' teaching experience and teachers' educational background.

b. EMI teachers' self-evaluation toward their own English

The average score of the nine items regarding the teachers' response toward the use of English in delivering the knowledge to their students was 3.19 or at the *high* category. It means that most teachers are confident in using English as Medium Instruction.

c. Respondents' perceptions to the types of academic use in EMI.

There are four items assessing the benefit of EMI for the students, and two items measuring the benefit of EMI for the teacher. Specifically, the average score of the six items regarding the benefit of English as Medium Instruction was 3.63 or at the *high* category.

The finding is summarized in the following table

Table 1: Result of Teachers' Perception toward EMI.

No	Questions Categories	Score	Interpretation
1	The use of English in respondents' school	2.80	Fairly low
2	EMI teachers' self-evaluation toward their own English	3.20	Fairly high
3	Respondents' perceptions to the types of academic use in EMI.	3.63	Fairly high
	Average Score	3.21	Positive

From the table above, it can be seen that the teachers' response are at the *positive* category with 3.21. Then, it can be concluded that most teachers are in line with the importance of using English in teaching and learning process. However, the reasons of responding to the items remain unknown. The following section will present data elicited from the interview.

3.2 Result of Interview

From the eleven teachers, seven teachers agreed to be interviewed. The focus of the questions is based on their response toward the questionnaire and their reasons of giving such response. Therefore, the presentations of result of interview are themes emerged from the questionnaire, namely: perceptions of English use in EMI and concern about teaching in EMI

a. *Perceptions of English use in EMI*

First of all, there are four English teachers from MAN Kota Palangka Raya who have been teaching English for over 20 years, and have been teaching English partially from various classes with various percentage of English usage. Meanwhile, there are three English teachers from SMAN 2 Kota Palangka Raya—who agreed to be interviewed—have been teaching English for more than 15 years. These three teachers actively use English in teaching, but still partially not fully. The result of interview revealed that the majority of the participants express a positive reaction to use English in teaching English subject. They considered English is important as they said that EMI is beneficial in both for themselves and for the students. One teacher T2 stated by teaching using English, teachers provide models of pronunciation, introducing new vocabulary and model of intonation. She also believed that teachers will be able to practice their English and evaluate their pronunciation and grammar quality when teaching. Completely, she stated

"Manfaat mengajar menggunakan bahasa inggris: jelas untuk pembiasaan, untuk memperlancar, kita bisa koreksi pengucapan kita sendiri, atau ketika kita mengajar bisa jadi kita melakukan kesalahan dalam grammar. Jadi saat menggunakan bahasa inggris kita melakukan evaluasi"

The more clearly positive response toward the use of EMI in teaching is shown by one participant from SMAN 2, T5 stated that she only use 30% for Bahasa Indonesia and 70% for English. She believed that teacher is the native speaker, therefore it is teachers' obligation to provide model of vocabulary, pronunciation and intonation by teaching using English in classes. Completely, she said

"Actually we should use English all the time, but you can measure how we use English in the class. So actually, we should...what's that...use English at the class—along the class...but the teacher can

measure the students' ability so sometimes they translate using bahasa Indonesia. And then it depends on the teachers also. Keep them the experience how to...because you are the model for your students. We don't have the native speaker and it is you the native speaker. Or just bring the song, it is from the native speaker. Keep make them easy to learn English by using the song because we are the only source. It is different from those use English as a Second Language"

From this it can be concluded that these teachers have positive perception toward the use of English in teaching. This result supports the questionnaire result in where the teachers are aware of the importance of providing models of pronunciation, introducing new vocabularies, and providing supportive environment for their English language skills—particularly speaking—to grow both for the teachers and for the students. However, despite their positive response, the teachers said that they use English partially in teaching. The following subsection portrays the teachers' concern about teaching using EMI.

b. *Concern about teaching in EMI*

From the answers given to the **open-ended questions**, some statements as regards teachers' perception of influence of EMI on their teaching performance showed similar pattern. Despite their positive response toward EMI and motivation in teaching English subject using English most teachers believes there are some hindrances contribute to the use of code-switching into Bahasa Indonesia and partial use of English in teaching.

First of all, mostly they use English in opening the class, giving instruction, and making conclusion. The percentage of the use of Bahasa Indonesia is considered to be bigger than the use of English. Three from four participants in MAN Kota Palangka Raya admit the use of Bahasa Indonesia in their classes is bigger than 50%. The worries of the students' inability in understanding the concept, the material difficulties, the students' interest and motivation in learning English, and students' readiness are conditions contribute to the consideration in using Bahasa Indonesia in teaching.

One participant, T2 stated the use of Bahasa Indonesia is bigger in quantity that English. Although she does not directly use Bahasa Indonesia in teaching. She is motivated to use English in teaching in where she starts the class in English, then switch to Bahasa Indonesia in translating her

previous sentence and in giving further explanation. In specific, she said

“Ya, lebih banyak menggunakan bahasa Indonesia. Terutama didalam menjelaskan konsep karena mereka kan harus faham. Saya biasanya mengawali dengan bahasa Inggris dulu, ketika siswa menunjukan wajah bingung atau tidak faham, maka diterjemahkan kedalam bahasa Indonesia”.

This consideration is also stated by T1, “We are motivated, but we do not want to be said as crazy”. She further added that it is going to be useless to continue teaching in English but have to deal with the confused expression and speechless class. Therefore, they prefer to use Bahasa Indonesia. In line with this, T3 stated he usually translate text into bahasa Indonesia since most students will ask teachers the meaning of difficult words to him instead of looking them up in the dictionary. This circumstance occurs in teaching reading.

Furthermore, teachers need to deal with other challenges in implementing EMI within classes. Students' low motivation, large classes, and inappropriate teaching periods are three among some challenges to answer by the teachers. First of all, teachers need to teach students who do not have the will to learn English internally. They had to be in Language class because they do not have other choices. Actually, the students prefer to be in Science or Social class. Obviously teaching less motivated students will be more difficult than the lack ability ones. In relation to the teachers' use of EMI, all the four teachers believe the students' better motivation and great interest in learning English affect their EMI. Teachers will be able to apply EMI with highly motivated students in where the students will pay more attention to the teachers, responding to the teachers' instruction and actively involve within the teaching and learning concept. In relation to this, one participant, T1 stated “if learning English is an option, these demotivated students would have preferred not to learn English”.

Then, teachers also have to deal with large classes. Most English classes consist of 38 to 40 students with different English language ability. It is not easy to make a lot of students pay attention to the teachers' utterance at the same place and time. One participant, T4 believes it is one of the hindrances contribute to problems in providing EMI classes due to the wideness of the class and the spread of the students. Ideally, the teaching of Language should be not more than 30 students. He further adds “teachers need to speak louder, use more effort in pronouncing words so the students

will equally understand and to use appropriate teaching strategies”.

The third challenge deals with the period when English is taught. English subject is given at noon where the students are tired, sleepy and boring. The school arranges the earlier schedule for more preferable subjects such as science and social science. Furthermore, T4 adds it takes greater effort of the teachers to provide motivating atmosphere using various strategies, to select interesting topics and to create natural, conducive, and comfortable language environment for the English language to develop. Another sad reality also encountered from the interview. The society—the school and the parents—believe IPA or science and IPS or social science subjects are preferable than language ones. Fortunately this situation can be solved when teacher teaches using appropriate strategies in teaching. One participant, T6 state “despite the less conducive situation and condition, the teacher's dedication, motivation and spirit that supported with the availability of facilities like LCD and speakers will encourage students to learn English”.

Furthermore, the teachers' response during interview also revealed the inability to use English outside class despite the *habitual* nature of language learning. Teachers only speak in English when teaching and not outside class due to unsupportive environment. The colleagues do not support the use of English surround the school as the result of lack of confidence, afraid to make mistake, lack of speaking ability and because of misunderstanding. One participant T1 stated “we cannot use English here (teachers' room) because other teachers will think we are gossiping or discussing about the other teachers just like what we are doing now. The other teachers stare at us, give confused expression and showed displeased expression. This hindrance demotivates us to use English here (teachers' room)”. In fact, this condition is worsened since the school does not provide programs to improve the teachers' speaking ability and particular setting for improving speaking ability among English and non-English teachers. Obviously, this is an interesting fact.

Finally, the teachers do not believe that in the future the teaching of English in Indonesia will be conducted in full English. One of the participants, T1 state “as long as we still use English as a Foreign Language, the teaching of English will be conducted partially and not fully English”. Furthermore, she added “the use of English in classes will depend on the students' readiness and interest in learning English”.

In summary, teachers believe the positive influence of EMI toward their teaching and students' language skills. Nevertheless, the obstacles contribute to the teachers' preference of teaching partially in English. Does this really happen? The following section discusses the *how* EMI is applied.

3.3. Result of Observation

This section describes the occurrence of EMI within the teaching and learning process. The observation was conducted in T1, T2, T3, and T4 class from MAN Kota Palangka Raya and T5, T6 and T7 class from SMAN 2 Palangka raya. From the seven subjects, four teachers hold master degree in English language teaching and most of them have been teaching English for more than fifteen years. The detail of observation is presented below.

Table 2: Description of English Use.

Sub	%	Activities					
		O P	I N S	E X P	D I S	C O N C	C L O
T1	70	Y	CS	CS	CS	CS	Y
T2	60	Y	CS	CS	CS	CS	Y
T3	30	Y	CS	CS	CS	CS	Y
T4	30	Y	CS	CS	CS	CS	Y
T5	70	Y	CS	CS	CS	CS	Y
T6	70	Y	CS	CS	CS	CS	Y
T7	60	Y	CS	CS	CS	CS	Y

From the table above it can be concluded that the teaching and learning conducted partially in English. The average percentage of English use in the class was 55.7% for English and 44.2% for bahasa Indonesia. This condition is confirmed by the result of questionnaire with *fairly low* and interview.

4 CONCLUSION

The result of the study shows the insignificant effect of EMI within ELT as the result of the use of English as foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia. The English teachers' positive response toward EMI and their awareness toward the importance of providing English instruction do not contribute to the full use of English in teaching English subject.

First of all, the existence of bilingual teaching in both schools is inevitable. The teaching and learning

process of English was conducted partially in English. The utilization of code-switching as one of the teachers' strategy is common. Moreover, English is mostly used in class rather than outside class in the selected schools. The average score of the first category (the use of English in respondents' school) in questionnaire was 2.80 or at the *fairly low* category. This result was verified during interview where teachers admitted the low frequency use of English both inside and outside class. In relation to this, the observation result showed various frequency use of English. T1 and T5 used mostly English in teaching, while T2 and T3 used mostly Bahasa Indonesia in teaching. This finding is similar to Muhlisin (2015) who also concluded that different teachers held different beliefs of the proper bilingual use in the classroom. Similarly, despite the use of English medium textbooks, teachers taught the students using Bahasa Indonesia. This is in line to EMI in EFL class in Thailand, where the teachers taught using Thai language (Hengsadeeikul, et al., p. 2010).

The result of interview highlighted the high motivation of the teachers in using English in teaching. However, the outcome of the teaching and learning process is unpredictable. The teaching and learning process was taken place one way where the students tend to be passive and confused. This contradiction is similar to result of a case study by Hu (2014) who pointed out that the teachers' desire learning outcome and students' actual learning activities were mismatched.

Then, teachers have positive response toward the benefit of EMI teaching. In the interview teachers believe that EMI was very beneficial that the students could get benefit from listening to the teachers' speaking and imitating how to speak English well. They also said that it would push the students to learn English faster since they get the model of pronunciation, intonation, grammar and new vocabulary. The findings about the benefits of EMI teaching are in line with the findings of research conducted by Chang (2010), Wong (2010) and Wu (2006) which also revealed that EMI was considered beneficial in improving students' English proficiency.

On the contrary, according to the result of the interview, the EMI teaching had also provided challenges to the students. Most respondents believe the most contributing factor to difficulty in implementing this program was because English was not the teachers and the students' mother tongue. This response is in line with one of the factors which caused difficulty in speaking as

mentioned by Ur (1996). Then, the respondents of the present study also assumed that the students with low motivation, had limited vocabulary and low confidence would get difficulty to understand the learning material if the lecturer explained using English without mixing the language with Bahasa Indonesia. The large class and teaching period are the next contributing factors. Obviously, these two latest factors deal with the policy maker and the teachers do not have any authority in dealing with these factors.

Nevertheless, teachers believe despite the bilingual teaching, the possibility of successful teaching and learning lies not merely at the outcome—the students' understanding toward a particular concept—but depend on the teachers' effort themselves in encouraging the students to utilize English both inside and outside class. The problem is not EMI itself, but how to make students realize the importance of using the English medium in their daily life. In line with this, Hengsadekul et al (2010) argued that EMI should not be used only in classroom or textbook, but also in other contexts such as social and cultural activities outside the class.

On the basis of the results of the present study, the use of English as foreign language in Indonesia still one contributing factor toward the teaching of EFL using EMI and the presence of bilingual teaching. The EMI is not implemented purely. Instead it tends to be bilingual class.

First of all, the frequency English use in respondents' school is low. Despite the habitual nature of English language acquisition and the need of English language environment both for teachers and students' practice their English, the two schools do not set any rules regarding the percentage of English use inside and outside class.

Then, teachers are aware of the importance of English. Not only for their own learning but also for the students' future. In fact, they have positive evaluation toward their own English skill. Most of them can teach confidently using English, able to express themselves clearly in teaching, able to explain the concept well and are comfortable in teaching using English.

Next, teachers are aware of the importance of using English Medium Instruction and its impact on academic life. They believe of the positive effect of EMI toward their teaching, despite the implemented bilingual teaching. In fact, teachers evaluate their grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation at the post teaching activity.

Finally, there are some obstacles in the implementation of EMI teaching. These obstacles hinder teachers in teaching using full English. Among the obstacles, the teachers' confidence and awareness toward the importance of providing model of good English to the students is the dominant one. Without the teachers' will to teach using various strategies and techniques in providing explanation of concepts, the great percentage use of Bahasa Indonesia will be inevitable.

In short, it is recommended that further studies be undertaken on larger scales to develop more understanding of EFL teachers' and learners' attitudes towards EMI. Moreover, this study will encourage for School needs to set targets of English use both inside and outside class, to provide programs to enhance the teachers' confidence, motivation and productive skills, and to provide programs to enhance the teachers' techniques and strategies in order to be able to provide English instruction. To conclude, the researcher found that despite of the teachers' positive perception of using different techniques for promoting EMI, without the interference of policy maker then it is impossible to conduct pure EMI in secondary high schools in Palangka Raya.

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