

English as a Classroom Language: A Study of Implementation in Grade XII AKL at SMK Palebon Semarang

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the use of English as a classroom language in grade XII AKL at SMK Palebon Semarang. The background of this study is the importance of English as a classroom language as a medium of communication in teaching and learning activities. This study used qualitative methods with data collection through a questionnaire of grade XII AKL students at SMK Palebon Semarang. This study shows that the use of English as the medium of instruction in the classroom has been successfully implemented through the teacher's ability to adapt to the students' English proficiency. The combination of Indonesian facilitates students' implementation, making the implementation approach engaging and enabling them to understand the classroom language provided by the teacher. The survey found that students still need assistance from translators, as they still struggle to understand English in classroom language. Assistance from translators can motivate students and build confidence, thus facilitating student struggles. The contribution of this study lies in how the use of English and Indonesian in teaching and learning activities, with bilingualism, can motivate and improve students' communication skills in the classroom. Adaptive skills from teachers who can adapt can facilitate students' implementation of classroom language.

Keywords: *bilingualism, classroom language, English learning, learning motivation*

INTRODUCTION

In this research, the researcher reviews how students use classroom language in grade XII AKL. The main objective of this study is to analyze the use of English as the language of instruction in the learning process in grade XII at SMK PALEBON Semarang. The use of English as a classroom language will create a transformative learning experience because it will use a foreign language for interaction. Effective English language skills will make it easier for students to apply English (Larson, 2014). Basically, every student is different in terms of their English ability, so teaching will also depend on the use of English as a medium of instruction to make it easier for teachers to apply the use of English. In using English as a classroom language, it can be used to motivate, instruct, and guide students in observations it can be used in observation results (Oka & Artini, 2021). English will be used well to interact between teachers and students, can use Indonesian or English for beginners in interacting in the classroom (Kasmiaty, 2021). In implementing English, to begin with use local culture to make it easier for students to understand the interaction between teacher and student (Mokoginta, 2024).

Classroom language is a language that is often used in the classroom for tasks such as giving directions, asking questions, expressing gratitude, assessing understanding, and so on (Bella & Zainil, 2020). This study shows whether the implementation of English as a medium of instruction has a positive impact on improving students' language skills, vocabulary, grammar, and speaking. The use of English as a medium for implementing classroom language will also affect student interactions (Sari, 2016). This finding is in line with the statement that English is a suitable learning medium for grade XII. Classroom language can be used in every activity session during learning hours to practice various new phrases or to get students used to using English in the classroom language, students will get used to speaking English if the teacher often applies classroom

language (Areni, 2014). So, to ensure the success of implementing English as a classroom language at SMK PALEBON Semarang, problems such as differences in student abilities and teacher preparation must be considered. While there are many benefits to using English in the classroom, implementing it is not always easy.

Classroom language is an expression of interaction between teachers and students so that it is effective in using English as a classroom language (Sumarni & Firman, 2023). The use of English as the main language of instruction in secondary schools is increasingly widespread. All grade levels have characteristics and challenges in adapting to English as the main language of instruction. Classroom language is an expression of the teacher to improve the communication part of the learning process. Classroom language is also one of the daily expressions for students to be able to maximize their English speaking (Kirana & Areni, 2014). In grade XII, students face challenges when English is used as the main language of instruction. Assessing how well English is used in class is very important, this is important to evaluate the effectiveness of using English as a language of instruction in learning. Students' understanding of the material, their participation in class discussions, and improvement of English skills during the program are indicators of the success of the program. Classroom language can be used in online teaching as well as offline teaching (Nyoman et al., 2023). It is expected that the best learning strategy for the class can be found in grade XII. Students has a variety of techniques in receiving lessons, with different concentrations for each students, so teachers will often implement English in the classroom language (Sumarni & Firman, 2023).

The use of English as the language of instruction in the classroom will certainly be increasingly widespread throughout the country. In the classroom, simple conversations between teachers and students are also one of the implementations of the classroom language using several templates (Oka & Artini, 2021). This can be an evaluation material for teachers and students, for teachers to adjust the use of English and for students it can be an evaluation to be able to continue to develop the English that has been mastered by

students. Teachers can modify their teaching strategies based on the level of student ability through the variation in the use of English in the classroom. The use of English as a classroom language will also affect student interactions (Sari, 2016). For grade XII, new terms can be used for students so that the vocabulary in students understanding is more developed. However, the use of English in the classroom is often still ineffective because it still uses L1 (First Language) which will reduce the level of implementation in the classroom language (Wang, 2019).

On the other hand, as the world becomes more global and more connected, English language proficiency can be a very valuable tool. An ELT curriculum is needed that combines centrally and can balance global methodology with local perspectives. With globalization, stakeholders can adapt to the use of human resources (Hasan, 2021). When English is the language of instruction, students will learn more vocabulary and grammatical structures. The diversity of English standards has its own effectiveness depending on the context of communication, with a mixture of English and local speakers having advantages and disadvantages, but the use of local speakers for early students will help (Rumawak, 2024). Mastering English will increase students' access to information and increase their opportunities to continue their higher education and work abroad. Because the level of competence of students in Indonesia is still relatively low, therefore the role of teachers also depends on how teachers can design effective and flexible learning (Prihatin, 2019).

By highlighting the value of bilingualism and emphasizing the importance of English as a global language, then by maintaining local languages as supporting languages (Rumawak, 2024). In the 21st century, the positive attitude of teachers to the needs of students in the future emphasizes the fulfillment of student needs as a characteristic of student-centered learning (El Byad, Mouaziz, Moumni & El Biadi, 2023). Teachers in Indonesia should also take advantage of current technology to enhance ELT methods such as workshops, trainings, and scholarships (Hasan, 2021). Through the analysis of the collected data, this study seeks to provide evidence supporting the efficacy of English as a medium of

instruction, and to offer relevant recommendations to improve the quality of English language teaching at SMK PALEBON SEMARANG.

In general, the use of classroom language to improve students' speaking skills, accelerates learning, and facilitates communication, resulting in successful learning (Rumawak, 2024). Specifically, this study aims to analyze students' perceptions and attitudes towards the implementation of English by conducting observations in grade XII. Students will certainly have difficulty in using English, but teachers must actively control student behavior and provide direction to students. So that results can be obtained that can be used for the analysis of the implementation of English, with how often teachers apply English and its impact on students (Mahendra, 2023). Furthermore, to identify factors that contribute to the success of the implementation of English. Through explanations from teachers and guidance, students can learn English as a facilitator in speaking development (Safitri & Anwar, 2021). New vocabulary learning should also be taught to students to increase their vocabulary. With students learning new vocabulary, it will also make it easier for students in daily tests or end-of-term exams.

Theoretically, this study will enrich our understanding of how English is applied in the learning process, especially at various grade levels (Oka & Artini, 2021). Thus, this study is expected to fill the gap in the related literature and provide concrete evidence regarding the factors that support the successful implementation of English as the language of instruction. Practically, the results of this study have broad implications for various parties involved in the world of education (Sumarni & Firman, 2023). For schools, this study can be a reference in formulating policies on the use of English. For teachers, this study offers effective strategies in teaching using English. For students, this study can increase learning motivation and understanding of the benefits of learning English. In addition, this study can also contribute to teachers to use classroom language learning materials that are more relevant to the needs of students in the era. Finally, this study is expected to provide a significant contribution to improving the quality of English learning at SMK PALEBON SEMARANG.

METHODS

In this research, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative method. The aim of this study was to describe the implementation of English as a classroom language in Grade XII AKL at SMK Palebon Semarang, focusing on the use of English supported by Indonesian in classroom communication, instruction, motivation, and interaction. The source of the data was taken from 12 students Grade XII AKL who experienced the bilingual classroom language approach directly. The data were collected through a questionnaire using a Likert-scale response format, and the data were analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis by categorizing responses, identifying patterns, and drawing conclusions related to the effectiveness, benefits, and challenges of using English as a classroom language.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

How English is Used as a Classroom Language in XII AKL

The use of English as a classroom language shows that students find it easier to understand the teacher's instructions. Analysis suggests that students may be unfamiliar with using English as a classroom language, making it easier for them to follow the teacher's instructions. Differences in the language used by students can increase their confidence in responding to classroom language. This is in line with Sinta, Bella, and Zainil (2020) who mentioned that the teacher's use of a mix of languages can help students understand better. Furthermore, this approach helps reduce the linguistic confusion often experienced by students when listening to English in class. Meng (2020) say with this variety of languages, students can adapt to new terms without losing their meaning.

According Apriliani and Lengkanawati (2023), students revealed when teachers gave assignments or tests, they did not feel a gap in their abilities. When giving assignments or tests, teachers did not give questions or instructions that were too confusing. They stuck to instructions that students could understand. This is in line with who mention that students also indicated that teachers were quite good at using English as a classroom language. Therefore, students found it easier to

understand teacher instructions. This confirms that teachers successfully match the language difficulty level to students' abilities. This is in line with who mention that choosing simple words and sentences is crucial for effective communication (Rouf & Mohamed, 2022).

Researcher conclude from the choices of students, that students can still easily understand the instructions from the teacher in online learning activities. In this scope, online learning is given by the teacher when there are assignments there are given at school. According to Yin (2016) who mention that, this indicates the students still need more encouragement or instruction to encourage them to be more active in class. Teachers will repeat instructions more than once, using both English and Indonesian. This suggests that students will be more motivated and understand English better if they receive encouragement from teachers who use mixed language, as in the paragraph above. With the majority agreeing, the teacher's role is essential for students to practice their English skills through the classroom language used by the teacher. This is in line with Aufa and Syarif (2020) who mentioned that teacher encouragement is a crucial element in fostering intrinsic motivation for language learning. When teachers demonstrate enthusiasm for English, students tend to imitate this in classroom communication. This kind of interaction also fosters positive habits of natural language use.

The students revealed that when there were assignments or tests from the teacher, they did not feel that there was a gap in their skill. When giving assignments or tests, the teacher did not give questions or instructions that were too confusing. Filer (2016) who mention that students did not experience difficulty understanding instructions or assignments during online learning activities. The teacher's instructions regarding the use of classroom language were very clear, so students did not experience any obstacles or confusion. Students benefited from the teacher's instructions in implementing classroom language. Students did not feel confused by the teacher's instructions when given instructions or assignments. According Safitri and Anwar (2021) who mention that clarity of instructions is a key factor in the successful use of English as a language in the classroom. Students become more confident in participating in

learning activities when the language of instruction is used, which helps them understand instructions or assignments.

Based on student feedback, it can be concluded that students perceive the use of English as appropriate. They feel more guided and motivated to respond to classroom language in English during the learning process. There is a correlation between teachers' use of English as classroom language. According to Kasmiaty (2021) for these statement, it can be concluded that teachers' skills in implementing classroom language have been successful. Teachers with strong language skills can create a cohesive learning environment. Student motivation also plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of classroom language implementation. This is in line with El Byad et al., (2023) who mentioned that teachers' communication skills determine the success of English implementation in the classroom. Teachers who consistently use English expressions will enrich students' skills. This success also indicates a more interactive learning environment.

This indicates that students still need more encouragement or instructions to motivate them to be more active in class. Teachers will repeat these instructions more than once in both English and Indonesian. Nyoman (2023) who mention that students perceived consistency from teachers in implementing English as the classroom language. However, students still had to use Indonesian to understand and respond to the classroom language, as discussed in the previous paragraphs. This concludes that the teacher's role in supporting the use of English as a classroom language was successful, although incorporating Indonesian into the mix can be helpful. This is in line with Pratiwi and Perangin-Angin (2017) who mentioned that bilingual approach allows for a more flexible and inclusive learning process. Teachers can adapt their language style to students' understanding levels. Combining languages also helps maintain student focus without compromising English learning objectives.

The students did not experience difficulty in understanding instructions or assignments in online learning activities. The instructions from the teacher in using classroom language were very clear so that students did not experience obstacles or confusion. Pusparini and Kurniasih (2023) who

mentioned that teachers evaluate the use of English as a classroom language to improve learning. Teachers correct and provide guidance if students are still confused when responding to instructions in classroom language. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' skills in using English in classroom language implementation are good, allowing for evaluation at the end of the lesson to help students become more familiar with it. According Kirana and Areni (2014) who mentioned that evaluation is important so that language strategies can be tailored to students' needs. This approach strengthens students' communication skills in the classroom language. It also helps teachers understand the English difficulties experienced by students.

Students when receiving instructions from pre-service teachers or trainee teachers also felt the impact of classroom language implementation. J. Wang (2022) who mentioned that the teacher has made every effort to use English as a classroom language effectively and easily understood by students. This indicates that students do not perceive any shortcomings in the teacher's use of English as a classroom language. Students perceive the teacher's skills in delivering English as a classroom language to be excellent. This illustrates the importance of teacher adaptation to students' proficiency levels. Thus, the use of English in the classroom not only improves understanding but also develops other skills for the future. The teacher's communication skills foster students' confidence in interactions. Teachers who use appropriate intonation and expression help students focus better. The quality of the teacher's language delivery directly contributes to the effectiveness of learning (Primurizki & Suherdi, 2023).

The Benefits When English Used as The Classroom Language in XII AKL

This demonstrates that teachers continue to adapt to the use of English, interspersed with classroom language. Teachers recognize differences in students' English skills, preventing them from fully engaging with them. They do not necessarily use commands that are too difficult for students to understand. According to Afikah and Murtiningsih (2017) who mentioned

that students still need Indonesian to understand the teacher's instructions. By adjusting the language level, teachers can create an inclusive learning environment for all students. This is in line with Narafshan and Noori (2018) mentioned that common among intermediate-level foreign language learners. Indonesian is used as a supporting language to ensure students don't lose context. Over time, students will become more independent in understanding instructions without the need for translation.

Students when receiving instructions from pre-service or trainee teachers, also felt the impact of classroom language implementation. Students were visibly helped by pre-service or trainee teachers who used English to guide them in learning (Pusparini & Kurniasih, 2023). Students also seemed less concerned when pre-service or trainee teachers gave instructions. Collaboration between teachers and pre-service teachers enriched the diversity of communication styles in the classroom. This is in line with Safitri and Anwar (2021) who mentioned that the blended approach helped students build confidence in speaking English. Furthermore, prospective teachers had a hands-on opportunity to adapt their communication styles. This two-way interaction fostered a collaborative learning environment.

This indicates that students feel helped by the instructions given by the teacher. Students feel there is progress in understanding the instructions as an implementation of classroom language given by the teacher. This is in line with Wang (2019) who mentioned that students' expressions will be helped by the use of Indonesian mixed with English as classroom language. Students will not be confused when they receive new instructions or assignments from the teacher. Students will be quicker in the learning process. According Primurizki and Suherdi (2023) who mentioned that students have the opportunity to connect meanings through natural translation that occurs in the classroom. The planned implementation of classroom language helps accelerate the process of meaning formation in students' brains. Spontaneous translation also serves as a tool to strengthen understanding.

Teachers who use a mixture of local languages and English for classroom language can help students understand

English words for classroom language, students can respond to commands or assignments given by the teacher. Oka and Artini (2021) who mentiones that some students have benefited from their speaking skills in responding to classroom language, while others are still average in their speaking skills when responding to teachers in using classroom language. Some students still need guidance in using English for classroom language implementation. This is in line with El Byad et al., (2023) who mentioned that appropriate feedback, students can build confidence in communicating in English. Teachers act as facilitators, providing a safe environment for language practice. Students who feel supported are more likely to use English in informal classroom situations. This process also helps them develop an awareness of the importance of cross-language communication.

Based on the students' expressions, it can be concluded that teachers who use a mixture of local languages and English for classroom language can help students understand English words. This is in line with Sumarni and Firman (2023) by mixing English and local languages, students can respond to commands or assignments given by the teacher. Teachers mix Indonesian with English in the implementation of classroom language. This has helped many students and has helped them become accustomed to using English as a classroom language. Students who are accustomed to the language mix show significant improvements in their abilities. This indicates that teachers play a crucial role in the success of language implementation in the classroom. This is in line with Narafshan and Noori (2018) who mentioned that phenomenon demonstrates a gradual process of language adaptation. Students who initially needed translation began to shift to direct comprehension. This suggests that frequent exposure to English influences the improvement of receptive abilities.

The Challenges Appeared When Implementing English as Classroom Language

Students feel the consistency of the teacher in implementing English as the classroom language used by the teacher. Apriliani (2023) who say that the students was that

they could still easily understand the teacher's instructions during online learning activities. Therefore, it's possible that students access Google Translate to facilitate understanding the teacher's instructions or questions. From the questions, students also continue to accept the use of English in the instructions, although they still use Google Translate or a dictionary. Reliance on digital devices is a sign that language learning is not yet fully independent. However, it also demonstrates students' potential for independent learning using technology. Reliance on digital devices demonstrates students' independent efforts to understand the language. According Apriliani and Lengkanawati (2023) who mentioned that teachers can capitalize on this by providing technology-based exercises. Thus, the use of digital media can be an effective tool in supporting language learning.

The teacher carries out evaluations in the use of English as a classroom language to improve learning. Mahendra (2023) who mentioned that indicates that some students already understand the instructions or assignments given by the teacher, while a small number are still confused when receiving instructions from the teacher. This also indicates that students still need further training in using English as a classroom language. The teacher's use of English has been designed in such a way to match the skills of students. Accordin Safitri and Anwar (2021) says by over time, students will learn to use English as a classroom language. Sustainable teacher skills are also crucial to increasing the effectiveness of English use in vocational classroom contexts. Overall, this strategy strengthens the communicative learning process in the learning environment.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the use of English as the language of instruction in grade XII AKL students at SMK Palebon Semarang has been implemented functionally. Teachers primarily use English for basic interactions, delivering lesson materials, classroom management, and directing, but Indonesian is still used to help explain unfamiliar areas. This indicates that English is not the sole language used

for communication, but rather serves as a supporting language during teaching and learning activities. In line with the goal of improving student competency, this implementation represents an adaptive teaching technique that considers students' proficiency levels while encouraging frequent exposure to English throughout the learning process.

Furthermore, the results indicate that the use of English as the language of instruction in the classroom brings several benefits to students. Frequent use of English improves comprehension of classroom phrases and helps students. This implementation complements the research objective of determining the beneficial effects of English in the classroom and suggests that its implementation helps create an English-rich learning environment that enhances students' readiness for academic and professional situations.

However, this study also noted several difficulties in using English as the language of instruction in the classroom. Effective communication in English is hampered by students' varying levels of language proficiency and limited understanding. Despite these difficulties, by providing insights into the real-world use of English as a medium of instruction in school settings, this research advances the field of English language education. Teachers, schools, and future researchers can use these findings as a guide to creating more successful methods of incorporating English into classroom conversations while considering the needs and limitations of learners.

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