Learners' Perspectives on English as a Learning Media in Maritime English Classes

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Abstract— the medium of instruction in English subject and what learners really need in teaching and learning process in a maritime English classroom. This study used a qualitative research method, with interviews and observations as data collecting techniques. The participants of this study are 15 students of grade eleven of the maritime vocational school in Cilacap. The result of this study shows that the students find some difficulties in understanding English as a medium of instruction used by the teacher in the teaching-learning process. This study also identifies what the students expect from their English classes. Students need more interesting teaching methods, such as games to foster their motivation. Games can reduce students' boredom in the classroom and can refresh their mind. In addition, they also want to have fun in the classroom and therefore their teacher can use songs as students' motivation enhancer. The original song lyrics can be replaced with maritime terms to help them learn more. In addition, visiting vessels guided by their English teacher was also a help for them to learn. Besides, their English teacher and vessels crews help them to learn directly about the terms related to shipping or maritime. Instead of using English only as a medium of instruction, the students suggest using bilingual language in classroom activities.

Keywords- Vocational Education, Teaching English, Medium of Instruction, Maritime English Classroom.

I. INTRODUCTION

As we know, interaction is becoming more important in English learning. Success or failure in Maritime English classroom typically has something, if not absolutely everything, to do with the nature of interaction that takes place during the lesson. In Maritime classroom, interaction plays an important role in developing learners' ability. Students must understand the teachers' instruction in their classroom.

Levels of education in our country, Indonesia, are divided into some grades; there are an elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and university. Each level has its own characteristic considering the growth or age of the students. Senior high school is categorized into two: public school and vocational high school. There are some similarities and also differences between them. The similarities are mostly concerned on the age. Students of public and vocational high school are on the average age of 14-17. The number of each class is nearly the same, that is around 25 – 32 students.

At this age, students are very active in finding out who they are. They will look for the information from many sides and point of views. They will also want to show to others that they have the ability, responsibility, and adult characteristics. These can be seen from their attitude and aptitude. They are critical and creative; they do not like to be treated as children when everything is instructed and fully protected.

The subjects taught in public school are general and theoretical. They are taught as the basic knowledge that will be continued in a higher level of education, for example in universities. The students are prepared to continue their study. They are given various materials that can open their mind and interest.

In vocational high school, the subjects are more specific and practical. They are related to their future job. The practice has a higher portion than theory during the lesson. Students are prepared to have skills for work, instead of for continuing their study to higher level. Students are trained with practical lessons, both in class and on board the ship. English is taught to make students able to communicate. It is related to their specific future job. English is hopefully used in their communication with others.

A medium of instruction means a language that can be used as instruction by the teacher in the classroom during the teaching-learning process. It is easy to understand that MOI is classroom language practiced by the teacher where the communication between teacher and students use that language to help them understand each other. Furthermore, MOI is the language used to teach not only in the English lesson.

As we know, language, such as English, becomes an important part of all teaching and learning activities in our country because it is the main medium and source of transmitting information and knowledge. Language that is used to teach and to impart instructions in any disciplines, subjects, and at any levels of learning (Elementary, secondary, Higher etc.) is called Medium of instruction. In this case, the medium of instruction is an important issue at all levels, especially in society, like Indonesia, in which various systems of education are followed.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Indonesia is an archipelago country, but the school of maritime is rarely found, especially in Central Java. There are only about seven vocational schools that open maritime

schools. It means maritime schools offer a prospective career in the future. However, not many people know about the prospect, thereby maritime schools are not as popular as a public school, particularly in Central Java. The purpose of the IMO model courses is to help training providers and their teaching staff in organizing and introducing new training courses about maritime. Besides, it is to increase, regenerate, or supplement the existing training material where the quality and effectiveness of the training courses may thereby be improved to get better output [1].

Professional with English knowledge is supported by Brow [2], in that the course of maritime English aims to provide awareness to trainees of their responsibilities to get an understanding and pay attention to all activity on board vessel and contribute to maritime safety. Therefore, communication is the contents of learning in English for maritime and the objective is to make the students communicate effectively using the English language. Yakusheckina states that the International Maritime Organization (IMO) requires a seafarer to have enough knowledge of English [3]. It means that the requirement accentuates the importance of English language proficiency in relation to safety at sea. In other words, students learn English as they need it for their future jobs. In addition, the teacher is expected to communicate with people who know students' specific skill. It aims to synchronize English learning and students' needs in their specific study. Arini explains that a set of materials of English covers four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which will be very useful for them when they work in a maritime world [4]. The materials are meant to train them to be capable of communicating in English, both oral and written.

The English language taught in the Vocational Maritime class is different from the common English spoken in public schools. Why? In this case, English is used for specific purposes, thereby forcing students to work harder to understand the teacher's instructions in their class. The language being used refers to IMO system for effective teaching [1].

English for Specific Purposes means a way of teaching English for specific learners who study for a certain workplace. It relates to the learners' need in their workplace. In this case, it is English in Maritime or in the sea. According to Tomlinson's English for Specific Purposes is an umbrella term that conveys the teaching of English to students who are learning the language for a particular work or study [5]. Moreover, English for Specific Purposes is more focused on students who learn a specific skill in their study. In addition, Hutchinson and Waters suggested that English for specific purposes or ESP is an approach which is based on learners' need or it is not a product language [6]. English for Specific Purposes is not a methodology in teaching English. It means that English for Specific Purposes refers to a way to teach English skill specifically in relation to their field study. Hence, English for Specific Purposes is not a result of English teaching-learning process, but it reflects on processing of English teaching-learning for certain learners.

"For seafarers, they must be able to communicate effectively, they need to be able to use and understand English in a range of situations. 'Being able to use English' means that the seafarer can combine the 'building blocks' of language (grammar, vocabulary, phonology) to express him/herself clearly and appropriately in speech and writing. 'Being able to understand English' means that the seafarer can interpret messages that he/she hears and reads correctly and can respond to these messages appropriately and comprehensible. When a seafarer can demonstrate the ability to do this, he/she proves his/her communicative competence in English [7].

The issue confirms that the students find it difficult to involve themselves in teaching – learning English in a maritime classroom. It is new and raises the problem to many students there. They do not understand new terminology used in English for maritime. Therefore, as a teacher, we must do something to improve the students' interest in learning English for maritime.

In order to stimulate the students' interests in classroom learning, the instructors should not always emphasize the difficulties. For some students, understanding different conceptual ideas in other languages highly overloads their memory. Although the teacher's job is to remind the students about the difficulties in studying, the side-effect undermines their confidence [8].

There are three research questions that be answered:

1. What are the learners' problems in understanding teachers' instruction at the Maritime English Classroom?
2. What are the views of Maritime English learners on the use of English as a medium of instruction?
3. What kinds of support do learners need to make learners involved in the teaching and learning process?

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

In this research, the writer used qualitative research method. It will be carried out through group interviews and questionnaires. The data obtained were analyzed through thematic analysis. The study examines a current phenomenon in the real context and uses more than one data collection techniques [9]. Therefore, the writer applied interviews and observations.

To determine the research sample, the criterion sampling method is used. The participants were students of the maritime class having English as its medium of instruction. Meanwhile, the research sample consists of 15 students of grade eleven of Maritime vocational classroom.

The research data were collected through interviews and questionnaires. It is to know the learners' views about the teacher's use of English as a medium of instruction in their classroom. In-depth data were collected through face-to-face interviews in a natural environment, particularly by stating agree or disagree upon the questions given [10]. All participants were asked for their permission to the interviewer to record the interview. The samples were divided into two groups of the interview, which were held

in two sessions. The first session of the focus group consisted of 10 learners, who were asked about the problem they had in receiving the instruction in English. The interviews were held from 08.00 to 11.30, on 10th of April 2018. The second interviews consisted of 5 learners, at 13.00 to 14.30 in the afternoon on the same day. The second session focused on how they overcome the problem, as well as what the learners need to make them involved in teaching learning process in the classroom.

During interviews, expectations were that the researcher would answer nine questions. Table 1 presents questions of interviews.

TABLE I. QUESTIONS OF INTERVIEW

No	Question
1	Do you like English lessons?
2	Do you have any problem in English lesson?
3	Is general English different from Maritime English?
4	What are your views on Maritime English teaching in your classroom?
5	What is your problem with the teaching of English maritime in your classroom?
6	Do you want to understand Maritime English?
7	What steps do you usually take to understand Maritime English delivery in your classroom?
8	What do you need to motivate yourself in the teaching of Maritime English?
9	Is Maritime English important in your work as a sailor in the future?

All students answered the questions on the available sheet. They took around 15 minutes to complete the statements with yes or no answers. Table 2 present statements of observations.

TABLE II. LIST OF QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS

No	Question
1	English lesson is difficult to understand.
2	I like the English lesson in Maritime classroom.
3	I like the teachers' instruction delivered in English in Maritime classroom.
4	I want to have something new in the teaching-learning process.
5	Playing game interests me in the teaching-learning process.
6	Students need a grammar-translation method in the teaching-learning process

The data from each resource were analyzed separately. The purpose of this activity is to know the learners' views about using English as a medium of instruction in Maritime classroom. In the process, statements on their experiences, conclusion, performance, issues, and the ways to overcome the problems were examined in detail from each data source. From those statements, only anxiety-related issues were determined and underlined. The data from each participant were transferred into three concept maps in which the statements were listed and numbered

(See Figure 1). The data about the learner's view of the problem are obtained after comparing the statements and numbers in the concept maps. The statements of "English lesson is difficult" and "learners need something new in teaching-learning classes" are similar. In other words, the triangulation indicated that the data obtained are valid and trustworthy. Finally, the data were analyzed.
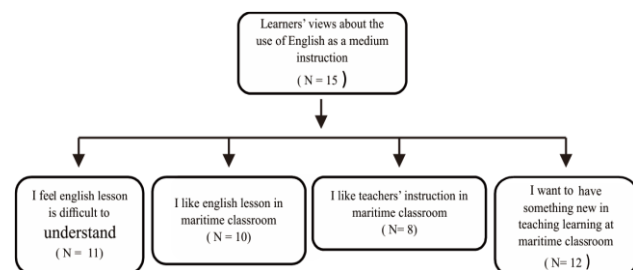

Fig. 1. The Sample concept of map

IV. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this part after collecting the data, in present the researcher gets some answers about learners' view through English as a medium Instruction. As we know, English in maritime class depends on the English specific purposes and its different from an English in general. This is something new to all learners there.

a. Problems of learners through teachers' instruction at the Maritime English Classroom

Observations were held on the same day, that was 30 minutes before the implementation of the interviews. From the observation, there were 11 students who found that English is a difficult lesson. The rest of them felt that the English lesson was not difficult. They feel it difficult because they do not understand the teachers' instruction in the classroom; they do not understand what the teacher is saying. Therefore, the students need to have bilingual instruction. In fact, it is not only a problem for the learners but also for the teachers. The table below represents the quantitative data of the problems faced by the students in the classroom in relation to the use of English as a medium of instruction.

TABLE III. PROBLEMS OF LEARNERS THROUGH TEACHERS' INSTRUCTION (N = 15)

Learners' Responses	f
English lesson is difficult to understand	11
Learners like English lesson in maritime classroom	10
Learners like teacher instructions as a medium instruction	6
Learners need something new in teaching-learning	12
Playing a game can make learners interest in teaching-learning	9
Students need a grammar-translation method in teaching learning	10

This result is also supported by Evans and Green [11]. that students encounter difficulties when they study their major subjects in English. It is not something taboo for

many students. Actually, students need more practice about that subject. Other research also emphasizes the problems of English for Specific Purpose courses in Iran. It founds that they are being offered without progress planning in course design, systematic needs analysis, teacher education, time, textbooks, and systematic research on the effectiveness of these programs [12-15].

Even if English is difficult for many students, some students have quite a good idea to speak English fluently. The teacher may need to explain this and say that they will be better in their exam and raise their capability to pronounce the words correctly if they speak with people they meet. But naturally, sometimes they will ask something in their daily activity by using their L1 in class. The teachers should not be worried about this. Teachers should explain the instruction slowly and carefully in English and make them repeat it. The teacher must praise and give them a reward for every simple activity.

b. Learners' Views About the Problem Regarding English as a Medium of Instruction at Maritime English Classroom

Some students said that they sometimes get bored with the learning process. They wanted it to finish in a very short period. In fact, the teachers used the time according to the schedule. The teachers encouraged the students to learn, as well as helping them to ease the burden, thereby allowing them to follow the learning process comfortably. If students feel fun and comfortable, they will be interested in getting involved in the classroom.

The results supported by Berman and Cheng [16] and Nowreyah [17] found that students with lower GPAs had more problems with their English. They said that the highest difficulty was understanding vocabulary in their major disciplines. Likewise, Eslami studied the problematic areas in EAP programs in Iran [12]. To compare, as we need flour to make a delicious piece of cake, we need vocabularies to speak English fluently.

The strategy which emanated from the data shows that the use of both Indonesian and English in the classroom should be institutionalized and well planned for effective use. The teachers commented that the use of both languages would enhance understanding; improve academic performance; as well as improving the students' English proficiency. In addition, sometimes students need their teachers to speak in local language to help them to boost their understanding and class participation. This is in line with Jacobson's argument that the integration of both L1 and L2 in a lesson is of great value to academic performance [18]. However, the teachers stated that the use of the local languages beyond upper primary should be minimal.

c. Learners' need for teachers' motivation in the teaching and learning process in the Maritime English Classroom

The second session of the interview focused on solving the problem presented above. Five students provided a similar answer, in that they actually need new activities that motivate them to move forward.

Actually, students have their own way to add the vocabulary they need. Most of them used memorizing method. However, they had not succeeded. The researcher found that students do not understand maritime English well. Dudley-Evans and Jo pointed out that we must make a distinction between comprehensive needs and course needs of learners [19]. Students still look embarrassed and not confident in using the terms they learn in the class.

Further, students need new ways of learning to motivate them, thereby allowing them to easily memorize vocabulary and understand the teacher's instruction given in English. One of them is games, for the students love it. Students enjoy playing with cards to memorize vocabularies.

V. CONCLUSION

The teacher's responsibility is to ease the heavy burden of the students. In addition, it is also to decrease students' difficulties. Therefore, students are interested in following the lesson and can understand the teachers' instruction delivered in English. It requires new innovations that can motivate students to be interested in a teaching-learning process in the maritime classroom.

Students find several problems in following the teaching and learning process, particularly the teachers' instruction. Some struggled with vocabulary, grammar, reading, and pronunciation, some other with English used for specific purpose, that is for Maritime.

Some of the best methods to improve students' motivation can include games. Games can reduce students' saturation in the classroom and can refresh the mind for a free return. In addition, teachers can also use songs to enhance students' motivation. The original song lyrics can be replaced with the terms used in the maritime field. Students will find it easy to remember the term through the song. Visiting vessels can also provide new motivation for students. With the help of the crew vessels, students can directly learn the terms related to shipping or maritime.

Teachers should understand the behavior of their students. If students find that it is difficult to follow the learning process because the teacher's delivery is too fast, teachers should reduce it. The teacher can also use bilingual language (L1 and L2) in the classroom. In doing so, it helps students understand what is delivered by the teacher. If it is still less effective, teachers can also translate English into Indonesian or in Javanese. In other words, they can use GMT (Grammar Translation Method). So, transfer material from teachers to be easy by students.

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