

Students' Perception on the Use of English as A Medium of Instruction in State Senior High School: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract—The focus of this study is to know students' perceptions on English in order to give some feedbacks to improve their ability in learning English. Therefore, the objectives of the study were to investigate the students' perceptions on English as a medium of instruction, to know some factors influencing the students' perceptions and to identify whether there is any relationship between students' perceptions and their English achievements. This study employed qualitative research and the data were collected through documentation, classroom observation and questionnaire which were analyzed using percentage formula. The study reveals that students have both positive and negative perceptions against English and there are some factors contributing to students' perceptions, such as attitudes, beliefs about self, goals, involvement, environmental support and personal attributes.

Keywords—*perceptions, medium of instruction, English as a medium of instruction.*

I. INTRODUCTION

It is widely recognized that English is important and the reason most frequently put forward for this is that English is a global and international language. English is also increasingly used as a medium of instruction in schools and universities, with subjects such as management, information technology and the humanities making particular use of English. Hence, in order to survive in the environment, proficiency in English language is also important for learners.

However, the outcome of English instruction in formal schooling has not been satisfactory since there are a few learners who are able to understand and communicate in English. Nunan [1] states that students in foreign language classrooms are rarely encouraged to make use of their language skills in the real world. Classroom is the only place where they can practice their English. Nunan's statement indicates that teacher, as a language model, should expose their students to English as much as possible in the teaching and learning process. Zacharias [2] notes that some teachers believe that classes should be teacher-centered, where the teacher is the expert and the authority in presenting information while other teachers take a learner-centered approach viewing their role as more of student learning. On

the other hand, students' motivation and attitude in learning language could determine their English proficiency. It is believed that the motivation comes from the attitudes which evoke the students' interest in learning English.

Nevertheless, the positive or negative attitude of students towards English is rooted from perception of an individual toward certain objects or matters. Perception is a process where one will form an impression about someone or something, where the input gain through one's observation will produce certain judgment which influenced the attitude of an individual toward certain things or events occur around them [3]. In fact, although the teachers of English produce the target language in classrooms a lot, it means nothing if the students have negative perception on it.

Considering some issues which have been mentioned above, this study concerned the students' perceptions of English as a medium of instruction used by teacher in classroom and its relationship between students' perceptions and their English achievements. Hence, this study attempts to address the following questions:

- a. What are the students' perceptions on the use of English as a medium of instruction?
- b. What factors influence the students' perceptions on the use of English as a medium of instruction?

II. METHOD

This research was in the form of qualitative research design. On the basis of its use, the purpose of qualitative research in the form of education is to describe a process of educational activities based on what happens in the fields as a material for further study in order to know the strength and weaknesses of education and the way to improve it. Moreover, the focus of this qualitative research is on the process of teaching and learning where the data and information required is regard to the question of what and is. Finally, this research gives a priority to meaning which means that the expressed meaning revolves around the perception of students about an event on the use of English as a medium of instructions through the language used by teacher in the classroom.

This research involved 31 students in the XI excellent class of Science Program (PC) at one of state senior high schools in Mataram. There are 20 female and 11 male students in this class and all of them were involved in this study.

Questionnaire was used to collect the data needed. The questionnaire in this research was given to the students in the form of questions to reveal the students' perception about English as a medium of instruction used by English teacher in the classroom.

Further, data analysis in this study was conducted over the course of the research program and after the research program. The data analyzed was mainly gotten from the questionnaire. Data from the questionnaire was transcribed and subsequently categorized and interpreted to answer the research questions. Furthermore, the data from the questionnaire were subsequently presented in a body of information and interpretation in order to know the percentages of students' perceptions on the use of English as medium of instruction.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were mainly gotten from the questionnaire and in this questionnaire, there are five types of questions were used to know the students' responses to the use of English as a medium of instruction.

A. Students' feeling about English as a Medium of Instruction

TABLE 1. STUDENT' RESPONSE ABOUT THEIR FEELING

No	Alternative answer	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Not happy	6	17.46%
2	Less happy	12	39.34%
3	Quite happy	6	20.64%
4	Happy	6	18.70%
5	Very happy	1	4.50%
Total		31	100%

The table above shows that there are 12 (39.34%) out of 31 students who feel *less happy*, in other words they have *negative* perceptions about English used by their English teacher. 6 (20.64%) students feel *quite happy* towards it, which means that they are in the perception of *neither positive nor negative*. Moreover, it can be seen that there are 6 (18.70%) students who feel *happy* and one student feel *very happy* with the use of English as a medium of instruction.

B. Students' ability in following the lessons using English as a Medium of Instruction

TABLE 2. STUDENT' RESPONSE ABOUT THEIR CAPABILITY

No	Alternative answer	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Incapable	1	5.61%
2	Less capable	5	26.35%
3	Quite capable	12	32.73%
4	Capable	11	26.26%
5	Very capable	2	8.81%
Total		31	100%

In the indicator of students' ability in following the lessons using English, it can be seen that there are 5 students (26.35%) with *less capable* and 1 (5.61%) student with *incapable* English lesson. Furthermore, 11 (26.26%) students said that they were *capable* and 2 students (8.81%) *very capable* in following their English teacher, which means that they have *positive* perceptions towards it. Meanwhile, 12 (32.73%) of them were *quite capable* in following the lessons, which means that they have neutral perceptions against it.

C. Students' impression on the use of English as a Medium of Instruction used by teacher

TABLE 3. STUDENT' RESPONSE ABOUT THEIR INTEREST

No	Alternative answer	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Not interesting	1	1.61%
2	Less interesting	4	12.90%
3	Quite interesting	12	40.32%
4	Interesting	8	25.80%
5	Very interesting	6	19.35%
Total		31	100%

The above table indicates the students' impression on the use of English as a medium of instruction which used by English teacher. From the table, it shows that there are 1 (1.61%) student feels *not interesting* and 4 (12.90%) others feel *less interesting* about using English in classroom. 8 (25.80%) students said it is *interesting* and 6 (19.35%) students said *very interesting*, which means that they have *positive* impression on the use of English as a medium of instruction used by teacher. Meanwhile, 12 (40.32%) students with their neutral impression said that the English used by teacher as a medium of instruction is *quite interesting*.

D. Teacher's clarity in explaining the lessons using English as a Medium of Instruction

TABLE 4. TEACHER CLARITY IN EXPLANATION

No	Alternative answer	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Not clear	1	1.61%
2	Less clear	8	24.19%
3	Quite clear	11	34.67%
4	Clear	10	33.06%
5	Very clear	2	4.83%
Total		31	100%

The above table shows that there are 8 (24.19%) out of 31 students who have *negative* perceptions by saying that the teacher's clarity in explaining the lessons using English is *less clear* and 1 (1.61%) student answered *not clear*. Moreover, around 10 (33.06%) students have *positive* perceptions towards it, which means that students think the teacher's explanation is *clear* and 2 (4.83%) of them answered *very clear*. Meanwhile, the other 11 (34.67%) students said that the teacher's clarity in explaining the lessons using English is *quite clear*.

E. The difficulty in understanding teacher's explanation when English is used as a Medium of Instruction

TABLE 5. FREQUENCY OF DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

No	Alternative answer	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	<i>Never</i>	2	5.80%
2	<i>Sometime</i>	12	38.71%
3	<i>Quite often</i>	9	27.73%
4	<i>Often</i>	6	19.35%
5	<i>Very often</i>	3	8.38%
Total		31	100%

The above table shows the students' difficulties in understanding teacher's explanation when using English as a medium of instruction. There are 2 (5.80%) students answered *never* and 12 (38.71%) students answered *sometimes* they have difficulties in understanding the English teacher's explanation. Furthermore, 6 (19.35%) students said that they *often* and 3 (8.38%) students were *very often* found difficulties in understanding the teacher's explanation. Meanwhile, 9 (27.73%) other students think that they were *quite often* found the difficulties.

Further, the following tables show the factors which influence students' perceptions on the use of English as a medium of instruction.

TABLE 6. STUDENTS' SELF-LEARNING IN THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

No	Alternative answer	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	2	4.46%
2	<i>Disagree</i>	5	14.38%
3	<i>Quite agree</i>	11	34.23%
4	<i>Agree</i>	9	28.03%
5	<i>Strongly agree</i>	4	12.65%
Total		31	100%

The table above shows that there are 9 (28.03%) students who said *agree* and 4 (12.65%) who *strongly agree* on their self-learning in the use of English as a medium of instruction. It is also found that 11 (34.23%) students who feel *quite agree* about their self-learning. Meanwhile, 2 (4.46%) students said that they were *strongly disagree* and 5 (14.38%) who *disagree* on their self-learning capability.

TABLE 7. STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

No	Alternative answer	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	6	19.35%
2	<i>Disagree</i>	13	41.81%
3	<i>Quite agree</i>	5	18.79%
4	<i>Agree</i>	5	15.01%
5	<i>Strongly agree</i>	2	5.00%
Total		31	100%

The above table shows that there are 13 (41.81%) students who *disagree* and 6 (19.35%) who feel *strongly disagree* with their motivation in learning English. It means that the 19 students have no motivation in learning English. Meanwhile, the number of students who have a motivation against English are only 7 of them, where 5 (15.01%) feels

agree and 2 (5.00%) feels *strongly agree*. The other 5 (18.79%) students showed that their motivation in learning English neither *negative* nor *positive*.

This part discusses the result of students' perceptions on the use of English as a medium of instruction and what factors influence the students' perceptions.

1) Students' perceptions

Students' perceptions on the use of English as a medium of instruction was divided into two categories, *positive* and *negative* perception. As what happens in the classroom, there are some students whom may remain focused on lessons and tasks but others may appear to be distracted or confused. It can be seen from the data of students' ability in following the English lesson. Many of the students' said that they were *capable* in following the lesson using English as a medium of instruction but on the other hand some other students said that they were *incapable* to follow the English lesson. Although there are many students who have a *positive* impression on the use of English, but still, there are some students who have *negative* perceptions towards it by saying that they were *not interested* on the use of English as a medium of instruction.

Beside assuming that learning English is hard, students in this class are also faced by some difficulties in understanding the teachers' explanation using English as a medium of instruction. The difficulties in doing tasks in the classroom or even homework happens to the students because teacher was less capable in explaining the purpose of the tasks or what is expected by teachers from the tasks. Although there are more students said that they were *sometimes* found difficulties in understanding the teachers' explanation, but, on the other hand, the other rest students said that they were *often* found difficulties in understanding teacher's explanation using English. These kinds of difficulties can lead to the students' confusion. Hence, as the consequences, students would ask their friends or doing the work in accordance with their own interpretation. They will be more oriented in accomplishing the tasks rather than the quality of the task.

Moreover, the real problem is providing choice and differentiating instruction. Teachers need to allow students more control and allow them to study how, what and even when they want, within a reason of course. There is sometimes misunderstanding between teacher and students. It happens due to the different perceptions between teacher and students. As the class is the excellent class, teacher assumed that all students could understand her explanation and the tasks given. Even though, there were some of the students in class who did not understand the teachers' objectives. Finally, teachers need to be much more sensitive about language learner anxiety and also how students need much more time and input before they are ready to productively use the language. Students need a clear and open processes for evaluation also feedback opportunities from teacher that could improve their own experience, not only providing commentary on what could help future students. Feedbacks can be either positive or negative and may serve not only to let learners know how well they have

performed but also to increase motivation and build supportive classroom climate.

2) *Factors influencing students' perceptions*

From the data on students' self-learning and motivation, this study found that there are some factors influences students' perceptions. As we know, many theorists and researchers have found that it is important to look at the construct of motivation not as a single entity but as a multi-factorial one. Therefore, this study was concerned with the theory from [4]. First, students' attitude reverses to the sentiments towards the students' learning community and target language. As what have been discussed before that most students have *negative* perceptions against their feeling about English by saying that they were *not really happy* with it. Therefore, their distaste has a big impact on their perceptions about English as a medium of instruction. Second, students' beliefs about self leads to the expectancies about one's attitudes to success. It means that, basically, most students in this class have a target to achieve the English lesson. It is seen from the data that many students believe with their self-learning by saying that they were *agrees* against it.

Furthermore, involvement constitutes extent to which the learner actively and consciously participates in the language learning process. Data from the classroom observation shows that most of the students were active during the teaching and learning while the others seem not serious. It is also proven from the data of students' impressions which shows that many students said that English as a medium of instruction used by teacher was *interesting* meanwhile a few students said it is *not interesting*.

The result of the students low motivation in this study is that students who fail in the English subject do not mean that they were less able or weaker than other students in class, but this is because that they do not engage in the classroom activity sufficiently and they never have English learning experience. It is proven by the students' response through the difficulties in understanding English in the classroom. Even though many of them said they *never* or *sometimes* found the difficulties, but for the other students, difficulties were *often* and *always* happened in understanding their teacher's explanation.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research is aimed to know the students' perceptions on the use of English as a Medium of Instruction and to know what factors influence the students' perceptions. Hence, there are 2 important points from this study which are as follow : (1) For some indicators, there are students' who have positive perceptions on the use of English as a medium of instruction while there are some other students' who have negative perceptions against it, this might be due to the different way of seeing something and how each student interpreted something around them; and (2) There are six factors found in this research which influence the students' perceptions on the use of English as a medium of instruction which are attitudes, beliefs about self, goals, environmental support and personal attributes. To sum up, the study contributes to heightening our understanding of students' perception particularly on the use of English as an instruction medium

that could help teachers as well as students to apply suitable strategies for improving the process of teaching and learning in English.

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