The Implementation of English as A Medium of Instruction in An Indonesian Efl Setting

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Abstract—The effectiveness studies for content subjects in an EFL and ESL using monolingual or bilingual approach has been inconclusive. This descriptive research was designed to examine the implementation of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in non-English Department. The researchers analyzed fifty-eight undergraduate university students enrolled in International class program in non-English department in one of the state universities in Indonesia. They have been given a fill in Likert-scale questionnaire on how they perceive the use and and function of English instruction within English-only (monolingual) and English-Indonesia (bilingual) L2 classroom. The analysis revealed that bilingual approach was more favored than monolingual approach due to the proficiency that the L2 effects. Moreover, discussion and implication of this study are presented.

Keywords—monolingual, bilingual, English as a medium of instruction

I. INTRODUCTION

Education and Technology in Indonesia has generated long term strategies to make Indonesian universities are widely internationally acknowledged and recognized, including world class university regulations. One of which is the recommendation to establish and increase international partnership and collaboration by university as stated in ministry of higher education decree 26/2007 and government regulation 17/2010 requiring universities to have International Office.

This study was conducted under the framework of international class program at one of the universities in Indonesia where English becomes a medium of instruction (EMI) in the classroom. As part of internationalizing the institution at tertiary level, the use of English as a medium of instruction in one or some study programs is regarded to be part of efforts in Indonesian higher education to equip students with sufficient English and knowledge in the field so that eventually they could compete internationally with other graduates across the world. For instance, learning from English textbooks and references used globally is expected to provide students with adequate or even excellent competence in the field of the study. The use of English in second language classroom in Indonesia has not much yet been explored, particularly in terms of its challenges faced by teachers and students. The use of use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in L2 classroom has been proposed by Coleman (2006), and this has also been associated with content and language integrated learning (CLIL) by which English should be a means to teach content subjects (Coyle et al, 2010). In this regards, Cenoz (2009) states that the use of English as a lingua franca is essential as to support students' international mobility in the globalized era. Furthermore, Doiz et al. (2013) investigate the implementation of English as a medium of instruction in many universities in Europe and Asia revealing that English is not fully used in the classroom and many references or textbooks are also written in languages other than English. Students' low English proficiency was the main reason for this condition. In monolingual approach, the use of L1 is avoided. English should be taught through direct method perspective arguing that L2 learners should learn the L2 in the same way as they learn their mother tongue (Yu, 2000) as anything needed to acquire the L2 should be exposed in the L2 since L1 acquisition was fully supported by L1 exposure. Moreover, Turnbull (2001) posits that the use of L1 as a learning tool by L2 teachers is notb beneficial since L2 teachers were the only channel of L2 knowledge for L2 learners. Due to that fact, L2 only classroom ads L2 learners' progress and achievement, suggesting the importance of bringing L2 learners into L2 environment and culture when learning the L2. Thus, many other scholars should continuously explore this issue of L1 role or L2 only role in L2 acquisition and learning especially in EFL context like in Indonesia.

Furthermore, some studies found that English-only classroom has positive effect in developing English proficiency because much English exposure or input for L2 leaners brings its benefits since they could learn the subjects and English at the same time in integrated manner (Ovando et. al, 2006). Meanwhile, in bilingual context, the use of first language (L1) is permitted in the classroom. Many studies provide supports for the benefits of bilingual approach where the use of L1 is allowed for teaching and learning purposes. Brown (2001) states the need to use the L1 in the L2 classroom as to facilitate the L2 learning particularly for L2 learners with low proficiency.

As the role of L1 in the L2 setting is still debatable in terms of pedagogical factors, practical factors, and learners' factors, this study examines the implementation of English as a medium of instruction in an Indonesian EFL context may bring more insights for L2 researchers particularly in understanding how English is used in L2 classroom aims to describe students' perception about the practice of English as

a medium of instruction in L2 classroom involving from English learning motivation, aspects of teachers, learning materials and to evaluate students' preferences on terms of monolingual and bilingual approach in L2 learning and how this preference is affected by L2 proficiency..

II. METHODS

With using quantitative method, this study examined voluntarily fifty-eight students with 21 males (36%) and 37 females (64%) enrolled in non-English department's perception about the use of English in an international class program and how students' perceptions are affected by L2 proficiency. The participants' overall TOEFL proficiency levels were considered as at intermediate level. Students' perceptions were drawn from data of Likert scale questionnaires.

Questionnaire modified from Costales (2017) and Nursanti (2016) was used to gather information in this study. The main survey contains 33 items eliciting three categories illustrating three dismensions: (1) 1-7 items about general satisfaction of the implementation of international programme (perceptions on learning process), (2) 8-15 items about course and materials, training receieved, perceptions of students regarding the English level of teachers and other issues, (3) 16-24 items about internalization and language learning, particularly asking participants about their willingness to participate in mobility programmes, and their perceptions about future career, and (4) 25-33 about the use of Indonesian in English classroom and their preference on English-only instruction or English-Indonesian instruction.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examines the students' their preference of English as a medium of instruction as for monolingual approach or bilingual approach, and the degree to which such perceptions are affected by their L2 language proficiency. The reliability of the instrument was found a Cronbach aplha . 87, suggesting that the questionnaire items had high reliability since i tis above .80 (Field, 2009). The data were also found to be normally distributed (skewness, 0.12, SE = 0.20 ; kurtosis, -0.46, SE = 0.40), and these values were within normality level (Field, 2009, p. 139).

This study found that the main goal of learning English by being enrolled in international class program was to participate in student mobility program and oversea program including double degree or joint degree program, student exchange, short course, and other oversea programs (53%). Meanwhile, 26% participants (n=15) expected to get a better career in the future, and 16% participants (n=9) hoped to develop their English.

TABLE 1. PARTICIPANTS' SATISFACTION INDEX

No	Statement	M	SD
1	I think the subjects of the International class program are well coordinated	2.84	1.06
2	I think a training course in English before starting the International class program is not needed	3.17	1.09
3	Learning contents in English is a positive experience for us	3.33	1.64
4	In general, I am satisfied with the contents learned through the subjects	2.50	0.98
5	I perceive I have learned as many contents as the	2.60	0.75

	students in the Indonesian program		
6	I need to make stronger efforts in the classes taught in English	2.90	1.18
7	I would recommend other students to take the International class program	2.84	1.21

This study revealed satisfactions from participants with international class program albeit the fact that some students were challenged to be able to cope with English in the classroom (M=2.90, SD=1.18). Students recommended that English training should be provided prior to English class in international program started (M=3.17, SD=1.09). Furthermore, students were also satisfied with content course taught in English (M=3.33, SD=1.64). This English class provides an uncommon experience on its own particularly learning economics and economic system across the globe through English textbooks and English explanation. English class program were perceived to be well-organized and coordinated (M=2.84, SD=1.06). Thus, students showed positive attitude toward English program and would recommend the English class for other students to follow (M=2.84, SD=1.21).

In regards to English instructor in English class program, in general students perceived that English instructors had sufficient English proficiency in delivering the subject content (M=2.78, SD=1.01). Teachers in the International class program teach mostly in English (M=3.09, SD=1.26). Moreover, almost all subject contents and materials were in English (M=2.71, SD=1.15). However, some students were struggled to understand and comprehend English content delivered by instructors (M=2.90, SD=1.02). This is in line with previous item regarding the need for English training before the international class program was started.

TABLE 2. STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ABOUT HUMAN RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

No	Statement	M	SD
8	In general, teachers have a good level of English	2.62	1.20
9	Teachers show involvement and commitment in the courses	2.58	1.00
10	Teachers in the International class program teach mostly in English	3.09	1.26
11	I do not understand some of the teachers when they explain in English	2.90	1.02
12	The overall quality of lessons in English is better than the ones in Indonesian	2.88	0.90
13	Class materials, resources and bibliography are suitable and updated	2.55	0.92
14	There are available materials in English for most subjects	2.71	1.15
15	Students' participation in the courses taught in English is similar to the one in the courses taught in Indonesia	2.76	0.86

This study also found that students perceived English content delivery program was a stepping stone for internationalization of the program through student mobility and student exchange program as well as double degree program. They believed that their English would be beneficial for their own learning and career in the future (M=2.78, SD=1.01). In detail, students' expectation to get involved in oversea mobility program was high (M=2.62, SD=1.20). Positive attitude of willingness to visit English

speaking countries was also acknowledged by students (M=2.90, SD=1.02) and even they were ready to work in English speaking countries (M=2.62, SD=1.20).

TABLE 3. STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ABOUT PROGRAM INTERNALIZATION

No	Statement	M	SD
16	I am willing to participate in international mobility program	2.62	1.20
17	The International class program has promoted my interest for visiting other countries	2.58	1.00
18	There are enough mobility opportunities and international exchanges at the university	3.09	1.26
19	I think taking the International class program will have a positive effect in my professional future	2.90	1.02
20	Taking part in this program has improved my level of English	2.88	0.90
21	My level is appropriate to follow the lectures in English	2.55	0.92
21	I speak in English to my mates and teachers in the classes	2.71	1.15
22	Thanks to the International class program I read more materials in English	2.76	0.86
23	Following lessons in English has provided me with technical and professional vocabulary and skills in English	2.93	0.80
24	I feel I am prepared to study and even work in a foreign country using English	2.62	1.20

In addition, students also perceived that joining international class program had improved their English ability (M=2.88, SD=0.90). As a result, they could understand and follow English lectures as well as able to use English in classroom ranging from 2.55 to 2.88. Besides, English based class provided students with learning technical terms related to their field of study so that it increased their interests in reading English materials (M=2.76, SD=0.86).

Another point examined in this study is the extent to which students prefer English-only or monolingual approach or bilingual (English-Indonesian) approach in their classroom. Generally, students in this study favored more bilingual approach (M=3.05, SD=1.19) than monolingual approach (M=2.91, SD=0.99). They preferred to involve the use of Indonesian for pedagogical purposes, such as assisting them cope with difficult words and concept due to their limited English proficiency.

The use of Indonesian in International class program was perceived to benefit students, particularly in terms of developing their speaking and writing skills (M=2.88 and M=2.77 respectively), understanding new English vocabularies (M=2.88, SD=1.23) and also comprehending teachers' explanation at level of sentence meaning (M=2.68, SD=1.07). In other context, the use of Indonesian in English classroom by teachers made students understand knowledge or subject content faster and assist teachers managing time efficiently in explaining things in English (M=2.68, SD=1.06).

Regarding the issue of preferences for monolingual or English-only classroom or bilingual classroom, this study

revealed that students preferred more bilingual approach in English classroom than monolingual classroom; M=2.91 and M=2.86 respectively. However, it was evident here that the difference between the two was small. In addition, this study also found that low proficient students or learners favored more bilingual approach than monolingual approach.

TABLE 4. THE PREFERENCE OF MONOLINGUAL VS. BILINGUAL

No	Statement	M	SD
25	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom helps you in learning English.	2.67	1.07
26	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you easy to understand the material given by the teacher.	2.76	1.17
27	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you easy to understand new vocabularies in English.	2.88	1.23
28	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom helps you to be fluent and accurate on your English speaking skill.	2.88	1.18
29	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you easy in English writing skill.	2.77	1.04
30	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you understand toward the meaning of every sentence which is explained by the teacher.	2.68	1.07
31	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you understand something faster and it helps your teacher in managing the time in explaining thing.	2.86	1.06
32	I like English only instruction (monolingual)	2.91	0.99
33	I like English-Indonesian instruction (bilingual)	3.05	1.19

In brief, this study revealed that generally students in this study favored bilingual (English-Indonesian) instruction over monolingual (English only) instruction. Bilingual instruction approach was assumed to provide them more advantages to facilitate their English proficiency use and development.

Moreover, this study demonstrates that the students are interested in joining English class program as to gain more English competence (both linguistic competence such as syntactic, semantic and discourse analysis and communicative competence as how to use English for communicative purposes), learn their field of study from English textbooks, participate in oversea student mobility, to be be able to communicate with other people around the world with English, and have better professional career in the future. This motivation seems to be integrative in nature for the students in this study, and this motivation plays an essential role in second language learning (Gass & Slinker, 2012). Learning content in English or English classroom has been perceived to bring positive experience for their learning, and that English classroom has increased their English proficiency skills. However, some students have been struggled to follow English instruction due to their limited English proficiency. Suggestion is made for the need of English training course prior to English classroom or

learning content in English is started. Regarding the qualification and English proficiency for the English instructors or teachers, it is confirmed in this study that teachers have sufficient knowledge of English so that they could deliver the subject content in English. For information, teachers in English class program are generally graduates from oversea university either in pursuing their master or doctoral degree program.

Furthermore, this study also revealed that English-Indonesia or bilingual instruction approach is more favored over English-only classroom or monolingual instruction approach. The use of Indonesia in English classroom for pedagogical purposes has been perceived to provide more advantages for students' English development. The important use of English as a second language (L2) in this context is within the spirit of supporting students' international mobility (Cenoz, 2009). It is evident that the students' preference is more on bilingual classroom, and one of the reasons is due to students' limited proficiency. Low level of English proficiency to some extent inhibits or impedes students' ability to understand and comprehend teachers' explanation in English. It is in line with the idea that bilingual approach is needed for students with low proficiency. Brown (2001, p.99) states that the use of first language (L1), Indonesian in this context, is required as an option to facilitate L2 proficiency for low proficient learners. In addition, the fact about students' struggle in understanding and comprehending teachers' explanation in English due to limited L2 proficiency is also found in previous studies (Handyani, 2011; Muttaqin dan Ida, 2015). What is different from this study and previous studies above is the fact that previous studies found that both students and teachers had a limited English proficiency. As a result, it is a challenge that both teachers and students to implement English as a medium of instruction/EMI. In this nature, it is quite understandable that bilingual approach is more favored for both teachers and the students. However, in this study, the challenge of implementing monolingual approach or English-only instruction lies on students in which they demonstrated low English proficiency. The benefits of English-only or monolingual approach are found to have developed English proficiency better than bilingual instruction (Ovando et. al, 2006). When people learn L1, they are not disrupted with the use of other language. The L1 exposure should be continuously presented to L2 learners.

On contrary, bilingual instruction in terms of using L1 as part of English instruction receives support from previous studies. For instance, Greene's (1998) meta study found positive effect of L1 use in English learning and development. Slavin and Cheung (2005) also found that bilingual approach provides more advantages in English learning in second or foreign language setting. The use of L1 should be for pedagogical purposes. The proportion of L1 use should account for L2 proficiency levels. In this case, it may be that at the early start of learning English, the use of L1 may be required, but as students' proficiency increased, for instance to advanced level, the use of L1

should be eliminated. The model may be about from bilingual toward monolingual classroom (Costales, 2017).

IV. CONCLUSION

This study concluded the use of English as a medium of instruction makes students keep up with materials and some students feel they need the use of L1 to be accommodated in the L2 classroom. The use of L1 is needed as some Indonesian terms particularly reflecting cultural identities are quite hard to find their synonyms in English, while at the same time the use of L1 could assist learners process the L2 information and concepts effectively and efficiently. Moreover, the use of bilingual approach should be properly implemented for pedagogical which means more proficient learners favored the implementation of English-only instruction or monolingual approach.

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