



English as A Medium of Instruction at Vocational High School in Indonesia

A Multimodality-Based Instruction

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ABSTRACT

Teaching English as a foreign language is always difficult. Teaching and learning become considerably more necessary and time-consuming in regions where English serves a very limited purpose especially for vocational high school teachers in the 21st century. This paper aims to investigate how Indonesian vocational high school teachers taught English as a foreign language in their classroom in the 21st -century learning. The information was gathered through interviews with two English vocational high school teachers. Both teachers in practice were found to be developing teachers' creativity in designing learning material and emphasizing technical vocabulary in order to adapt with textbooks, as they believed that students needed 21st century English skills to cope and face future professional career challenges.

Keywords: *English for specific purposes, English medium instruction, Multimodality.*

1. INTRODUCTION

English medium of instruction (EMI) is the use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries where the first language (L1) of most of the population is not English (Dearden & Macaro, 2016). English is more than just a means of communication in the business world, especially in vocational schools. It is essential because it forms the basis of knowledge development, and is considered the basis of the construction of the reality of the organization (Basturkmen, & Shackelford, 2015; Tenzer, Terjesen & Harzing, 2017). English is already compulsory in secondary schools and almost all primary schools provide English instruction, not to mention the proliferation of private English lessons (Lamb & Coleman, 2008; Zein, 2014). The public's enthusiasm for the use of English can be evident in almost every facet of life (Hamied, 2013), in primary school (Zein, 2014) and secondary level (Wahyudin & Sukyadi, 2015). Vocational high school (VHS) learners are expected to be able to use English in both written and spoken language as a means of communication as stated in Indonesian curriculum 2013. However, many vocational high school students still encountered difficulties in communicating or expressing their thoughts in English. It is unquestionable that most students elude when they were asked to do so (Agustin &

Wirza, 2020). One of the reasons was a lack of learning materials to meet the needs and interests of students. Teaching English in vocational education be considered English for Specific Purposes should (ESP) (Rahman, 2015; Esfandriani, 2015; Widodo, 2016; Agustin & Wirza, 2020; Santika, Wirza, & Emilia, 2022). ESP courses are designed to meet the communication needs of learners and other stakeholders in specific fields, such as work or study (Vogt & Kantelinen, 2013).

Many experts, including Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Dudley-Evans and John (1998), and Basturkmen (2010), define English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a mixed area where real-life practices and education meet, involving a specific area of knowledge, pedagogy, and English language skills combined. ESP differs from general English in that it focuses on the needs of learners for work or other professional purposes (Basturkmen, 2010). As a result, ESP content is typically best suited for professional or adult learners (Dudley-Evans & John, 1998).

In the context of EMI, the multimodality approach is critical (Morell, 2018). Multimodality is the representation and conveyance of meaning across a variety of forms or modes (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Kress & Selander, 2012; Kress & Bezemer, 2016). A

multimodal approach to English instruction could significantly benefit students (Kustini, Suherdi & Musthafa, 2019).

The central idea of multimodal communication theories is that all communication is multimodal, and that "language is only one of the communicative resources through which meaning is (re)made, distributed, and interpreted" (Jewitt, 2009). This implies that although oral and written language is usually considered as the central media of communication, there are also other modal resources such as visual, gestural, aural through which individuals can represent significant meanings (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; O'Halloran & Lim, 2011).

The multimodal approach takes into account the modes (language, visuals, and others) used to achieve the goal of a text, the addressee and context, and the structure of thoughts and information. It means that teachers must be careful when deciding on instructional styles. Furthermore, instructors are said to be responsible for assisting students in understanding the messages in multimodal texts, such as forming judgments, analysing perspectives, and explaining the values in the texts (Lim & Tan, 2017). It is further explained that "Multimodality" assumes that all modes have, like language, been shaped through their cultural, historical and social uses to realize social functions" (Jewitt, 2009).

Multimodality is not a novel idea. Language, sight, gesture, sound, and space have always been used as modes of orchestration for creating meaning - expressing ideas and communicating meaning (Kustini et al., 2019). Multimodality and university academic oral discourse studies have investigated how speakers use and combine semiotic resources in presentations and lectures (Hermawan, 2013; Camiciottoli & Fortanet-Gómez, 2018; Morell, 2015). However, very few studies have looked at the development of interactive and multimodal competence in teachers or lecturers.

Since multimodality plays an important role in EMI related to students' communicative competence, this study aimed to investigate EFL teachers' perspective towards English as a medium of instruction using multimodal-based instruction. It tried to reveal whether English teachers take on EMI as something that is significantly needed to support the learning process or not and whether multimodal could contribute positively on students' communicative competence or not in EFL classroom.

2. METHOD

In this study, a descriptive-analytical approach was used, with qualitative data interpretation. The data for this study were gathered through an interview with two English teachers at a vocational high school in Bandung, Indonesia adapted from Fazriah, Hamied and Gunawan (2021). One female teacher (Participant 1) who is a

master's degree student with ten years of teaching experience and one male teacher (Participant 2) holding bachelor's degree with five years of teaching experience involved in the study.

There were several questions of the interview regarding research questions and all elements that are related to the use of English as a medium instruction (EMI). There were some interview questions about research questions and all elements related to the use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) on students' communicative abilities. It included questions about whether or not teachers are familiar with multimodality, as well as questions about their teaching methods. Whether or not they use EMI What types of learning materials they use in the teaching-learning process, what challenges they face when using a multimodal approach, and how students' communicative competence deals with the use of English as a medium of instruction in the classroom.

Face-to-face interviews were used to collect data, which was then recorded using an audio recorder The recordings were then transcribed and converted into conversational writing. The interview began with an invitation to participants, who agreed to an in-depth interview lasting approximately 40 minutes for each participant and was held in a convenient and relaxing location.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the findings relevant to EFL teachers' perspectives on EMI in multimodality-based instruction classrooms. It aimed to answer the following questions: Are they using general English or specific in teaching and learning process? Are they familiar with the concept of multimodality? What are the teachers' perspectives on the EMI EFL classroom? Do teachers use multimodality-based instruction in their teaching and learning? How and why? Do teachers believe that EMI using multimodality-based instruction influences students' communicative competence?

To clarify, this section is divided into three subsections based on the central themes that emerged from the interview responses of teachers. The central themes are students' attitudes toward EMI in English instruction, the rationale for using multimodality-based instruction, and the impact of EMI on students' communicative competence.

3.1. Teachers' Perspective Toward EMI in Class

Teachers thought that using EMI in EFL classes had a positive impact. Based on their five years of teaching experience, they stated that the use of EMI was very important in their classroom. The teachers developed

their own teaching materials based on the curriculum 2013, the syllabus, and an additional industrial curriculum. They created and prepared materials that were readily available and accessible. Both teachers, however, have argued that the English language should be taught in specific English throughout the teaching and learning process. In participant 1's opinion, it must be different, definitely not going to be able to general English, even though the material from the service is almost the same, we still have to analyse the needs, the ESP must come from the teachers. Modified.

Both teachers used the current curriculum, Curriculum 2013, to teach students in the eleventh and twelfth grades. One eleventh-grade teacher uses mostly Indonesian as a medium of instruction in the classroom. One of the reasons is a lack of English proficiency on the part of both students and teachers. One of the participants believed that using Indonesian language effectively engaged students and helped them fully understand the lesson. The other participant, who teaches twelve-year-olds, appears to use interactive and motivating learning materials, such as using her gesture to explain words, sentences, and meaning-making without using Indonesian language.

Above all, it is clear that they want to learn new techniques for teaching English. One of the alternatives is genre-pedagogy. This technique is derived from the Systemic Approach, which requires educators to thoroughly explain the topic. Teachers are required to teach broad text structure (language, images, etc.) as well as specific shared multimodal schemes to pique readers' attention (Lim & Tan, 2017).

3.2. The Reason and the Way the Teachers Employ EMI

They were unfamiliar with the term "multimodality" at first, despite the fact that what they had been practicing in class was practically multimodal. In theory, they just heard something that sounds unfamiliar to them.

3.2.1. Participant 1

Students' intake in English proficiency is at the middle level, so using English for teaching and learning is completely great, it was difficult for them at first, but as time passed, they will understand and show a significant improvement if done consistently.

They will undoubtedly face numerous challenges in the beginning. When participant 1 delivers the material in English, it is usually converted into simpler sentences or re explained so that the students understand it better. Body language and gestures can be useful in the classroom when teaching.

The participant will first have a peer discussion with the technical teacher in charge of each field of majors,

inquiring about technical vocabularies that should be included in the learning material, and then the participant will develop a teaching plan based on a genre-based approach for teaching material and learning design. In terms of tools, the participant frequently used power point and technology support.

We prepare learning in this software to be able to face the world of work after graduation, so that the text-based learning that is taught prefers which one can be used in teaching. For example, in procedure text, we prepare children on how to complete one skill or work in a workshop, for example explaining in Indonesian first, then the children have to explain in English as the material to be presented. Factual report is more or less the same as describing with descriptive text but the difference is that the students should be able to present or explain the history from the beginning of its establishment up to today when the technology shapes it, like electric cars. As they are about to graduate, we prepare them to be able to tackle job-seeking challenges like CV writing, cover letter writing, and job interview, all in English. To succeed a job interview, in particular, the students are provided with tips on what to do and what to avoid. When answering questions, about projects for instance. They are guided to introduce themselves prior to answering questions that require them to explain the progress – what works they have completed and what works have not.

3.2.2. Participant 2

Participant 2 takes a slightly different approach. With all of his and his students' limitations, the participant relied solely on one source book, and the material was prepared entirely by themselves, with no peer discussion between English and the technical in its field. As a result, there will be no coordination between the learning material and the technical subject matter presented. Only on rare occasions did participant 2 look for material sources to be cited. Participant 2 also admitted that he struggled to maintain his own motivation to teach.

3.3. Teachers' Perspective in Multimodality-Based Instruction

Both teachers agreed that students were still progressing as a result of the positive effect of multimodality-based instruction in the classroom, which motivates students to learn. They expressed their opinions while learning because they found it enjoyable and enjoyable to learn. They were willing to not only comment on the topic at hand, but also actively interact with other students, despite the fact that their grammar was still uncorrected, which they saw as progress. Based on what the teachers said, the findings indicated that students had communicative competence in the classroom. According to the teachers, multimodality-

based instruction allowed students to express themselves through discussion and conversation.

3.3.1. Participant 1

In participant 1's opinion, the text is the same as what the curriculum requires; however, as a teacher in the classroom combine, modify it based on the needs of the students (learners need). For example, a recount text discusses student experiences, so participant 1 usually modifies it by attempting to tell you in the workshop, from entering the workshop until leaving the workshop, what you did or did not do, and a text, such as that recount, was created. As for procedure text, it's mostly automatic because it's really student work done in SMK, for example, about analytical exposition, persuasive, yes, text to persuade other people to agree with us, for example, it's a bit complex for children, they need to broaden their horizons first, for example, engines, cars that run on petroleum fuel, For example, will gradually become extinct, it's like what are you trying to solve, what do you think, is there an alternative you think is good, then how to invite people so that they reduce global warming, and so on. It's like that, so they have to broaden their horizons first, but even after they understand how to do it themselves, how to make persuasive texts, invite the readers to what, how, what to invite, on what side, and so on, the text demands remain unchanged.

3.3.2. Participant 2

Participant 2 teach all of texts, but yes, procedure text is definitely more suitable if you are in Vocational School because the field being studied is definitely about procedure as he explained from the interview.

In order to view multimodal texts critically, students must understand how meanings are made across the semiotic resources and be able to cite textual evidence to support their interpretation of the multimodal texts. In order to communicate effectively through multimodal representations, students must also have an awareness of the affordances of various semiotic resources and how they can work together effectively to make meaning. The importance of developing multimodal literacy in our students is increasing gaining recognition by policy makers and curriculum planners internationally. Singapore, in particular, has introduced the viewing and representing of multimodal texts as new areas of language learning in the Ministry of Education English Language Syllabus as early as in 2010. With the recognition of the importance of multimodal literacy, the next question to be answered is how to effectively develop multimodal literacy in students. With the inclusion of viewing and representing as part of students' literacy development, there is a corresponding need to build competencies in teachers to be able to teach multimodal literacy. This article describes an

instructional approach with content informed by systemic functional theory, and pedagogy aligned to the Learning by Design framework widely used in multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015). The aim of the approach is to provide teachers with the meta-language, pedagogical scaffolds, and resources to effectively teach the viewing and representing of multimodal texts.

Much effort continues to be done in research to improve EMI teaching in the classroom, including identifying "best practices" and ensuring the quality of the cross-disciplinary context of EMI education. However, when it comes to visual modes and their combinations, this was not evident. considering each representation (mode) in isolation is insufficient; we must also investigate how they combine to generate a 'chemical representation.' In other words, research should look into how EMI teachers in certain disciplines employ multimodal ensembles to successfully represent and communicate the subject's specific and unique significance. (Ainsworth, 2006).

4. CONCLUSION

While the importance of multimodal literacy in preparing students for the new communication environment is widely recognized and represented in various literacy curricula around the world, teachers face challenges in designing for students' multimodal literacy learning in the classroom. In this paper, the term 'multimodal pedagogies' describes how multimodal discourse principles underpin multimodal communication. That the various modes in multimodal texts have strictly constrained and outlined specialist activities are denied, as in a film where images may provide the action, sync sounds a sense of realism, music a layer of emotions, and so on, with the editing process providing the 'integration code', the means for synchronizing the elements through a common rhythm. (van Leeuwen's, 1985). A lot of consequences emerge in terms of preparing teachers who transfer from teaching in their L1 to English. According to (Morell, 2004) and (Morell, 2007), audience-oriented questions, particularly referential questions, will boost interaction, which will not only promote student participation but also allow for meaning negotiation.

English in vocational high school should be viewed as specialized English. As previously discussed, the challenge for teachers is to design students' multimodal literacy learning in the classroom, despite all limitations, such as a lack of confidence in using the language in and out of the classroom, unsupported technology, student motivations, stakeholder demands, and inadequate English language proficiency.

There should be peer discussion and learning materials collaboration proposed between English and technical teachers about the vocabulary material that

should be taught. To enhance meaning, spoken and written language use stressed key words and simple syntactic structures.

As a result, it can be concluded that teachers had a positive attitude toward the use of EMI. They used multimodal materials to motivate students, encourage participation, and improve students' communicative competence. Furthermore, it encourages learners to learn the language by giving them the impression that they are doing so. Although the teachers were still having difficulty obtaining and selecting appropriate materials, they did not disregard the use of EMI. Teachers confirmed that EMI was critical, particularly in the context of EFL in Indonesia.

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