



# Students' Perceptions on English as Language Input in EFL Classroom

Tiffany<sup>1\*</sup>, Yetti Zainil<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English Department, FBS, Universitas Negeri Padang

<sup>2</sup> English Department, FBS, Universitas Negeri Padang

\*Corresponding author. Email: [\\*tiffany3796@gmail.com](mailto:tiffany3796@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

As non-native English-speaking teachers, there is an issue which has been debatable until the present time. It is multi languages which are used by teachers when teachers teach foreign language in the classroom. It is suggested that teachers should employ English as language input for students' language output. It has found many cases, especially in West Sumatera, that teachers use Indonesian and mother tongue in the classroom which is definitely opposite with Krashen's theory. This following research aims to explore students' perceptions of the English used by the teacher as language input for students. Ten selected students were chosen as participants from well-accredited Senior High School 1 Padang Panjang. This research utilized a set of questionnaires which were distributed to students. A set of questionnaires consisted of 30 statements. Students' answers presented a variety of perceptions. Some participants highly perceived that English as language input is enough for them. They assumed that teacher used English much in the classroom. In contrast, some participants perceived that they have lack of capability in communicating English as language output in the classroom. Participants felt that they needed Indonesia and local language to help them understanding English so that they may use it. To conclude, there are still different perceptions on English as language input. Therefore, those participants cannot maximally use English as language output because of some reasons.

**Keywords:** *Perceptions, Language Input, EFL Classroom*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In educational practices, there has been a debatable issue in which teacher uses one language or multi languages in their practice. These languages are target language/foreign language (TL), mother tongue (L1), and second language (L2). L1 and L2 are claimed as the interference for students in learning a new language [1]. In Indonesia, English is a target language which is taught as a subject in Junior and Senior High School. Therefore, teachers may use several languages in classroom [2]. To support maximally the use of English as a target language, the teacher has a role in encouraging the students to use English in the classroom [3]. It purposes to achieve much language output from the teacher's language input. It is suggested that teacher

should minimally use L1 and L2 as it is discussed in Krashen's theory concerning about comprehensible language input [4]. In fact, teacher cannot use TL only in the classroom because the students are surprised with the new language. It is supported by Üstünel who claimed that there is an impossibility for teacher to use the whole-English in the classroom [5].

The issue of using multi languages in EFL classroom definitely has been debated by expert [6] [7] [8], [9]. Those experts discussed that there has been pro and con about this issue. Several studies found that the interference of L1 and L2 give the benefits for foreign language teaching [10], [11], [12], [13]. They said that L1 and L2 assist teachers to deliver materials to students. On the other hand, several studies are not in line with previous studies. They found that there is a disagreement of L1 and L2 [14], [15], [16]. The findings

showed that tendency of using target language in foreign language learning are presented in the studies. They stated that the using of foreign language should be employed as much as possible in the classroom. It purposes to achieve students' language output.

English as a target language which is taught in the classroom becomes language input for students. It means students must get output after studying English as language output. Language input is essential for language teaching because it plays an important role for successful learning. Language input theory was developed by Stephen Krashen and he concerned about comprehensible language input about forty years ago. In fact, the reality shows that language input does not emphasize the quantity of teachers' talk but on their way of talking, the way of language use, and how their talk support students' language development [17]. The use of English as language input needs to be paid attention in order for knowing students' language by investigating students' perception.

Additionally, it is crucial to explore perception of students who are directly exposure to English in the classroom. Dealing with teachers' language input, it is crucial to investigate students' perceptions. It is believed that paying attention to students' perception may give teachers guidance in deciding the learning and teaching process whether use one language or several languages in achieving the target language. Investigating students' perceptions may give point of view for teacher to recognize students' willingness in speaking English or mixed them up with Bahasa Indonesia [18]. Some studies show that students' perceptions influence their expectation on English [19], [20], [21], [22]. These studies supported English becomes language input in the classroom so that students may acquire English as language input. On the other hand, a study also conducted students' perception on L1 use in the EFL classroom [23]. This study found that L1 use is beneficial for students in comprehending English.

Based on the explanation above, this study will conduct students' perceptions on English as Language input in EFL Classroom.

## 2. RELEVANT THEORETICAL REVIEW

### 2.1. Language Input and Language Output in the classroom

Using much language input plays a great role in assisting students to get language output. Teachers' language use will influence students' language output. In the classroom, students will immitate and memorize in their mind what their teachers have said. This is what Krashen proposed in his theory about language input which should contain *i+1*. This formula is beneficial for students' language competence [4]. In addition, *i+1* has its meaning in which "i" is defined as the linguistics

competence that students have before joining the class. The structure of "i" is described as the things that students recently learn when they join the class. It is believed that students have little information about linguistics competence as their prior knowledge. Consequently, it is likely beneficial for students to get much language input so that they are able to speak English [4]. If students understand and are able to use the language communicatively as the target language, it means that *i+1* is provided in the class. This is called as language output.

Swain discussed the theory of output hypothesis in 1985 which reported students' language acquisition of foreign language or target language. The theory goes to the claim that students are not only exposed by language input but comprehensible output is also needed [24]. Language input and language output are closely connected in foreign language learning because it is proven through students' ability in producing and communicating foreign language.

On the other hand, students have no capability in communicating foreign language as the native-speaker like. It is influenced because of students' lack of comprehensible output and they did not get sufficient input in the classroom [25]. Swain also argues that this problem is caused in two aspects; students are not given the chance to use the target language in the class and they are not motivated to produce the target language. Similar to what Swain has previously addressed, both the teacher and students use the target language in the classroom whether as language input or language output.

### 2.2. Mother Tongue and Second Language Use in EFL Classroom

In fact, mother tongue actually helps students learning a foreign language. The terminology of 'mother tongue actually harks back to the concept of linguistics skill of children that sharpened by their mother [26]. Mother tongue is the language that we firstly learn from birth and the first language acquisition is biologically linked to the age so that mother tongue becomes an identity and learning medium at school and in society. Mother tongue positively helps students when they are learning a new language [27]-[28]. When language students face difficulties in learning a new language, the teacher will fix it up with the mother tongue because it will ease teachers delivering the ideas and students directly understand the meaning of particular utterances. As Indonesian, teachers automatically use their Indonesian to support them in teaching foreign language. Furthermore, it can be justified that the teacher uses Indonesian during teaching foreign language.

Encouraged with the new era using the mother tongue will be beneficial for students and its existence

cannot be ignored any more [29]. A study which was conducted by Pablo, Lengeling, and Zenil shows that students prefer to use their first language (Spanish) to learn English because the reason is that they feel it takes time when they explain in English [30]. This finding proves that the existence of mother tongue or first language is still used in the classroom.

### ***2.3. The use of Target Language in EFL Classroom***

The consensus of maximizing the use of target language in the FL classroom is still debatable among scholars and teachers. As English is a foreign language, especially in Indonesia, the teacher needs to exposure English as the target language that is frequently used in the classroom. It can be denied interference of mother tongue exists in language learning but the teacher should minimize them to encourage students to use English. Akitson [9] share this opinion and warns that "if English is not often used by the teacher, students will not learn English frequently. It is the effect that Atkinson illustrates if English becomes no main language in the classroom. Students may listen to the teacher and forget it when they have accomplished the lesson at the time. Inbar-Lourie [31] claims that learners who receive sufficient input of target language from teachers can bring the language obtain effective form and confident language use, as well as intercultural competence.

### ***2.4. Students' Perceptions on English as Language Input***

It is essential for teacher to know students' perceptions on English. English is expected to be beneficial language output for students in the classroom. The use of target language in form of English should be paid attention because students must acquire language output that is based on language input given by teacher. Several similar studies presented the result related students' perception on English as medium of instruction. Some studies show that participants have good perception on English which is used by teacher in the classroom [21], [22], [32]. It can be assumed that the use of English has positive response from students indicated that students acquire English to be used in communicative way in the classroom. Meanwhile, a study presents that the perception is both positive and negative [20]. It reflexes on the language input given by teachers. If teachers give much comprehensible input for students, the possibility of good language output may be acquired by students.

## **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

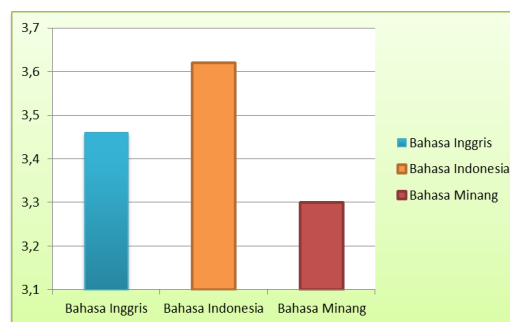
The research was in the form of descriptive design. This research conducted to explore students' perceptions on English as Language input in EFL Classroom. This research was carried out at SMA N 1 Padang Panjang. The selection of research setting was considered that the school has good reputation in general aspects. This well-accredited school was chosen purposively because certain reasons supported the selection of the research setting. This school has good reputation in its regency. They have higher average score of UTBK based on Provincial Education Office of Sumatera Barat. There were 10 participants who come from SMA N 1 Padang Panjang. Questionnaire was used to collect the data needed. This questionnaire was given to ten students of SMA N 1 Padang Panjang to conduct this mini research. The questionnaire consisted of 30 close-ended statements which employed Likert-Scale in which it ranges from strongly agree (5), agree (4), slightly do not agree (3), do not agree (2), strongly do not agree (1).

After the data were analyzed, it discussed in this session. The presented data was going to discuss about students' perception on English as language output in the classroom. The questionnaire consisted of 30 statements which were adapted from [16] and [22]. The questionnaires were distributed directly to the students. The answer of questionnaires was analyzed and counted by using Microsoft Excel. The score of participants were converted into raw mean score.

## **4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

Results of analysis are presented in figure 1 below. Statements of questionnaire were adapted from [16], [22], [32]. There are three mean score of students' perception on English, Bahasa Indonesia, and Bahasa Minang which were drawn below.

Figure 1. *Students' perceptions on multi-languages in the EFL classroom*



The data in the bar graphic presented that a variety of mean on students' perceptions on the use of multi languages. Blue bar indicated the mean of students' perception on English as language output

(Mean=3.46). The mean descriptive equivalent of this perception was categorized into high. Several items of statements highlighted students' perception on English as language input. This mean interpreted those students got output from teachers in the classroom because of high categorization of raw mean score. Students felt that they acquire English and can use it in communication. They also agreed that they understand English teacher's talk during teaching English. Similarly, this finding was in line with [16], [18], [33]. Those findings agreed that the use of English in the classroom may affect students' language output. Students perceived that language output gives them easiness in using English in the classroom. Related to students' language output, the teacher must give them enough and comprehensible input for helping them acquire target language which was supported by [34]. Bahrani claimed that the importance of language input may influence language acquisition same as theory of Krashen.

The use of second and first language was importantly viewed because it could not be separated when students learned foreign language. In this situation, students' perception on the use of L2 and L1 in the classroom may support or may not support them in acquiring language output. The data, especially orange bar, showed the highest raw mean score (Mean=3.62) among three indicators. The raw mean score of orange bar was, then, categorized as high. This finding can be interpreted that students strongly support the use of L2 or Indonesian. They assumed that L2 can assist them in leaning foreign language in EFL context. Participants agreed if the teacher use L2 and they slightly did not agree if L2 could detain their acquisition of target language because Bahasa Indonesia definitely assisted them in understanding new English vocabulary. Participants highly expected that their teacher uses Bahasa Indonesia. The participants' answers of questionnaire presented that they strongly agree that much the use of L2 may exist in the classroom. This perception was opposite with Krashen's theory which described that much language input was better for foreign language learners. Moreover, mean score of red bar (Mean=3.3) indicated the use of Bahasa Minang in EFL classroom. The use of Bahasa Minang was supported by participants by considering participants' answer on the questionnaire. They argued that the use of Bahasa Minang helped them in understanding English as foreign language and target language. In addition, the raw mean score was categorized as moderate and the score refers to the tendency of Bahasa Indonesia usage. They did not emphasize the use of Bahasa Minang but they still support it. This finding was accordance with [35], [36], [37].

A variety of findings in the research appeared the various opinions. It was suggested that teacher should use English as much as possible as language input which was proposed by Krashen. The theory of Krashen told that students need much comprehensible language input same as *i+1* form. If students are dominantly

exposure L2 and L1, they will not get much English as language output. It will affect to their English speaking ability. Teacher employs English not only as language lesson but also as communicative language.

## 5. CONCLUSION

A survey has been conducted for this mini research in purposing to know students' perception on English as language output. The data in the graphic mentions three indicators in total; English, Indonesian, and Minangnese. The highest score of mean goes to Bahasa Indonesia according to the score of questionnaires. Ten students of SMA N 1 Padang Panjang have participated to give their perceptions. According to the data, it presents that students' perception is high on English. It can be interpreted that their teacher has given enough input to the students. Several items on the questionnaire indicate that participants' perception believe that they can speak English and understand when teacher uses English during the lesson. Participants also claim that they are motivated when teacher uses much English in the classroom. Interestingly, there is an opposite reality between language input and output. Participants perceive that their teacher has given much input for them. This leads to assumption that participants acquire enough language output. Therefore, certain items on the questionnaire show that participants have no ability to speak English proven that students do not acquire comprehensible input. Another side discusses the use of L2 and L1. On average, they are satisfied if their teacher uses English when teacher teaches English. The use of Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Minang becomes consideration because language input can be interfered by Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Minang

It can be concluded that students have high perception on language output in the classroom. They claimed that teacher uses English in the classroom for academic and non-academic context in the classroom. The use of Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Minang become interference for students to acquire language output.

## SHORT CV OF AUTHORS

*Tiffany* is A Magister student of English Education program of Faculty of Languages and Arts at Universitas Negeri Padang. She graduated bachelor of education in 2018 at Universitas Negeri Padang. She is interested in the phenomena of language use in EFL classroom. Her research topic also focuses on multi languages use in EFL classroom.

*Yetti Zainil* is one of lecturers who teach in English Department of Faculty of Languages and Arts majoring English Language Teaching. She teaches several courses, for instance, English Language Teaching Seminar, Academic Writing, Language

Teaching Evaluation, Critical Reading, etc. Her background study started from bachelor degree at IKIP Padang in 1988. She, then, continued to take doctoral degree at Deakin University and she graduated in 2017.

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