

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPACT OF USING FIRST LANGUAGE TOWARDS ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Hilda Adelina Alfi
English Education
UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya
Email: hildadelina@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The investigation of teachers' viewpoints on non-native English-speaking students is the main topic of this study. Nevertheless, there is still uncertainty regarding the efficacy of implementing first language instruction in English classrooms. The purpose of this study is to better understand the viewpoints of instructors on the usage of native tongues in English classrooms. The research methodology included qualitative data collection, with the objective of acquiring a broad spectrum of information. The English teachers at Santi Witya Serong School in South Thailand are the study's participants. The findings shows that teacher was sometimes using Thai language as an instruction in English classroom but most of the instruction is on English as their targeted language. The results demonstrate that teachers noted that first language implementation increased students' desire to learn English, gave them a chance to better understand challenging concepts in the language, and inspired them to ask bold questions that clarify linguistic elements. In an English-speaking classroom, student interaction and communication can become quite difficult, particularly when there is a tendency for the students to have poor English language skills. Using the first language in the target language classroom can increase students' enthusiasm and eagerness to study regardless of their background level and can be seen as a sign of respect for those who still require help learning English. It is noteworthy that although having a classroom where all of the language used is English is good for the students, it is also vital to pay attention to the state of the students.

Keywords: *English classroom, First language, Thailand language, English teacher*

INTRODUCTION

Language has a dynamic landscape in Language education, the availability of linguistic element into English class was always being a subject of escalating the effect. One particularly the influence of the use of Thailand language into English classroom's learning activity has become an interesting topic to break down. Educator who taught English language as a foreign language required to

navigate the language instruction of the complexities of students' mother tongue and English language. Teacher's perspective on the use of Thailand language in the English classroom released a myriad opportunity that influence on the more attractive and engaging of learning activity.

Thailand is a country who have a diverse of linguistic element, it creates a unique background of English teacher, English as an international language view as a connecting language barrier worldwide. Hence, the integration of Thailand language into English language classroom activities required reasonable approach in terms of linguistic exchange.

There are a multifaceted aspect needs to delve in incorporating Thailand's language into English classroom activities, including, pedagogical aspect, teachers grapple in maintaining the balance between the language immersion and the objectiveness of English language integrity. Furthermore, the background of the learners in diverse linguistic element in Thailand's language and the potential of English language acquisition need consideration.

In this study, the researcher aims to investigate how English teachers in Santi Witya Serong School, South Thailand navigate the teacher perspective in interplay use of Thailand language in English classroom setting. The researcher will delve into the creativeness of English teacher in infusing Thai element into learning activities without compromising the main focus in English in achieving English acquisition and to what extent the tolerances in using Thailand language in English classroom. Additionally, the researcher will investigate the benefit of using Thailand Language in English classroom, such as foster students' motivation in learn English and ease student in to learn English.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Use of First Language in Foreign Language Classroom

The impact of using first language in English classroom or their second/foreign language has been debatable for decades in regards to its effect on student's outcome. study that held in some of the Jordan university revealed that the use of first language in English classroom as their second/foreign language has

a positive impact in assist students' comprehension in learning the complicated word and the new vocabulary to understand its meaning, break down the syntax rules, saving time, explaining grammatical rules in a easy way, and build rapport between learners and teachers In regards to this preference, it is not understandable that the prohibitions of using the first language in targeted classroom affected in depriving students learning tool (Hussein 2013).

The second study was conducted in Malaysia, the participants admitted the positive effect on using the first language in English classroom, the students utilize the first language as a tool in facilitating their learning process such as: find out the meaning of a new vocabulary, explain a new concept and points and also help them in escalating their task faster. They also acknowledge the role of L1 in helping them to learn English. (Michelle Manty and Parilah M. Shah 2017) In regards to this preference, it is not understandable that the prohibitions of using the first language in targeted classroom affected in depriving students learning tool (Hussein 2013).

The result shows that most of the participants prefer to use targeted language in the classroom, they believe that a massive use of the first language inthe classroom impacting in depriving students' chance in practice the oral skills We can conclude that the study from above-mentioned research revealed that first language is useful and not a barrier in language learning activity. However, on the other hand several studies reported opposite findings. In the study that was held in Asia-Pacific International University revealed that first language in English classroom had a crippling in English classroom learning activity as they were attributed in the failure of the massive use the first language in English classroom and the lack of determine the best time in using first language appropriately (Tantip Kitjaroonchai and Ritha Maidom Lampadan 2016).

The other study in one of the high schools in Iran found that the massive using of first language in English classroom affected in demotivating effect on learning process (Gholam-Ali Kalanzadeh et al. 2013). The next study was conducted by Sener and Korkut shows that most of the participants prefer to use targeted language in the classroom, they believe that a massive use of the first

language in the classroom impacting in depriving students' chance in practice the oral skills (Sener and Korkut 2017) In the contrary some research revealed that the use of first language in proper portion can affect on the improvement of students' achievement in writing sentences (Usadiati 2010) and leading students' achievement (Damra, Heba Mohammad, and Mahmoud Al Qudah 2012).

Mother Tongue in Escalating Second Language Acquisition

Mother Tongue able to escalate the second language acquisition for student, based on the previous research the reason of using mother tongue for second language acquisition learning is student who learn second language from their mother tongue are likely achieve higher proficiency in second language and mother tongue can be a foundation to learn second language (Г.З.Узакова 2022), previous research in jabodetabek, Indonesia revealed that most of the teacher and student in senior high school viewed, first language assist student in develop their language skill, they considered first language assist them in learning the forth skill (reading, writing, listening and speaking), most of them agree that the utilization of first language was useful as a tool in escalating learning process of vocabulary and grammar (Pardede 2018).

RESEARCH METHOD

Methodology of this research employed qualitative data gathering, the aim of this technique is to obtaining the wide range of information. The participants in this study are all of the English teachers of Santi Witya Serong School, South Thailand, the total of the teachers was willing of voluntary taking the interviews was 3. The present study was captured the exploration of finding out the teachers' perceptions.

Semi-structure interview was adopted to portray teachers' perspective on the use of first language in English classroom. This interview result was transcribed and audio-recorded. The qualitative data result was reviewed interpretively.¹ (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2002)

This study aims to investigate the perception regarding the use of first language in English classroom, To accomplished that, following questions were adopted:

1. the creativeness of English teacher in infusing Thai element into learning activities without compromising the main focus in English in achieving English acquisition
2. to what extent the tolerances in using Thailand language in English classroom
3. What the benefit of using Thailand language in English classroom

FINDINGS

The data gathered from the teachers' interview was identified into each category arranged by the question of the interview. Each question's responses were examined and discussed in relation to it sequentially. A few quotes were chosen to accurately convey the participants' actual opinions or perspective.

Teachers' perspective in infusing Thailand language element into English classroom

This question was made in investigated teachers' perspective in infusing Thailand language element into English classroom, the aim is to find out are they were wholly in favor of or against the usage of first language. The interviews result revealed that all of the participants were agree in infusing first language in English classroom. However, most of the teacher believed that the use of first language in English classroom should be restricted and the frequency is adjust based on students' skill and levels. The restriction made by teachers to escalate students' exposure to their target language (English language). Based on teacher experienced they revealed that students who are exposed to their targeted language tend to be faster in mastered the language and seems to gain positive mind on the use of first language especially in conversation. All of the teacher also allowed the students in using their mother tongue especially when teach the grammar, all of the teacher also recommend that students who still in the basic level of English not compulsory to use English in class. The teachers believe that

the use of first language in English classroom can motivate student to learn more and reduce students' anxiety and students who afraid to start learning English. Based on the teachers experienced the use of first language in the beginner class effective to make student more active and engage in the learning process because when the teacher only use English on the beginner class students will get difficulty in grasp the material because students still do not have proper background in English. Based on the interview all of the teachers also consider the balance use between first language and second language, all of the teachers stated that they only use first language when it's needed for example: to explain grammatical rules, clarifying and summarize the topic using English and break down the difficult concept in English, however for the intermediate class the teacher restrict the use of first language in English classroom, students only can use first language when they are completely don't understand the concept and need clarification from teacher.

To what extent the tolerances in using Thailand language in English classroom

The result of the interview shows that most of the teacher use the first language in a certain circumstances, such as : to give an instruction especially when the material is difficult to grasp, because they want to ensure student understand the course properly and The teachers also used first language as a tool to describe and explain grammatical rule and clarify the different language element between first language and targeted language, In addition, on the beginner class the teachers also use first language as a means of teaching English vocabulary.

What the benefit of using Thailand language in English classroom

This question means to investigate teachers' perspective on the benefit of using Thailand language / first language in English classroom, due to all the teachers implement the first language in class as a tool in achieving students' proficiency in English language, the researcher includes this question to clarify the reason behind this action by find out the benefit of using Thailand language in

English classroom to students. Most of the teachers were asserted that the use of first language in English classroom can enhancing students' proficiency in English due to first language can be a tool to simplify difficult material. Some of the teachers also the use of first language can established a rapport between teachers and students in class because the students are not hesitating to asking the difficult concept in English without being judge by the teacher. In addition, teachers perceived using first language in class can decrease students' apprehension in class because they still can use their first language when they do not understand the meaning or when students asked the teacher to summarize the material in first language. Furthermore, all of the teachers stated that the use of first language in English classroom can saving time because when the teachers were teaching grammar to the students who still have basic level of English, they use first language to explain it in detail and because the grammatical course needs a lot of time to understand, besides if they still on the beginner level it will needs an extra time to clarify the concept in English.

DISCUSSION

Even though there are still numerous pros and cons regarding the use of first language in second or foreign language classroom, The merits of its pragmatism and practicality could not be disregarded. Examining the results of this study, it is evident that teachers often assign first language specific functions in the context of foreign language learning, most of the teachers are seen of having positives views towards the implication of this method because the allowance use of first language in English classroom perceived to have a positive impact on teachers and students.

The present study that held in qualitative data shows that teachers have an upbeat perspective regarding the incorporation of first language into their classes. They observe that teaching in Thailand / students' first language helps teaching practice, especially when it comes to students who still on the beginner class in the course of vocabulary and grammar. Teacher also believes that first language can provide clear instructions for students and fostering an engaging and

supportive learning environment. According to the majority of participants, Thailand is only a useful auxiliary language in language classes, and its application varies depending on the proficiency and level of the students. The use of the first language in grammar course in particular level especially for beginner or the first stage of learning grammar in the circumstances that students may not fully understand some complicated concepts, which could result in the development of anxious obstacles to language acquisition, this first language will be extremely useful in assist students understanding in course.

CONCLUSION

The result shows that teacher was sometimes using Thai language as an instruction in English classroom but most of the instruction is on English as their targeted language. Teachers reported that such an approach escalate students' willingness to learn English, provided an opportunity to more understand difficult concept in English and encourage student to be brave asking, explain linguistic element and clarify something. Despite the high amount of teacher who recognize the importance of using the first language in English classroom, they consider the positive effect of using English in classroom, the finding revealed that even though they use Thai in English classroom but they perceived this approach are not necessary and only use in the certain circumstances because using the targeted language in the classroom can stimulate student to speak and listen more in English and adapt with this situation since this can increasing their exposure to the targeted language, however due to Thai and English language have a totally different linguistic element and since they still goes to the elementary school using first language is important in this situation.

In addition, the data shows that there is appeared to frequently use the first language (Thailand language) in the learning activity. The data revealed most of the teachers consider this practice was extremely useful and important, and most of them reported to be consistent using this approach as a strategy in English classroom that means to ease students' understanding on the material. This might be due to the leverage of this practice which allows teacher and students to switch

into the first language which purpose to provide a more understandable concept or it might due to teacher awareness on the effectiveness in using first language as assistance in learning English language.

In conclusion, in the Santi Witya Serong School, South Thailand, interaction and communication between students in English classroom can be totally complex, especially when the students tend to have a low proficiency in English language. Deploying the first language on the target language class can be a sign of respect of students who still need assistance in learning English this means to enhance students' motivation and eagerness to learn regardless of their background level. It is notable that despite the use of 100% English language in English classroom is beneficial for students but the students' condition is also important to note.

REFERENCES

- Cohen, Louis, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison. 2002. *Research Methods in Education*. Routledge.
- Damra, Heba Mohammad, and Mahmoud Al Qudah. 2012. "The Effect of Using Native Language on Grammar Achievement and Attitudes toward Learning of Basic Stages EFL Students in Jordan." *International Journal of Business and Social Science*.
- Gholam-Ali Kalanzadeh, Fatemeh Hemati, Zahra Shahivand, and Morteza Bakhtiarvand. 2013. "THE USE OF EFL STUDENTS' L1 IN ENGLISH CLASSES ." *The International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW)* .
- Hussein, Basel Al-Sheikh. 2013. "Teaching and Learning English-as-a-Second / Foreign Language through Mother Tongue: A Field Study." *Asian Social Science* 9(10).
- Michelle Manty, and Parilah M. Shah. 2017. "STUDENTS' PERCEPTION: REASONS AND OPINIONS ON THE USE OF FIRST LANGUAGE IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS." *Journal of Education and Social Sciences*.
- Pardede, Parlindungan. 2018. "Use of Mother Tongue in EFL Classes of Secondary Schools In Jabodebek: Students' and Teachers' Perception." *JET (Journal of English Teaching)* 4(2): 62.
- Sener, Sabriye, and Perihan Korkut. 2017. "Teacher Trainees" Awareness Regarding Mother Tongue Use in English as a Foreign Language Classes." *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*., *JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTIC STUDIES*.

Tantip Kitjaroonchai, and Ritha Maidom Lampadan. 2016. "Perceptions of Students towards the Use of Thai in English Classrooms." *HUMAN BEHAVIOR, DEVELOPMENT and SOCIETY*.

Usadiati, Wahjuningsih. 2010. "Contribution of L1 in EFL Teaching." *k@ta* 11(2).

Г.З.Узакова. 2022. "THE INFLUENCE OF NATIVE LANGUAGE IN LEARNING/TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE." *Involta Scientific Journal* 1(13): 38–41. <https://www.involta.uz/index.php/iv/article/view/371> (November 6, 2023).