

Research Article

LANGUAGE USED IN THE INTERNATIONAL CLASS PROGRAM AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL

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Abstract.

This study aimed to determine the classroom language used in the International Class Program for a private elementary school in Malang city, Indonesia. This qualitative research involved three teachers who taught subjects of Math, Science, and English with English as a medium of instruction. The results showed that the classroom language used by the teachers was in the forms of giving directions, asking questions, discussing, and expressing agreement and disagreement. Also, some teachers have tried using action verbs in Bloom's Taxonomy to foster higher-order thinking skills while teaching in class. However, some teachers still used Indonesian extensively to give directions and instructions. Therefore, continuous training in English Language proficiency and English as a medium of Instruction pedagogy must be established to strengthen International Class Program teachers' skills.

Keywords: *classroom language, International Class Program, Elementary school*

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Published 27 April 2023

Publishing services provided by Knowledge E

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Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the IICB Conference Committee.

1. INTRODUCTION

Understanding classroom language to engage students in classroom activities will help them to acquire knowledge and language. Classroom language refers to some expressions used by teachers to provoke interactions in the classroom (Leona et al., 2021; Martriwati, Setyani, Sari, & Kaniadewi, 2018). Brown and Hekyong (2015) classified classroom language into five aspects. These are giving directions, asking questions, discussing, and expressing agreement and disagreement. Therefore, teachers must use relevant classroom language to guide their students clearly (Albaladejo, Coyle, & de Larios, 2018). Brown and Hekyong (2015) stated that using classroom language not only for politeness and speaking competence but also affects students' efficiency when they do tasks and assignments from the teachers in the classroom. Teachers must have competencies in modeling classroom language for the students to understand the teachers' instruction and use the target classroom language. In this study,


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researchers discussed classroom language used in the International Class Program (ICP) in elementary schools. English here is used as a medium of instruction (EMI).

EMI refers to the use of the English language in a program in which English is not the official language in the country where the program is implemented (Macaro, 2019). EMI can help students fully catch the meaning of the language and relate it to the actual context of communication (Bella & Zainil, 2020). By giving instructions using the classroom language, students will be more familiar with the language, which, later, can also help students to become familiar with the English language. Studies on using EMI in teaching content subjects vary at each level of education. At the elementary school level, EMI helps students to know the vocabulary related to the subject content. However, teachers tend to ask and respond with classroom language at the elementary level. Meanwhile, Hanifa (2018) finds that in junior high school, it is considered that students must be able to analyze and use the language in their daily lives. In a senior high school setting, using classroom language in English is likely to be an active strategy in motivating the students (Widyahening, 2018). Thus, it draws a line that using English as a medium of instruction in teaching content with a particular language classroom has a good impact on teaching content subjects.

However, teachers face many obstacles in teaching content subjects using English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in their classes. Uys, van der Walt, van den Berg, and Botha (2007) explained some reasons why some teachers are not successful, one of which that is teachers still lack personal language proficiency. Therefore, one of the ways to overcome the language proficiency faced by ICP teachers is to learn the classroom language. The teachers need to have competence in the classroom language in English.

Not only concerning language competence in the classroom but also learning and teaching nowadays cannot be separated from integrating 21st-century skills. Critical Thinking (CT) is one of the 21st-century skills (El Soufi & See, 2019). Thus, classroom activities in the ICP classrooms not only deal with EMI but also with critical thinking. This phenomenon follows extensive research on CT. Many researchers have studied Critical Thinking (CT) and its implementation in learning and teaching, especially in teaching English. For instance, higher education (Al-Fadhli & Khalfan, 2009) investigated the use of e-learning models to enhance the CT skills of the student. The e-learning environment positively affects the student's critical thinking skills. To some extent, El Soufi and See (2019) find that explicit instruction strategies can be effectively used in integrating critical thinking in higher education. Furthermore, Anggraeny and Khongput (2022) and Floyd (2011) find that critical thinking can be promoted by conducting active learning activities. Therefore, the results above have pointed out that research in CT

is quite a trend nowadays. It can be seen that Critical Thinking (CT) is necessary for learners' improvement both in academic and daily life (Saadé, Morin, & Thomas, 2012).

However, studies discussing the classroom language used and critical thinking operational verbs used based on Bloom's taxonomy are still limited, especially in the International Class Program for content subjects at the elementary level. Based on that fact, researchers try to investigate English as the Medium of Instruction, especially in the case of classroom language at the elementary level in the International class program. In this study, researchers focus on finding the classroom language used in ICP classes and the operation verbs based on Bloom's Taxonomy. A list of action verbs is provided in Bloom's Taxonomy, which varies based on the level of understanding.

Therefore, the teachers' classroom language must be investigated and focuses on this research question: 1) What is the classroom language used in ICP? 2) What Bloom's Taxonomy Operational Verbs are Implemented in the ICP? This research is vital to add knowledge about classroom language used to foster CT in the international class program for the elementary school level.

2. METHOD

This study used the qualitative research design to analyze the classroom language implemented in three subjects: English, Math, and Science, for ICP students in a private elementary school in Malang city, Indonesia. Qualitative design is chosen because this study aims to understand the phenomenon that has happened (Patton, 2015). Three teachers from International Class Program (ICP) from Mentary elementary school (pseudonym) were selected to join this study to dig further into the type of classroom language used and the classroom language used in fostering CT with English as a Medium of Instruction.

The instruments were five online classroom observations. The data collected were five videos of teachers' online classes. The videos collected were from one Math class, two Science classes, and two English classes. The classes in the video recording were administered during Covid, 19 pandemic in 2021 where all subjects were delivered online. The video analysis of teachers' online classes focused on the classroom language used by the teachers in giving directions, asking questions, discussing, expressing agreement and disagreement (Brown & Hekyong, 2015) and Bloom's taxonomy Operational verbs.

All the data collected were coded to derive themes from answering the research question (Saldana, 2013). In analyzing data, irrelevant data were reduced, and only

relevant data were used to represent the objectives of the research questions (Creswell, 2012). The themes were presented in the findings and discussions section of this paper. The themes for the results were classroom language used and Bloom's taxonomy Operational Verbs Implemented in the classroom.

Deductive analysis (Patton, 2015), Classroom language theory (Brown & Hekyong, 2015), and Bloom's Taxonomy Verb Chart were used to guide the interpretation of the data about teachers' language used in the International Class Program with English as Media of Instruction.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the data presented were obtained from the observation of online teaching videos and analyzed to investigate the classroom language used in the subject in which English is used as media of instruction, namely Math, Science, and English subjects. Also, to investigate Bloom's Taxonomy Operational Verbs Implemented in the Classroom.

3.1. Classroom Language Used

Classroom language here refers to teachers' language to interact with or among students (Brown & Hekyong, 2015). However, this study focuses on seeing the language used by the teachers to interact with the students. Brown and Hekyong (2015) classify classroom language into four aspects: giving directions, asking questions, having discussions, and expressing agreement and disagreement. However, some findings do not belong to those four aspects, primarily when spoken in Bahasa Indonesia. Therefore, the findings of these results were seen not only from those four aspects but also from another aspect in Indonesian. Here, the findings and discussion were categorized into three subjects: Math, Science, and English.

Mathematics

The learning and teaching process was conducted via Google Meetings for approximately 30 minutes. Cambridge curriculum was the umbrella. Therefore, English should be used as the media of instruction for this Math class. Some findings related to the classroom language used by the teacher in this class (Table 1).

It can be seen from Table 1 that the teacher tends to use Indonesian rather than English to interact with the students in the classroom. Sometimes the teacher speaks in English first, and then she translates directly into Indonesian. Findings from this

TABLE 1: Classroom Language Used by Math Teacher.

No.	Aspects	Expressions	
		English	Indonesian
1.	Giving directions	"Make these lines into right angles." "Please give a thick." "Let's go to the next shape."	"Sekarang, silakan gambar lingkaran pada sudut- sudut berikut, lalu sebutkan gambar mana yang termasuk <i>right angle</i> ."
2.	Asking questions	"What is the right angle? any one knows?" "Does it has a right angle?" "What shape is this one?" "Are there any questions?" "What is quadrilateral?"	"Sudut apakah ini?" "Apakah ini termasuk <i>right angle</i> ?" "Apakah ada pertanyaan?"
3.	Discussions	"There are eight angles; which of the following angles is right?"	-
4.	Expressing agreement and disagreement	-	-

data were very revealing as they showed that the teacher seems to be much more comfortable asking and giving clarification in her native language, Indonesian.

Furthermore, expressing agreement and disagreement was not found in this class. The students tend to listen to the teacher's lecture rather than argue the content taught, and there is no further discussion about the topic. Students merely answer the questions given. In addition, Brown and Hekyong (2015) state that one of the most challenging aspects of L2 learning is developing the ability to initiate and conduct discussion in the classroom.

The more extensive view of English as media of instruction in this subject shows that the teacher did not use English to teach maximally. However, this subject should be taught in English, for the Cambridge Curriculum is the umbrella to teach this subject. However, the language used to deliver the materials and interact with the students was primarily Indonesian. Facing the same problems in using English as media of instruction, Dupree (2017) also finds that in some other elementary schools in Indonesia, a high percentage of native language use occurred among teachers and students during classroom interactions despite being in the EMI classrooms. Furthermore, this phenomenon happened because the students needed further instruction, clarification, and additional help in Indonesian.

Science

In science class recording, both English and Indonesian classroom language have been found. The recording lasted for approximately 30 minutes. Here are classroom language used (Table 2).

TABLE 2: Classroom Language Used by Science Teacher.

No.	Aspects	Expressions	
		English	Indonesian
1.	Giving directions	“Let’s begin.” “Wait a minute.” “Please read the text. “Please identify the pushes and pulls to make things go faster and slower.”	“Dengarkan baik- baik ya” “Mari kita amati bersama-sama.”
2.	Asking questions	“Who’s not coming today?” “How to move the swing?” “What have you learned today?”	“Mobil mana yang bergerak lebih cepat?”
3.	Discussions	“Let’s observe the video; which one can go faster and which one can go slower?” “What happened with the toy car? Which one can go faster?”	“Kenapa mobil ungu bergerak lebih cepat? Mari kita amati bersama-sama.”
4.	Expressing agreement and disagreement	“Correct! I agree; it’s like a slide.” “That’s right! The purple goes faster.”	“Iya betul sekali”

The classroom language used in the science classes is not much different from the findings in the math class. In this science class, the teacher also uses Indonesian a lot, although it is not as often as in the Math class. Here, the teacher tries to initiate the discussion in English even though the students give the answers in Indonesian. However, Indonesia is mainly used when the teacher needs to provide further clarification and explanation.

Additionally, during observations that had been conducted to see the use of classroom language, it can be seen that classroom language certainly supported the teacher to keep managing the class and controlling student activities during the learning and teaching process time (Nartiningrum & Nugroho, 2020). Using this instructional classroom language would invite students to respond to the teacher (Fitria, 2020). Therefore, the interaction and communication between the teacher and students can be conducted comprehensively and in a good manner.

All the aspects of classroom language proposed by Brown and Hekyong (2015) can be found during the observation, although the amount of expressions is not that much. Furthermore, the use of classroom language to instruct was also based on several considerations of the classroom situation being faced by the teacher. The teacher were still using a lot of Indonesian in explaining and giving instruction. Because learning and teaching was held online, all forms of instruction given by the teacher were technological and sometimes were not clear (Nartiningrum & Nugroho (2020). That is why in an online classroom, students tend to confuse and ask more to clarify something. That can also be one reason why Indonesian is still used extensively even though this is an EMI

classroom. However, it can be seen that the teacher was trying hard to emerge English to the subject’s content.

English

The recording for English class lasted for approximately 30 minutes. During the learning and teaching activity, the teacher uses English almost all the time. There are only one or two words that slip in Indonesian when the teacher is giving the response to the students. The class lasted for approximately 30 minutes. Here are some expressions found related to Classroom Language (Table 3).

TABLE 3: Classroom Language Used by English Teacher.

No	Aspects	Expressions
1.	Giving directions	“Let’s continue our lesson” “prepare for students’ book p.20-21” “Today we are going to learn the difference between myth, true story and historical story.” “ Listen and read” “Please answer the question based on the story given” “Please write the events based on the story.” “This is the end of the lesson, you can submit the work through our Google Classroom. “
2.	Asking questions	“Who’s not coming today?” “ How to move the swing?” “What have you learned today?” “Have you read some myth from other countries? Or in Indonesia? “ Do you know the difference between, myth and true story, or historical story?
3.	Discussions	“Let’s observe the video; which one can go faster and which one can go slower?”
4.	Expressing agreement and disagreement	“That’s right”

In contrast with the previous subject, Math, and Science, The English teacher delivers the materials almost entirely in English. The English teacher shows better English proficiency compared to the two other teachers. It is proven by the data above that the teachers can apply all the classroom languages in English. However, the teacher did not provoke the students to express their agreement or disagreement. Thus, the classroom language used in that aspect is limited.

From the observation, it can be seen that classroom language clearly can guide the students to understand their tasks better (Brown & Hekyong, 2015). However, due to the limitation of online learning, the teacher sometimes has to repeat the instructions a couple of times because students lose focus.

Moreover, a suitable classroom language, which is delivered in English, will help students familiarize themselves with English. Also, it helps students fully catch the meaning of the language, which is related to real communication (Bella & Zainil, 2020). Thus, using proper English classroom language will improve understanding of the content and instructions and the student’s English ability.

3.2. Bloom's Taxonomy Operational Verbs Implemented in the Classroom

Bloom's taxonomy operational verb list includes action verbs related to the categories and cognitive process. These verbs describe activities required for achieving educational objectives corresponding to each level: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Here is the list of verbs that can be found during the observations of the teachers. The verbs are classified into some verbs which are related to Bloom's Taxonomy (Table 4).

TABLE 4: Bloom's taxonomy verbs found.

No.	Subjects	Bloom's taxonomy verbs					
		Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
1.	Math	Select,		show	Identify		
2.	Science	Select,	compare	choose	Identify		
3.	English	name, select, find	describe	Show, choose,	Question, differentiate, identify	Arrange, Make, write	discuss

From Table 4, it can be seen that the teachers have already implied some of Bloom's taxonomy operational verbs. The majority of verbs used are in the range of analysis. Furthermore, higher-order thinking comprises knowledge in analyzing, evaluating, and creating (Anderson et al., 2001). It means that the teachers were trying to emerge EMI to Students' higher-order thinking skills.

However, the use of Bloom's taxonomy operational verbs is quite varied. The English teacher tends to be more aware of Bloom's taxonomy of operational verbs and tries to foster higher-order thinking skills because the verbs are used in the range of analysis and synthesis. Math and Science have also implied the analysis type of verbs but only a limited amount.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

As revealed in the findings, it can be seen that classroom language has different purposes according to the situation happening in the classroom. This study revealed the language used by the ICP teachers in the forms of giving directions, asking questions, discussing, expressing agreement and disagreement, and some classroom language found in Indonesian to accommodate teachers to interact with the students. Another finding is that Bloom's taxonomy operational verbs are implemented in the ICP. It shows

that the teachers have already tried to foster higher-order thinking skills during the learning and teaching process.

Moreover, English is supposed to be used as media of instruction in these classes. However, some teachers were still using Indonesia to clarify and give instructions in the classroom extensively. Therefore, continuous training in English Language proficiency and EMI pedagogy needs to be established to strengthen teachers' skills.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researchers would like to express their gratitude to Faculty of Letters, Universitas Negeri Malang, for funding this research.

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