

The Use of Classroom Languages in Teaching English

¹Baiq Sumarni, ²Edi Firman

¹²Mandalika University of Education, Indonesi

Info Artikel

Article history:

Received: 29 Desember 2022

Publish : 21 Januari 2023

Abstract

learning. The introduction of English from the beginning is based on a pedagogical concept that the earlier a person is introduced to the target language, the faster and better the child's mastery and acquisition of the language being learned. But unfortunately, the policy of teaching English as a local content subject has not been accompanied by maximum effort from the school. Both in the form of knowledge and teaching skills as well as teacher education qualifications. This condition certainly affects the quality of learning carried out. This study is aimed to describe the use of classroom languages in teaching English used by English teacher in MI Al-Amin Pejeruk, Mataram city. In this research, the writers use descriptive qualitative method. The techniques of data collection in this study are observation, interview, and documentation. The writers use data reduction, data display and data conclusion to analyze the data. The finding shows that the use of classroom languages became one of the effective strategy in teaching English. Through relevant classroom language, children can work together and communicate in

Keywords: classroom languages, teaching English

This is an open access article under the [Lisensi Creative Commons Atribusi-BerbagiSerupa 4.0 Internasional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)



Corresponding Author:

Baiq Sumarni

Mandalika University of Education, Indonesia

bqsumarni@undikma.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning English for children called English for Young Learners (EYL) is currently developing in various parts of the world, especially in developing countries including Indonesia. This policy began in Indonesia since the enactment of the 1994 Curriculum. The introduction of English from the start is based on a pedagogical concept that the earlier a person is introduced to the target language, the faster and better the child's mastery and acquisition of the language being learned (Harmer, J : 2007).

However, the policy of teaching English as a local content subject has not been accompanied by maximum effort from the school. Both in the form of knowledge and teaching skills as well as teacher education qualifications. This condition certainly affects the quality of learning carried out even though these teachers are considered "capable" to carry out learning.

This situation became even more difficult when the government decided to abolish English lessons for the basic education level in the 2013 Curriculum. However, this did not rule out the possibility that children at the SD/MI level could not learn English. A number of schools also still make English a compulsory subject of study. One of them is at MI Al Amin Pejeruk. The urgency of English at this time has become the reason why English subjects are still given to all MI Al Amin Pejeruk students. Furthermore, the headmaster in that school stated that giving English subjects would make it easier for English teachers at a higher level (SMP-SMA) in terms of material introduction.

As we know, not all English teachers use classroom languages in their teaching and learning process. It depends on their competence itself. Nevertheless, English teachers at MI Al-Amin use classroom language in teaching English. It based on the fact that they have been already given a workshop about the use of classroom languages itself. The English teacher used classroom languages with crafting media and Total Physical Response (TPR) method. Therefore, the research questions are: how is classroom language implemented by English teachers using

crafting media? And how is classroom language is implemented by English teachers using Total Physical Response (TPR) method?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. English Language learning in Elementary School

Many schools at the elementary education level (SD/MI) stipulate English as a local content subject, so teachers with competent academic qualifications are needed. It is not easy because it has unique characteristics. In an English learning seminar it was stated that English is important both independently and in bilingual learning.

It was further said that currently teachers at the basic education level have not been able to set a good example as users of English. So that learning still needs to be developed further and consistently. Many obstacles are encountered in learning English, which lie in the less than optimal role of the teacher as a facilitator and catalyst. This is caused by the choice of words and sentences that are not appropriate, facial expressions with stiff postures and sometimes different from the sentences that come out because the current understanding of teachers is mostly text book in nature. This happened because their English language activation process was low.

2. The Nature of Novice Learner

Harmer classifies three age groups of students, namely children, adolescents, and adults. Specifically for the term children, Harmer classifies two groups of children's ages, (young learners) are those aged between 5 to 9 years, and very young learners are usually between 2 to 5 years (Harmer : 2007a). McKay defines young language learners as learners who learn English as a foreign language or a second language in elementary schools. In terms of age, they are on average between 5 and 12 years old (McKay : 2007).

Furthermore, Harmer stated that the characteristic of children when learning is that they do not only focus on what is being taught, but also learn many things at the same time, such as taking information from their surroundings. Seeing, hearing, and touching are as important as the teacher's explanation in the understanding process. Abstraction of grammatical rules is less effective when taught to children (Harmer : 2007b).

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the teacher is an important and primary source of learning in learning English as a second or foreign language. Therefore the teacher should be an adequate language model so that children have communication competence in the language they are learning.

3. Classroom Language

Classroom language in general can be said as an expression used in communicating in class between teachers and students. The use of the classroom language by the teacher is very important so that children get used to using English expressions in interactions.

Furthermore, it is emphasized that teachers maximize the use of English in the classroom by using gestures, acting, puppets, and others to be able to convey meaning. Therefore, teachers should try to use English that is simple, natural and appropriate to the level of students. With this strategy, teachers can increase the use of English in their efforts to acquire the target language.

Chang reported the results of his survey of 370 undergraduate students in Taiwan that they had a positive attitude towards using English as the language of instruction and the majority agreed that learning English could improve their English proficiency, especially listening skills (Chang : 2010).

Paul added that teachers need to use class language for class instructions. The teacher's task is to provide examples and guide students to use English expressions naturally so that it is easy for students to understand and use according to their feelings (Nation : 2012).

The following are some of the classroom languages that are generally used as communicative expressions in everyday classroom learning

Table 1. Expressions of *Classroom Languages*

<p><i>Simple Expressions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Good Afternoon.</i> • <i>How are you today?</i> • <i>Thank you.</i> • <i>I'm sorry.</i> • <i>I don't know.</i> • <i>Goodbye.</i> • <i>See you next week.</i> • <i>May I open the window?</i> 	<p><i>Asking for help</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Could you repeat that, please?</i> • <i>What's this in English?</i> • <i>What's that in English?</i> • <i>How do you spell...?</i> • <i>I don't understand.</i> • <i>Please help me.</i> • <i>How do I say...?</i>
<p><i>Between the children</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can I borrow ... , please?</i> • <i>Sure.</i> • <i>Here you are.</i> • <i>It's my turn.</i> • <i>It's your turn.</i> • <i>May I have a ...?</i> 	<p><i>From the teacher</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guess.</i> • <i>Please stand up.</i> • <i>Please open your books.</i> • <i>Let's write/ go home.</i> • <i>Let's play ...</i> • <i>What's the weather like today?</i> • <i>It's time to write/ go home</i>

The use of English in language classes should be maximized whenever possible continuously or through class management. Nation added that when students have few opportunities to use the target language outside of class, it is the teacher's job to maximize the use of English learned in class. One way that can be done is through classroom management, such as telling students what needs to be done, for example take your books, turn to page 7; controlling behavior, for example be quiet; describes an activity, and for example get into pairs.

4. Crafting as Learning Media

As previously explained, children's learners have different characteristics from adult learners. Children not only learn by hearing and seeing, but also by doing/doing it. In addition they also have a short time to concentrate. With these natural differences, children must be taught in a different way from adults. Based on Claire (1988), children involve all their senses in learning. Therefore, in order for learning objectives to be achieved, a teacher must be able to create an atmosphere and learning conditions that are in accordance with their basic nature. Brewster also emphasized the importance of choosing the right learning media for children. Among them is the use of crafting as a learning medium. As explained by Amy Sedaris, Crafting is all activities related to manual skills in making useful objects. In other words, crafting is putting ideas into action using inexpensive materials. The implementation of this crafting activity also aims to hone children's motor skills and language skills, especially in developing their vocabulary mastery.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the writers use descriptive qualitative method. The aim of this study is to describe the implementation of classroom language used by English teachers. The source of the data is taken from English teachers which focus on classroom language used by the English teachers. Technique of data collection is carried out from observation, interview, and documentation. The writers use techniques of data analysis: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

MI Al-Amin Pejerk is an Islamic Elementary School that is located in Pejerk Ampenan, Mataram city. Based on the observation, English Language is taught from the first grade until

the sixth grade, it based on the headmaster's policy in that school. The teachers there have got a workshop about the implementation of classroom language using crafting media and Total Physical Response Method. So that is why the teachers always use classroom language in teaching English.

The teachers stated that classroom language is English language to communicate with the students in every classroom activities. The use of the classroom language by the teacher is very important so that children get used to using English expressions in interactions. They always use classroom language in the opening until ending of the lesson. In connection with the definition of crafting, it is clear that crafting not only trains children's thinking/creativity but also trains their motor skills. And this is in accordance with the nature of children in learning where they involve all their senses including in this case their motor (action).

In relation to children's motor skills, various skills has been practiced by the teachers in that school, including: 1) making various animal shapes or other objects using origami paper or plasticine media that are safe for children, 2) drawing freely on HVS paper with the theme which has been given by the teacher which can be accompanied by coloring using their favorite colors, then making simple flash cards using the pictures they have made, 3) gluing and pasting on a media, and so on. Meanwhile, in relation to teaching vocabulary, various games has been done by teachers. Such as; 1) see and say, 2) hear and choose, 3) listen and choose, 4) find out the names of animals, flowers, fruits, etc., 5) make up words about animals or other things and phrase it.

Besides, the writers take some documentation related to this study to complete the data including school profile and pictures during interview and observation to the English teachers in MI Al-Amin Pejeruk.

5. CONCLUSION

The use of classroom languages in MI Al-Amin Pejeruk used by the teachers runs well, and the teachers achieve the objectives of the learning. The students also seem very enthusiasm in learning process. They were very active and happy to do all things that their teacher instructed. The teachers always use classroom language to communicate with their students in every classroom activity. For the teachers, classroom language makes teaching and learning easier to communicate with the students. They can deliver instruction clearly in every classroom activities, manage classroom activities, improve the students' speaking skill, and reach the purpose of learning effectively and systematically.

6. SUGGESTION

The use of classroom language is very effective to implement by teachers, especially in basic level or young students. Due to the characteristic of young learners that is different from adult learners. Based on the research, it is suggested for the teachers to implement classroom language using crafting media and also Total physical Response method to make it easier both in teaching also in learning.

7. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writers want to thank all people who help, support, and also assist the process of the research such as: the principal and the teachers of MI Al-Amin Pejeruk.

8. REFERENCES

Chang, Yu-Ying. "English-Medium Instruction for Subject Courses in Tertiary Education: Reactions from Taiwanese Undergraduate Students." *Taiwan International ESP Journal*, Volume 2, Number 1, 2010.

-----, The Practice of English Language Teaching. Essex: Pearson Education Limited. 2007b.
Hammerly, H. Synthesis in Second Language Teaching. Blaine: Second Language. 1982.

- Harmer, Jeremy. *How to Teach English*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited. 2007a
- McKay, Penny. *Assessing Young Language Learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2007.
- Nation, Paul. "The Role of the First Language in Foreign Language Learning." Diakses dari *Asian EFL Journal*, Volume 5, Issue 2. Diakses dari http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/site_map_2003.php (pada tanggal 30 Agustus 2012).
- Orlich, D. C. *Teaching Strategies*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1998.