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THE USE OF ENGLISH AS INSTRUCTIONAL LANGUAGE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL IN JAYAPURA

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Abstract

The use of English as the instructional language in English Language Teaching (ELT) is widely acknowledged as a key factor in enhancing learners' communicative competence. However, in many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, teachers tend to rely heavily on the first language (L1), which may limit students' exposure to the target language (L2). This study investigates the proportion of English used as the instructional language in senior high schools in Jayapura and examines its impact on students' English proficiency, particularly in listening and speaking skills. A descriptive quantitative design was employed involving 22 English teachers from 21 senior high schools. Data were collected through classroom observations, questionnaires, and documentation of students' academic performance. The findings reveal that the average use of English as the instructional language is relatively low (39%), while Indonesian dominates classroom interaction (61%). English is primarily used during opening and closing activities, whereas Indonesian is predominantly used during core instructional activities. The statistical analysis indicates that the use of English does not significantly affect students' overall academic achievement (M = 61%, SD = 18.2). However, it has a substantial impact on students' listening and speaking competence (M = 31%, SD = 15.6). Schools with higher exposure to English tend to demonstrate better oral proficiency outcomes. These findings highlight the importance of increasing meaningful exposure to English in EFL classrooms. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers adopt a balanced approach by maximizing the use of L2 while employing L1 strategically to facilitate comprehension and support learning.

Keywords: instructional language, L1 use, L2 exposure, ELT, communicative competence

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INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary globalized era, English plays a significant role as an international language that connects people across countries and cultures. According to Crystal (2012) and Jenkins (2015), English has become the dominant language for communication in education, business, technology, and international relations. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language and has become one of the most important subjects in formal education. The Indonesian government has continuously emphasized the importance of English proficiency to prepare students for global competition and academic advancement. However, despite years of English instruction at schools, many Indonesian students still face difficulties in using English communicatively, particularly in speaking and listening skills. As stated by Anita Lie (2017), students often demonstrate limited confidence and competence in oral communication because they rarely use English in meaningful interactions.

One of the major factors influencing this issue is the language used by teachers during classroom instruction. In the field of second language acquisition, exposure to the target language is considered essential for developing language competence. Scholars such as Ellis (2015) and Lightbown and Spada (2021) argue that learners acquire language more effectively when they are exposed to meaningful input in the target language. Teachers who consistently use English during classroom instruction provide students with valuable opportunities to improve their listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and speaking fluency. Through repeated exposure, students become more familiar with English expressions, sentence structures, and classroom communication patterns.

Nevertheless, in actual classroom practice, many English teachers frequently rely on the students' first language (L1), namely Indonesian, for various pedagogical reasons. Teachers often use Indonesian to explain difficult grammar points, clarify unfamiliar vocabulary, manage classroom discipline, and ensure that students understand lesson content. According to Macaro (2018), the use of L1 may support comprehension and reduce students' anxiety, particularly for beginner learners. However, excessive dependence on Indonesian may limit students' opportunities to interact with English, thereby reducing their exposure to authentic language input.

The debate regarding the use of L1 in English language teaching has evolved over time. Traditional language teaching approaches strongly emphasized the exclusive use of the target language in the classroom. In contrast, modern perspectives acknowledge that

strategic use of L1 can facilitate learning when used appropriately. Cook (2001) and Hall and Cook (2012) argue that L1 can function as a helpful pedagogical tool rather than an obstacle to learning. More recent studies, such as those conducted by Lee and Levine (2020), suggest that a balanced approach between English and Indonesian is the most effective strategy in English language teaching.

In Jayapura, where students have limited exposure to English outside the classroom environment, the role of teachers becomes even more important in providing meaningful English input. Since classroom interaction may be the primary source of English exposure for many learners, understanding how teachers use instructional language is crucial. Therefore, this study aims to examine the proportion of English and Indonesian used in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms and investigate its impact on students' academic achievement, particularly in speaking and listening skills. The objectives of this paper are:

1. To analyze the proportion of English and Indonesian used in ELT classrooms.
2. To examine the impact of instructional language on students' academic achievement.
3. To evaluate the relationship between the use of English in classroom instruction and students' speaking and listening skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of the first language (L1) in second language (L2) learning has been one of the most widely debated topics in the field of applied linguistics and English Language Teaching (ELT). For many decades, scholars and educators have discussed whether the use of learners' native language should be minimized or strategically integrated into language classrooms. Traditional language teaching methodologies, such as the Direct Method and the Audio-Lingual Method, strongly discouraged the use of L1 in classroom instruction. These approaches emphasized maximum exposure to the target language and promoted the belief that successful language learning occurs when learners are immersed entirely in the second language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This perspective was heavily influenced by behaviorist and structuralist theories, which viewed language acquisition as a process of habit formation achieved through repetition, imitation, and reinforcement.

The emergence of communicative approaches and second language acquisition theories further strengthened support for extensive L2 exposure. One of the most influential theories is Krashen's Input Hypothesis. According to Krashen (1985), language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly above their current

level of proficiency, commonly represented as "i+1." Krashen argued that learners acquire language naturally when they understand meaningful messages in the target language. Therefore, maximizing L2 exposure in the classroom is considered essential for developing communicative competence. From this perspective, excessive use of L1 may reduce opportunities for learners to interact with meaningful English input and consequently slow down language acquisition.

However, many scholars criticize the exclusive target-language approach because it overlooks the cognitive and pedagogical functions of learners' first language. Cummins (2007) introduced the interdependence hypothesis, which suggests that proficiency in the first language and second language are interconnected. According to this theory, cognitive and academic skills acquired in L1 can positively transfer to L2 learning. Cummins argues that learners do not develop languages separately; instead, knowledge gained through the first language can support second language acquisition. This theory challenges monolingual teaching ideologies by emphasizing the importance of bilingual competence in language learning.

Similarly, Cook (2001) introduced the concept of multicompetence, which refers to the knowledge of more than one language in the same mind. Cook argues that bilingual learners naturally use both languages interactively rather than keeping them completely separate. Therefore, the use of L1 in the classroom should not be viewed as a failure or weakness but rather as a valuable cognitive resource that can facilitate understanding and communication. This perspective has contributed significantly to changing attitudes toward L1 use in modern ELT practices.

In classroom contexts, the use of L1 has been found to serve various pedagogical functions. Hall and Cook (2012) explain that teachers often use students' first language to explain difficult grammar points, clarify vocabulary, provide instructions, maintain classroom discipline, and build rapport with learners. According to their study, completely banning L1 from the classroom is unrealistic, particularly in contexts where learners have low proficiency in English. They argue that strategic use of L1 can support comprehension and improve the effectiveness of classroom communication. Likewise, Butzkamm and Caldwell emphasize that L1 functions as a "bridge" that helps learners connect existing knowledge with new language concepts, making learning more efficient and less frustrating.

Research also indicates that teachers' use of L1 may vary depending on learners' proficiency levels and instructional goals. Macaro (2018) proposes a continuum of language use in the classroom, ranging from exclusive use of the target language to extensive reliance

on the first language. Macaro argues that effective language teaching occurs when teachers maintain a balance between maximizing exposure to English and strategically using L1 when necessary. Rather than viewing L1 and L2 as opposing forces, he suggests that both languages can complement each other in facilitating language learning.

Empirical studies further support the benefits of balanced language use in the classroom. De la Campa and Nassaji (2009) found that moderate use of L1 can improve learners' comprehension without significantly reducing opportunities for L2 exposure. Their findings indicate that strategic L1 use may help students understand lesson content more effectively, especially when dealing with difficult concepts or unfamiliar vocabulary. Similarly, Sali (2014) found that teachers frequently use L1 as a practical classroom tool to facilitate communication and support students' understanding.

In addition to cognitive and pedagogical benefits, recent studies have explored the affective role of L1 in language learning. Lee and Levine (2020) demonstrate that careful and limited use of L1 can reduce learners' anxiety, increase classroom participation, and create a more supportive learning environment. Students often feel more comfortable and confident when teachers occasionally use their native language to clarify instructions or explain difficult material. Similarly, Nguyen and Nguyen (2019) found that learners perceive L1 use positively because it helps them understand lessons more clearly and maintain engagement during classroom activities.

Despite these benefits, scholars also warn against excessive reliance on the first language. Swain (2005), through the Output Hypothesis, argues that learners need opportunities not only to receive input but also to produce language actively. According to Swain, meaningful language output helps learners develop fluency, grammatical accuracy, and communicative competence. If teachers overuse L1, students may lose valuable opportunities to practice speaking and interacting in English. As a result, learners' communicative development may be hindered because they become overly dependent on their native language.

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts such as Indonesia, this issue becomes particularly important because students have limited exposure to English outside the classroom. According to Lie (2017), many Indonesian students experience difficulties in developing communicative competence because classroom interaction is often their only opportunity to use English meaningfully. Similarly, Lamb and Coleman (2008) note that Indonesian learners generally lack opportunities to practice English in authentic social environments, which negatively affects their confidence and proficiency. Consequently, the

teacher's language choice in the classroom becomes a crucial factor influencing students' language development.

Furthermore, the global importance of English has increased the demand for effective English instruction worldwide. Crystal (2012) and Jenkins (2015) emphasize that English functions as a global language used for international communication, education, business, and technology. In this context, improving students' communicative competence in English has become an important educational objective. Therefore, teachers need to provide sufficient exposure to English while also considering learners' needs and comprehension levels.

The literature suggests that the role of L1 in L2 learning should not be viewed in absolute terms. While exclusive use of the target language may increase exposure to English, strategic use of the first language can facilitate comprehension, reduce anxiety, and support classroom interaction. Contemporary research generally supports a balanced approach in which teachers maximize the use of English while allowing limited and purposeful use of L1 when necessary. Such an approach is particularly relevant in EFL contexts like Indonesia, where opportunities for English exposure outside the classroom remain limited.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design using a correlational approach to investigate the relationship between the use of the first language (L1) and students' English learning outcomes at the secondary school level in Jayapura, Papua Province, Indonesia. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it allows researchers to collect numerical data and analyze relationships among variables objectively through statistical procedures. The correlational design was specifically selected because the study aimed to determine whether there was a significant relationship between the extent of L1 use in English classrooms and students' academic achievement, particularly in listening and speaking skills (Ellis, 2015; Lightbown & Spada, 2021).

The study was conducted in selected senior high schools in Jayapura, where English is taught as a foreign language. In this context, students generally have limited exposure to English outside the classroom. Consequently, classroom interaction and teacher instruction become important sources of English input (Krashen, 1985). The researcher focused on examining how the use of Indonesian during English instruction influences students'

learning experiences and language performance. This issue is particularly relevant in Indonesia, where English exposure outside the classroom remains limited (Lie, 2017).

Research Design

This research applied a non-experimental correlational design. According to quantitative research principles, correlational studies are used to examine the degree of relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them. In this study, the independent variable was the use of the first language (Indonesian) during English instruction, while the dependent variable was students' English learning outcomes. The learning outcomes included students' general English achievement as well as specific aspects of language proficiency, particularly listening and speaking performance.

The correlational design enabled the researcher to identify whether higher or lower levels of L1 use were associated with differences in students' academic performance. The study did not attempt to establish causation; rather, it focused on identifying patterns and relationships between variables. This approach is consistent with previous studies examining the pedagogical role of L1 in second language classrooms (Cook, 2001; Hall & Cook, 2012; Macaro, 2018).

Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of all eleventh-grade students from selected senior high schools in Jayapura, Papua Province. Eleventh-grade students were chosen because they had already experienced English instruction for several years and were considered sufficiently familiar with classroom language practices. In addition, students at this level are expected to demonstrate more developed communicative competence in English compared to lower-grade students.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants for the study. Purposive sampling was considered appropriate because the researcher specifically targeted students who had experienced English instruction involving varying degrees of Indonesian and English use by teachers. Through consultation with school administrators and English teachers, classes were selected based on the instructional practices commonly used in the classroom.

The total sample consisted of 60 students from several selected classes. This number was considered adequate for conducting correlational statistical analysis and for representing the characteristics of the target population within the research context. The

participants included both male and female students with relatively similar educational backgrounds.

Instruments

Data for this study were collected using two primary instruments: a structured questionnaire and students' academic records.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to measure students' perceptions regarding the frequency and functions of L1 use during English instruction. The instrument consisted of several Likert-scale statements ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The questionnaire items focused on different aspects of classroom interaction, including teacher explanations, vocabulary clarification, grammar instruction, classroom management, comprehension support, and student participation.

The questionnaire was divided into several sections. The first section collected demographic information about the participants, such as gender and age. The second section examined the extent to which teachers used Indonesian during classroom instruction. The third section explored students' perceptions of whether L1 use helped them understand lessons, reduced anxiety, and supported their participation in classroom activities. These aspects were developed based on findings from previous studies regarding the pedagogical and affective functions of L1 in language classrooms (Hall & Cook, 2012; Lee & Levine, 2020; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2019).

To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by experts in English language teaching and educational research. Suggestions from the experts were used to revise unclear or ambiguous items before the questionnaire was distributed to participants. In addition, a pilot test was conducted with a small group of students outside the research sample to evaluate the clarity and effectiveness of the instrument.

The reliability of the questionnaire was measured using Cronbach's Alpha. The reliability coefficient indicated acceptable internal consistency, suggesting that the instrument was sufficiently reliable for data collection and analysis.

Students' Academic Records

In addition to the questionnaire, students' English scores were collected from official school academic records to represent their learning outcomes. These records included students' semester English scores and assessment results related to listening and speaking

skills. Listening scores reflected students' ability to understand spoken English, while speaking scores represented their oral communication performance during classroom activities and assessments.

The use of academic records provided objective data regarding students' English achievement and minimized potential bias that could occur through self-report measures alone. The focus on listening and speaking skills was considered important because communicative competence is one of the primary goals of English language teaching (Jenkins, 2015; Crystal, 2012).

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process was conducted in several stages. First, the researcher obtained permission from school authorities and English teachers to conduct the study. After receiving approval, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the participants and ensured that participation was voluntary.

Next, the questionnaire was distributed to the selected students during classroom sessions. Participants were given sufficient time to read and respond to each statement carefully. The researcher also provided clarification whenever students encountered difficulties understanding the questionnaire items.

After the questionnaires were completed and collected, the researcher obtained students' English academic scores from school records with permission from the school administration. All collected data were treated confidentially and used solely for research purposes.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and present the data in an organized manner. These statistics included mean scores, percentages, frequencies, and standard deviations, which helped describe students' perceptions regarding L1 use and their English learning outcomes.

Inferential statistical analysis was conducted using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation to examine the relationship between L1 use and students' academic achievement. Pearson correlation was considered appropriate because the study aimed to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between two quantitative variables.

The level of statistical significance was set at 0.05. This means that relationships were considered statistically significant if the probability value (p-value) was lower than 0.05. All statistical analyses were performed using standard statistical analysis software to ensure accuracy, reliability, and consistency in data interpretation.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research and their right to withdraw from participation at any time without consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by ensuring that students' identities were not disclosed in the research report. Furthermore, all collected data were used exclusively for academic purposes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal a significant imbalance in the use of instructional language in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms in Jayapura. The data show that Indonesian (L1) accounted for approximately 61% of classroom interaction, while English (L2) constituted only 39%. This finding indicates that students were exposed more frequently to their first language than to the target language during classroom instruction. Such an imbalance has important implications for second language acquisition, particularly in relation to the development of communicative competence, listening comprehension, and speaking fluency.

From a descriptive perspective, the results indicate that English was primarily used during peripheral classroom activities, such as greetings, opening remarks, simple classroom routines, and closing sessions. In contrast, Indonesian dominated the core instructional activities, including explaining lesson content, teaching grammar, clarifying vocabulary, managing classroom discipline, and giving detailed instructions. This pattern suggests that teachers tend to switch to Indonesian when they encounter cognitively demanding teaching situations or when they believe students may have difficulty understanding explanations delivered entirely in English.

This finding is consistent with the studies conducted by Hall and Cook (2012), who argue that teachers often rely on students' first language to ensure comprehension and maintain classroom efficiency. Similarly, Macaro (2018) explains that teachers frequently use L1 strategically to simplify difficult concepts and reduce communication barriers. In the context of this study, teachers' reliance on Indonesian may reflect practical concerns rather

than pedagogical preference. Teachers may feel pressured to complete curriculum targets within limited instructional time, making the use of Indonesian a more efficient option for explaining complex material.

However, while the use of L1 may facilitate immediate comprehension, excessive reliance on Indonesian can also reduce opportunities for meaningful exposure to English. According to Krashen (1985), language acquisition depends heavily on exposure to comprehensible input in the target language. If students receive limited English input during classroom interaction, their opportunities to internalize vocabulary, grammatical structures, pronunciation patterns, and communicative expressions may also become limited. In this study, the relatively low proportion of English use suggests that students may not be receiving sufficient target-language exposure to support optimal communicative development.

The findings regarding students' academic achievement reveal that there was no statistically significant correlation between the proportion of English use and students' overall academic scores. Approximately 61% of students were categorized as academically competent despite the relatively limited exposure to English during classroom instruction. This finding suggests that students were still able to achieve satisfactory academic performance even though Indonesian remained dominant in classroom interaction.

One possible explanation for this result is related to the nature of English assessment practices in many Indonesian schools. In many educational contexts, English examinations tend to emphasize reading comprehension, grammar exercises, vocabulary recognition, and written tasks rather than oral communication skills. Consequently, students may perform well on written examinations without necessarily developing strong listening and speaking abilities. This finding supports the argument made by Lie (2017), who notes that Indonesian students often demonstrate relatively adequate knowledge of grammatical structures but experience difficulties in using English communicatively in authentic situations.

Furthermore, the findings may also indicate that strategic use of Indonesian can support students' cognitive understanding of lesson content. Cummins (2007) argues that cognitive and academic skills developed in the first language can transfer to second language learning. Therefore, the use of Indonesian during explanations may help students understand academic concepts more effectively, especially when dealing with abstract or difficult materials. Similarly, Cook (2001) suggests that bilingual learners naturally use both languages interactively, and the first language can function as a valuable learning resource rather than a barrier.

In contrast to the findings on general academic achievement, the results related to listening and speaking skills present a different pattern. Only 31% of students were categorized as competent in listening and speaking performance, indicating a substantial gap in communicative proficiency. This finding demonstrates that although students may succeed academically, many still struggle to use English effectively in oral communication.

The low level of oral proficiency strongly supports the argument that exposure to the target language is essential for developing communicative competence. According to Ellis (2015), language acquisition requires sustained exposure to meaningful and understandable input. Students need consistent opportunities to hear authentic English and interact with it in meaningful contexts. Likewise, Swain (2005), through the Output Hypothesis, emphasizes that learners also need opportunities to produce language actively in order to develop fluency and accuracy. If classroom interaction relies heavily on Indonesian, students may have fewer opportunities to practice speaking English and develop confidence in oral communication.

The findings further reveal a positive relationship between increased English use and improved oral proficiency. Schools and classrooms that demonstrated higher levels of English use tended to produce students with better listening comprehension and speaking ability. This finding suggests that increasing the proportion of English used during classroom interaction may contribute directly to the improvement of students' communicative competence.

This result is also consistent with the theories proposed by Lightbown and Spada (2021), who argue that successful second language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to rich and meaningful target-language input combined with opportunities for interaction. In classrooms where teachers use English more frequently, students are more likely to develop familiarity with pronunciation, sentence patterns, classroom expressions, and conversational structures. Repeated exposure to these language features can gradually improve students' confidence and communicative ability.

Nevertheless, the findings also highlight several challenges that limit the use of English in ELT classrooms. These challenges include teachers' limited English proficiency, lack of confidence in using English continuously, large classroom sizes, students' varying proficiency levels, and pressure to complete curriculum objectives within restricted instructional time. In such circumstances, Indonesian often becomes a practical solution for maintaining classroom efficiency and ensuring students' understanding.

This finding aligns with the research conducted by Nguyen and Nguyen (2019), which found that teachers often use L1 to reduce learner anxiety and maintain student engagement. Similarly, Sali (2014) reports that teachers frequently perceive L1 as an effective classroom management tool that helps maintain smooth instructional flow. Therefore, the use of Indonesian in this study should not necessarily be interpreted as ineffective teaching practice; rather, it reflects the complex realities faced by teachers in EFL contexts.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings suggest the need for a more balanced and strategic approach to language use in the classroom. Instead of viewing L1 and L2 as competing options, teachers should consider how both languages can complement each other to support learning objectives. This perspective is consistent with Macaro's (2018) continuum model, which advocates maximizing target-language exposure while allowing strategic and limited use of L1 when necessary.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of creating a classroom environment that encourages active use of English. Teachers should provide students with opportunities to participate in discussions, pair work, role plays, presentations, and other communicative activities that require meaningful English interaction. Without sufficient opportunities for practice, students may remain passive learners and fail to develop confidence in speaking English.

Another important implication of this study concerns assessment practices. If the primary objective of English language teaching is to develop communicative competence, then assessment systems should reflect this goal. Greater emphasis should be placed on listening and speaking assessments rather than focusing predominantly on grammar and reading comprehension. Incorporating oral performance tasks into classroom evaluation may encourage both teachers and students to prioritize communicative language use.

In addition, professional development programs for English teachers are essential. Teacher training should focus not only on improving teachers' English proficiency but also on developing practical classroom strategies for maximizing English use. Such strategies may include simplifying instructional language, using gestures and visual aids, scaffolding difficult concepts, and encouraging interactive classroom communication. Through continuous professional development, teachers may become more confident and effective in using English as the primary medium of instruction.

The findings of this study support the growing consensus in contemporary ELT research that maximizing exposure to the target language is essential for developing

communicative competence. At the same time, the strategic use of the first language remains important for facilitating comprehension, reducing anxiety, and maintaining inclusive classroom interaction. Therefore, the challenge for teachers is not to eliminate Indonesian completely, but rather to achieve an appropriate balance between Indonesian and English in order to create effective and meaningful language learning experiences for students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that the use of English as the instructional language in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms at senior high schools in Jayapura remains relatively limited, with Indonesian continuing to dominate classroom interaction. The findings reveal that Indonesian accounted for a greater proportion of classroom communication, particularly during core instructional activities such as explaining grammar, clarifying vocabulary, managing classroom discipline, and providing detailed explanations. In contrast, English was more frequently used during routine classroom expressions, greetings, and opening or closing activities. This pattern indicates that teachers still rely heavily on the first language (L1) to facilitate comprehension and maintain instructional efficiency.

The findings further demonstrate that the proportion of English use in the classroom does not significantly influence students' overall academic achievement. Many students were still able to obtain satisfactory academic scores despite receiving limited exposure to English during classroom interaction. This result suggests that traditional assessment systems in many schools may emphasize reading comprehension, grammar mastery, and written performance rather than communicative competence. Consequently, students may succeed academically without necessarily developing strong oral communication skills. This finding is consistent with the argument presented by Lie (2017), who states that many Indonesian learners possess adequate grammatical knowledge but continue to experience difficulties in using English communicatively.

However, the findings also reveal that the use of English in classroom instruction has a substantial and meaningful influence on students' listening and speaking abilities. Students who were exposed to higher proportions of English during classroom interaction tended to demonstrate better listening comprehension and speaking proficiency. This finding reinforces the importance of meaningful and sustained exposure to the target language in the process of second language acquisition. According to Krashen (1985), language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input in the target

language. Similarly, Swain (2005) emphasizes that learners also require opportunities to produce language actively in order to develop fluency and communicative competence. Therefore, limited use of English in classroom interaction may reduce opportunities for students to practice listening and speaking in meaningful contexts.

The findings of this study also support the perspective that the first language should not be viewed entirely as an obstacle to language learning. Strategic use of Indonesian can help teachers explain difficult concepts, reduce learners' anxiety, and maintain effective classroom communication. This perspective is consistent with the views of Vivian Cook (2001), Jim Cummins (2007), and Graham Hall and Guy Cook (2012), who argue that learners' first language can function as a valuable cognitive and pedagogical resource when used appropriately. Nevertheless, excessive dependence on Indonesian may reduce opportunities for meaningful English exposure and communicative practice. Therefore, the challenge for teachers is to achieve an appropriate balance between English and Indonesian in classroom interaction.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study have several important pedagogical implications for English language teaching in EFL contexts, particularly in Indonesia. First, teachers should gradually increase the use of English as the primary medium of instruction in the classroom. Increasing English exposure does not necessarily mean eliminating Indonesian completely; rather, teachers should use Indonesian strategically and purposefully to support comprehension when necessary. This balanced approach aligns with Ernesto Macaro's (2018) continuum model, which recommends maximizing target-language exposure while allowing limited and meaningful use of L1.

Second, English teachers should adopt more communicative teaching practices that encourage active student participation. Classroom activities such as role plays, group discussions, presentations, pair work, debates, and problem-solving tasks can provide students with opportunities to use English meaningfully. Through frequent interaction and practice, students may gradually develop greater confidence and fluency in speaking English. This implication is consistent with the theories proposed by Ellis (2015) and Lightbown and Spada (2021), who emphasize the importance of meaningful interaction and input in second language acquisition.

Third, the findings suggest the need to reconsider current assessment practices in English language teaching. Since communicative competence is one of the primary goals of language learning, assessment systems should include greater emphasis on listening and speaking performance rather than focusing predominantly on grammar and written examinations. Incorporating oral presentations, interviews, listening tests, and communicative tasks into classroom evaluation may encourage both teachers and students to prioritize oral language development.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS AND POLICYMAKERS

The findings also provide important implications for schools and educational policymakers. Schools should create supportive language-learning environments that encourage students to use English beyond formal classroom instruction. This can be achieved through extracurricular activities such as English clubs, speech competitions, storytelling programs, debate activities, language camps, and English immersion programs. Providing authentic opportunities for English communication may help students become more confident and motivated to use the language in real-life contexts.

In addition, policymakers should support professional development programs for English teachers. Teacher training should focus not only on improving teachers' English proficiency but also on developing effective pedagogical strategies for managing English-medium instruction. Teachers need practical training in simplifying instructional language, using visual aids, scaffolding difficult concepts, and promoting student interaction without relying excessively on Indonesian. Strengthening teachers' confidence and competence in using English may contribute significantly to improving classroom language practices.

Furthermore, curriculum developers should consider designing instructional policies that encourage balanced language use in EFL classrooms. Rather than imposing rigid "English-only" policies, educational guidelines should recognize the practical realities faced by teachers and allow strategic use of L1 while still prioritizing meaningful English exposure.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that provide opportunities for future research. First, the study focused only on a relatively small sample of senior high school students in Jayapura. Future studies could involve larger samples from different regions of Indonesia to

obtain more comprehensive findings regarding instructional language use in EFL classrooms.

Second, this study primarily employed a quantitative correlational approach. Future researchers are encouraged to use mixed-method or qualitative approaches to explore teachers' and students' perceptions of classroom language use in greater depth. Classroom observations, interviews, and discourse analysis may provide richer insights into how and why teachers switch between Indonesian and English during instruction.

Third, future research could examine the relationship between instructional language and other aspects of language proficiency, such as vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation development, reading comprehension, and writing skills. Researchers may also apply more advanced statistical analyses to investigate causal relationships and identify other variables that influence communicative competence.

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