



THE USE OF TARGET LANGUAGE IN A CLASSROOM: FOCUSING ON AN INDONESIAN EFL TEACHER

Desi Septiani¹, Yuyus Saputra², Fuad Abdullah³

*desiseptiana09@gmail.com

Sahara Madani Junior High School¹, Universitas Siliwangi^{2,3}, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

The employment of Target Language (hereafter, TL) in English language teaching practices has burgeoned significantly. One of the reasons generating such an issue is the notion of providing students (non-native English students) sufficient exposures of English. Conversely, little is known about how English as the TL is deployed as a medium of instruction and communication among teachers and students, notably in the Indonesian junior high school remains under-researched. Hence, this study aimed at scrutinizing such an investigative issue. The participant was a female English teacher applying English as a medium of communication and instruction in the classroom learning practices. The data were garnered through non-participant observations and analyzed thematically (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The findings outlined that utilizing the target language in pre- and post- activities and commanding the student by using the target language become an obvious picture of how the TL is used as a medium of instruction and communication among teachers and students. Pedagogically speaking, encouraging students to communicate in the TL (English) enables them to generate their willingness to communicate in the TL and language awareness of the significance of TL in the classroom learning practices.

Keywords: English (Target Language); English language learning activities; the use of Target Language; Indonesian EFL teacher

INTRODUCTION

The target language (hereafter TL) is students' learning, and also the individual items of language that they want to learn, or the teacher wants them to learn. Dickson (1996), states that the use of target language in the classroom greatly increases students' exposure to the target language. By utilizing the target language in the classroom, students are expected to not only learn languages but also learn through language (Andriani & Abdullah, 2017). In learning, the teacher is a primary source of students in TL. This proves that maximizing the use of TL in class is favorable practice (Turnbull, 2001b).

Using target language in the classroom can provide modeling resources for students both in terms of language production and attitudes towards language (Rahmadani, 2016). This is due to the ideal use of English in each meeting by the teacher concerned and also the treatment of teachers who consider English not only as a subject of learning but also as a

*Corresponding Author

Desi Septiani

Email : *desiseptiana09@gmail.com

learning medium. Most L2 and FL educators agree that students need to be exposed to input in the TL when they are expected to learn (Krashen, 1982).

MacDonald (1993) argues that the maximum use of TL by teachers in class can influence student motivation. According to Tholin (1992, p. 132), the first minutes are 'crucial' and it is in those first minutes when the teacher has to inspire the students to use the TL. In addition, Dörnyei (1994) argues that teachers are not only regarded as instructors but also role models, motivators, mentors, and consultants. This shows how important the use of TL is in class (in this case English). If the teacher applies L1 more in class, students will not immediately need to further their understanding of TL. MacDonald (1993) also contends that when too often L1 is used, students will not be motivated.

The fact that Indonesian is also an important language (not only language) dominating important functions such as politics, economics, education, social, etc. This parallel with the Government Regulation number 57 of 2014 article 1 paragraph 2 is stating that "*Pembinaan Bahasa adalah upaya meningkatkan mutu penggunaan bahasa melalui pembelajaran bahasa di semua jenis dan jenjang pendidikan serta pemasyarakatan bahasa ke berbagai lapisan masyarakat.*" [Indonesian Language Development is an effort to improve the use of language education and socialization to various levels of society]. This reinforces the position of Indonesian as an official language for instruction.

Previous studies have focused on TL in parallel studies such as Mikhaleva and Régnier (2014), Sharma and Mittal (2016). Therefore, this study seeks to reveal the extent to which the use of TL in EFL classrooms by investigating it. This study also presented the results of using English as the target language by the English teacher in the EFL classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Implementation of Target Language

Academically, teachers and students with low abilities can cause inefficient and ineffective teaching and learning processes. This is because most teachers have relatively limited English proficiency. Ibrahim (2014) states that teachers who could not speak English fluently and accurately might be considered incompetent to do one of their main roles as instructors. Pausing, hesitating, lacking vocabulary mastery and inaccuracy of grammar, lexical, and pronunciation can characterize most of their limitations and this will certainly hinder their students' understanding of the learning material provided. In addition, a teacher with poor reading comprehension of English textbooks as a source of important information for them can cause them to not understand the material and can cause misinformation.

Therefore, the teacher should be good at choosing and utilizing the language of instruction well. The language used not only should be correct and by the level of language development of students but also should be a language that is understandable by students (Baker, 1988; Andriani & Abdullah, 2017). Utilizing Indonesian is used to compensate for English. This can be called code-switching. One definition of the practice of moving back and two languages or registers of the same language is far more in conversation than in writing (Gardner-Chloros, 2009). Whereas according to Cook (2001) code-switching is a natural phenomenon in setting the speaker which shares two or more languages. Coste (1997) also argues that code-switching can help further learners' proficiency in TL by applying the L1 as a referral point.

Previous Studies of Target Language

There have been previous studies regarding TL such as Parallel Study of Native and Target language (Mikhaleva., Régnier, 2014), Native and target language influence on students' inter-language production (Fauziati, 2017), and Exploiting parallel sentences and cosine similarity for identifying target language (Sharma., Mittal, 2016).

Mikhaleva and Régnier (2014) have researched Russia. In this study, they consider the parallel study of native and target-language cultures to be the most efficient way of encouraging the personal development of a student in the process of language teaching.

On the other hand, Fauziati (2017) found that NL and TL influenced the students' IL production. The influence was generally due to the students' ownership of two language systems (Indonesian and English) in one mind. And then the major influence from their NL was dealing with vocabulary in the form of Indonesian borrowings, including cultural bound expression, cognates, and acronyms.

In the other study, Sharma and Mittal (2016) established that the TFM approach achieves very good MAP without using full parallel corpus and also performs fewer computations compare to the LSI approach.

METHODS

Design

The current study employed a descriptive case study to portray how an English teacher applied Target Language in an EFL classroom. Yin (2003) contends that a descriptive case study offers a specific and contextualized description of a peculiar phenomenon. This investigative design was utilized because it enables researchers to understand and sketch out the potentials of research issues from varied viewpoints. Likewise, it helps link an occurred phenomenon and its context (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Abdullah, Tandiana & Amelia, 2020). Hence, this design was utilized to gain more holistic information from the teacher's employment of Target Language in an EFL classroom as naturally as it occurred.

Setting and Participant

This inquiry was performed in one of the junior high schools in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. The school was chosen because the research issue took place there, viz how an English teacher applied Target Language in an EFL classroom. Additionally, the headmaster as the policymaker permitted the researchers to conduct scrutiny in the school. Hence, such a school was an appropriate and contextual investigative place for the present study.

A female English teacher took part as the research participant. She was 40 years old. She held a bachelor's degree (B.A.) in English Education. She has been teaching English for 12 years in a junior high school (General English for junior high school students). Linguistically, she communicated in Basa Sunda (L1), Bahasa Indonesia (L2), and English (FL).

The participant recruitment was based on several considerations. First, the English teacher applied English as a medium of instruction in the classroom though it occurred in an EFL setting. Second, the students indicated enhanced motivation and engagement amid English language learning activities through the use of TL (English). They were willing to participate in this inquiry. As a result, they were regarded to be appropriate with the needs of the present study.

In practice, they were socialized about the purpose of this study. Besides, they were required to read, fill in and sign an informed consent form given by the researchers. Ethically speaking, their identities were represented in pseudonyms to conform to ethical issues (e.g. teacher A and students).

Data Collection Technique

The data were collected through observations. Observations are viewed as a data collection technique enabling researchers to involve in particular investigative contexts, such as settings, interaction, relationships, actions and events (Mason, 2002). In particular, focused observation was adopted since it helps researchers gain the observed phenomenon, person and practices more effectively and holistically (Hopkins, 2008). Dealing with the role of observer, non-participant observer was performed to enable the researchers obtain and record the needed information without immersing in the participants' observed activities (Creswell, 2012). More specifically, the observational practices encompass several stages, namely

1. Selecting one of the classes conducting English language learning practices in one of the junior high schools in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia as the investigative place;
2. Characterizing one of the English teachers in such a school as the research participant;
3. Informing consent form and seeking for the agreement of observational activities as an actualization of performing ethical issues;
4. Deciding non-participant observer as the role of observer during observational practices;
5. Preparing and designing instruments for performing observation, such as observation guideline and cam-recorder;
6. Determining the use of target language in the classroom (English);
7. Deciding May and June as the time of performing observation;
8. Conducting the observation about the use of target language in the classroom;
9. Withdrawing from the observational activities ethically.

(Creswell, 2012).

Data Analysis Technique

Once the data were collected, they were analyzed with Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This qualitative data analysis was adopted due to its flexibility, adaptability, and pluralism (King, 2004; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Technically, the data analysis procedures cover a number of stages, namely familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, searching the themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The concentration of this study is based on how an English teacher applies Target Language (hereafter, TL) in an EFL classroom. After the data were analyzed rigorously, two predominant findings appear thematically. They are utilizing the target language in pre-post activities and commanding the student by using the target language. More particular elucidation of such findings is showcased subsequently.

Utilizing Target Language in Pre- And Post- Activities

Common learning activities using the three-phase technique (i.e. pre-activities, main activities, and post-activities) (Krashen, 1985) are generally accepted in the educational realm. The cognitive views of language learning are generally the same in every comprehension and consequently, pedagogical practices are very similar: In a typical lesson, there are "pre", "main", and "post" activities (Brown, 2006; Tandiana, Abdullah & Komara, 2018). In Pre-activities, starting from the opening greetings (e.g. good morning!, how are you in this morning?), checking the students' presence and recalling the previous materials (e.g. who is absent today? what were you studying in the last meeting?). Whereas, in main activities, the student gets activities related to the core material and practices the skills that are the learning objectives. The last is Post- activities usually contain conclusions and endings of learning (e.g. thank you for your attention, see you in the next meeting.)

In this case, the researchers focused on the use of TL by the teacher when learning took place. From the whole set of activities, pre and post activities get more focused.

Excerpt #1

Pre-activities	<p>Teacher A: "Okay, Good morning!"</p> <p>Students: Good morning ma'am!</p> <p>Teacher A: "How are you this morning?"</p> <p>Students: We are fine to find, and you?</p> <p>Teacher A: "Okay, we are fine, we are good. I'm fine too this morning. There are your friends who didn't come here?"</p> <p>Students: <i>Parere bu...</i> holiday.</p> <p>Teacher A: Holiday, maybe a holiday. Idul Adha... okay nevermind</p>
Post-activities	<p>Teacher A: "Because time is up, time is enough.. please continue in your house. So you have homework how many numbers?"</p> <p>Teacher A: "Thank you for your attention. See you tomorrow morning ya.."</p>

The data above are categorized into pre-and post-activities existing at the first meeting. Teacher A started the lesson by greeting with saying "**Good morning!**" and asking the students' situation by said, "**How are you this morning?**" The class situation was not very crowded at the time. Only a handful of students answered. This is because many of the students did not attend the class (e.g. spending time on holiday). Teacher A seemed to understand the reasons of the students. As a matter of fact, teacher A, stating "**Holiday, maybe a holiday. Idul Adha... okay never mind**". Moreover, most of those who were absent were male students. However, the teacher comprehended the situation in which the male students were absent at that time. In particular, it can be viewed from her facial expression (e.g. smiling) considering that such a phenomenon is common sense (informal observation). Nevertheless, it did not have an impact on the continuity of teaching and learning.

After giving a greeting (equally good morning, and how are you), teacher A gave a bit of advice and encouragement (e.g."I hope you find this morning and you have a new spirit

after you celebrating Idul Adha".) to the student in the class. In the middle of teaching and learning activities, a male student suddenly came late and entered the class. The teacher invited him to sit down and was seen approaching by repeating his greeting personally, such as said **good morning** and **how are you in this morning**. The latecomer did not answer directly, so the teacher had to repeat the greeting. After the student answered, teacher A returned to the front of the class and began to explain what lesson they will learn that day.

In the post activities, there is also an expression to end class activities by saying "**Because time is up, time is enough**". In addition, teacher A reminded students to continue the work they are doing at home (saying "**please continue in your house**"). In the end, teacher A did not forget to thank for the students their attention and closed with goodbyes (with "**Thank you for your attention. See you tomorrow morning ya.**"). On this first day, it has begun to be detected that the use of TL in the most dominant

Pre- and Post- activities are used by teacher A. Whereas the students respond using L1 or L2, they imply to realize what teacher's A talking about so teacher A did not need to change it to CS. In the second meeting, the researcher likewise found that there was a dominant use of TL in pre and post activities. As in the following quote:

Excerpt #2

Pre-activities

Teacher A: "**All right, good morning all!**"

Students: "Good morning ma'am!"

Teacher A: "**How are you this morning?**"

Students: "I am fine and you?"

Teacher A: "**I'm great too..**"

Post-activities

Teacher A: "Ya.., **because time is up.. hey pay attention, please! Because time is up, maybe your work continues in your house.**"

Teacher A: "Okay... **Make the congratulations card beautifully. Please collect the dictionary!**"

Teacher A: "**See you next Monday ya.. goodbye!**"

On this second day, Teacher A applied the same greeting on pre activities such as said "**Good morning all!**", and "**How are you in this morning?**". The class situations have returned engrossed considering that almost all students attended the EFL class. Slightly different from the first day, almost all students responded well.

Whereas, in Post- activities are still equal to the first day. Teacher A said that time had over when the bell rang (seen "**because time is up..**"). However, the condition was worthless where the students were a bit rowdy causing teacher A to warn and repeat what was said before (saying "**pay attention to please! Because time is up,..**"). After that, Teacher A did not forget to remind them of what they have to do outside the EF class and returned the dictionary they previously borrowed (seen "**Make the congratulations card beautifully.**").

Please collect the dictionary!"). In the end, the teacher said a farewell expression such as **"See you next Monday ya.. goodbye!"**.

On the second day, it was repeated that the use of TL was more dominant than other purposes in Pre- and Post- activities although the expression used was almost similar to the previous expression. This looks like teacher A familiarizes the students with comparable words so the students have no trouble to considerate and to respond with the expressions they normally use too.

At the third meeting, teacher A asked the students situation with slightly different words like said: **"How's life this morning?"**. The student's expression was confused. Teacher A retold with familiar sentences such as **"are you fine this morning?"** when the airs alert. The students immediately appreciate with said **"Yes"** and **"No"**.

Excerpt #3

Pre-activities

Teacher A: **"All right, good morning students!"**

Students: "Good morning ma'am!"

Teacher A: **" How's life this morning?"**

Students: (not responding)

Teacher A: **" Okay, are you fine this morning? Are you great this morning?"**

Teacher A: "Listen, please! Are you fine this morning?"

Students: **"Yes...(but a student say no)"**

Teacher A: **" Are you feeling unwell? What's the matter with you?"**

Teacher A: **"You say you feeling unwell, why? What's the matter?"**

Post-activities

Teacher A: **" Ya, because time is up, please continue in your house okay... continue in your house!"**

The situation was not conducive. Only some of them replied with **"Yes"**, even some of the responses were **"No"**. Teacher A appeared annoyed with the student's response. This was caused by the student's answer heard gotten joking. Teacher A came near the student and inquired **"Are you feeling unwell? What's the matter with you?"**. There is no replied from the student. It caused teacher A to question, **"You say you feeling unwell, why? What's the matter?"**. Teacher A turned back to the front of the class when she did not get any responses from the student.

However, in Post- activities teacher A was not so much talked. She solitary said, **"because time is up.."**. In addition, giving Commands to complete tasks outside the EFL class (she said **"please continue in your house okay... continue in your house!"**). The difference that day was that there were no farewells like before.

Apart from all that, on the third day, there was also a similarity in the use of TL when pre and post activities were more dominant. The response obtained was also the case with the previous one, that we tend to use L1 and L2. Only a few of them responded using TL (most of

them are female students). After seeing the saturation of the available data, it established that the use of TL in EFL class tends to be dominant in Pre- and Post- activities. The students had no difficulties in comprehending what teachers express. This due to the word is expressed repeatedly in each meeting.

From all the data above, the author strongly agrees with Tholin (1992) that the first minute is crucial to encourage and motivate the students. In this case, teacher A tried to use TL in Pre-activities as much as she can even in some meetings only a view of the students' responses by using TL. This is also supported by observation from Cook (Cook, 2007) stating that the teacher's language in the classroom is the primary model and if the teacher uses the first language, it may make it even more difficult for the students to use the TL (Abdullah & Lulita, 2018; Hidayati, Dewi, Nurhaedin, & Rosmala, 2020). Likewise pre-activities, teachers are also expected to use TL in main and post-activities. Despite the fact that Teacher A used CS a lot during the activities, Teacher A returned to apply TL during the post-activities.

Commanding the Students Through The Target Language

In teaching and learning activities are not merely filled with explaining the material. Another thing that the researcher focused on was also the commands that teacher A provided. This can occur in pre-, main- and post- activities. The commanding was more dominant in main activities because that's when teacher A interacts a lot with students. As a result of three observations made, teacher A tends to utilize the same expression as "pay attention!" Or "please open the book!" Here is a review.

Excerpt #4

Commanding

Teacher A: "**Please listen to me!**"

Students: (being silent)

Teacher A: "**Please open the book! Page on 11. Let's continue. Don't write please!**"

Teacher A: "**Look at the book, listen to me, don't speak, don't write! Okay..?**"

Students: okay.

Teacher A: "**Look at the book!**"

The data shows the use of TL in student commanding at the first meeting. When teacher A will review the material at the previous meeting, some students are a bit rowdy. She tried to gain the student's attention by clapping then gave a command to listen by saying "**Please listen to me!**" After getting enough attention, she continued to review the material.

After several reviews, the teacher then commands the students to open textbooks such as "**Please open the book! Page on 11. Let's continue. Don't write please!**". The phrase "**Don't write please!**" is addressed to several students who were seen writing in their notebooks. Teacher A wanted them to pay attention to the book because that is not the time to write.

The class atmosphere was quite noisy at that time. When teacher A explained, some students were seen chatting and some were seen writing. For this reason, the teacher gave commands thought the students to look at a book and listening to the explanations, not to surf,

and not to write by saying "**Look at the book, listen to me, don't speak, don't write! Okay ..?**" the students understand then reply "**okay ..**" then teacher A continues the explanation.

In the middle of the explanation, some students again seemed to pay less attention to the text contained in the book. Teacher A pauses to reprimand the student and reminds them to refocus their learning books. Teacher A said "**Look at the book!**" to the student and then continues his activities.

At the second meeting, the learning activity was to make a letter so that the lack of interaction between teacher A and the students. Some commanding was quite different from the previous meeting.

Excerpt # 5

Commanding

Teacher A: "**Okay, please open your homework.**"

Students: (they started open the book while the teacher checking it)

Teacher A: "**Okay please** (catching the student's attention) **write the expression about congratulation that you will great her birthday. Please do it now in 15 minutes..**"

Teacher A: "**Ya.., because time is up.. hey pay attention, please! Because time is up, maybe your work continues in your house.**"

Students: *Siap bu.*

After greeting the students, teacher A then asks students to open the homework given at the previous meeting. She said "**Okay, please open your homework.**" to the students who responded. They started to open the homework that they had been working on. Teacher A started to examine the work of the students by circulating starting with the student in the front seat. Some students seem not to do assignments for various reasons. Once it was enough, teacher A returned to the front of the class to explain.

For the activity at the second meeting, Teacher A ordered to make a statement by saying "**Okay please** (catching the student attention) **write the expression about congratulation that you will great her birthday**". In addition, she also gave a limitation time of up to fifteen minutes in the process by saying "**Please do it now in 15 minutes ..**". The students begin to do their work.

Unnoticed, the bell for the end of the class rings, so teacher A has to stop the activity by saying "**Yes because time is up ...**" to the students. Because many students began to tidy up their equipment, the class sounded noisy until teacher A had to give a warning in the form of "**hey pay attention please!**" to get the students' attention. After being considered quite conducive, teacher A instructed the students to continue their work outside the classroom (saying .. "**Hey pay attention please! Because time is up, maybe your work continues in your house.**").

At the third meeting, teacher A asked about the assignments she had previously given. The class situation was quite noisy at that time, causing teacher A to give a warning to the students to stop talking (saying "**You may to stop .. stop speaking please!**") and asked them to pay attention than asking again about the assignment (saying "**Pay attention! I ask you .. have you finished your homework?** ")

Excerpt #6

Commanding

Teacher A: **"You may to stop.. stop speaking please!**

Pay attention! I ask you.. have you finished your homework?"

Students: Yes.

Teacher A: **"Yes? Okay please collect your homework!."**

Students: *"Bu namian?"*

Teacher A: **"Give your name on your paper!"**

Teacher A: **"Okay stop writing please! Stop do your homework!"**

Teacher A: **"Please open the book page on 17. Stop talking please! Pay attention!"**

After getting answers from students, teacher A then told students to collect the assignments by saying **"Yes? Okay please collect your homework!."** some students ask if they should give a name to the assignment they have made, and teacher A answers **"Give your name on your paper!"**. Some students who did not finish their work seemed busy working on the task. Teacher A saw them and then told them to stop doing it (saying **"Okay stop writing please! Stop do your homework!"**).

After that, teacher A continued the material and started the explanation contained in the guidebook. She told the students to open books on page seventeen (saying **"Please open the book page on 17"**). When going to explain the material, some students sounded chatting with each other and did not pay attention. Teacher A then warns them to stop talking and pay attention to the explanation given (saying **"Stop talking please! Pay attention!"**).

The classroom language use is not only with TL but also with L1 even L2. Macaro (1997) found four reasons that most commonly led to the use of L1 and L2. One of them is the L1 / L2 was frequently used when giving commands. Giving commands in TL is seen as something that can be done, but with difficulty. However, Tholin (1992) argues that the teachers can give Commands by utilized the TL. While students do not realize everything that is said, the teacher can gain students' understanding by using body language or repeating the statements that have been expressed.

In this case, teacher A strained to not replace the sentences immediately with L1 or L2 when she did not get any responses from the students. In processing of digesting what teacher A said, the teacher repeated what she said. Pinter (2017) argues that if the teacher suspects that one or more students do not understand what is being said, one way can be done about adjusting, but not switching from English (Tandiana, Abdullah & Komara, 2017).

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at investigating the employment of TL by the English teacher in an Indonesian EFL classroom. The findings revealed that the teacher utilized TL in Pre- and Post-activities while teaching English in the classroom (e.g. good morning! how are you this

morning?). Likewise, she deployed TL to give some commands to the students (e.g. open the book! pay attention!).

The implications of this study cover theoretical, practical, and empirical contributions. Theoretically, this study reinforces the language acquisition concepts which emphasize the importance of language exposure. Thus, the use of TL by non-native speakers (English) allows them to acquire the TL optimally. Practically, this study encourages the teachers to use TL proportionally while the teaching and learning process is performed. As a result, the students can gain authentic experiences of communicating with TL. Lastly, empirically this study offers new insight into the body of the research in TL.

Though this study provides meaningful contributions, it has several limitations. Such as the use of single data collection, focused only on the teacher, applying descriptive as the research design, and the limited amount of the participant. Therefore, the future study can utilize various data collection techniques (e.g. interviews, questioners, document analysis, etc.). Besides, the future researcher also can focus on both the teacher and the students or the policymakers. For more optimally, critical multimodal and explanatory design can be used as the research design with the representative amount of the participant.

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