

# MULTILINGUAL INTERACTION IN CLASSROOM CONTEXT

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**ABSTRACT**, This research aimed at exploring teacher and student ways of interacting in multilingual EFL classrooms. This research was a qualitative study using case study design. This research participants consisted of 1 EFL and 4 SMKN 5 Jenepono students at Sulawesi Selatan. The instrument of the data was obtained by observation and interview. The data was analyzed on the basis of data analysis procedure consisting of data collection, data display, data condensation, and conclusion: drawing / verification. The finding showed that there were three ways through multilingual interaction in the teaching and learning process, beginning the class, during learning process and closing the class. The findings led to the conclusion that the multilingual interaction within the classroom had already made the teacher-students and student-students more interactive. Furthermore, the students were even good in communicating and influencing their attitude so they participated actively in classroom activities and felt comfort interacting with the class using multilingual interaction. The implication of this research is the teacher and students can provide several languages by using multilingual terms in classroom activity. In addition, the students' anxiety can be reduced for providing foreign language. The researcher also suggests that future researchers should conduct the relevant research by adding some new aspects to it. The aspects can be extended in terms of the method used, the number of research variables, research participants, etc.

**Keywords: Multilingual, Interaction, EFL Classroom**

## A. INTRODUCTION

**T**here are many different ways to say things to other people. How we like to say and what we are want to say is an important part of it. Selection of the most suitable types of sentences, words and sounds it's what with how, and when we communicate. How we say is as important as what we said to others. There is one way to look at the relationship between the speaker and the listener from use of the address form; that is, the choice of the spoken form, or the use of a naming (Wardhaugh,1986: 251). From the use of the address form, we can also see the familiarity and distance between the speaker and listener. The choice of language they use, such as the subtlety and accuracy of the word or language important to determine politeness in communication. So, as speakers and listeners, they have to do it comply with the prevailing norms and culture. If someone doesn't speak obey procedures with norms and culture, they will get a negative value in the environment.

Language is a device used to interact with other people. People use language to express their emotions, feelings, and beliefs. Languages come from one place to another, from one social group to another social group, and the experience is unique from one situation to another. In this case, there are a number of languages that are used to communicate. People who can speak one language are monolingual, and people who can speak two languages are called bilingual, while people who can speak more than two languages are multilingual, not only people but also teachers themselves. Nurchalis, Selviana, & Riza (2019) stated teachers have a sensitive role to play in enhancing students to be using the target language, English, as often as possible.

English had been chosen as the first foreign language of the Indonesian school curriculum. It is and one of the reasons that English is superior in the international domain. The Government hopes that it can be a medium for the acquisition of science and technology. From a society perspective, multilingualism is more a way of life than a problem to solve. The challenge is for educational institutions to adapt to these complex realities and provide quality education which takes into account the needs of learners, and at the same time balancing them with social, cultural, and political demands. The consequence of this issue is that education should facilitate people to develop themselves in accordance with their interests and potentials. The use of language as a medium of instruction should then be well considered in line with the social and cultural values in which they live.

People, it refers to the students, would learn when they understand the language used by teachers. They will obviously find many difficulties when they are in the contrast situation, i.e. they do not certainly know the language as the device of instruction talk.

The interaction in the multilingual EFL classroom needs a lot of help from the teacher. The teacher must find appropriate methods to teach English. This is due to the students who are acquiring a third language. Differences between the learning of second language (SLA) and TLA were ignored in SLA study and in bilingualism studies. For this reason, TLA can be considered as a reaction Cenoz (2013). Moreover, regarding the linguistic-cultural diversity in Indonesia, the teacher needs to adapt their teaching to accommodate minority language students. Baker (2007: 2–3) examined the potential benefits of using Trans language in class to enable students to develop into balanced and confident bilingual people. Baker suggested that bilingualism offered the advantages of communication, culture, curriculum, cognitive, character, and cash advantage. Garcia (2009: 45), in his book on bilingual education in the 21st century, extends the scope of translation to all "dual discursive practices in which bilingual is involved in understanding their bilingual world." He further asserted that 'apart from the curricular arrangements that separate languages, the most common bilingual practice in bilingual

education classes are translating' (Garcia 2009: 304). Li Wei (2011: 1223) applies 'Trans language to multilingual in the broadest sense because it includes occurring between different language structures, including different modalities'. "If people in the language compared to the native speaker, we believe that 'if multilingualism has some special characteristics when learning and using language, native speakers of a single language from every subject at school will not be the right reference'" (Cenoz & Gorter 2011: 367).

This research was conducted at SMKN 5 Jenepono Sulawesi Selatan. In SMKN 5 Jenepono, English has been a subject in this school, and the students must speak English. So, The English teacher has to switch the language from local language, which is makassarese, and Indonesian language to help the students understand the English. Concerning this case, multilingual interaction becomes one kinds of solution for the teacher and the students as well. The teacher can provide the appropriate approach to teach English, and the students have to interpret English by using their local language or Indonesian language. In this case, this research focused on how the teacher deal with the students in multilingual interaction at SMK 5 Jenepono Sulawesi Selatan.

## **B. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

There are some researchers who support multilingual interaction. Kartika-Ningsih (2018) entitled "Language shift: analyzing language use in multilingual classroom interactions". The term language shift refers to the use of multiple languages in all kinds of interactions, including teaching and learning. The analyzes were determined in the context of action research projects in Indonesian schools. It includes three components: a framework for mapping teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms; Pedagogic interaction analysis shows that the structure of language shifts within and between speaker's roles; and analysis of the pedagogic function of language shifts, as learning and teacher/student interactions unfold. The theoretical foundation for analysis is the model of language as a text-in-context developed in systemic functional linguistics. Stein-Smith also conducted research.

Merita Ismaili (2015) investigated "Teaching English in Multilingual Setting". The southeast European University (SEEU) is the only regional university that offers equal opportunities for both Albanian and Macedonian nationalities to study in their mother tongue or choose English as a medium of instruction. Students studying in SEEU come from diverse racial backgrounds. The Language Center, which exists within the university, provides classes in English to all students in all SEEU faculties, from general English to technical and ESP. Getting this mixture of teachers and pupils, teaching and studying English in this setting is a struggle for both sides. The most difficult problem

of teaching a foreign language (in our case English) is the question of teachers as to whether or not to use the first language of the learner. The data obtained for this paper was evaluated using quantitative and qualitative approaches. In conclusion, the findings that emerge from this study indicate that the careful and balanced use of L1 in English classes does not seem to affect students' exposure to the target language.

Garrote (2014) investigated “Second Language Learning in a Multilingual Classroom: Didactic Interaction Development”. A foreign language classroom is a space where various elements of interaction are involved in the teaching and learning process: teacher intervention, peer interaction, learning methodology, materials, classroom management, etc. However, when the classroom is multilingual, there is also a need to develop different strategies of action to promote the integration of all students and to ensure inclusiveness in the classroom and respect for cultural diversity. The aim of this paper is to reflect on these issues, demonstrate useful strategies and methodological tools in didactic interactions, and provide practical examples to bring to the classroom through teaching proposals for cooperative learning. The finding showed that the researcher has conducted a brief overview of the characteristics of the elements involved in teaching interactions in a multilingual learning context: teacher performance, interactions between students, teaching methodologies, adaptation materials, classroom management, and teaching strategies to promote integration in the classroom and respect cultural diversity. The purpose of this work is to reflect on this problem and provide practical examples to bring to class through teaching proposals for application in multilingual classrooms. Didactic interactions are presented as an important tool for achieving meaning construction in multilingual classrooms and cooperative learning is an ideal resource for students to be more involved in their own way of learning. Multilingual classrooms are still a challenge for some teachers, but the diversity of cultures and languages that exist within them is a great opportunity for personal enrichment, allowing direct contact with different realities and reflecting on their own culture from different perspectives.

Davila (2020) investigated “Multilingual Interactions and Learning in High School ESL Classrooms”. This article examines how high school peer and teacher-student interactions in high school English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms vary linguistically which results in changes in students' use of different languages and cultures. The data presented are from a 2-year communication ethnography that focuses on the language use of adolescent multilingual English learners in three ESL classrooms in the United States. The main languages of the study participants are French, Lingala, and Tshiluba, and the dominant language used by students in the classroom is Spanish. The data included

notes of peer group class interactions, individual and focus group interviews, and field notes from classroom observations. These findings reveal a gradual ideological and pragmatic shift among students in a focus from resenting the dominant use of Spanish by teachers and their peers during Year 1 of the study to using Spanish words and phrases during Year 2 for two different purposes: peer socialization and language learning. . English. This article concludes by highlighting the importance of paying attention to students' language experiences to harness metacognitive thinking, critical multilingual language awareness, and linguistic creativity.

Silva (2020) investigated “Multilingual Interactions and Code-Mixing in Northwest Amazoni”. Multilingualism in the Vaupés region of northwest Amazonia has attracted the attention of scholars for decades. This paper discusses the problems of code-switching and code-mixing in this area. The claim is often repeated that despite intense multilingualism, code-mixing does not occur. The findings showed that this study documents code-switching and code-mixing and has important implications for the general claims that have been made. The data is extracted from encounters between speakers of East Tukan languages who have separate ethnic affiliations but participate in a multilingual speech in violation of what is believed to be language norms banning code-mixing. The results contribute to the understanding of these people's linguistic practices and correct misconceptions about their linguistic behavior.

In short, the relation of this studies with the previous studies concerning the subject of the research. This research focused on the language used by the teacher and students in teaching and learning process. The first five researchers discussed multilingual interactions in the classroom while the current study observed the several languages used by teachers and students in class activities in the ongoing teaching and learning process.

### **C. METHODS**

This research employed a case study design to examine some questions which are addressed in this study. Gay (2006) defines that a case study is examination of specific phenomena such as a program, an event, a process, an institution, or a special group. There are several justifications that have supported the choice of a case study approach for this study. For example, Creswell (2007:73) argues that case study design is approach used when the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded system (case) and reports a case description and case based themes. Such as; single program or several programs may be selected for study.

The analysis of this classroom presentation is based on the framework of discourse analysis which relies on data recording, data transcription, data selection, and data interpretation. The classroom

recordings were transcribed into text in this research, and the texts were then translated into acts. The participants of this research are students of SMKN 5 Jeneponto. The study was conducted in August 2019. The participants in this research are grade X students at SMKN 5 Jeneponto. The researcher used a purposive sampling technique by taking 4 students at X TKJ, namely two high achievement students and two of low achievement students. They would be the object of the observation and interview. Besides X TKJ as a research sample, their English teacher also participated in the research.

To reduce the students' anxiety, the audio recording was used instead of video recording. In addition, recordings were conducted by the students using the recording function on their mobile phones. Overall there were 3 recordings taken from this research. The recording for each group lasted for one and a half hours. The researcher initially listened to the recordings. The data were then transcribed. Since the transcripts were long, the data were then selected for the purposes of this study. Then, the data is interpreted and evaluated in conversation extract formats. Relevant details as described and addressed in the extracts.

## **D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The ways of the teacher and the students interact in multilingual EFL classroom**

#### ***Beginning the Class***

Based on the data observation, the teacher started the teaching and learning process by greeting and introduce the material that will be present. After that, she also gave warming activities before explain the material.

Greeting is one of the best way to begin the class because it is an act of communication in which human beings intentionally make their presence known to each other, to show attention, and suggest a type of relationship between individuals or groups of people coming in contact with each other. The following conversation illustrate the process of greeting in the greeting in the classroom:

#### **EXTRACT 1**

- T : okay, well. Assalamu alaikum Wr.Wb!  
Ss : Waalaikumussalam Wr.Wb  
T : good morning, everybody! Semangat pagi.... pagi....  
Ss : Good morning, Maam !  
T : How are you Guys.....  
Ss : Fine maam.....

(Observation on 1st meeting)

In the beginning, greetings can make students feel comfortable before starting the lesson. Sometimes the teacher starts with a roll call without greetings before the lesson begins. Introducing the material is learning from experience or enabling others to do so. Introducing the material before begin the class is any process of facilitating learning from experience for others asking question, giving feedback, or exploring alternative explanations.

### ***Learning Process***

On the learning process based on the observation, the teacher explain the material in English and also combine with Indonsian and makasarese. The teacher was teaching the student by using textbook.

The teacher was explained the material to student by giving examples. She invited a pair of students and let the students to introducing each other by reading the material that had written before in the white board. The following conversation illustrate the process of taching and learning in the classroom.

#### EXTRACT 4

- T : okay, because last week kita sudah belajar tentang (*we have learnt about* )  
introducing self, it means you have understood about the point that we should  
know when we meet someone new. Jadi, kalian sudah bisami to' introducing  
friend juga? (*so, can you inducing fiend also?*)
- S1 : O Bu' yang di papan tulisji toh di baca?  
(*Maam, only read the text in the whiteboard?*)
- T : iyo, majumi cepat dua orangko. Baca itu percakapannya.  
(*yess, both of you go ahead. Read the conversation*)
- S2 : Teaja' nakke gang, anu susah bacanna bela, i kaumo Ayu.  
(*I don't know. It is difficult to read in English. How about Ayu*)
- S1 : ambamo, na bantu jaki Ibu.  
(*come on, maam will help us*)

(Observation on 1st meeting)

### ***Closing the Class***

On the closing the class, the eacher close the by using by using multilingual interaction also because it is the point of learning process the teacher explain more about the material and make the

resume for the material. The conversations below illustrate the using of multilingual by the teacher and also the student.

EXTRACT 6

T: so today, we have learnt about how to introduce our friend. Artinya, dalam pembahasan ini kita sudah bisa memperkenalkan teman kita yang ada dalam kelas ini. So the point is same with when you introduce your self, yang membedakan hanya pronounnya. Punna bura'ne pake he atau his, punna baine she atau her. Okay ?

Ss : Yes Mam...

T : next. perhatikan itu. task three

(Observation on 1<sup>st</sup> meeting)

EXTRACT 7

T : siapa yang bisa rangkum kembali pelajaran hari ini? Please retell the material that you get today. Anyone can answer my question?

S5 : anu mem, about present tense. Atau sesuatu yang dilakukan secara berulang-ulang. Terus pola kalimatnya menggunakan subjek + verb1+ object. Apa anjo poeng di...

S6 : ituee, yang adayya juga do atau does.

S5 : o iyye tawwa mem, kalau negative or interrogative sentence pakai do or does. I, you, they, we pake do. Sedangkan she, he, it pakai does. Toh mem?

T : oke betul... and do not forget to finish your homework in the next meeting. Tugasnya jangan lupa ya!

(Observation on 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting)

In the way of closing the class, the teacher requested the students to review and make summary of the material. After that, the teacher told the purpose of the learning and then gave an assignment for the next meeting.

According to the extracts above, the teacher was proved in involving their students in multilingual classroom interaction. This finding also was supported by the interview. As described during the interview session, it become clear that the teacher who participated in the study mentioned that the large proportion of the lesson should be carried out in multilingual interaction. In general, she appears



to have made very deliberate decisions as to what language she in her teaching process. This type can be called a highly advocating teacher (HAT) who advocates use of multilingual interaction and endeavor to find alternative ways to use first language or second language during teaching the foreign language.

Based on the findings, teachers and students use several languages in L1 / L2 terms or even foreign languages. The use of this language is caused by several students' abilities in mastering foreign languages. In line with (Davilla 2020), she stated that in class activities, the most important thing is to pay attention to students' language experiences to take advantage of metacognitive thinking, multilingual critical language awareness, and linguistic creativity. In addition, the findings of this study reveal the importance of teachers' attention to how their own language practices can strengthen local linguistic hierarchies and alienate speakers of non-dominant languages. The findings also show that students' language experiences, not only related to their target and native language, can be used to take advantage of metacognitive thinking, critical multilingual language awareness.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Some people in this context are teachers and students often use several languages that are used in the classroom. Enabling them to create the best possible learning atmosphere. Some additional classroom activities can be provided by teachers and students in general using their local language. Some teachers use different methods to teach the form of greeting. Among the different methods, explicit teaching, implicit teaching, reading text, using context including calling terms, using contexts that are directly related to this research. Learning greeting terms can be authentic material to be taught to students. Students can understand the types of calling terms and their reasons. Students can try to understand the language used by the community, especially in the application of greeting terms in their daily life.

Multi-language teaching and learning involve the use of more than two languages as a medium of teaching. It provides subject-matter and language learning experience in three languages. Multi-language education refers to educational programs where native languages, second languages, and foreign languages are taught as subject matter and are used as teaching media for academic subjects rather than just the language itself. Then, the term multilingual education is defined as the use of Makassarese, Indonesian, and English in the teaching and learning process and measuring student understanding.

The overall impression of the research is that both teachers and students must have positive attitudes towards using L1 in English classes. However, this attitude depends on the ability of teachers to speak to students that are not respected by L1 students. In such situations, teachers choose to use the policy only in the English language, enabling students to interact with each other in the L1. So, when students try to say something but find it difficult to express themselves, they can say in their own language, and teachers can help them to pose questions, to make students feel less strenuous.

The target language is present in all classes of observations, and all teachers stated that they use the mother tongue only in a "state of emergency". They were allowed to use L1 in the classroom, but the use of L1 is limited only to the purposes mentioned earlier in the study. In addition, it is the responsibility of the teacher to limit the use of L1, and they have to be selective when And the extent to which they use the language of the indigenous learners ' in English class, so it is not detrimental to the acquisition of the target language. The study confirmed that teachers of English use L1 during the teaching classes

In addition, there are three steps in the teaching process with multilingual class interactions, they start classes, the learning process, and close the class. These results also show that the way teachers are classified into highly advocating teachers who advocate the use of multilingual interactions and try to find alternative ways to use L1 / L2 / FL during class teaching.

To be a good multilingual learner, the first thing is that students must have an interest in the target language. They must be active, tolerant, and come out to the target language. Next, they must have a positive learning strategy. They must practice often and use language in real communication. So, their motivation and self-esteem must be raised. They must reduce frustration and anxiety to the lowest level.

The researchers hope that this kind of research can be continued by future researchers to find out more phenomena in sociolinguistic studies or cross-cultural pragmatics. In addition, it is important to know the variation of address terms used throughout Indonesia and it is hoped that it will become a source for other researchers who wish to conduct research on greeting terms in other languages.

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