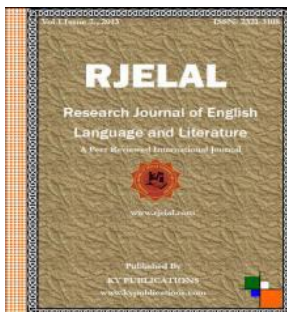RESEARCH ARTICLE

TEACHERS' USE OF CLASSROOM LANGUAGE: SOME FINDINGS FROM A BC TRAINING COURSE

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ABSTRACT

This research seeks to obtain an insight into teachers' use of classroom language. In particular, it aims to describe the types of classroom language that are frequently or rarely used by teachers in their English teaching. Further, it also intends to identify reasons underpinning teachers' responses with respect to their use of classroom language. To approach this study, a mixed-method design was employed with questionnaire, semi-structured interview and observation used as the means for collecting the information. Fifty participants were recruited to respond to the questionnaire and a few of them including one trainer were also interviewed. The findings of this study suggest that most teachers were not well aware of the importance of frequently using various types of classroom language prior to participating in the training. Overall, the study suggests that classroom language training gives an important impact to the way teachers use their classroom language in their EFL classrooms.

Keywords: Classroom language, frequency, English usage, quality.

INTRODUCTION

The success of English language learning in schools is highly influenced by the quality of English language teaching in these schools. One of the main factors which can determine whether or not a quality teaching can happen is the ways teachers talk and interact with their students (Cook, 2000; Parrish, 2004; Price, 2003; Weddel, 2008; Xiao-yan, 2006; Yilmaz, 2011). To this end, teachers become the key players who can positively or negatively influence the process of students' second or foreign language learning (Kavaliauskienė & Anusienė, 2008).

The influence of teachers' talk or classroom language on students' language learning has been reported in a number of studies (e.g. Brown, 2001; Price, 2003; Szendrıi, 2010; Xiao-yan,

2006) and most claim that proper use of classroom language will positively influence students' learning and vice versa. These conditions imply that teachers should mind their use of classroom language or talk in their teaching.

Despite the fact that teachers' classroom language use has gained attention in the past decades, little is known about how Indonesian English teachers optimize their use of classroom language in their English language teaching (ELT). The lack of such information has resulted in a gap between English teaching literature and practice. Thus, the conduct of a study which looks at and critically analyzes teachers' use of classroom language, particularly within an Indonesian situation, is a necessity. Therefore, this study is essential not only that it addresses the gap

between research and practice, but also it better informs the stakeholders about the quality of teachers' use of classroom language and of course their English teaching. Then, the research questions of this study are formulated as follows:

1. How often do teachers use each type (from ten types) of classroom language in their English classrooms?

2. Are there any differences in the use of classroom language between teachers who have participated in classroom language training and those who have not?

3. Also, are there any differences in teachers' use of classroom language before, during and after participating in classroom language training?

4. What makes teachers always, often, occasionally, rarely or never use each type of classroom language?

5. How well has the training impacted teachers' use of classroom language?

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

This theoretical background section informs teachers about classroom language aspects they should know. It also highlights some past research dealing with classroom language use.

Teachers' Classroom Language Use

Classroom language or often referred to as teacher talk is generally understood as "the language typically used by foreign language teachers in the process of teaching" (Szendrıi, 2010, p. 39). Issues of teachers' classroom language use have been reported in a number of studies (See, for example, Brown, 2001; Szendrıi, 2010; Weddel, 2008; Xiao-yan, 2006; Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010) and all agreed on the importance of using the appropriate instructions in an EFL or ESL classroom.

Brown (2001), for example, stresses on the need for teachers to mind their talk time. He argues that "teacher talk should not occupy the major proportion of a class hour; otherwise they are probably not giving students enough opportunity to talk" (p. 99). The amount of time spent by teachers for talking in the classroom can determine the success or failure of English language teaching (Xiao-yan, 2006). Thus, it is important for teachers to limit their talk time and let their students dominate the class (Romero, 2009). Romero finds that students can become more responsible with their learning if they are given enough opportunity to interact with others in English.

Simplifying the instructions is another aspect of classroom language that teachers should be able to do. The aim of doing this is to ensure that learners, particularly those at the beginning stage of their English study, can follow teachers' instructions clearly (Holland & Shortall, 2000; Ishiguro, 1986). Teachers, for instance, can simplify their instructions through "a simplification of speech in terms of grammar and vocabulary, exaggerated pronunciation, a slower pace of talk, self-repetition and more frequent and longer pauses" (Chaudron, cited in Szendrıi, 2010, p. 40) (see also Price, 2003). In addition to allowing learners to understand instruction easily, simplifying the talk or instructions will also open the opportunity for teachers and learners to interact actively in English. Without extensive interactions, it will be very difficult for learners to acquire English effectively (Bradshaw, 2005; Tsui, 1995; Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010). In short, the interaction which is defined by Yanfen and Yuqin (2010, p. 77) as "a collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas, between two or more people" is very crucial in the process of foreign or second language acquisition and one way to do this is through the simplification of teachers' instructional use (Long, 1996; Parrish, 2004).

Some researchers (e.g., Butzkamm, 2003; Szendrıi, 2010), however, remind the teachers not to be misunderstood with the idea of simplification of instructions. They explain that simplification here is not merely translating the ideas or messages from the target language (L2) to learners' own language. According to them, teachers may use L1 in their teaching only for dealing with difficult situations. In other words, the decision to use L1 and L2 should be proportional, depending on "factors such as the target language competence of the students, the teacher's ability to speak L1, and the type of tasks" (Szendrıi, 2010, p. 41). So, the main message here is still that learners should be given extensive English exposure in the classroom.

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Knop (n.d) also sees the issue of target language use or English by teachers as a vital element in the process of foreign language acquisition. He maintains that "the more foreign language input learners are exposed to, the greater will be their proficiency" (p.1). Knop observes that nearly all English teachers are well aware of this idea, but finds that many of them still dominate their teaching with their own language. This unfortunate situation (for students) may be the result of teachers' poor English proficiency. Yilmaz (2011) has proven this in his study where he found that there was a significant correlation between the quality of teachers' language use and their English proficiency. So, teachers should never stop improving their English even if they are no longer in their teacher training college.

Overall, the literature has suggested that teachers should mind their use of classroom language because its appropriate and inappropriate use has a clear impact on students' English acquisition. Aspects of classroom language use that they should consider include, among others, the amount of their talk time, simplifications of their English instructions, particularly if dealing with learners with low level of English mastery, proper use of L1 and extensive use of English in classrooms.

Past Research on Teachers' Classroom Language Use

A study by Flores (2001) looking at the quality of teachers' use of classroom language in Virginia found that many students who were at the beginning ESL level had problems with their teacher's instructions. The results of focus group discussions conducted by Flores indicated that students wanted their teachers to simplify their language use or avoid using complicated instructions. The students contended that they could not understand the words used by teachers and they had a feeling that learning another language was just too difficult for them. In other words, they became distracted and less motivated due to teachers' inappropriate language use.

Yilmaz (2011) in his research looking at the link between teachers' English proficiency and their instructional strategies found that there was a significant correlation between teachers' English proficiency and their ability to use classroom language properly. He further stresses the importance for teachers to always advance their English knowledge because only through which they can then become more confident in their teaching.

Szendrıi (2010) conducted a study looking at a college English teacher's classroom language use or talk. In this study, he aimed to analyze the ratio of teacher talk and student talk as well as the use of mother tongue in the classroom. The class observed was an ESP (English for specific purpose) class where students learned English for tourism. It was evident in this study that classroom instructions were still dominated by the teacher (71%) and not by the students (29%). Then, L1 or Hungarian in this context was overly used by the teacher. Overall, the study suggested that the teacher of this research should minimize their talk and optimize her use of English. Also concluded was that the findings of this ESP setting were not different from the findings of research conducted in the English for general context.

Romero (2009) performed a study aiming to analyze a teacher's classroom language use. The observation was conducted in 2009 at a non-government school (for adult learners) in Granada. The analysis of teachers' use of classroom language proved that the teacher of this research "always spoke English to the students and (the students) were able to follow the lesson correctly" (p. 21). Romero also found that this teacher could well adjust his language use with the level his students' English proficiency. As a result, the students could understand all the instructions clearly. Overall, it was concluded that the teacher could create an excellent classroom atmosphere which enabled his students to learn English effectively.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To meet the aims and answer the research questions formulated in this study, a mix-method (or the combination of quantitative and qualitative) research design was used. There are two main reasons why this type of design was adopted. First, each research paradigm (qualitative or quantitative) has its weaknesses. Quantitative research, for example, is often criticized for its lack

of depth and therefore unable to obtain deep information about the phenomena being investigated. Thus, for an interpretive researcher, a qualitative paradigm is the type of research paradigm that a researcher should choose when he or she plans to do research. With this type of research, a researcher can gain a deep insight into the research phenomena. Similarly, a qualitative researcher will also be criticized by a quantitative researcher who claims that such a type of research is not valid. This is so because the researcher is using a subjective tool for collecting data. A research should be objective and free from bias and thus, this should be in the form of quantitative research. Realizing that each type of paradigms has weaknesses, this study, therefore, used a mix-method design. Second, it was expected that with the use of this mix-method, this study would obtain much more comprehensive information about the phenomena under investigation. That is, not only that it could involve many participants (for the purpose of making generalizations), but it also enabled the researcher to obtain a deep understanding about research issues.

Setting and Participants:

The study was conducted in Indonesia. It is chosen because not much is known as to how teachers use their English in the classrooms.

The participants of this research are mainly English teachers currently teaching at elementary, junior and senior high schools in a number of cities in Indonesia and also one classroom language trainer. Two types of English teachers were invited to take part in this study, that is, those who have been trained by the British Council (BC) trainer/s on classroom language and those who have never had such opportunity. The two types of teachers are involved to firstly make a comparison with their use of classroom language in their English teaching and secondly to evaluate whether training on classroom language has given positive changes on teachers' use of classroom language. To select the participants, especially those who have participated in classroom language training, the researcher sought support from BC office in Jakarta. As a result, a number of teachers could voluntarily complete the online questionnaire. Then, to recruit the participants who

have not yet had the opportunity to join the classroom language training, the researcher sent emails and contacted them by phones. For this purpose, the contact details of teachers (e.g. contact numbers or emails) were obtained through a number of ways, such as English teachers' mailing list groups and schools' web addresses. Overall, fifty English teachers were available to complete the questionnaires where 28 of them had participated in classroom language training managed by BC and the other (22 people) had not had such an opportunity yet. Also, one classroom language trainer was interviewed some time during the execution of classroom language training.

Tools for Collecting Data

This research used three tools for data collection, namely questionnaire, semi-structured interview and observation. Firstly, the researcher prepared a questionnaire to gain information about the frequency of teachers' use of classroom language. The formulation of questionnaire items was guided by the framework (or types) of classroom language that were developed by the British Council. These ten types of classroom language include *starting and finishing a lesson, giving instructions, asking questions and eliciting, general classroom management language, correction, presenting new language, developing confidence, pronunciation, spoken model and using L1*. Before administering the questionnaire, the researcher worked with several teachers and an experienced researcher to discuss the wordings of the items or questions. The participants of this study were then requested to choose one of the likert-scale responses provided in each item on the questionnaire (Always = 1, Often = 2, Occasionally = 3, Rarely = 4, Never = 5).

Then, several teachers representing one group and the other some representing another were interviewed. The purpose of interviews was to identify reasons why they, for example, rarely use certain types of classroom language during their teaching. In addition to that, the interviews were also done to obtain deep information about things associated with teachers' use of classroom language. One classroom language trainer was also interviewed to obtain some ideas about teachers' use of classroom language. The interviews were

individually performed using means or ways that are convenient for the participants and also the researcher (e.g. face to face interviews or phone interviews). The interviews were recorded using a digital recorder. Lastly, to have a good understanding of the atmosphere of the classroom language training, classroom observation was also preformed. Here, important information identified during the training could be noted.

Strategy for Data Analysis

Data from the questionnaire were entered into and analyzed using SPSS. Firstly, the frequency of participants' responses (i.e. their individual response to each item in the questionnaire) was calculated and then the trend of their answers would be analyzed by calculating the mean score (or *M*) of their responses. As explained earlier, the responses of the questionnaires would be from always to never and to enable the process of statistical analysis, numbers were assigned to each response (always = 1, often = 2, occasionally = 3, rarely = 4, never = 5). So, the range of mean score would be from 1 to 5.

Then, inferential statistical analysis with t-test calculation (in addition to the descriptive statistics) would also be employed to examine whether there were significant differences between groups or not.

Then, data from interviews and observations were analyzed to search for important themes. These themes were then used as the headings in the reporting of the findings. In supporting the arguments, several important narratives or chunks taken from the interview data were incorporated. During this process, codes were used so that the participants' credentials would not be disclosed.

RESULTS

Analysis of Quantitative Data

The findings presented in this section were obtained from online and paper questionnaires with the focus on addressing questions 1 and 2 of this research study.

Firstly, the questionnaire data showed that teachers involved in this study were mostly good at practicing the first type of classroom language (i.e. starting and finishing the lesson) (*M* < 2). Despite this positive mode, significant differences still

occurred between the first group (i.e. teachers who have done the classroom language training) and those of the second (i.e. teachers who have not done the classroom language training) in terms of the frequency of greeting the students (*p* = .000), the frequency of asking students' feeling towards the lesson (*p* = .002) and the frequency of praising the class (*p* = .001). These findings revealed that teachers of the first group could practice starting and finishing the class activity more frequently and perhaps better than those of the second.

Next, data about teachers' use of instruction or the second type of classroom language in this research (i.e. giving instructions) showed that teachers participating in this study preferred using short instructions to long ones. This is evident in their response to the question *"how often do you use long English instructions"* where most claimed that they rarely used them in their class (*M* of group 1 = 4.2; *M* of group 2= 3.9). More positively, all the teachers of this study used English instructions in their teaching instead of Indonesian ones (*M* < 2).

This research also observed another positive result in relation to the third type of classroom language (i.e. asking questions and eliciting). Both groups of teachers were found to be frequently asking questions to their students in English instead of in Indonesian (*M < 2*). They also saw the importance of linking these questions to the topic to be or being presented in the class and therefore they ticked 'yes' to the question *" are the questions related to the topic of the lesson"* (M of yes < 1.2). Eliciting the meaning of words or phrases was also emphasized in this research and the findings suggested that teachers of this study often performed this kind of activity in the class (*M* of group 1 = 1.79; *M* of group 2 = 2.05). Then, general classroom management language is the fourth type of classroom language that was examined in this research. The study found that the majority of teachers representing both groups claimed to have set the rules (e.g. what students can or cannot do in the classrooms) in their English classes (*M* < 1.1).

With respect to the next type of classroom language (i.e. correcting learners' English), the study revealed that teachers of this study was not yet in agreement whether this kind of activity

should be part of their teaching. It is evident in the data that a number of these teachers still responded 'no' to the question *"do you correct your learners when they make mistakes (e.g. wrong pronunciation, wrong grammar, etc)"* (*M* of group 1 = 1.36; *M* of group 2 = 1.41). Their responses to this item were, however, not in consistent with the responses they made to the other item pointing at the same information. When asked about the frequency of correction they made to their learners, both groups claimed they often did this in their teaching (*M* of group 1 = 1.93; *M* of group 2 = 2.18).

Then, teachers of the first group were generally better in performing the next type of classroom language (i.e., presenting new language) than the teachers of the second group. For example, when questioned about the frequency of using pictures for presenting new language, they indicated that they often (M = 1.89) used this kind of teaching aid in their teaching while the other group did not use them quite often (M = 2.32). The use of translations for presenting the new language was also more frequently performed by teachers of the first group (M = 2.07) than those of the second (M = 2.18). Then, this study also observed that there was a significant difference in terms of real object use by teachers of both groups (p < .000) where it was noted that the first group used real objects more often (M = 2.25) than their counterparts (M = 2.68). These first group teachers could also use gestures and acting to present new language more often (M = 2.11) than the second group (M = 2.59). And another significant difference was also noted with respect to the use of opposite words for presenting new language (p < .000) where teachers of the first group used this kind of teaching approach more often (M = 2.21) than those of the second (M = 3.18).

The quantitative data also revealed that both groups were well aware of the importance of developing students' confidence in their English learning process. Thus, they all often incorporated this type of classroom language in their teaching (M of group 1 = 1.46 and M of group 2 = 1.36). Then, most of these teachers taught pronunciation to their learners too (M of both groups < 1.3). From a

number of expressions for teaching pronunciation asked in the questionnaire, it was found that the expression "how often do you pronounce this word" was more frequently used by teachers of the first group (M = 2.11). Whereas, the expression "is this the same or different sound" was more favored among the teachers belonging to the second group (M = 2.64). Despite this reality, the first group teachers were still more superior (in terms of their frequency of using expressions for teaching pronunciation) than their counterpart.

Spoken model is the next type of classroom language examined in this study, with particular emphasis on the use of stories for teaching English. The findings suggested that most teachers of this study were not accustomed to using stories in their teaching (M of group 1 = 1.36 and M of group 2 = 1.41). There were only a few of them who used stories in their teaching. Despite their rare use of stories, the majority of the teachers believed that the stories could be used to help improve students' listening skill (M of group 1 = 1.89; M of group 2 = 1.95). And they also agreed that stories could be used for presenting new vocabulary or structures in context (M of group 1 = 1.79; M of group 2 = 2), for improving students' confidence in using English (M of group 1 = 1.64; M of group 2 = 2.23) and for practicing their reading, writing and speaking skill (M of group 1.71 = 1.64; M of group 2 = 1.91).

Finally, with regard to the last type of classroom language (i.e. using L1), both groups still often used Indonesian language in their English classroom (M of group 1 = 2.07; M of group 2 = 1.82). The mean scores indicated that teachers of the second group used L1 more often than those of the first. The findings also showed that the second group seemed to prefer using L1 to English for all kinds of situations asked in the questionnaire such as telling the class about the weekend (M = 1.45), checking learners' understanding (M = 1.45), giving instructions for a new activity (M = 1.55), explaining the word 'hot' (M = 1.73) and correcting students (M = 1.77), whereas teachers of the other group used English quite often mostly for explaining a complicated word (M = 1.54).

Analysis of Qualitative Data

The findings presented in this section were obtained from observations and interviews with several participants and the focus was to address questions 3, 4 and 5 of this research study. From the analysis of qualitative data, several themes could be identified. They are teachers' use of classroom language before, during and after the training, the use of classroom language versus the curriculum, underestimation of students' ability, and in need of regular professional development and further support.

Teachers' Use of Classroom Language before, during and after the Training

Teachers who participated in the training of classroom language interviewed some time after the training indicated that they used some types of classroom language such as starting and finishing the lesson and general classroom management more frequently now. In one interview, two teachers, for example, said:

The master trainer has shown me good examples of using appropriate classroom language during the training. The things that I have learnt include starting and finishing the lesson and the language for classroom management. I use them frequently in my teaching. To be honest, before the training, I rarely incorporate them. (Teacher 1)

I have to say that my use of classroom language has changed quite significantly after the training. For example, now I often start and end my class with the expressions that I learned in the training. I have to thank the trainer for giving us such a wonderful learning experience. (Teacher 3)

Another teacher participating in the training also had a similar comment with the above teachers indicating her improvement in using classroom language. She, however, raised her concern over the no further support provided for them. She thought that it would be more effective if the teachers were given the opportunity to be evaluated (with regard to their use of classroom language). By doing this, they could then know whether their use of classroom language instructions had been effective or not.

Notes taken during the observations (of the training) proved that teachers participating in the training were so enthusiastic practicing classroom language instructions introduced by the trainer throughout the training days. This enthusiasm, however, could be viewed only after the trainer showed them how to use the instructions effectively in an English classroom and impressed them with her excellent use of English (with very few Indonesian words used). Before that, a rather contrasting atmosphere could be well spotted right at the start of the training (i.e. on the first training day) where some teachers were not seen that motivated with the training activity. They seemed to underestimate the trainer's quality and the training materials she would deliver. The same impression was also expressed by the trainer who claimed that it was not uncommon to see that kind of facial expressions at the beginning of the training. She said that most participants expected that the trainer would be someone coming from an English speaking country such as England or Australia. They were a bit unhappy when they knew that it was not this type of person delivering the training. Again, this kind of situation soon changed when the trainer could lead the training effectively.

The Use of Classroom Language versus the Curriculum

It could be identified in the data that several teachers interviewed concerning their perceptions of their use of classroom language before attending the training claimed that they thought that using classroom language would take much of their time for teaching or covering all the materials as outlined in the curriculum. So, they did not really incorporate some types of classroom language in their teaching. This is, for example, evident in the comment given by one of the teachers who said, "I am afraid that I would miss the curriculum target if I use classroom language extensively in my class" (Teacher 2).

Nevertheless, this wrong understanding soon changed after they were informed by the trainer that the use of classroom language would not negatively affect their curriculum target. Conversely, its use could help their students acquire English more effectively and faster because they would be exposed to English instructions frequently in their classroom. During the interview, one teacher, for instance, commented:

After attending the training, now I know that classroom language should always be part of my teaching. Before this, I thought that classroom language was one of the materials that I should teach to my students. What I mean by this is that I would need one or two meetings to teach classroom language to my students and this is the only chance I and my students have to talk about classroom language. In fact, I should use it every time I teach English. (Teacher 4)

Enriching the ideas previously expressed by her fellow teachers, one participant, prior to her attendance to the training, admitted that she would claim that her students attain success if they could do all the tasks in exams well. So, she did not really bother with her use of classroom language in the classroom. What was so important for her was whether or not her students could complete their written tasks successfully. If the students could successfully do the tasks in both school and national exams, she would then be considered as a successful teacher. Thus, she emphasized her teaching most on the completion of exercises. Again, this teacher did not consider classroom language as something that should be taken seriously while she was teaching. However, after listening to the explanation given by the trainer and seeing her classroom language demonstrations during the training, she admitted that she had done a big mistake for not using classroom language frequently and effectively in her teaching. She also confessed that many of her students were unable to use simple English instructions despite the fact that they had been taught a lot of English expressions and grammar. She was well aware that this problem was likely to happen because her students were rarely exposed to English instructions and did not do a lot of practices when learning this language in the classroom.

Underestimation of Students' Ability

Too much exposure of Indonesian language while learning English is another big problem faced by students in the context of this study. Some teachers participating in this research study contended that they did not use all classroom language types frequently in their classroom because they thought that their students would not

understand their instructions. Two of them during the interviews, for example, explained:

I am now teaching English to elementary school students and these students are all still at the beginning level of their English learning. So, because of this, I limit my use of English instructions when teaching them. The expressions that I use quite regularly only things like 'good morning/afternoon', 'how are you', 'I am fine' and 'see you tomorrow'. (Teacher 5)

I used to try incorporating a lot of English instructions in my class, but to be honest I found it a bit frustrating because many of my students did not understand the instructions. So, since then, I used a lot of Indonesian instructions in my class. (Teacher 2)

The above information was not totally true. The results of observation of teachers' teaching practices (as part of classroom language training activities) showed that a few of these teachers were not proficient in their use of English. This notion was also supported by the trainer who suggested that around two teachers were rather passive in the training due to their lack of English proficiency. So, it could be well justified that teachers' preference for using Indonesian instructions to English was also caused by their poor mastery of English.

In Need of Regular Professional Development and Further Support

It was stated clearly in the interviews that teachers participating in this study had not been in the trainings for improving their English teaching skills for a quite long time. They admitted that they required regular professional development activities such as the one offered by The British Council. They realized that they did not receive enough practices when they were students of teacher training colleges.

Then, in one interview, one of the teachers spoke about the teacher working group or known as KKG (Kelompok Kerja Guru). She explained that in this working group, teachers who taught at schools locating in the same sub-district organized a monthly meeting to discuss all matters related to their English teaching. She, however, claimed that this monthly activity was not effective for some reasons. Firstly, the meeting was not attended by

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an experienced English trainer or teacher. According to her, it would be more effective if this meeting could be filled with training activities facilitated by a teacher or trainer who was known for his or her excellence in teaching English. She thought that learning from a model was a good way for enhancing their English teaching skills. Secondly, the meeting was also not yet effective because the teachers did not see the chance for observing one another's teaching as something that was worth doing. She explained that observing someone's teaching was a useful activity because by doing so, a teacher could adopt good teaching practices that he or she saw during the classroom observation. Lastly, the meeting was not that effective yet because the attending teachers talked to each other in Indonesian and not in English. According to her, communicating in English among the English teachers was really important not only for improving their English proficiency but also for making them always aware that English should frequently be used in their English teaching activity.

Some teachers of this study also questioned about the other types of classroom language which had not been taught to them. They explained that during the three-day training, the trainer only covered three types of classroom language, namely starting and finishing the lesson, giving instructions and general classroom management language from ten types that they should learn. So, after the training, they asked this matter to the trainer including to the organizer. In one interview with one of the trainers, it could be concluded that the main reason for the trainer not covering all the ten types of classroom language in three days training was due to the fact that teachers participating in the training should be given some practical opportunities to use appropriate classroom language. So, according to her, three days were not adequate at all to cover all types of classroom language. The trainer also explained that the teachers who were interested in undertaking further classroom language training should contact The British Council for its approval.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The quantitative findings of this study have shown a positive trend indicating that the majority of participants have incorporated most types of classroom language in their English teaching with the exception of spoken model (with the use of stories). Drawing from this general information, it can be understood that classroom language is not something new to the teachers of this study. This also shows that the instructions that teachers deal with in the case of classroom language are the ones that are integral to their teaching.

Statistical data also record some differences in teachers' frequency of classroom language use between those who have undertaken classroom language training and those who have not. Generally, the teachers with classroom language training experience are able to use most types of classroom language more frequently than their counterparts. This situation explains that this sort of training can positively impact on teachers' frequency of use. This claim is also supported by the teachers who have completed the training saying that this particular training has made them become more aware of the importance of using classroom language properly and they can also observe some changes in their classroom language use in terms of quality and frequency (or quantity) before and after the training.

Explorations of participants' views (through interviews and observations) regarding their use of classroom language are able to reveal some important reasons as to what makes teachers less frequently incorporate classroom language in their teaching. Issues of curriculum, underestimation of students' English ability, overuse of L1 and teachers' English proficiency are the examples of reasons that are well recorded in this study. Some of these findings (e.g., overuse of L1, students' English ability and teachers' English proficiency), in fact, confirm the findings of previous research (e.g., Szendrıi, 2010; Yilmaz, 2011).Whereas, the correlation between the issue of curriculum and teachers' use of classroom language is considered to be a new finding in this area of research. This research has noted that teachers of this study concern so much with the coverage of materials as specified in the curriculum and think that the frequent use of classroom language will negatively affect their teaching in terms of meeting the curriculum target. The teachers involved in this study are only a few from

many others with the same profession (i.e. teaching English) throughout the country. It can be imagined how big the negative impact this problem may cause if many English teachers across the nation demonstrate a similar kind of understanding. Surely, classroom language will not be used in the classroom extensively and effectively and as a result, learners will not hear a lot of English instructions from their teachers and of course will have very few opportunities to talk in English in the classroom. In fact, as previously suggested, to acquire English effectively, learners need to be given a lot of opportunities to talk in English including with teachers (Bradshaw, 2005; Tsui, 1995; Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010).

Then, teachers' decision to adjust their level of classroom language use with learners' English ability or competence may be justified and such a decision is well supported by other researchers including Szendrıi (2010) and Chaudron (1988) who suggest that this kind of action is important to be done as a way to ensure that learners can understand teachers' instructions clearly. However, it is evident in the data that teachers participating in this study did not simplify their language use. Rather, they said their instructions using their mother tongue or Indonesian. Such an approach is, in fact, not recommended because they will limit their learners to expose themselves in English extensively. Mother tongue or L1 may only be used for dealing with difficult situations (Butzkamm, 2003). In other words, its use should be minimized in an English classroom. So, clearly, classroom language experts have suggested that teachers should not underestimate their learners' ability to understand their instructions. Even when dealing with beginners of English, they are highly recommended to dominate their instructions in English and not in their own language. The aim of doing so, as previously explained and to confirm, is to allow their learners perform interactions in English (including with their teachers) extensively (see, for example, Tsui, 1995; Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010).

The next reason (i.e. overuse of L1) may be linked to the previous reason (i.e. underestimation of students' English). However, this matter may also be associated with other factors such as teachers'

poor English proficiency, lack of sense of responsibility or commitment towards students' learning and heavy teaching workload. The case of teachers' poor English proficiency, also noted in this research as one of the reasons hindering teachers from using classroom language properly and frequently, seems to be strange because logically an English teacher should be the one who is good or proficient in English. This unique problem somehow happens, particularly within the context of English teaching in Indonesia. Such a matter can eventually be anticipated well in advance if the processes of pre-service teachers' training and English teachers' recruitment are professionally performed. These processes can include things such as ensuring the quality of pre-service teachers' trainers or lecturers, curriculum, resources, and the pre-service teachers admitted in the teacher training college as well as controlling the quality of stages (e.g., evidence of English proficiency, evidence of teaching competence, etc) involved in the recruitment of English teachers. All of these need to be done in an expectation that only top quality English teachers will be produced and recruited.

Lack of sense of responsibility or commitment towards students' learning is also likely to be the cause of teachers' reluctance to frequently and properly incorporate all types of classroom language in their teaching. This phenomenon is presented in this discussion because of the fact that a number of teachers in this study brought the issue of focusing their English teaching on exam-taking strategy (mostly in the form of written test) rather than on students' communicative performance. If teachers are successful in making their students perform well in exams (as indicated by their fine score achievement), they will then be praised by the school administrator and vice versa. Meanwhile, if their focus is merely on students' communicative performance and, to some extent, is successful in making their students use (basic) English communicatively but fails to help them achieve good scores in exams, they will then be considered as not successful in their teaching. So, teachers, in this study context, need to have a good commitment towards their students' learning. That

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is, they may focus their teaching on the already formulated curriculum, but at the same time, their students also need their support through their frequent and proper use of all types of classroom language in their teaching.

Then, teachers' heavy teaching load is also assumed in this discussion as one of the possible reasons which may prevent teachers from frequently and properly using the classroom language. This issue was identified by Marwan (2009), as evident in his study looking at the issue of teachers' workload and their EFL teaching quality, as one of the main problems faced by English teachers in Indonesia. According to him, teachers should not be given too many teaching hours or classes because if so, they will then not be able to show their best teaching approaches to their students. In the case of classroom language use, teachers are likely to limit their use of English if they are aware that they still have some other classes that they have to teach on the same day. In short, teachers' should be provided with reasonable workload.

Regular professional development activities are also an important issue addressed by teachers of this study. These teachers are absolutely right that regular trainings should be part of their profession. The users, in this case the office of education and schools, cannot merely rely on the knowledge and skills that teachers have attained during their study at teacher training college. They of course still need to be supported with adequate trainings. New teaching approaches keep emerging along with the fast development of information and technology. Therefore, teachers should be well informed of these new approaches. Then, the KKG or teacher working group should be strengthened. Its existence is really important as a medium for English teachers to share ideas including discussing the current trends in field of English teaching with other teachers in the region. Occasionally, teachers can also do classroom observations to see how their fellow English teachers perform their successful teaching. According to Burn (1999), "researching one's classrooms and teaching concepts is a realistic extension of professional practice" (p. 12).Guest speakers or experts (e.g. teacher trainer) can be

invited too to give teachers some insights concerning the improvement of English teaching quality. Again, this important forum for English teachers will certainly not be effective without the support from the related parties including the office of education and schools.

Another important issue addressed by teachers of this study is concerning the types of classroom language training provided by the British Council. This matter should be taken seriously by this well-known English training provider. There are some alternatives that can be chosen by BC to deal with this issue. Firstly, if BC has enough budget, it can then provide the teachers chosen to participate in a classroom language training with all types of classroom language, namely from starting and finishing the lesson to using L1. Should it choose so, three days will then not be sufficient to effectively cover all types of classroom language. The training should at least be taking place for nine days. Secondly, BC may limit the number of training days (e.g. three, four, five or six days) depending on the result of their need analysis. The questionnaire of this study (later can be modified, adjusted and improved), for example, can be used as a tool to identify problems that teachers mostly have (prior to attending the training) in relation to their use of classroom language. By doing so, BC can then provide teachers with the types of classroom language training that they mostly need. The overall idea here is that teachers need to be well supported so that they can provide best teaching performance to their students. If possible, they can also be provided with the after training support. To do this and also to save budget, BC, for instance, can use its local agents (e.g. local teacher trainers) to help regularly evaluate teachers' use of classroom language in an expectation that teachers' progresses can be continuously monitored. By also doing, clear impacts of BC trainings can be accountably recorded.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study is overall able to examine teachers' use of classroom language including frequency of use and differences in using between different groups of teachers. All teachers participating in this research, despite their

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familiarity with classroom language, share some common problems in their use of this type of instructions. These problems include such things as underestimation of students' English competence, overuse of L1 and teachers' poor English proficiency. This research is also able to link teachers' problems in relation to their classroom language use to issues of lack of commitment towards students' learning and too much teaching load.

This research also manages to identify some concerns (shown by the participants) over the lack of professional development activities. Issues of quality and regularity are the two main aspects of professional developments or trainings that should be addressed by the relevant parties such as the office of education and school administrators. KKG or teacher working group that is currently in operation in every sub-district needs to be strengthened. Then, this research also provides some recommendations for the training provider for assuring that teachers can learn all types of classroom language or at least specific types that they mostly need to learn in the training. Also recommended is the inclusion of the after-training supports for teachers.

This study has some limitations. These limitations are, therefore, opening up the opportunities for the conduct of further research in the area of classroom language use. Firstly, classroom language training is a well-established training provided by The British Council, particularly for English teachers teaching in non English speaking countries. This study is only focused on researching teachers' use of classroom language within an Indonesian context. Further study, therefore, can be done to look at this similar issue within a different context (i.e. a country other than Indonesia) or even within a few different contexts or settings for comparison purposes. Secondly, this study does not specifically look into the quality of classroom language training provided to English teachers. Further research can be directed to investigate deeply on the training aspects including, for example, the qualification and quality of trainers and quality of resources. Lastly, the voices of students were not investigated in the present study. Future research, therefore, can involve students aiming to hear their perceptions of teachers' use of classroom language.

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