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“The Implementation of Language, Literature, Art and Cultural Studies in Strengthening the Nation’s Civilization”
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Multilingual Teaching: An Alternative Solution to Save Local Language

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ABSTRACT

Local languages in Indonesia are now facing big challenges. Gradually, a number of the local speakers of the languages are getting decrease in the last decades. The possible factors influence that situation such as lack of speakers, and the effect of majority language, and the development of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) effects. On the other hand, we, as human beings, cannot denied the importance of those the developments in our life. In this article, the author would like to propose the ideas to cope the problem by using multilingual teaching which discusses about the nature of multilingual teaching, the importance of multilingual teaching, and implementation of multilingual teaching in classroom.

Keywords: local language, foreign language, multilingual, language teaching.

INTRODUCTION

The number of local languages existing in Indonesia is still a big question. Hardjati, (2016) through her report on National Geographic Indonesia mentioned that Indonesia only has 742 local languages while based on data from Badan Bahasa, only 617 was identified as local languages in Indonesia (Zuraya, 2016). However, they predict that the number of the local language can be 700 or more. That number is getting decrease slowly but sure in recent years. According to Zuraya (2016), there are at least 139 local languages of Indonesia are now in endangered condition.

The reasons why that happened can be caused by some factors. One of them is possibly by lacking of the young generation of the local languages’ speakers. Another factor is a pressure from certain dominant language which can influence the local language. For an example, English as an international language can be a threat for local languages (House, 2003). Then, the development of information, communication and technology which continue influencing the local languages in Indonesia is also considered as the main problems for local language. Therefore, to tackle that issue, implementing multilingual teaching can be probably suitable to maintain that local language from disappearance.

The concept of multilingual teaching here is teaching and learning language whether it is local, national or even foreign language in classroom. The form of multilingual teaching can be in form of bilingual such local and national language or trilingual; combination of local, national and international language (Arabic, Chinese, English, etc.).

Furthermore, the concept of multilingual teaching itself has begun by English teachers who particularly teach in remote areas or villages. Commonly, when teaching in the areas, one of the biggest problems for teachers is language barrier. Therefore, they should use mixed language among English, Indonesian and local language as language instruction to ease students in understanding the lesson. Thus, this concept ‘multilingual teaching’ is basically not something new for teachers because they have been practicing for so long time. However, maybe the teachers just practice it without any complete guidances on how to teach multilingual in one classroom, especially local language to preserve it from the bad effect of globalization.

Meanwhile, for foreigners, the concept of multilingual teaching is mainly focusing on the goal of teaching itself. For example, in immersion class which students are mainly coming from different parts of the world with their own nation language, it is possible for teacher only use English as a medium for language instruction. In another class, on the other hand, it enables the teacher to use the language used by majority of the students in the class. Allow students to discuss with other students with that language.

In this article, the authors try to discuss about nature of multilingual teaching, the importance of multilingual teaching for preserving local language.
The Nature of Multilingual Teaching

Multilingual teaching is a teaching and learning process which use two or more languages as a medium of instruction (UNESCO, 1999). The goal of multilingual teaching is to facilitate the learners who migh have different background especially in language skills because of their various first languages (British Council, 2086). In addition, this also can help home language learners broaden their knowledge about other languages. More implicitly, this multilingual teaching can provide a solution to persist the local language to be known and learned by learners at school. In multilingual teaching, there are at least six approaches which should be known by stakeholders. Firstly is submersion, pullout, structured immersion, transitional, maintenance, dual language. Here is a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

<table>
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<th>Types of Approach</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
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<tr>
<td>Submersion</td>
<td>Involve one on one communication Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability Leveling student’s ability</td>
<td>Only for learners who speak language instruction Peer interaction happens if the languages are not familiar with them No support for learner’s home language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pullout ESL</td>
<td>Provides for Non-native English learners Use direct language instruction Teach learners with various particular skills</td>
<td>Miss essential academic content No support for learner’s home language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured immersion</td>
<td>Support for learners to be bilingual or bilingual, or multilingual or multicultural</td>
<td>Must teach literacy in home language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional</td>
<td>Have more than one basic knowledge about language.</td>
<td>Shift from multilingual classroom to monolingual classroom Language used in instruction is the dominant language at the school. No support for home language learners if they pass the proficiency test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Support for home language and official language development at school Support the learners to be proficient in native language and new language.</td>
<td>Pullout instruction is often included in the target language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Language</td>
<td>Given both on students who are unfamiliar with the official language of the school and students who speak official language.</td>
<td>Use two native languages teachers in one classroom.</td>
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From various of multilingual approaches above, it can be concluded that there are three approaches which can be used as the way to keep the local language from distinction, namely structured immersion, maintenance and dual language approach.

The Importance of Multilingual Teaching

In the case of Indonesia, which promotes multilingualism (the mother tongue, national language and international language), multilingual teaching is quite necessary to consider to save the local language (mother tongue) because in multilingual teaching process, the local language (mother tongue) is one of teaching instruction in class. As noted by UNESCO, (1999), they support to apply bilingual or multilingual teaching in the classroom as early as possible due to some reasons, more importantly they think that it can promote student’s literacy both in mother tongue (L1) and second language (L2). In line with the statement of UNESCO, the PRESS-India summarized that the importance of multilingual teaching based on this consideration; firstly the...
students will learn best if the language instruction is mastered by them; secondly, the teacher will teach perfectly in the language they are known well; and lastly, the outcome of the education will be better if the teaching and learning happen for long time in the first language.

Implement Multilingual Teaching in Classroom
In multilingual teaching, there will be more than one language in the class depending on what language teachers want to use as a medium of instruction. The target language used in or out of class can totally depends the agreement among teacher and students.

1. Teacher
A teacher plays an important role in addressing what language to be used in the classroom. Just important to remember that the language are going to be used in the classroom, it should be familiar with them and they are proficient in it. In addition, a language teacher, she or he should build interaction through multilingual perspective (Ziegler, 2013). There are some points (UNESCO and British Council) which need full attention from teacher when they teach in multilingual class:

1. Be sensible which means that teacher should realize that the students come from different languages and cultures. The teacher should know the student's socialcultural background,
2. Be professional which means teachers must have competence to master the language used in the class. As it is mentioned earlier, the teachers will teach effectively if they are familiar with the language they use. The teachers should have relevant trainings (in multilingual or multicultural environment) which enable them to teach student's mother tongue and the student's second language. Moreover, the teachers also need to enrich their knowledge on methodology and pedagogy used to teach languages including the mother tongue.
3. Be material developer. The material used for multilingual teaching should be developed in certain language, for instance in local languages which reflect local culture
4. The first language (L1) and the second language (L2) can be used at school. However, to save their mother tongue, the teachers can encourage the students to use their first language at home and use second language as the language of instruction in class.

Activities for Multilingual Teaching
Since the students have different languages and cultures and then teacher should accomodate them as a language learner, the form of activities which can be created by a teacher as follow:

1. Greetings
   The teacher asks their multilingual students to teach their friends a greeting in their local (home) language. Do it starting from opening class and also closing the class with the greetings in their local language.
2. Label
   The teacher can sign the features of class (such window, whiteboard, wall, etc) with languages teacher wants. It can be combination of three languages such foreign language, national/regional language or local (mother tongue). Use different color for different language to differ them.
3. A multilingual word wall
   Almost the same as labelling, but in this activity, the teacher posts some words or written expressions in local languages and the teacher can also invite other students to add some words or expressions if needed.
4. Multilingual reading material
   In this activity, teachers provide various books written in different languages in classroom. Then the students read and discuss the content on the books. Students who well understand about the language used in those books, they can tell and share it to their classmates.

2. Teaching Strategies for Multilingual Students
   Teaching with diverse students needs an effective strategy to be successful. Here are three teaching strategies which can be used by teachers for students with various languages and cultures background (Allison & Rehm, 2007):

   a) Visual, through this strategy, the students are expected to have meaning and mental image to words and the concepts through the use of concrete instructional material.
   b) Peer tutoring, this strategy can be used to promote communication, motivation and high level achievement among students when they are involving in interaction.
   c) Cooperative learning, this strategy, on the other hand, can be useful to make students to develop their intellectual autonomy.
Conclusion and Implication

In the era of modernization such right now, it is possible for an individual to speak more than one language. This condition, especially for language class, is very complex for language teachers due to they have students who are multilingual students. However, the domination of major language in or out of class can influence the existence of local language (mother tongue) of students.

Multilingual teaching which present here is as the way to accomodate the mother tongue, national/regional language and even international language to develop together and open for all students to master them. However, to conduct multilingual teaching in class, a teacher should firstly understand the students’ language background. Then, the teacher should be professional and be ready to create effective materials for multilingual students. In addition, as multilingual teacher, she/he should create class environment with interesting activities which can facilitate students to keep their mother tongue and also boost them to enhance their ability to master other languages.

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TESS-India. Multilingualism in the Classroom. Retrieved on August 13, 2017 from://www. TESS-India.edu.in

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