



## EXPLORING CLASSROOM LANGUAGE IMPLEMENTED BY NOVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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### **Abstract**

Using English as a classroom language is widely acknowledged as the most effective means to encourage students to get used to English. The more often they are exposed to English, the more proficient they will be. However, teachers' awareness of the role of classroom language as a means to maximize student proficiency remains vague. Studies reveal that EFL teachers tend to use their own language in the classroom rather than the target language, English. Furthermore, teachers are susceptible to code-switching, which is the use of two or more languages in a single sentence or phrase. Despite the growing attention of studies exploring classroom language used by EFL teachers, studies focusing on novice EFL teachers with less than five years of teaching experience are considered limited. Accordingly, this descriptive qualitative study aims to investigate the implementation of classroom language used by two EFL novice teachers based on Sallaberry's framework from the English Classrooms Handbook: Classroom Language (1995). The data were gathered through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The study's findings revealed that two EFL novice teachers use Bahasa Indonesia as their primary classroom language, including code-switching. Besides, using English as a classroom language became teachers' dilemma since the students' proficiency levels and their experience in teaching are strongly affected their actions. Some recommendations and potential future practices and research are also discussed thoroughly.

**Keyword:** *classroom language; EFL novice teachers*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Due to its complexity and status as a foreign language, English has been challenging for most Indonesian students at all school levels. The role of English teachers becomes vital as they have to assist students in facing their obstacles. Mukminatien (1999) states that teachers should offer adequate input for acquisition in the classroom and encourage students to use the target language either in or



outside the classroom. Furthermore, EFL students will receive the most valuable input through their teachers' classroom language.

Classroom language is typically used, such as making requests, asking questions, praising, assessing comprehension, etc. (Voss, 1984; Yeni-Palabiyik & Daloglu, 2016). In the EFL context, one of the critical sources of English input for students is the teachers' classroom language. The English used in the classroom by teachers enables students to engage in authentic and meaningful communication. Hence, EFL students will familiarize themselves with English through classroom language to improve their language proficiency. Since classroom language is a substantial source of students' input, teachers should offer the most influential input possible.

To consistently provide students with optimal input, teachers must have sufficient knowledge of classroom language to provide students with optimal input (Zainil, 2019). Unfortunately, not all teachers are aware of the language they employ in the classroom. For convenience, some EFL teachers may prefer their first language as their classroom language to the target language (Yulia, 2013). Apart from that, teachers also often combine two or more languages in one sentence or phrase, either intentionally or not. Zainil (2019), in her work on assessing language input in the EFL classroom, showed that using Bahasa Indonesia as the quantity of teacher talk was high. It also found that the teacher did code-switching in the interaction with the students. This phenomenon will undoubtedly cause the students confusion, which may affect their English proficiency.

Until recently, studies that investigated the classroom language used by teachers have been conducted in the contexts of Indonesia (Adnan & Illias, 2008; Lestari, 2017; Zainil, 2019; Bella & Zainil, 2020; Aufa & Syarif, 2020) and outside the Indonesian context (Xiao-yan, 2006; Polio & Duff, 2007; Kang, 2008; Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010; Rabbidge & Chappell, 2014). These studies have enriched the literature on the classroom language used by pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and students, from elementary school to university levels. Although studies on classroom language have gained attention, studies that explicitly address



the context of novice English teachers with less than five years of teaching experience still need to be investigated.

Novice teacher is described as a teacher with a teaching experience of fewer than five years (Kim & Roth, 2011). In line with Hady (2018), novice teachers have new theoretical knowledge and are trying to start their teaching careers. Consequently, novice teachers can encounter any obstacle or complexity during their teaching careers. This assertion is supported by Gholam (2018), who identifies numerous hurdles and difficulties that novice teachers may encounter. Furthermore, it is not easy to teach English as a foreign language, particularly in Indonesia, because of the country's egalitarian approach to adopting other cultures and ways of thinking and acting (Widiati, Suryati, and Hayati, 2018).

Novice EFL teachers have to adapt to teach students whose first language is not English in a classroom setting. Classroom language and student conduct issues are not the only obstacles that a beginning teacher must overcome. According to Amin and Rahimi (2018), inexperienced teachers must also interact with administrators, coworkers, and the students' parents. As stated by Kalay (2017), a successful EFL teacher into four categories revolving around personal traits, academic qualities, socio-affective qualities, and teaching grades in the context of EFL teaching. These principles can guide novice EFL teachers to face obstacles and concentrate on professional development.

Based on previous research, the number of researches examining classroom language in the context of novice English teachers is still underexplored. Thus, this study aims to fill a gap in the literature by investigating the classroom language used by novice English teachers at the junior high school level, where English is first formally taught. Moreover, this study uses a framework proposed by Sallaberri (1995), which is a framework that divides classroom language into eight categories: simple instruction, dealing with the language of spontaneous situations, the language of social interaction, pair and group work (classroom layout), question type, using audio-visual aid, dealing with errors, and evaluation. To fulfill the investigation's purpose, the following research question is posed: ***“How do novice English teachers implement classroom language in junior high school level”***



## METHODS

In terms of the research methodology, this study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to characterize actual occurrences. This research can be referred to as positive case study research from the perspective of the investigated phenomenon, as it examines the selected example in depth. This study utilized Creswell's qualitative descriptive research methodology (2007). The method was selected because it generates rich and thorough data, providing ideas and concepts to inform the current investigation (Creswell, 2007). In qualitative research, the goal is to study the various elements surrounding the focal phenomena and to show the diverse perspectives or interpretations of the participants (Creswell, 2007).

To enrich the study's results, the researcher highlighted various aspects of recruiting participants: age, length of teaching experience, teaching qualification, geographical location (rural and urban area) and workplace/school.

**Table 1 Participants' demographic information**

	Name (pseudonyms)	Age	Teaching experience	Teaching qualification	Geographical location	Workplace/school
Teacher 1	Reska (Female)	24	<2 year	S.Pd (Bachelor of Education)	Rural area in the province of West Sumatra	Junior High School (Public)
Teacher 2	Indah (Female)	24	<2 year	S.Pd (Bachelor of Education)	Urban area in the province of West Sumatra	Junior High School (Public)

The researcher employed a method of purposeful sampling in which study participants are selected depending on their capacity to provide detailed information about a phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). In this study, participants were selected based on the criteria mentioned above.

The data was gathered by administering a questionnaire adapted from Sallaberri's Handbook for the English Classroom: Classroom Language (1995), which consists of eight aspects of classroom language; simple instruction, dealing with the language of spontaneous situations, the language of social interaction, pair and group work (classroom layout), question types, using audio-visual aid, dealing



with errors, and evaluations. In each part, there are five answer options: Nearly all in English, Mostly in English, Half English/ Half Indonesian, Mostly in Indonesian, and Nearly all in Indonesian. Except in the last part, evaluation, the options are Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, and Always.

To get a more in-depth explanation regarding the answers given by the participants in the previous instrument, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interview consisting of 5 questions; how do you define the term classroom language?, how do you implement your classroom language to your students?, have you maximized the classroom language you use to help students become familiar with English?, what problems do you encounter when using classroom language in class?, how do you solve this problem? (From the students' problem), what problems do you encounter when using classroom language in class?, and how do you solve this problem? (From the teachers' problems). To ensure the instruments' validity, two lecturers who are experts in English language teaching have been asked to examine these two instruments.

The questionnaire and semi-structured interview data were descriptively analyzed. The analysis was begun by reviewing and coding the data according to the research question. The Sallaberri's Handbook would examine the data obtained from the questionnaire for English Classroom: Classroom language (1995). After the questionnaire data had been summarized, the researcher conducted interviews to investigate further. The interview data was evaluated by translating it into transcription and codifying it to ensure it was organized. All data were then evaluated to determine the final of the investigation. The results of the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were descriptively evaluated concerning the relevant theories.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Finding and discussion through the questionnaire***

After analyzing the data by using Sallaberri's Handbook for English Classroom: Classroom language (1995), eight parts of classroom language; simple instruction, dealing with the language of spontaneous situations, the language of social interaction, pair and group work (classroom layout), question types, using



audio-visual aid, dealing with errors, and evaluations implemented by two novice EFL teachers who teach at different junior high schools in the province of West Sumatra have been found.

Simple Instructions										
	<i>Nearly all in English</i>		<i>Mostly in English</i>		<i>Half English Half Indonesian</i>		<i>Mostly in Indonesian</i>		<i>Nearly all in Indonesian</i>	
	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
1. Introduce yourself to the class in English on the first day						√			√	
2. Give basic instructions in English that require only non-verbal responses						√			√	
3. Give instructions in English to set up class work or different activities						√			√	
4. Give instructions in English to bring the class to an end						√			√	
5. Give instructions in English to tell the order in which to do things						√			√	
Dealing with the language of the spontaneous situations										
	<i>Nearly all in English</i>		<i>Mostly in English</i>		<i>Half English Half Indonesian</i>		<i>Mostly in Indonesian</i>		<i>Nearly all in Indonesian</i>	
	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
1. Use English to take the register						√	√			
2. Use English to ask learners								√	√	



what happened to them or how they are being away from school										
3. Explain to the class in English why you have to leave the classroom for any reason								√	√	
4. Talk briefly with learners who arrive late								√	√	
<b>The language of social interaction</b>										
	<i>Nearly all in English</i>		<i>Mostly in English</i>		<i>Half English Half Indonesian</i>		<i>Mostly in Indonesian</i>		<i>Nearly all in Indonesian</i>	
	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2
1. Say hello and goodbye to the class in English				√	√					
2. Use English to focus the class in finishing an activity						√			√	
3. Use English to ask the class for help, offer to do something, say thank you and try and get the class to perform these functions						√			√	
4. Encourage the class's efforts in English						√			√	
5. Take the opportunity to talk about what interests the class in English						√			√	
<b>Pair and group work: classroom layout</b>										
	<i>Nearly all in English</i>		<i>Mostly in English</i>		<i>Half English Half Indonesian</i>		<i>Mostly in Indonesian</i>		<i>Nearly all in Indonesian</i>	



	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2
1. Give instructions in English to focus the class's attention on what to do						√			√	
2. Give a model for the class to practice before doing an activity						√		√		
3. Give instructions in English to start activity						√			√	
4. Give instructions in English to finish an activity						√			√	
<b>Question types</b>										
	<i>Nearly all in English</i>		<i>Mostly in English</i>		<i>Half English Half Indonesian</i>		<i>Mostly in Indonesian</i>		<i>Nearly all in Indonesian</i>	
	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2	Teache r 1	Teache r 2
1. Give instruction which generate non-verbal responses to check how much the class have understood						√			√	
2. Ask yes/no questions						√			√	
3. Ask or question (X or Y)						√			√	
4. Ask Wh-questions						√			√	
5. Ask questions to confirm that the class have understood or to clarify the situation						√			√	
<b>Using audio-visual aids</b>										





	<i>Nearly all in English</i>		<i>Mostly in English</i>		<i>Half English Half Indonesian</i>		<i>Mostly in Indonesian</i>		<i>Nearly all in Indonesian</i>	
	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
1. Use English to talk through the stages when using audio-visual aids						√			√	
2. Use English when putting audio-visual aids into operation						√			√	
3. Give the learners instructions in English on the use of audio-visual aids so that they can help with their use in class						√			√	
4. Check that the learners can all see/hear from where they are sitting						√			√	
5. Use the board to give precise descriptions of the position of pictures, sentences, etc						√			√	
<b>Dealing with errors</b>										
	<i>Nearly all in English</i>		<i>Mostly in English</i>		<i>Half English Half Indonesian</i>		<i>Mostly in Indonesian</i>		<i>Nearly all in Indonesian</i>	
	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
1. Ask the class questions which draw on their previous knowledge						√			√	



2. Paraphrase the learners' utterances which contain errors to provide a correct model.  Use gestures to show an error has been made  Stress the words or part of the utterance which is wrong to help the class correct themselves  Expand sentences to clarify meaning						√			√	
3. Get other learners to provide a correct model						√			√	
4. Use a correction code when marking written work						√			√	
<b>Evaluation</b>										
	<i>Never</i>		<i>Rarely</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Often</i>		<i>Always</i>	
	<i>Teacher 1</i>	<i>Teacher 2</i>	<i>Teacher 1</i>	<i>Teacher 2</i>	<i>Teacher 1</i>	<i>Teacher 2</i>	<i>Teacher 1</i>	<i>Teacher 2</i>	<i>Teacher 1</i>	<i>Teacher 2</i>
1. Use self-evaluation sheets with the class					√	√				
2. Use class diaries	√	√								
3. Negotiate possible areas of change with the learners					√	√				
4. Write short					√	√				



personal reports on the learners' progress										
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As indicated by the data above, in the simple instructions part, teacher 2 preferred to use half English and half Indonesian. In contrast, teacher 1 preferred to use nearly all in Indonesian to set up the use of common expressions (e.g., come in, go out, stand up), which are part of the routine of daily classroom activities, and to start eliciting non-verbal responses from the students. Meanwhile, in the second part of the classroom language, dealing with the language of spontaneous situations, teacher 2 tended to use classroom language mainly in Indonesia. In contrast, teacher 1 preferred to use nearly all in Indonesian to relate the target language to the student's immediate environment or exploit the context that is not linked to the syllabus.

In the third part of the classroom language, **language of social interaction**, **teacher 2 mainly used classroom language in half English and half Indonesian. In contrast, teacher 1 preferred to use classroom language, nearly all in Indonesian, to relate the target language to the situations outside the language syllabus. Meanwhile, in the next part of the classroom language, pair or group work: classroom layout**, teacher 2 used classroom language mainly in Indonesian, whereas teacher 1 preferred nearly all in Indonesian **to set up a couple and group work, both in a small and large group. Furthermore, in the part of question types, teacher 2 chose to use classroom language mostly in half English and half Indonesian. In contrast, teacher 1 preferred to nearly all in Indonesian to check students' understanding or to clarify situations.**

**In the next part, which is using audio-visual aid and dealing with errors, teacher 2 mostly chose to use classroom language in half English and half Indonesian. In contrast, teacher 1 preferred to use classroom language, nearly all in Indonesian.** In the last part of this finding, evaluation, teachers 1 and 2 never used class diaries and sometimes use self-evaluation forms with the class, discussed potential areas for change with the students, and composed brief personal comments on the students' progress.



The data from this questionnaire show that two EFL novice teachers implementing English as the classroom language are still relatively low. It indicates that teachers have increased their use of Bahasa Indonesia in the classroom. It confirms the findings of Zainil (2019) and Rabbidge & Chappel (2014), who discovered that English was rarely used in classroom interactions. This data contributes to an explicit knowledge of the language exposure of the participants, which contradicts Krashen's idea (1985). According to Krashen's rationale, students must be provided with accessible input. Yet, the teachers in this study have not increased their use of English in the classroom.

#### ***Finding and discussion through semi structured-interview***

This interview was conducted to see an in-depth explanation of EFL novice teachers' responses to the previous instrument, the questionnaire. This interview began by looking at their basic understanding of the term classroom language and then continuing with questions that led to justifications or reasons for the classroom language they implemented. The results are presented according to 5 open-ended questions as the guidance for teachers to share their response.

- The following is the two novice EFL teacher's response to the first question **(How do you define the term classroom language?)**

#### **Teacher 1**

"....*Classroom language* adalah bentuk dari ekspresi seperti perintah ataupun kalimat-kalimat yang digunakan para pengajar dalam proses interaksi di dalam kelas." (*Teacher 1*)

#### ***Translated***

"....*Classroom language is a form of expression such as commands or sentences used by teachers in the process of interaction in the classroom.*" (Teacher 1)



**Teacher 2**

"...Ungkapan bahasa kelas mengacu pada definisi yang secara rutin digunakan di ruang kelas..." (*Teacher 2*)

**Translated**

"...*The term classroom language describes the routine language that is used on a regular basis in a classroom...*" (*Teacher 2*)

The responses above show us that the two EFL novice teachers have understood the basic meaning of classroom language. Supported by Bilash's (2011) statement that classroom language is the everyday language used regularly, like instructing praise. In the classroom, language can be used for instructional purposes such as telling what students to do, responding to their questions, and giving feedback. Words or phrases used for such purposes are **classroom language** (Voss, 1984; Sánchez-Solarte, 2019; Yeni-Palabiyik & Daloglu, 2016).

- The following is the two novice EFL teacher's response to the second question (**How do you implement your classroom language to your students?**)

**Teacher 1**

"...*Saya hampir sepenuhnya menggunakan bahasa Indonesia sebagai bahasa kelas karena siswa di kelas saya kurang mengerti bahasa Inggris. Hampir semua siswa di kelas saya baru mulai belajar bahasa Inggris di sekolah menengah pertama. Paparan bahasa Inggris mereka masih dangkal. Akibatnya, akan terasa sulit rasanya apabila saya menggunakan bahasa inggris ketika mengajar di kelas*" (*Teacher 1*)

**Translated**

"...*I almost fully use Indonesian as the classroom language since the students in my class don't understand English. Nearly all of the students in my class were studying English for the first time in junior high school. Their exposure to English is shallow. Consequently, it will be quite difficult if I use English when teaching in class.*" (*Teacher 1*)



### Teacher 2

*“.....Karena anak yang baru masuk SMP itu kan belum bisa berbahasa Inggris (baru lulus SD), jadi saya cenderung lebih banyak menggabungkan bahasa Inggris dengan Bahasa Indonesia ketika mengajar. Jadi saya mengajar mereka sekaligus menerjemahkan kata bahasa Inggris ke bahasa Indonesia, misalnya saya bertanya “how are you?” lalu saya ikuti dengan artinya “Kamu apa kabar?”. Jadi anak-anak tau maksud dari pertanyaan saya itu apa..” (Teacher 2)*

### Translated

*“....Since students who have just entered junior high school have not spoken English, I use classroom language by combining English with Indonesian because they haven't learned English in elementary school. So I teach them English then I translate it into Indonesian. For example, I ask, "how are you?" then I follow it with the Indonesian, "kamu apa kabar?". Therefore, the students know what the purpose of my question is....” (Teacher 2)*

In this result, the student's English proficiency level is the primary consideration for the teacher's classroom language use. Teacher 1 used nearly all in Indonesian as her classroom language. In contrast, teacher 2 chose to use Half English and Half Indonesian. In this case, teacher 2 asserted that code-switching was a factor in students' limited English proficiency.

These findings are similar to what Harmer stated: in classrooms with low-level students, the first language is utilized to explain topics/materials, discuss lessons, and deliver announcements that are probably difficult to comprehend when using the second language (Harmer, 2005). Similar research was conducted by Campa & Hossein (2009) and Pan & Pan (2017), who discovered that students' proficiency determines the amount of first language use in the classroom.

- Continue to the third question (**“Have you maximized the classroom language you use to help students become familiar with English?”**)

### Teacher 1



*“...Sebenarnya belum begitu maksimal karena saya baru mengajar di SMP kurang lebih baru 1 tahun. Setelah lulus S1, saya mengajar di tempat kursus bahasa inggris. Jadi, sangat banyak sekali hal-hal baru yang saya temui ketika berhadapan dengan murid SMP terutama latar belakang pengetahuan mereka tentang bahasa inggris. Jadi, untuk memaksimalkan classroom language itu sendiri masih menjadi PR untuk saya sendiri. Saya pun juga harus lebih cepat menyesuaikan diri sebagai seorang guru SMP...” (Teacher 1)*

**Translated**

*“...It's not that optimal because I've only been teaching in junior high school for about one year. After graduating from S1, I conducted an English course. Consequently, I encountered a lot of new things when dealing with junior high school students, especially their background knowledge of English. Therefore, maximizing classroom language itself is still a task for me. I also had to adapt more quickly as a junior high school teacher” (Teacher 1)*

**Teacher 2**

*“...untuk pertanyaan ini, saya masih perlu mengoptimalkan diri dalam penggunaan classroom language. Saya perlu belajar bagaimana membuat kelas menjadi aktif dan menarik agar para murid tidak merasa bosan selama proses belajar dan mengajar. Ditambah lagi dengan pengalaman saya yang masih minim untuk mengajar bahasa inggris untuk anak-anak/remaja ” (Teacher 2)*

**Translated**

*“...For this question, I still need to optimize myself in using classroom language. I need to learn how to make the class active and exciting so that the students don't get bored during the learning and teaching process—coupled with my minimal experience teaching English to young learners. ”(Teacher 2)*

Regarding the answer to this question, the two EFL novice teachers have the same response: they still need to give maximum effort in implementing classroom language during the learning and teaching process. The main thing that



makes them feel they could be more optimal is that their teaching experience is still relatively low. For novice teachers, issues relating to their lack of teaching experience are always the primary concern. In line with Karatas & Karaman (2013), Kim & Roth (2011), and Widiati et al. (2018), the experiences of novice teachers are less than five years, which is challenging enough for them to carry out the teaching and learning process in an optimal way especially in the aspect of using classroom language.

- The following is the two novice EFL teacher's response to the fourth question (**“What problems do you encounter when using classroom language in class? And how do you solve this problem (From the students' problem)”**).

#### **Teacher 1**

*“...Masalah utamanya adalah para siswa belum pernah belajar bahasa Inggris sebelumnya. Bagi mereka, belajar bahasa Inggris begitu asing. Saya mengajar di daerah pedesaan di mana akses bahasa Inggris sangat terbatas. Di desa ini tidak ada bimbingan belajar yang bisa mereka gunakan untuk mendalami bahasa Inggris, mereka sepenuhnya mempelajari bahasa Inggris hanya di sekolah. Mereka memiliki ponsel tetapi terlihat tidak ada motivasi bagi mereka untuk menggunakannya untuk belajar bahasa Inggris. Paparan mereka terhadap bahasa Inggris sangat rendah. Oleh karena itu, sulit bagi saya untuk menggunakan bahasa Inggris full dalam proses mengajar.”(Teacher 1)*

#### **Translated**

*“..The main problem is the students have never even studied English before. For them, learning English is so foreign. I teach in rural areas where access to English is quite limited. In this village, tutoring does not exist. They have cell phones but need more motivation to use them to learn English. Their exposure to English needs to be more profound. Therefore, I use Indonesian when teaching them English. It is quite difficult for me to give whole teaching in English” (Teacher 1)*





## Teacher 2

*“...Karena bahasa Inggris adalah mata pelajaran baru yang mereka temui di jenjang pendidikan, mereka menganggapnya sulit dan menakutkan. Oleh karena itu, saya mengajari mereka bahasa Inggris secara bertahap menggunakan setengah bahasa Inggris dan setengah bahasa Indonesia. Mereka dapat mengikuti kelas saya dengan baik dengan cara itu karena selain mempelajari bahasa Inggris di sekolah, mereka juga mengikuti kursus di luar sekolah untuk mendalami ilmu yang mereka peroleh dari sekolah. Saya mengajar di daerah perkotaan sehingga paparan mereka terhadap bahasa Inggris cukup signifikan..” (Teacher 2)*

### **Translated**

*“..Since English is a new subject they encounter at school, they view it as difficult and frightening. Therefore, I teach them English step by step using half English and half Indonesian. They can follow my class well by that way. I just have to build their confidence that English is fun. Besides, I teach in an urban area, and luckily, the students' exposure to English is quite significant. Several of them not only learn English in school but also in English courses after school.” (Teacher 2)*

In their responses above, the two EFL novice teachers mentioned the same viewpoint about English subjects, which were still relatively unfamiliar to students. Furthermore, it is clear from the responses above that geographical factors (urban and rural areas) influence how much exposure students receive. This aligns with the finding in Hossain (2016), where students in rural areas were more or less adept in English than students in urban areas. This is closely tied to the services given by the surroundings. Students in urban areas, in this case, have easier access to re-explore English obtained from schools at the course.

- The following is the two novice EFL teacher's response to the last question **(What problems do you encounter when using classroom language in class? And how do you solve this problem? (from the teachers' problems).**



### **Teacher 1**

*“...Masalah yang saya temukan dari diri saya ketika mengajar bahasa inggris adalah jumlah kosa kata yang saya gunakan serta kelancaran saya dalam berbahasa inggris. Saya menyadari bahwa saya sering mengulang-ngulang kosa kata yang sama ketika mengajar, yang mana seharusnya saya harus lebih menggunakan kosa kata yang bervariasi. Dalam artian, kosa kata saya cukup terbatas. Ketika saya mengajar lalu menemukan kosa kata yang sulit, maka saat itu saya gunakan bahasa Indonesia agar pembelajaran tetap berjalan baik”*

**(Teacher 1)**

### **Translated**

*“...The problem I found myself with teaching English was the amount of vocabulary I used and my fluency in speaking English. I realized that I often repeated the same vocabulary when teaching, in which case I should have used more varied language. My vocabulary is quite limited in that sense. When I teach and find difficult words, I use Indonesian to keep the learning going.”* **(Teacher 1)**

### **Teacher 2**

*“...Kecakapan saya dalam bahasa inggris masih tergolong rendah. Dengan pengalaman mengajar saya yang masih terbilang sedikit, tak jarang saya merasa gugup ketika mengajar dikelas sehingga mempengaruhi keoptimalan saya dalam menagajar. Dari masalah ini, saya harus lebih banyak melakukan evaluasi terhadap diri sendiri.”* **(Teacher 2)**

### **Translated**

*“....My proficiency in English is still relatively low. With the length of my teaching experience still relatively low, it's not uncommon for me to feel nervous when teaching classes, affecting my optimization in teaching. I have to do more self-evaluation”.* **(Teacher 2)**

Through the responses above, the two novice EFL teachers expressed their problems conducting classroom language in class. The issues they encounter are related to their proficiency which still needs to be improved. Proficiency in English has been considered an essential part of EFL teaching expertise that could



significantly impact student learning (Butler, 2004; Sullivan, 2011; Cheng & Wang, 2004). Cullen (2001) states that a teacher with a limited or apprehensive command of spoken English will struggle with fundamental classroom teaching practices, such as delivering instructions, asking questions about literature, explaining the meaning of a word, and responding to a student's question or comment. Similarly, students with low English proficiency will struggle to understand basic instructions, and thereby the teacher may often switch to their first language (Aufa & Syarif, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

The research question of this study, *“How do novice English teachers implement classroom language in junior high school level?”* has been answered. Based on data analysis using Sallaberry's Handbook for English Classroom: Classroom language (1995), which consists of 8 parts classroom language; simple instruction, dealing with the language of spontaneous situations, the language of social interaction, pair and group work (classroom layout), question types, using audio-visual aid, dealing with errors, and evaluations, the researcher discovered that the two novice EFL teachers did not use English fully as their classroom language but used Indonesian as their primary classroom language, including code-switching. The reason for their actions is significantly determined by the length of their teaching experiences, the level of English proficiency of their students, and geographical factors, in this case, rural and urban areas, which impact the level of English exposure their students obtain.

Based on the findings, several recommendations arise: First, for the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia regarding enhancing teachers' competence. In this case, it is essential to train EFL novice teachers to focus on how to run the class well, especially in classroom language use. Second, for teachers, in hopes of providing students with optimal and comprehensible input, EFL novice teachers should be more aware of the classroom language they employ by reflecting their teaching regularly. In addition, teachers also need to improve their English ability to increase their engagement with the language in the



classroom. If they consistently utilize English, the students will become familiar with it, which will positively affect their proficiency in English.

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