



Harmonizing Languages: The Impact of Multilingual Classroom Dynamics on Teaching Indonesian in Taiwan

Rini Sipahutar*, Te-Sheng Chang

¹Department of Curriculum Design and Human Potentials Development, National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan

Abstract

This case study investigates the intricate interplay of multilingualism, specifically in Chinese and English, and its consequential impact on the language of instruction in the context of teaching Indonesian as a foreign language in Taiwan. This research delves into the nuances of language pedagogy within a multicultural and multilingual educational setting. This study employs case study methodology, gathering data through classroom observations and open-ended student questionnaires. Additionally, students' progress, as evidenced by assignments and feedback, serves as a quantitative indicator to measure the influence of multilingualism on their language learning journey. Key objectives include examining student preferences and perceptions on the use of Chinese and English in Indonesian language course instruction. The research explores instances of code-switching and code-mixing, shedding light on the dynamic language choices of instructors and learners. Through an analysis of student progress, the study aims to discern tangible outcomes associated with the multilingual approach. The results show that students found the classroom dynamics positive and motivating, enhancing their learning experience. Local students benefited from using Chinese, while international students appreciated the multilingual approach, though some noted occasional delays in translation. Overall, the study provides insights into the benefits and challenges of multilingualism in Indonesian language instruction in Taiwan, contributing to discussions on effective practices in multilingual education.

Keywords: multilingualism, classroom dynamics, teaching Indonesian language, foreign language teaching, student engagement

1. Introduction

Taiwan is broadening its global presence with political and economic motives, aligning with the belief that improving English proficiency boosts national economies, particularly in high-income Asian nations (Drun, 2022; Glaser, 2013). Many countries, including Taiwan, have adopted English as the primary medium of instruction to boost language proficiency. Taiwan's

commitment to global engagement is further reflected in its efforts to attract international students, aligning with its bilingualism goals set in 2018 (Taiwan, 2019).

The use of English in higher education, as highlighted in Dearden's (2023) global report, shows positive outcomes such as improved English skills, promotion of multilingualism, and positive student attitudes (Belhiah, 2015; Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009). A phone survey in Taiwan reported that 87% of respondents supported designating English as the second language (Tzu-ti, 2018).

However, the exclusive use of English raises concerns, including perceived threats to national language and identity (Coleman, 2006; Tarhan, 2003), and may further disadvantage students from lower-income backgrounds who struggle with English instruction (Kong & Wei, 2019; Miranda & Molina-Naar, 2022). Students' lack of preparation for English instruction further exacerbates these challenges (Cho, 2012; Hellekjær, 2017; Kırkgöz, 2009; Phuong & Nguyen, 2019), adding time and complexity for both educators and students (Kırkgöz, 2009; Miranda & Molina-Naar, 2022).

In conclusion, the global shift towards English as a medium of instruction presents both opportunities and challenges. The following section will explore the impact of this shift on Taiwanese students' preparedness.

1.1. Linguistic Landscape in Taiwan

As a multicultural country, Taiwan embraces linguistic diversity, including the use of English (Gupta & Lin, 2023; Leimgruber, 2022). While many languages are spoken, Mandarin Chinese remains the official language and the primary means of communication in formal contexts (Klöter, (2006); People, 2023).

However, government policies have increasingly promoted English, particularly in education (Taiwan, 2019). Substantial budgets have been allocated to support this initiative, funding programs to hire foreign teachers and teaching assistants (Admin, 2023a, 2023b; Lin & Chung, 2020; Shan, 2023). The Taiwanese government actively recruits foreign teachers and offers extensive opportunities for international students to study in Taiwan (Admin, 2021a; News, 2022), fostering a multicultural environment.

There is also a strong push to encourage students to enrol in English-taught courses (Lau, 2021). However, challenges remain in English education, as highlighted by Xie (2020), indicating areas that need improvement for effective implementation.

In addition to these challenges, despite the Taiwanese government's endeavour to enhance international openness and achieve the goals outlined in Taiwan Bilingual 2030, students seem to encounter difficulties. Most of the challenges are that students are not ready. This condition can be seen in Yeh's study (2014), which highlighted that despite the students' satisfaction with using English as a medium of instruction, there was a notable portion (35% of the class) of challenges related to their insufficient English proficiency.

Other reports indicate that, despite improvements in their English proficiency, Taiwanese students better understand course content when using their mother tongue, Chinese (Chang, 2010; Huang, 2009). This finding aligns with Tarhan's (2003) research in Turkey. Students and teachers acknowledge difficulties in fully grasping the material, leading to slower learning and decreased interest and motivation. This approach encouraged memorization over a deeper understanding, impacting students' retention of knowledge and terminology and affecting academic achievement.

Similar challenges were observed in Poland, where teachers and students needed more time explaining and absorbing materials (Mikolajewska & Mikolajewska, 2022). This unpreparedness in English skills disproportionately affects students with lower incomes, as emphasized by Gao and Zheng (2024), who stress the need to address disparities among students, particularly those with lower incomes facing challenges in accessing disparities among students. Additionally, Miranda and Molina-Naar's (2022) concerns about students from diverse backgrounds, especially those with lower incomes, feeling excluded in English-exclusive instruction, resonate with findings by Kong and Wei (2019), indicating threats and fairness concerns associated with English as a medium instruction.

1.2. Multilingual context in Teaching Indonesian Language as a foreign language in Taiwan

Taiwan's Southbound Policy, part of its broader international engagement objectives, seeks to strengthen ties with Southeast Asia (Marston & Bush, 2018; Yang & Hashmi, 2021). This strategic move reflects Taiwan's commitment to fostering robust relationships in the Southeast Asian region to build stronger ties and collaborations (Admin, 2021b, 2022; Marston & Bush, 2018; Yang & Hashmi, 2021).

As part of the southbound policy strategy, Taiwan has incorporated Southeast Asian languages, including Indonesian, into its educational curriculum. Notably, the Indonesian courses are offered in English and serve multiple purposes. This approach not only aids foreign students who require courses in English but also encourages Taiwanese students to engage in bilingual education, aligning with boarder language-learning objectives. Furthermore, offering courses in English fosters enhanced cultural exchange and strengthens Taiwan's connection with Southeast Asia.

As the class is conducted in English, it creates a diverse learning environment that welcomes students fluent in English (international students) and those proficient in Mandarin Chinese (local Taiwanese and some international students). It is worth noting that most international students in Taiwan may not be fluent in Chinese (Yuan-ting & Pan, 2022). However, it is essential to recognize that not all Taiwanese students may feel familiar and confident with English as the medium of instruction (Gao & Zheng, 2024; Huang, 2009; Lin, 2022). This multilingual context in the classroom highlights the unique challenges and opportunities associated with language diversity.

The role of multilingualism in language education is multifaceted, contributing to a comprehensive and enriched learning experience. At its core, multilingualism acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of languages and cultures in our interconnected world. King (2017) mentions that multilingual recognition forms the foundation for fostering a more inclusive and culturally rich learning environment within educational settings.

Multilingualism equips learners with the skills and competencies for effective cross-cultural language communication. As the global landscape becomes increasingly interconnected, proficiency in multiple languages and cultures in our interconnected world (Evans, 2019). Learners with diverse linguistic backgrounds gain a nuanced understanding of communication, enabling them to navigate linguistic complexities in various contexts.

Furthermore, the cognitive benefits associated with multilingualism play a crucial role in language education. Research suggests that learning multiple languages enhances cognitive flexibility, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking (Marian & Shook, 2012; Xia et al., 2022; Yang, 2023). This cognitive stimulation not only aids in language acquisition but also contributes to broader intellectual development (Marian & Shook, 2012; Spence, 2022)

Multilingualism in education yields both individual and societal benefits. It fosters cultural awareness, adds academic value, enhances creativity, aids societal adjustment, and promotes appreciation for local languages (Okal, 2014). Proficiency in multiple languages opens diverse career opportunities, aligning with the demands of a globalized job market where multilingual individuals are highly sought after (Hulett, 2019).

In essence, the role of multilingualism in language education is pivotal for cultivating well-rounded and adaptable individuals. It facilitates a deeper understanding of cultural nuances, sharpens cognitive abilities, preserves linguistic heritage, and prepares learners for active participation in a globalized and diverse world (Editor, 2022; Evans, 2019; Krulatz & Christison, 2023; Singh, 2013). As education continues to evolve, embracing and integrating multilingualism remains essential for fostering linguistic and cultural competence among learners.

In light of this commitment to multilingualism, our study seeks to understand students' perceptions and preferences regarding using Chinese and English in Indonesian language course instruction. We aim to explore the impact of instances of code-switching and code-mixing on the dynamic language choices of both instructors and learners. Additionally, we endeavour to discern tangible outcomes of the multilingual approach, particularly regarding students' progress.

By addressing these problems, our research aims to contribute valuable insights into the effectiveness and challenges of a multilingual approach in teaching Indonesian as a foreign language, shedding light on nuances of language dynamics in a diverse educational setting. Therefore, we develop the following research questions:

1. How does multilingualism impact the teaching of Indonesian in Indonesian language course?
2. What are students' preferences and perceptions regarding the use of Chinese and English in Indonesian language instruction?
3. How do code-switching and code-mixing influence language learning in this multilingual context

2. Methods

This study employed a case study approach, chosen for its ability to explore in depth the real-life context of multilingual classroom dynamics (Baxter & Jack, 2010; Channaveer & Baikady, 2022; Heath, 2015; Priya, 2021), specifically focusing on the interactions between Chinese, English, and Indonesian in teaching Indonesian as a foreign language in Taiwan.

2.1. Participants

The research involved 28 students enrolled in an elective Indonesian language course at a public university in Taiwan. After the research introduction, 23 students consented to participate in the study. Participants were categorized into three groups: local Taiwanese students, international students, and Malaysian students, with varying academic years and language backgrounds.

Table 1: *Students' Demographics*

Student categories		Local students	International students	Malaysian students
Year/grade	First Year	2	-	-
	Second Year	4	3	3
	Third Year	1	3	-
	Fourth Year and above	6	1	-
Gender	Female	11	2	-
	Male	2	5	3
	Prefer not to say	-	-	-
Language Background	Monolingual	2 (Chinese)	2 (English)	-
	Bilingual	9	2	1
	Multilingual	2	3	2
English Ability: self-assessment	Poor	7	-	1
	Okay	4	-	-
	Good	2	5	2
	Native Speaker	-	2	-
Indonesian ability	No	10	5	-
	Know simple words / phrase	3	2	-
	Know simple sentences	-	-	2
	Know complex sentences	-	-	1

As seen in Table 1, the participants had diverse academic levels, language backgrounds, and self-assessed English and Indonesian abilities. Most local students reported having poor English skills, while international and Malaysian students generally reported stronger English proficiency. Indonesian language knowledge varied among participants; most had little to no experience, while the Malaysian students had prior experience learning Malay, which is similar to Indonesian.

2.2. Data Collection Tools

A wide array of tools was employed for data collection, including classroom observations, weekly assignments, performance assessments (role-plays, midterms, and final projects), open-ended questionnaires, and student interviews. The 16-week observation period, consisting of three 50–55-minute weekly sessions, was recorded on camera. The recordings were later transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis, focusing on interaction patterns among the teacher (T-R), teaching assistant (TA), and students, as well as among students. Key aspects such as code-switching, student engagement, language proficiency, and classroom dynamics and environment were emphasised.

Task completion and language proficiency were rigorously assessed through a combination of written assessments, verbal tasks, and performance-based activities. These activities included asking students to pronounce words, interpret their meanings, and engage in role-play scenarios. Midterm and final project evaluations further measured student progress and overall comprehension of the material. The student's performance, including weekly assignments, midterm, and final project results, was analysed using ANOVA and assessment mean comparisons to evaluate progress across different groups and time periods.

At the end of the semester, students completed an anonymous open-ended questionnaire, allowing them to freely express their views on the teaching methods, materials, and overall

classroom experience. The responses were analysed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes in student feedback.

Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into students' perceptions of teaching methods, classroom dynamics, and individual progress. These interviews allowed students to elaborate on their experiences while ensuring key themes like language proficiency, engagement, and classroom environment were consistently addressed.

3. Result

This research analysis presents the findings in the following categories: code-switching, classroom dynamics, classroom environments, language proficiency and assessment, students' perceived improvements, and students' perception.

3.1. Code-Switching

In this course, the teacher (T-R) and Teaching Assistant (TA) frequently utilized code-switching between Indonesian, English, and Chinese to navigate the multilingual classroom environment. As shown in Table 2: Code-switching patterns in classroom interactions, code-switching occurred an average of 33.22 times per week, highlighting its integral role in communication and instruction.

Table 2: Code-switching patterns in classroom interaction

Activities category	Average frequency (times per week)
Teaching Assistant (TA)-assisted Translations	18.46
Prompting student's response	9.76
Bridging Translation	5.00
Total number	33.22

The most frequent code-switching occurred during TA-assisted translations, with an average of 18.46 weekly instances. During lessons, the T-R often explained material in English and prompted the TA to translate the explanation into Chinese for local students. In some cases, the TA initiated translations proactively. This ensured that both English- and Chinese-speaking students could follow the lessons.

T-R also employed code-switching between English and Chinese when prompting student responses, particularly to reassure students, explain concepts, or respond to inquiries. For instance, the T-R used Chinese conjunctions like 所以 (suǒyǐ / therefore) and 因為 (yīnwèi / because) to create a familiar linguistic environment for local students. This switching occurred 9.76 times per week, making the classroom atmosphere more inclusive and accessible to Chinese-speaking students.

Another common practice was bridging translations between Indonesian, English, and Chinese during discussions about Indonesian sentence structures. When students guessed the meaning of Indonesian sentences in their preferred language (either English or Chinese), T-R translated their responses into the alternate language. For example, if a student responded in Chinese, T-R would translate it into English, and vice versa. This practice, occurring five times per week on average, allowed for greater engagement and mutual understanding between English- and Chinese-speaking students.

The multilingualism of this classroom, involving Indonesian, English, and Chinese, significantly impacted teaching strategies. Code-switching became a key method for bridging

language gaps, supporting students' comprehension of Indonesian while maintaining active participation from both English- and Chinese-speaking students. This dynamic interaction helped ensure that language barriers did not hinder learning and exposed students to multiple languages in real time.

The code-switching and code-mixing also fostered an environment conducive to learning, helping students grasp complex concepts. By translating student responses and explanations into alternate languages, the T-R deepened students' understanding of linguistic structures across Indonesian, English, and Chinese, effectively integrating multilingualism into the learning process.

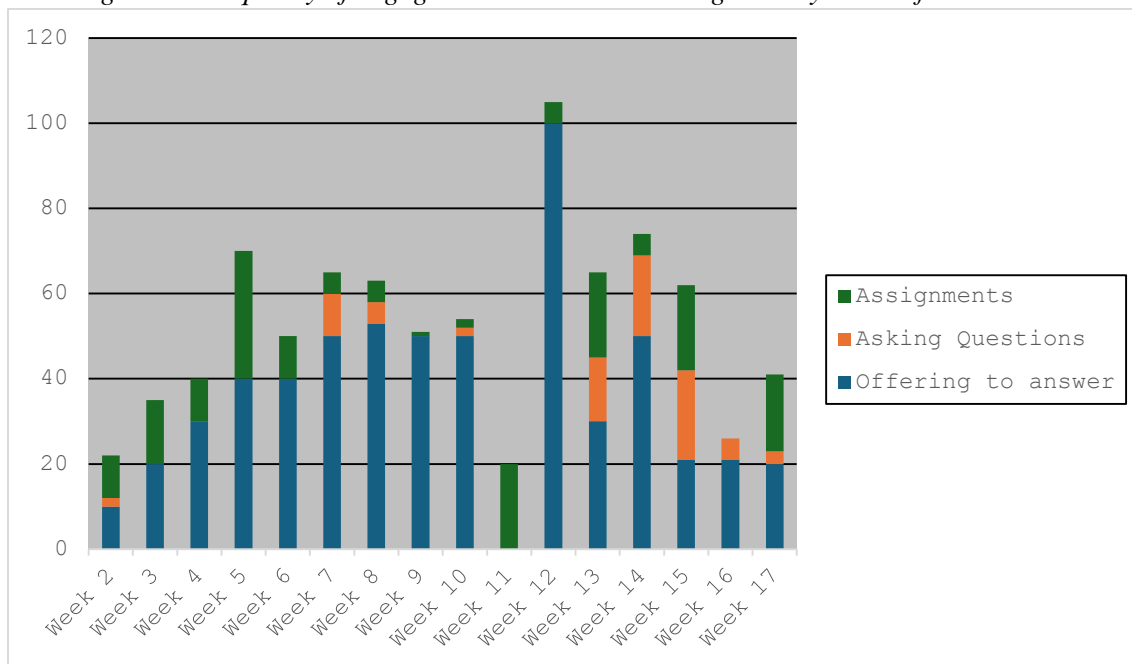
3.2. Classroom dynamics

Classroom dynamics are analysed using two main categories: student engagement and classroom environment. Student engagement refers to how actively students participate and interact during lessons, while the classroom environment focuses on the overall atmosphere, including how supportive and comfortable it is for learning.

3.2.1 Student Engagement

Student engagement in this course includes offering to answer questions, asking questions and assignments. On average, students offered to answer questions 36.56 times per week, completed assignments 11 times per week, and asked questions 4.5 times per week. Offering to answer means students raised their hands when the T-R asked questions.

Figure 1: Frequency of engagement themes in teaching: weekly count of occurrences



There was a significant increase in students offering to answer after Week 2 due to the introduction of a 'bonus session.' This was implemented because the class was initially passive, with students only responding when called on by name. After the second week, students, including local students, eagerly participated in answering questions. The highest participation rate was in Week 12, during a session on reviewing lessons, where students reviewed the difficult parts of the midterm.

The second highest form of student engagement was in assignments. Students were given a minimum task but often exceeded this limit, motivated by T-R's offer of bonus points for extra effort, leading to scores over 100. This approach considered students' varying levels of motivation and well-being. The peak engagement was in Week 5 (Making Friends with Indonesian), where 20 students asked more than three questions beyond basic details. Other high points included the Midterm (Week 11), Imbuhan / Affixes (Weeks 13 and 14), and Bargaining (Week 15), with each having 20 students exceeding the minimum requirements.

The third highest form of student engagement was asking questions, averaging 4.5 per week. The peak occurred in Bargaining (Week 15) with 21 questions, followed by Imbuhan / Affixes (Weeks 13 and 14) with 15 and 19 questions each. These questions were mostly related to the lesson, including language, context, and Indonesian culture.

3.2.2 Classroom environment

Meanwhile, themes were seen in three categories for the classroom environment: playfulness, flexible atmosphere, and supportive and cooperative environment.

Table 3: Classroom environment

Activities category	Average frequency (times per week)
Playfulness	28.9
Flexible atmosphere	35.9
Supportive and cooperative environment	48.45
Total number	113.25

The most frequent occurrences were observed in the supportive and cooperative environment category, with an average of 48.45 instances per week. This category includes behaviours such as T-R waiting for students' responses, re-explaining lessons, allowing students to access materials when they could not immediately respond, motivating primarily local students, encouraging students to relax, providing scaffolding when students were completely stuck, and promoting fairness by ensuring that all students had an opportunity to participate.

The second most frequent occurrences were observed in the category of a flexible atmosphere, with an average of 35.9 instances per week. This category includes allowing students to move around during assignments or class activities, permitting students to use the restroom during lecture time, letting students enter the class late without questioning them, and accepting students' corrections while teaching.

Additionally, the class fostered a playful environment with an average of 28.9 instances per week. This category encompasses T-R, TA, and students making jokes, offering playful comments, and teasing each other during class.

In conclusion, the classroom dynamics in this course were characterized by a predominantly supportive and cooperative environment, fostering student engagement and participation.

3.3. Language Proficiency and Performance

In assessing the students' language proficiency, we utilised ANOVA to analyse their assignments, midterm scores, and final project scores, dividing assignments into pre-midterm and post-midterm to observe learning progress.

Table 4: ANOVA analysis of student's performance

		df	Mean Square	F	p
Pre-midterm average	Between Groups	2	32.331	.771	.474
	Within Groups	23	41.954		
Midterm	Between Groups	2	909.478	3.183	.060
	Within Groups	23	285.758		
Post-midterm average	Between Groups	2	13.768	2.493	.105
	Within Groups	23	5.523		
Final Project	Between Groups	2	259.468	6.324	.006
	Within Groups	23	41.030		

*. Note: $p < 0.05$

The ANOVA table reveals a significant difference in final project results (p -value = 0.006), particularly benefiting Malaysian students. There is also a slight difference in Midterm Exam results (p -value = 0.060). Tukey's post hoc test shows that these differences, both less significant in the Midterm Exam and significant in the Final Project, are primarily between local and Malaysian students.

Table 5: Tukey HSD post hoc analysis of student's performance

				df	Mean Square	F	p	
Midterm	Tukey HSD	Local	International	-13.58	7.5	0.188	-32.33	5.19
			Malaysian	-21.08	9.59	0.093	-45.07	2.93
		International	Local	-13.58	7.5	0.188	-5.19	32.33
			Malaysian	-7.5	10.35	0.752	-33.42	18.42
		Malaysian	Local	21.08	9.58	0.093	-2.93	45.07
			International	7.5	10.35	0.752	-18.42	33.42
Final	Tukey HSD	Local	International	-5.92	2.84	0.114	-13.04	1.18
			Malaysian	-12.18*	3.63	0.007	-21.27	-3.08
		International	Local	5.93	2.84	0.114	-1.18	13.04
			Malaysian	-6.25	3.92	0.269	-16.07	3.57
		Malaysian	Local	12.18*	3.63	0.007	3.08	21.27
			International	6.25	3.92	0.269	-3.57	16.07

*. Note: $p < 0.05$

The difference in performance between local and Malaysian students can be attributed to several factors. Malaysian students' prior knowledge of the Indonesian language likely facilitated their understanding. Additionally, attendance records show that Malaysian students were the most consistent in attending classes, followed by international students, with local students attending less consistently.

Despite the significant benefit observed for Malaysian students, all student categories demonstrated improvement throughout the learning process. Local students exhibited the highest increases, with a 6.8-point difference between pre-midterm and post-midterm assignments and a 12.53-point increase between the midterm exam and the final project. International students showed a 5.89-point increase between pre-midterm and post-midterm assignments and a 4-point increase between the midterm exam and the final project. Malaysian students also improved, with a 5.47-point increase between pre-midterm and post-midterm assignments and a 2.75-point increase between the midterm exam and the final project.

Table 6: Assessment mean comparison

Group	Pre-Midterm	Midterm	Post-midterm	Final Project
Local	88.28	74	94.76	86.54
International	89.34	88	95.24	92
Malaysian	92.39	95.5	97.87	98.25

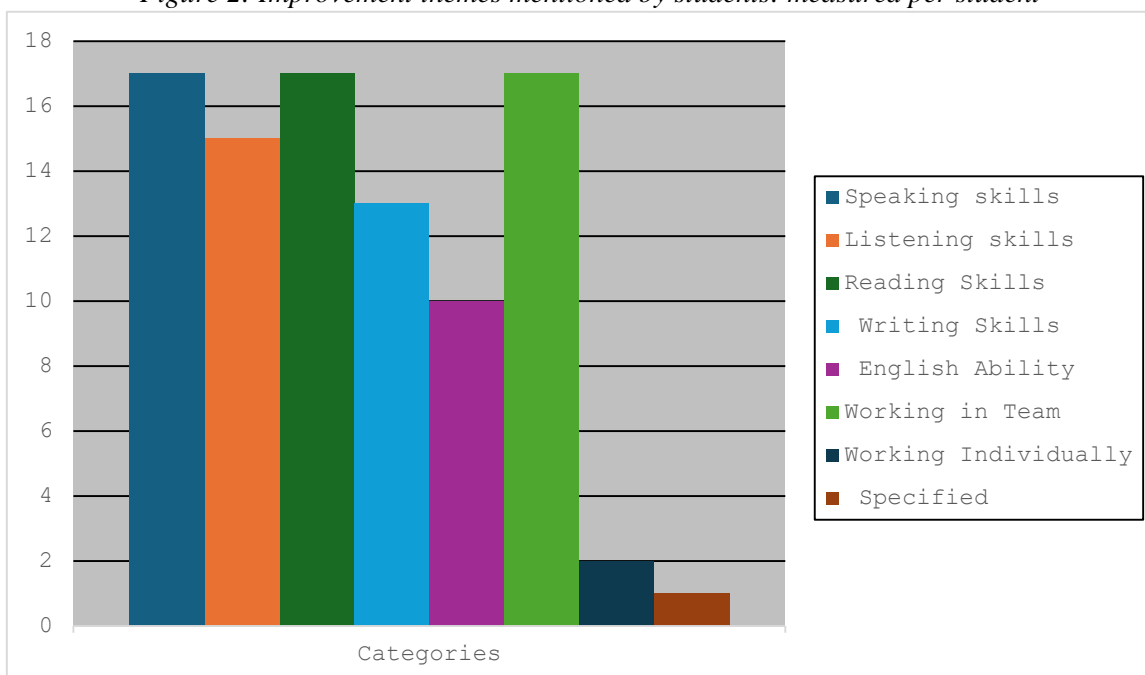
These results confidently indicate that the learning process was effective for all student categories, with significant improvements across the board, benefiting Malaysian students due to their prior knowledge and consistent attendance.

Moreover, students also reported improvements in some skills related to the Indonesian language, their English ability, working in a team, and working individually, as we can see from the figure 2: Improvement themes mentioned by students.

3.4. Student-perceived improvements

Based on the open questionnaire, most students mentioned that their skills have improved. Interestingly, they reported that besides their Indonesian skills, they also improved some other parts, such as English abilities and teamwork.

Figure 2: Improvement themes mentioned by students: measured per student



Most students (17) reported improvement in their Indonesian listening and reading skills, followed by Indonesian speaking (15) and writing (13). In addition to Indonesian language skills, the majority of students (17) also reported an increased ability to work in teams, followed by improved English proficiency (13) and the ability to work independently (2). However, one student reported increased familiarity with Indonesian culture and vocabulary.

3.5. Student perception

The questionnaire showed that the teaching methods used in this course benefited students and improved their skills. Ten students reported improved vocabulary, listening skills, and grammatical aspects like affixes. Specifically, five students noted a gradual understanding of their Indonesian friends' conversations, while four students could recognize words in written

Indonesian. One student mentioned significant improvement in understanding new terms and affixes.

Additionally, ten students reported using their skills in simple or playful communication. Seven students communicated with Indonesian friends, while two used their knowledge to impress Indonesians, with one feeling encouraged to learn more afterwards. Learning Indonesian also boosted the confidence of two students when interacting with their Indonesian peers, fostering a sense of familiarity. However, two students mentioned they still relied on notes for communication. One Malaysian student noted the course helped her recall Malay.

in the questionnaire. The results showed that twenty students were very satisfied with the teaching methods, four were satisfied, and one student reported being neutral. The student who reported neutrality (an international student) mentioned that the teaching pace was too fast, a concern shared by three other local students. Conversely, one international student found the pace too slow and expected a faster rhythm.

Two students expressed concern about the amount of content covered each week, which made it difficult for them to keep up. One student highlighted that shy students might feel overwhelmed by the group-oriented learning style, especially in such a diverse class. Another student found it challenging to keep up with the task submission process, as T-R required all class activities and assignments to be uploaded at the end of each session.

Despite these concerns, most students were satisfied with the teaching and learning experience, particularly appreciating the interactive learning environment, class activities, and the personal qualities of the TA and T-R, such as their helpfulness, patience, and supportiveness. This positive feedback was also reflected in the interviews, which echoed similar sentiments.

Overall, the course received positive feedback, with most students expressing high satisfaction with the interactive and engaging teaching methods. While the dynamic pace and diverse activities were strengths, some students found the pace too fast and the content volume challenging. Adjusting these aspects could further enhance the learning experience for all students.

Besides the teaching methods and strategies, the significant improvement in local students might be due to the informal communication introduced by T-R in the class. One local student mentioned preferring informal Indonesian because it is closer to Chinese. Meanwhile, seven local students and 2 Malaysian students mentioned that Chinese inclusion as the alternative medium of instruction helped them understand the lesson.

One international student expressed that while she was generally fine with using Chinese, she occasionally felt bored and lost focus. Meanwhile, seven other international students stated they were comfortable including Chinese, noting that it allowed them to either learn some Chinese or briefly review the lesson while waiting for the translation.

Six local and two Malaysian students reported that this approach helped them better grasp the lesson.

4. Discussion

In this course, students' needs varied based on their language proficiency, and code-switching between English (L2) and Chinese (L1) when teaching Indonesian proved highly beneficial. This aligns with findings from Chimbutane (2013) and who emphasize the advantages of switching from L2 to L1 when teaching a target language. Similarly, Yildiz and Bergil (2021) reported that students preferred code-switching as it improved their comprehension.

The code-switching also allows students to express themselves and ask questions more freely (Ataş & Sağın-Şimşek, 2021), which in turn enhances their understanding (Mortega, 2022). Hirosh and Degani (2021) further support this by demonstrating that students with stronger L1 proficiency tend to learn the target language more effectively.

Additionally, students observed that informal Indonesian resembled Chinese, which increased their motivation to learn. This similarity may be attributed to Chinese loanwords in Indonesian (Muyassaroh, 2021; Zhi, 1987), as Chinese influence has been present in Indonesia for centuries (Claver, 2014; Lim & Mead, 2011). This observation supports Mitrofanova et al. (2023), who found that learning a target language is more effective when it shares grammatical familiarity with the learner's native language.

As mentioned by international students in the results, Chinese as an alternative language of instruction was reported as non-disruptive and particularly helpful for students with lower English proficiency. This approach proves to be both practical and inclusive in this multilingual classroom setting.

The class's playful, supportive, and flexible nature positively impacted classroom dynamics and student engagement. This created a supportive environment that enhanced students' emotional engagement. Emotional engagement is crucial, as it can significantly boost students' learning motivation (Cents-Boonstra et al., 2021; Nguyen et al., 2016).

Most students reported high satisfaction with the teaching methods, including the materials, content, and class activities. High attendance and motivation to attend class weekly likely contributed to their improved performance. All student groups demonstrated significant improvements, as seen in the comparison of assessment means in Table 6, suggesting that the classroom environment and teaching methods were effective (Oga-Baldwin & Fryer, 2020; Usher & Kober, 2012; Waninge, 2015; Wong & Liem, 2022)

Although ten students reported struggling with the fast pace of spoken Indonesian, this highlights a gap in real-world listening practice. One student mentioned the need for more listening practice. Rakhimova (2024) suggests that tailored listening exercises can help students keep pace with spoken language, which aligns with our findings. Addressing this by incorporating focused listening exercises and adjusting the pace could better support students' language acquisition.

5. Conclusion

The study observed that including Chinese as an additional language of instruction benefited local students and did not negatively impact international students, as evidenced by their performance, engagement, and satisfaction. The course employed balanced participation and diverse multimodal materials shifted from form-focused to more communicative activities over time, fostering a supportive and dynamic learning environment.

Statistical analysis indicated significant improvements in language proficiency, particularly for Malaysian students with prior knowledge and consistent attendance. Overall, the teaching strategies and the integration of Chinese enhanced learning outcomes, with students expressing high satisfaction. However, some suggested pacing, content load, and assignment clarity improvements. The study underscores the effectiveness of code-switching and flexible teaching methods in language learning.

Future research could further investigate the comparative effectiveness of multilingual versus single-language instruction and explore how various teaching strategies impact student engagement and motivation over extended periods. Limitations of the study include a small

participant sample, the case study design, which affects replicability, reliance on self-reported data, and the absence of a control group.

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