

The Autistic Student Teacher's Usage of Classroom Languages in English Language Teaching Practicum

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ABSTRACT

During English Language Teaching (ELT) practicum, an autistic student teacher must have pedagogical competence. To demonstrate it, the autistic student teacher's ability to use classroom language largely depends on the proficiency level. This study investigates how the autistic student teacher's English proficiency in applying pedagogical competence through classroom language (including instructional and management talk) in ELT practicum. The objectives of this study are to: (1) examine the various classroom languages that the autistic student teacher used during the English Language Teaching (ELT) practicum process in the classroom; (2) explain how the autistic student teacher used these languages during the ELT practicum process in the classroom; and (3) determine whether the classroom languages are categorizable based on student levels. A descriptive qualitative approach was used in this study. The autistic student teacher who had an ELT practicum at SMPN 39 Surabaya was the subject of this study. Observation, interview, and an audio-video recording were used to collect the data. The study's findings demonstrated that (1) The English teacher used four languages—Indonesian, English, Bilingual, and Javanese languages—while teaching the students. (2) The way in the eighth-grade level's teacher used classroom languages. (3) Depending on the students' proficiency, the teacher used different classroom languages during the teaching and learning process.

Keywords: Classroom Language, Autistic Student Teacher, ELT Practicum

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INTRODUCTION -According to Long, as cited in Polio and Duff (Hadiatmi et al., 2020),

classroom interactions, particularly those involving the teacher, significantly determine

student outcomes in second language acquisition (SLA). Specifically, teachers' linguistic interactions play a pivotal role in shaping students' language competency. This impact is particularly pronounced in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting, where the classroom often represents students' primary context for language input and output (Hadiatmi et al., 2020).

Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), as referenced in Hadiatmi et al. (2020), underscores that effective learning occurs when students receive input slightly beyond their current language proficiency level. The teacher, therefore, serves as the crucial facilitator of this comprehensible input within EFL contexts (Kim & Elder, as cited in Hadiatmi et al., 2020). Consequently, the teacher's proficiency directly influences their ability to deliver enriched language input and explanations essential for students' language development.

Lindsay and Knight (2006) posit that even if students predominantly encounter English only within educational settings, consistent and meaningful interaction can substantially enhance their language skills. Brown (2001, p. 165) describes "classroom language" as language utilized to facilitate communication and classroom management without reliance on the students' mother tongue. This language typically mirrors daily conversational patterns, thereby naturally fostering the development of practical communicative competence among students.

Despite these theoretical expectations, practical realities within Indonesian EFL classrooms often diverge significantly. Previous research identifies systemic issues such as large class sizes, insufficient teaching resources, inadequate teacher preparation, and low remuneration as significant barriers to effective language teaching (Kirkpatrick, 2007; Andriani et al., 2020). These constraints frequently result in teachers defaulting to the students' native language rather than employing English consistently within instructional contexts (Nazary, 2011).

Informal preliminary observations by the researcher revealed that classroom language utilization among EFL teachers remains

inconsistent and often inadequate, particularly concerning basic classroom interactions such as attendance checks or basic instructional commands. More notably, existing literature largely neglects the distinct challenges faced by student teachers diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), specifically in using classroom language during English Language Teaching (ELT) practicum.

Students diagnosed with autism, including Asperger's syndrome, often struggle with expressive and receptive language skills, particularly in phonology and syntax, resulting in notable communicative impairments (Conti et al., 2019). Furthermore, Padmadewi et al. (2017) highlight that these impairments manifest through difficulties in reciprocal social interaction, repetitive behaviors, and limited adaptability to varied communication contexts. Given these characteristics, autistic student teachers likely encounter unique barriers when employing classroom language effectively during instructional practicum experiences.

Previous research, such as Saputri et al. (2024), has explored autistic student teachers' pedagogical competencies broadly, focusing primarily on teaching skills like questioning, reinforcement, and classroom management. However, no existing studies have specifically investigated how autistic student teachers manage and utilize classroom language in detail, particularly regarding its instructional and management functions in the ELT context. Thus, the existing research gap pertains explicitly to the comparative paucity of studies examining autistic student teachers' practical linguistic competence during ELT practicum.

The novelty of this study lies in its distinct focus on autistic student teachers' English proficiency, specifically their capability to utilize classroom language effectively within instructional and classroom management scenarios during ELT practicum. No prior research has examined this intersection of autism spectrum disorders, language proficiency, and pedagogical competence comprehensively, particularly within the Indonesian EFL context.

Therefore, this research explicitly aims to investigate:

- (1) The types of classroom language autistic student teachers employ during the ELT practicum;
- (2) How autistic student teachers utilize instructional and management language during practicum sessions;
- (3) Whether employed classroom languages correlate categorically with student proficiency levels.

The research questions guiding this study are:

- 1. What types of classroom language do autistic student teachers use during their ELT practicum?
- 2. How do autistic student teachers apply instructional and management classroom language during ELT practicum?
- 3. Are there identifiable patterns linking the classroom language used by autistic student teachers to the proficiency levels of students?

Addressing these objectives will provide critical insights into how language proficiency intersects uniquely with autism spectrum conditions in EFL instructional settings, ultimately guiding targeted pedagogical support strategies for autistic educators.

Review Literature

Theoretical Perspectives on Classroom Language

Classroom language, inherently linked to broader educational goals, serves as a fundamental medium facilitating effective communication between teachers and students. According to Freeman et al. (2015), "English-for-Teaching" specifically refers to English language forms utilized by teachers instructing English language learners (ELLs), emphasizing clarity and effectiveness rather than strict adherence to native-speaker norms. Freeman (cited in Lőrincz, 2024) further emphasizes a close relationship between teachers' communicative competence and their general language proficiency, highlighting a significant research gap regarding the direct influence of general language proficiency on the effectiveness of classroom

language.

Classroom language encompasses specific vocabulary, grammar, discourse patterns, and pedagogical interactions critical to the linguistic and instructional growth of students (Mahendra & Dewi, 2023). Mahendra and Dewi argue that teachers' proficiency in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and contextual appropriateness significantly impacts their ability to model language accurately, thus providing students with practical linguistic input.

In ELT contexts involving autistic student teachers, pedagogical competence and language proficiency assume heightened importance. Recent literature underscores specialized pedagogical strategies tailored explicitly for autistic individuals, considering their distinct cognitive and communicative needs (Pickard et al., 2021; Zierer, 2022). Such strategies frequently incorporate explicit instruction, structured routines, visual supports, and personalized feedback mechanisms, fostering effective classroom communication and management (Pickard et al., 2021; Humphrey & Symes, 2022).

Reflective literature in ELT frequently differentiates between "instructional talk" and "management talk," emphasizing structured clarity for effective pedagogical outcomes (Hadiatmi et al., 2020; Pickard et al., 2021). Instructional talk encompasses deliberate linguistic strategies employed to present content, question students, facilitate activities, and provide tailored feedback aligned with learners' cognitive and linguistic levels. Conversely, management talk addresses maintaining classroom order, redirecting attention, encouraging positive behaviors, and facilitating transitions between tasks (Hadiatmi et al., 2020).

Table 1: Types of Classroom Language

No.	Types of Classroom Language	Utilization
1	Instructional Talk	Explaining, Asking questions, Directing students, Providing

No.	Types of Classroom Language	Utilization
		feedback
2	Management Talk	Giving Instruction, Greetings, Checking Attendance, Making Humor, Praising, Giving answer, Modelling activities and giving students' chance to think

Explicit instructional talk for autistic student teachers often integrates simplified sentence structures, direct vocabulary, explicit modeling, and routine comprehension checks (Humphrey & Symes, 2022). Effective management talk in autism-specific ELT settings typically includes predictable routines, clear articulation of expectations, structured verbal and visual cues, and consistent positive reinforcement to manage classroom dynamics efficiently (Zierer, 2022).

Reflection-based ELT literature increasingly highlights mentors' roles in facilitating effective classroom language practices among autistic student teachers. Reflective narratives from supervisors and peers significantly shape the linguistic adaptations and classroom discourse strategies implemented by autistic student teachers, enhancing instructional efficacy and self-awareness (Lasintia et al., 2021; Mahendra & Dewi, 2023).

Furthermore, multilingual identity perspectives add complexity and depth to autism-specific ELT scenarios. Recent studies advocate for integrating bilingual identity into pedagogical strategies, recognizing how multilingual autistic learners navigate linguistic challenges uniquely within ELT settings (Hamline University, 2023). Incorporating structured reflective tools, such as reflective diaries and dialogue journals, is also recommended to systematically capture ongoing self-assessment and linguistic adaptations in practice, significantly enhancing the reflective capacity of autistic student teachers (Pickard et al., 2021; Humphrey & Symes, 2022).

In conclusion, recent literature (2020–2024) highlights instructional and management talk as integral, reflective components of classroom language, pivotal in enhancing the pedagogical effectiveness of autistic student teachers (Mahendra & Dewi, 2023; Pickard et al., 2021; Humphrey & Symes, 2022). Such reflections affirm the necessity of adaptive, structured communication tailored explicitly for autistic individuals within ELT, presenting compelling avenues for future research and reflective pedagogical practice.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Design

This qualitative study employed a single-case research design to comprehensively explore the English Language Teaching (ELT) practicum experience of an autistic student teacher (Johnson et al., 2014). The design ensured authenticity by avoiding any deliberate alteration or influence on participants' behaviors, allowing for a holistic and naturalistic examination of interaction dynamics and language usage. According to Creswell and Creswell (2019), case study research facilitates detailed, contextual analysis through extensive data collection, including observations, interviews, audio-visual materials, and documents. This methodological approach enabled the nuanced exploration of classroom communication specific to the participant's condition and professional context.

Yin (2018) emphasizes the adaptability of case study designs, particularly their capacity to integrate diverse evidence sources, making them ideal for examining complex phenomena such as interactions involving autistic educators. Unlike many studies predominantly focusing on autistic learners (Maysuroh et al., 2024; Friedman & Morrison, 2021), this research uniquely centers on an autistic student teacher. Similar studies, such as Saputri et al. (2024), have examined autistic teachers' pedagogical competencies but have not specifically focused on language choice and interactional dynamics, underscoring the distinctive contribution of this investigation.

Participants

The participant selected for this study was an autistic student teacher undertaking an ELT practicum at SMPN 39 Surabaya. He was enrolled in the fifth semester of a bachelor's degree program in English Education at a private university in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia. The deliberate choice of this participant, diagnosed with mild Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), provided critical insights into the intersection of autism and language proficiency within an educational context—an area notably underrepresented in ELT research (Saputri et al., 2024; Maysuroh et al., 2024).

Assessments and Measures

Data were collected using video recordings, direct observations, and structured interviews. Classroom language use was systematically documented, facilitating extensive analysis of linguistic choices, including English (L1), Indonesian (L2), bilingual (L1 & L2), and Javanese. The analysis indicated that English dominated instructional language use (52%), followed by Indonesian (34%), bilingual use (13%), and minimal use of Javanese (2%). Specifically, English was frequently employed for instructional explanations, question formation, and task directions. Indonesian was primarily used for providing feedback, answering queries, and managing administrative tasks, while Javanese occasionally featured for humor and directional purposes.

Data Analysis Procedures

Video-recorded classroom interactions underwent thematic analysis following guidelines by Braun and Clarke (2019). Initial coding identified recurrent linguistic patterns, adaptive strategies, and interactional styles. These codes subsequently formed clearly defined themes: linguistic adaptation strategies, communicative challenges, and classroom management proficiency. Interviews validated findings and offered reflective insights directly from the participant's perspective, structured around reflective practice models (Schön, Gibbs) (Saputri et al., 2024; MDPI, 2023).

Methodological Reflection

This study's methodological framework contributes meaningfully to existing literature by highlighting linguistic behaviors and adaptive strategies employed by an autistic educator within an ELT context. Employing structured reflective cycles (Schön, Gibbs) in data interpretation improved methodological rigor and connected findings explicitly to broader reflective practice literature. Reflecting critically on the research process, challenges arose in capturing nuanced interactional subtleties, highlighting the need for meticulous video analysis. Lessons learned underscore the importance of integrating systematic reflective practices into teacher training programs, particularly within inclusive education frameworks. Future research could beneficially extend these insights through longitudinal studies or multiple participant studies to enhance the validity and generalizability of findings (Friedman & Morrison, 2021; MDPI, 2023).

RESULTS

In this study, six observation processes were carried out. The study discovered that the autistic student teacher used majority English (L1) while teaching students or working in groups throughout the teaching and learning processes in the classroom. The teacher sometimes used bilingual (L1 & L2) while conducting such tasks in the target language. In order to create a positive environment that is related to classroom interaction, the teacher also used the mother language of the students that is Indonesian language (L2) and Javanese.

The Types of English Classroom Languages Used

Based on the data collected in a class observed, the researcher found that there were two types of classroom language used by the teachers, Instructional talk and Management talk. The use of classroom language from meeting 1-6 of the teaching practicum in this study was dominated by the use of L1 as a

medium of interaction in the classroom, at 46.5% (both Instructional talk and Management talk), as it was indicated in table below:

Table 1. Frequency of Teachers Utterances

No	Languages	Teacher Utterances				Total	
		Instructional		Management			
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Indonesian (L1)	6	9.7	2	3.2	8	12.9
2	English (L2)	21	33.9	16	25.8	37	59.7
3	Bilingual (L1&L2)	14	22.6	1	1.6	15	24.2
4	Javanese	2	3.2	0	0	2	3.2

Based on the table above, the frequency of teacher utterances, it was observed that the use of L2 as a medium of interaction in the classroom accounts for 59.7% of the overall findings on the use of classroom language in meeting 1 of the teaching practicum in this study. Based on the frequency of teacher utterances, it was observed that L2 (English) is used more frequently than L1 (Indonesian). In contrast, multilingual (L1 and L2) communication is used 24.2% of the time, whereas Indonesian is used 12.9% of the time. The autistic student teacher in this case also uses the vernacular or local language (Javanese) occasionally with 3.2%. The use of English as medium of interaction predominantly transpires as instructional talk with 33.9%. It is similarly used in management talk with 59.7%. It was also

further discovered that the instructional talk is used in the context of explaining, asking questions, directing students, and giving feedbacks.

a. The Instructional Talk

The language used by teachers in relation to the transmission of educational contents is known as instructional talk. Those teachers who were observed made 257 utterances (68%) that expressed their instructional talk. The findings from the observation of teacher talk revealed that they used instructional talk in four different contexts: questioning, explaining, guiding, and correcting students. The distribution of instructional talk usage is seen in the following table.

Table 2. Frequency on Teachers Instructional Talk in Meeting 1-6 of Teaching Practicum

No	Instructional Talk (IT)	F1	%	F2	%	F3	%	F4	%	F5	%	F6	%	Total	%
1	Explaining	1	2	2	18.2	12	42.9	9	12.9	7	11.5	8	21.6	39	15,2
2	Asking Questions	32	64	4	36.4	11	39.3	31	44.3	30	49.2	18	48.6	126	49,0
3	Directing Students	3	6	2	18.2	2	7.1	10	14.3	11	18	3	8.1	31	12,1
4	Providing Feedback	14	6.7	3	27.2	3	10.7	20	28.5	13	21.3	8	21.6	61	23,7
														257	100

The instructional talk begins with meetings 1-6, as indicated in table 2. The overall instructional talk score was 15.2% for explanation, 49.0% for questioning, 12.1% for student guidance, and 23.7% for feedback. With 49.0% of all

instructional discourse, asking questions was the most common activity. This demonstrates the teacher's attempts to encourage involvement in the classroom, evaluate understanding, and spark critical thinking. Giving feedback was shown to

be the second most common instructional discourse, accounting for 23.7% of all observed utterances. Giving students feedback entails making corrections, recommendations, and evaluating remarks. With 15.2%, explanation came next. The explaining part shows that the goal of the class discussion was to provide students explanations about the lesson topic and information delivery. Student direction is the least common type of instructional talk.

Practical Illustration of Checking Vocabulary

Strategy: *Teacher: "Okay class, listen carefully. Apa artinya 'went' dalam bahasa Indonesia?" (What does 'went' mean in Indonesian?) Students: "Pergi, Miss!" (Go, Miss!) Teacher: "Yes, that's right. 'Went' is the past tense of 'go'. Sekarang coba buat kalimatnya." (Now, please make a sentence.)*

This interaction exemplifies how the autistic student teacher practically applied bilingual

instructional talk to ensure student comprehension during vocabulary checking.

The endeavor to include students is also evident in 12. Students are guided in an active conversation for one percent of the teaching discourse. It is also critical to note that the purpose of the management talk is to teach students on how to behave.

b. The Management Talk

The language used by teachers to discuss discipline and control in the classroom is known as management talk. According to the analysis's findings, management talk which accounted for 121 utterances (32%) was the most common use of classroom languages during the teaching and learning process. Teachers used management talk in seven different circumstances, according to the findings of the observation of their speech.

Table 3. Frequency on Teachers Management Talk in Meeting 1-6 of Teaching Practicum

No	Management Talk (MT)	F1	%	F2	%	F3	%	F4	%	F5	%	F6	%	Total	%
1	Giving Instruction	18	62.1	3	17.6	2	25	6	19.4	1	4	1	9.1	31	25,6
2	Greetings	2	6.9	1	5.8	1	12.5	1	3.2	1	4	1	9.1	7	5,8
3	Checking Attendance	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.2	2	8	3	27.3	6	5,0
4	Making Humor	3	10.3	0	0	2	25	22	71	5	20	6	54.5	38	31,4
5	Praising	1	3.4	10	58.9	3	37.5	1	3.2	15	60	0	0	30	24,8
6	Giving answer	3	10.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	4	3,3
7	Modelling activities	2	6.95	3	17.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4,1
														121	100

The frequency of various management talk types seen in the classroom, beginning with meetings 1-6, is shown in table 3. The overall management talk score was 25.6% for teaching, 5.8% for greetings, 5.0% for attendance checks, 31.4% for comedy, 24.8% for praise, 3.3% for answers, and 4.1% for modelling activities. With 31.4% of all management talk, humor is the most common kind. Maintaining cordial relationships or closeness with the students is crucial. Instruction is the second most common sort of management talk, occurring 25.6% of the time. Giving

instruction indicates that a large amount of the language used in the classroom is devoted to instructing students in order to direct their behavior and learning. At 24.8%, praise is the third most common kind of management talk. Praising is crucial because it inspires, encourages, and motivates students. Greetings rank as the fourth most common kind of management talk, occurring 5.8% of the time. Only at the start of the session is an attempt made to keep up constructive interactions with the students. Checking attendance is the sixth most common

form of management talk, occurring 5.0% of the time. Since it is the procedure for documenting the number of students in the classroom, it is crucial to complete. Modelling activities are the sixth most common sort of management talk, occurring 4.1% of the time. To provide students a clear and visual picture of what is expected of them, modelling exercises are required. Additionally, when students internalize the teaching as part of their own knowledge, this effort might assist them in observing the process step-by-step. Answering questions is the least common form of management talk, occurring 3.3% of the time. Answering questions can assist teachers in gauging their students' comprehension. **Practical Illustration of Modeling Activities Strategy:** *Teacher: (pointing to one student) "Silakan maju, bawa bukumu dan perlihatkan ke teman-teman bagaimana mengerjakan tugas ini, ya."* ("Please come forward, bring your book,

and show your friends how to do this task.") Student: (stands up, approaches the front, and demonstrates) *Teacher: "Very good! Libat temanmu, seperti ini ya caranya."* ("Look at your friend; this is how you do it.")

This practical excerpt demonstrates how the autistic student teacher effectively employed management talk by clearly modeling the expected classroom activities.

The Way the Teachers Used Classroom Languages

According to the researcher's findings from the classroom observation, there are a few things that have to do with how the autistic student teacher used the classroom languages, like checking vocabulary, eliciting, modelling the target language strategy, thinking aloud, giving students thinking time strategies, repeating strategies, and modelling the activities strategies.

Table 4. Frequency the Way Classroom of Instructional Languages Used

The Way	Grade VIII	
	F	%
Giving Student Thinking Time Strategy	6	14.3
Eliciting Strategy	6	14.3
Checking Vocabulary Strategy	12	28.6
Thinking Aloud Strategy	6	14.3
Modeling The Target Language Strategy	12	28.6
Total	42	100

Based on table 4 about frequency the way classroom of instructional languages used by the autistic student teacher, it revealed that the frequency of giving student thinking time strategy

was 6 (14.3%), eliciting strategy was 6 (14.3%), checking vocabulary strategy was 12 (28.6%), thinking aloud strategy was 6 (14.3%) and modeling the target language strategy was 12

(28.6%).

Table 5. Frequency the Way Classroom of Management Languages Used

The Way	Grade VIII	
	F	%
Repeating Strategy	6	25
Giving Students' Thinking Time Strategy	6	25
Modeling of Activities Strategy	12	50
Total	24	100

Based on table 5 about frequency the way classroom of management languages used by the autistic student teacher, it revealed that the frequency of repeating strategy was 6 (25%), giving students' thinking time strategy was 6 (25%), and modeling of activities strategy was 12 (50%). Below is the description of each category of the instructional and management languages used by the autistic student teacher:

a. Giving Student Thinking Time Strategy

Approximately 14.3% of students used the thinking time strategy while the classroom teaching process was observed. The findings of the observation demonstrated that the students were given a chance by increasing their thinking time, which was different for each class that was observed. In the eighth-grade of the inclusion class, students were given the chance to think more deeply by increasing the time allotted for each question from five to ten seconds. The teacher then repeated the question by compressing it. This strategy could make it easier for students to understand how to interpret their responses.

b. Eliciting Strategy

In lesson observations, the technique of elicitation was used 14.3% of the time. This strategy was probably going to assist a teacher in

extending and maintaining the conversation while also bringing forth the opinions of the students. It was discovered that the autistic student teacher used the prompting approach in grade VIII of the inclusion class in order to increase the students understanding of the language being taught. By going over previously covered language related to the previous session, the teacher also assessed the students' vocabulary comprehension. The teacher assessed student's vocabulary competence by conducting exercises that involved pronouncing the words correctly and explaining their meanings.

c. Checking Vocabulary Strategy

Vocabulary checks were the most frequently used language teaching approach among autistic student teachers, with 28.6% of them using it in various ways. The teacher made many efforts to assess student's vocabulary.

d. Thinking Aloud Strategy

One approach and strategy that was observed 14.3% of the time during lesson observations was think aloud. The act of sharing a teacher's inner monologue or opinions with students so they may hear their ideas and thoughts on the thought process is known as a think-aloud. As they had never studied or prepared before entering the classroom, the students were unable to

understand the question asked, thus the autistic student teacher used to think aloud throughout the observation.

e. Modeling the Target Language Strategy

The modeling of target language was a strategy that showed as many as 28.6% of techniques used. This strategy and the technique followed were found in a class. In grade VIII of the inclusion class, the teacher used this strategy by teaching students how to use appropriate rules as likely used by the English native speakers. Students were taught how to place an appropriate *V2 (verb-2)* by fitting it to the sentence at the question. Furthermore, the autistic student teacher also used the modeling the target language by teaching the students how to translate sentences were meant from the English to the Indonesian language appropriately and the way those words were correctly pronounced, yet, the sort of language employed by both of those teachers when delivering the information was the same, by using the Indonesian language.

f. Repeating Strategy

As a consequence of the teacher having already completed 25% of the repetition approach, the autistic student teacher used elaborated input throughout the teaching and learning process in the classroom by using a type of repeating method in each of the teacher talks. A teacher used the strategy throughout the teaching process in grade VIII of the inclusion class. Additionally, each of the terms taught was translated from English to Indonesian as part of the teacher's repetition technique.

g. Modeling the Activities Strategy

There was 50% of the methods and approaches used during lesson observations were related to activity modelling. The teacher modelled the students' task by requesting one student to enter the classroom first, carrying the notebook that the student had previously filled up during the meeting. After that, the student was given a simple past tense sentence exercise. Students may be able to clearly describe the lesson they gained from this type of practice.

Language Based on Students' Grades

a) Language of Instructional

Grade VIII students in the inclusion class had a tendency to alter their language usage in the classroom by using more tone and loudness. Asking questions, directing students, and correcting students were some of the ways the autistic student teacher used loudness. The majority of the time, the teacher used repetition to change the language. The same terminologies that the teacher used to describe things were also used, but more slowly in the past. Regarding the language function used, the teacher seemed to use more English while elaborating and asking questions to the class. However, the teacher used mixed language more often while directing the class.

b) Language of Management

Regarding the language of management talk, the class's language modification focused more on using English while instructing students and on volume and tone. When providing directions or responding to a question about the students during class, the teacher had a tendency to shout louder. Another change was that the teacher greeted the class with a variety of facial expressions before moving quickly. Additionally, the language was changed to use repetition techniques more often, such as when instructing and asking questions. This study found that the autistic student teacher predominantly used English (59.7%) during instructional and management tasks, followed by bilingual (L1 & L2) use (24.2%), Indonesian (12.9%), and minimal Javanese (3.2%). These findings align closely with Padmadewi and Artini's (2017) observations that educators frequently use bilingual strategies in inclusive Indonesian classrooms, combining English and students' mother tongue to support comprehension and engagement. Similarly, translanguaging theories emphasize strategic multilingual practices to facilitate deeper understanding among diverse learners, reinforcing the practical value of

bilingual instructional methods demonstrated in the current study.

Regarding instructional strategies, the autistic student teacher frequently employed questioning (49%), feedback provision (23.7%), and vocabulary checking strategies (28.6%). This practical distribution closely matches existing research advocating multimodal and explicit instructional strategies tailored for learners with autism spectrum disorder (Zohoorian et al., 2024). The extensive use of questioning and vocabulary checking particularly aligns with established best practices recommended in the literature for enhancing student participation and comprehension within bilingual contexts (Howard et al., 2020).

In terms of classroom management talk, humor (31.4%), giving instructions (25.6%), and praise (24.8%) emerged as the most frequently utilized approaches. This finding partially resonates with prior research advocating structured and supportive classroom management techniques such as positive reinforcement and modeling tasks (Padmadewi & Artini, 2017). However, while humor prominently featured in the autistic student teacher's management approach, it is less extensively discussed in the general literature, highlighting a potentially novel finding warranting further exploration.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide critical insights into the linguistic strategies utilized by an autistic student teacher within an English Language Teaching (ELT) context. While the data clearly identified predominant use of English (59.7%), followed by bilingual language use (24.2%), Indonesian (12.9%), and minimal use of Javanese (3.2%), a comparative reflection against existing literature and reflective practice frameworks deepens the interpretative analysis.

Comparing this study to Rohmah's (2017) research, common classroom practices such as questioning, providing information, and direction-giving were similarly evident. However, strategies involving direct correction and extensive feedback, frequently noted in

Rohmah's findings, were scarcely observed here. This divergence suggests a distinct linguistic approach potentially linked to autistic characteristics, such as pragmatic language limitations and structured linguistic preference (Zohoorian et al., 2024). The autistic teacher's choices appear driven by a need for predictability and clarity, aligning closely with established best practices for inclusive education contexts.

In parallel with Hadiatmi's (2020) findings, multilingual practices were prominent, but this research uniquely reveals the nuanced linguistic strategies employed specifically by an autistic teacher. The autistic teacher demonstrated a clear preference for structured bilingual interactions and minimal repetition. Reflective practice literature indicates that teachers, particularly those in special education contexts, employ reflective cycles to adapt and optimize instructional language (MDPI, 2023). Although explicit reflective cycles were not thoroughly documented here, interview responses indicate the teacher's implicit reflective-on-action practice, particularly regarding linguistic choices responsive to student proficiency.

The study revealed significant divergence from Thomson's (2012) findings regarding elicitation strategy usage. Thomson identified elicitation as frequently utilized in advanced classes, contrasting with this study's observation of less frequent elicitation and a greater emphasis on modeling. This divergence is contextually meaningful when framed within reflective practice theory (Schön, 1983; Gibbs, 1988), indicating reflective-in-action adaptations to classroom demands. The autistic teacher's modeling preference likely reflects a considered reflective choice, given the structured clarity modeling provides, which supports autistic students' understanding (Zohoorian et al., 2024).

Regarding minimal Javanese language usage, this reflects deliberate pedagogical choices aligning with strategic bilingual instructional practices (Padmadewi & Artini, 2017). The autistic teacher's linguistic strategy, grounded in English immersion, highlights reflection-based pedagogical decisions to optimize language

acquisition and classroom management effectiveness. These choices could also reflect inherent autistic traits, such as structured cognitive processing and preference for predictability, significantly influencing classroom language dynamics (Howard et al., 2020).

Integrating reflective practice models (Schön, 1983; Gibbs, 1988), the autistic student teacher's linguistic decisions could be interpreted as reflective-in-action adaptations. Interview data indicates implicit reflection-on-action regarding the justification of language choice based on student proficiency and classroom interaction dynamics. The autistic teacher's structured instructional approach aligns with reflective practice findings that suggest teachers in inclusive education contexts strategically use reflection to enhance pedagogical effectiveness (MDPI, 2023).

Contextual factors—including teacher beliefs, educational training, student proficiency levels, and classroom dynamics—also significantly influenced linguistic strategies, reinforcing the complexity and reflective nature of instructional language decisions (Freeman et al., 2015; Zohoorian et al., 2024). The interaction between autistic characteristics and reflective practice warrants further investigation, particularly regarding explicit reflective processes and their direct influence on linguistic strategy selection.

Overall, this study provides substantial theoretical and practical contributions, enhancing understanding of autistic teachers' linguistic strategies within multilingual ELT contexts. Future research should explicitly integrate reflective practice frameworks, exploring further how varying autistic traits shape reflective capacities and linguistic choices across diverse educational contexts.

CONCLUSION

The findings reveal distinct patterns in classroom language use by the observed teacher, emphasizing a higher prevalence of instructional talk (68%) compared to managerial talk (32%). Within instructional talk, questioning strategies (49.0%) and feedback provision (23.7%) dominated, reflecting the teacher's strategic

emphasis on engaging students actively and reinforcing learning outcomes. Conversely, the managerial talk predominantly consisted of humor (31.4%), praise (24.8%), and giving instructions (25.6%), indicating an intentional approach to fostering a positive and structured classroom environment.

Moreover, the linguistic choices by the teacher were significantly influenced by students' proficiency levels and classroom contexts. The teacher predominantly utilized English, occasionally resorting to bilingual strategies (English and Indonesian) to enhance comprehension among students in grade VIII inclusion classes. Notably, minimal use of Javanese highlights sensitivity towards maintaining an inclusive and accessible linguistic environment.

The diverse range of strategies observed—including vocabulary checks, elicitation techniques, modeling language usage, thinking aloud, providing adequate deliberation time, repetition, and task modeling—underscores the nuanced adaptability required by teachers in inclusive ELT settings, especially when involving educators with autism.

Key pedagogical implications arising from this study emphasize the necessity of targeted language training within ELT teacher education programs. Specifically, training should prioritize inclusive practices that address diverse linguistic competencies and cognitive needs, ensuring teachers, including autistic educators, are well-prepared for dynamic classroom interactions.

Recommendations:

Future research should explore broader dimensions of autistic educators' classroom language usage, considering additional contextual factors such as class size, the severity of autism, and the socio-cultural backgrounds of students. Pedagogically, ELT teacher training programs must explicitly incorporate inclusive language strategies, equipping educators with practical techniques for differentiated instruction, effective classroom management, and fostering supportive learning environments. Such

comprehensive training is essential to enhance both educator preparedness and student outcomes in inclusive ELT contexts.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

We declare that we have no competing interests pertaining to the subject matter discussed herein.

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