THE LANGUAGE LEARNING PRINCIPLES REFLECTED IN EF'S ENGLISH THRESHOLD 2 TEXTBOOK

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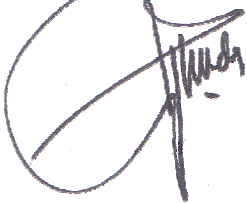
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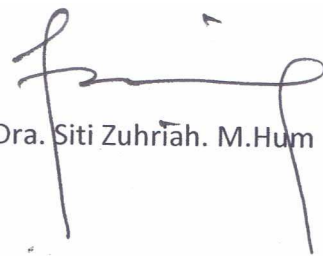
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The Language Learning Principles Found in EF's English Threshold 2

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Abstract

The paper describes the language learning principles in The EF's English Threshold 2, an English textbook published by English First (EF). Subjects of the research are all the instructions and tasks in English Threshold 2. The data gathering was conducted by documentation. The data were analyzed were qualitative. The result of the research shown the dominant language learning principle is the cognitivism, while the other three principles comes as follows: 2nd dominant is behaviorism, the third dominant is constructivism, and the least dominant is humanism. The language learning principles are the perspectives of describing the book so the teacher can hold this as the hand-grip in choosing a proper English textbook for their students. And the material developer can use the principles as other consideration of arranging the new English textbook

Keywords: behaviorism, cognitivism, humanism, constructivism

Introduction

Textbooks are one of the important parts of teaching-learning process. The good book is a need for the teacher to support them in teaching. But the dependence of the book may be found in many school surround us. This is proven by the selling of textbook every year. The teacher seems don't have a power to choose the proper book for them and students. As the result, the teachers and the students are controlled by what is in the book. This case calls the researcher to conduct a research about textbook.

Harmer (2000:117) stated "students often feel more positive about textbooks than some teachers. For them, the textbook is reassuring. It allows them to look forward and back, giving them chance to prepare for what's coming and review what they have done". From the statement above we can notice that how important is the textbook as important

as the developing it, to be developed to give the students a mean of learning which have helpful tasks and instructions.

The function of the book may be different based on the view of the students and teacher but the in general textbook is a mean of learning. For the teachers, the functions of the textbook are as a standard of teaching, a pole of teaching, and materials collection of teaching. The textbook contains of task or instructions which lead the teacher to follow them. He may ask the students to do the tasks in the textbook. By doing the tasks, the teacher is able to recognize whether the students inquire the standard or not. The teacher could use the textbook as a hand-grip although some of the books needed to be modified to make it proper to the students' abilities, curriculum or logical content. While for the students, it is a "recording device" of the lesson. Means, when students forget about the subjects given by the teachers, he could directly open the book and browse it. So the materials in the book should be developed in the right way.

The language learning principles are behaviorism, cognitivism, humanism, and constructivism. They play the important role in this study because all the tasks and instructions in the researched books are seen in their point of view. All the principles with the aspects in them are maximally used to describe the book.

Language learning principles could be the options to develop the materials in the textbook. Nunan (1991) He (Curran) came to the conclusion that success or failure in language teaching depends not so much on whether one engages in meaningful practice rather than a pattern drill, but in the extent to which one caters to the learners' active domain. The researcher could conclude that the word "one" and "learner" used as a signal that they are the center of the materials development in language principles.

Why "English Threshold 2"? This book is authored by a five members team (Joe Chapple, Adam Golub, Susan Hills, Li whybrow, and Ingrid Wisnieska) named English Threshold 2. These textbooks are arranged in a systematic ways that makes the students practice English step by step or we can chose one of the book that proper to our students abilities. The book was first published in 1999 for EF learners only. It gives three of the language skills (writing, speaking and reading). Every text book is observable. The English threshold 2 is one of them. The tasks and instructions in the book must reflect the language learning principles and could answer why the book is so effective.

Research Methodology

The data this research is all the tasks and instructions in English Threshold 2. The tasks come in different numbers, mentioned as follows: chapter 65 has 37 tasks, chapter 66 has 33 tasks, chapter 67 has 25 tasks, chapter 68 has 32 tasks, chapter 69 has 36 tasks, chapter 70 has 35 tasks, chapter 71 has 30 tasks, and chapter 72 has 16 tasks. They are arranged in a 204 pages-book. All the tasks and the instructions in the book will be used as the data. For short, The book plays two parts in this section, as the data and the source of data.

The method of this study is descriptive qualitative. The writer uses documentation and classification the tasks and instructions based on the language learning principles. The methods are follows: (1) The researcher reads the book all over, (2) The researcher observes the tasks and instructions, (3) The researcher categorizes the type, frequency and dominant language learning principles in every task deeply, he also add the pedagogical aspects found and use them as data, (4) The researcher record the research finding.

The data analysis conducted through several stages. The tasks and instructions were classified into each language learning principles into four groups. The tasks and instructions categorized in the four language learning principles were classified into some types. And the total number of the classification was calculated to find the frequency and dominant language learning principles found in English Threshold 2.

Result and Discussion

The English Threshold 2 has 8 chapters with the various tasks and instructions. The total numbers of the tasks and instructions are 256 (Chapter 65 : 38 tasks, 66:33, 67:35, 68:31, 69:37, 70:36, 71:30, 72:16). The tasks and instructions were classified by using the language learning principles. The result of this step was classified into some types.

The analysis shows the language learning principles domination as follow: 1st is cognitivism, 2nd is behaviorism, 3rd is humanism, and the 4th is constructivism. The every chapter represents the four principles with the various dominant principles. However, the greatest principle is cognitivism which formed the tasks and instructions.

Cognitivism tasks are the tasks which lead the students to process the knowledge in their brain, store it, and use it in the future as stated by Siemens (2004) "learning is viewed as a process of inputs, managed in short memory, and coded for long-term recall". The tasks with this principle found in English Threshold are as follows:

1. Think about the scene you have read

2. Think some other common phobias. Create a "fun" medical terms for the phobias

3. Decide which religion each item refers to, write the first of the religion name's in the space

Behaviorism tasks are the tasks which form a habit formation. The students are the

objects of learning. As stated by Skinners (2005) "while the concept of behaviorism is about to give the student operant and wait them to give a feedback". The behaviorism tasks are the tasks which provide the students operant (stimuli) like completion, restatement, replacement, repetition, transformation, repetition, and restoration. The instructions of behaviorism tasks are listed as follows:

1. Fill in the blank using the words in the list

2. Copy your answers

3. Respond these statement

4. Unscramble the words related to the religion

5. Complete the text with the words in the list

The third dominant principle is constructivism. The principle leads the student to construct the knowledge trough experience. The teacher's role is to lead the students in gaining new knowledge. As said by Driscoll in Siemens (2004) "create knowledge to understand their experience". Using this theory the researcher list the constructivism tasks found in English threshold 2 as follows:

1. Now suggest the treatment for Harry

2. What is the difference between a skill and a talent? List three of your skill and three of your talents

3. Work with a partner. Imagine that you know nothing about computers and have never used one. And now you have to work for a company that uses computers. You will have to do a lot of work on your computer. What will you have to get used to?

4. Now imagine that your case has gone to court and it's the last day of the trial. One person in your group is the prosecuting attorney, one person is defense

attorney, and one person is defendant. Each of you must make a closing statement to the court. The prosecutor must argue for the maximum punishment. The defense attorney must argue for a lesser punishment or an acquittal. The defendant may ask for the mercy of the court. The jury (your classmates) will decide the defendant's fate

The least dominant principle is humanism. This principle offers a good situation of learning by considering the psychology of the students. Curran in Stevick (1990) suggested that the teacher must not confront the student in case to give them sense of security feeling in learning. The tasks with this principles found in English Threshold have been listed as follows:

1. Most people are scared of something-even if they are afraid to admit it! What are you scared of? Check ( ) the things that make you afraid

2. Discus these questions with partner

3. Now, reverse it! You and your partner come up with a general topic. Think of four keywords. Tell your keywords to the class, and see if they can guess what your original topic was

The analysis shows that the highest percentage of the language learning principle which dominates the book is the cognitivism tasks (38.3%), second, behaviorism tasks (37.5%), third, constructivism tasks (12.3%); and fifth, humanism tasks (11.3%). From the analysis above, the writer concludes that the dominant language learning principles in the book is the cognitivism with percentage of 37.5%. The tasks spread in 8 chapters of the books. The tasks of cognitivsim are 98 tasks. It is two tasks greater than the behaviorism tasks. The principle is not always dominant in every chapter. The smallest is in the chapter

72 with 5 tasks in it while the greatest is in the chapter 67 with 17 tasks in it. The behaviorism tasks may lesser than the cognitivism but it fills the 37.5% of the tasks. From this we know that the authors lead the students to process their knowledge by giving the tasks which ask them to think or decide. For short, the book is a book which is used by the students with the good English already, so they need a challenge in learning English and the authors supply them trough the book.

Brown cited Anthony's statement that sounds (1986) "He identified three levels of conceptualization and organization, which he termed approach, method, and technique". The researcher finds that the authors of the books used the language learning principles as one of the approach in building the tasks in the English Threshold 2. The technique is how the authors arrange the language principles neatly. The language learning principles are the part of the concept and the way how the authors organize them is very clear. The researcher finds that the authors put the right principle in the right materials.

We may arrange the books base on the curriculum, the teacher and students' needs, the local philosophies, or any categories we chose. The researcher dares to say that the language learning principles are able to be a hand-grip for it. The researches above are complete each other. It may be hard to arrange the book with all the point of view of the researchers but it is not impossible. Let's imagine how lucky our students if the use the book with this concept. The researcher has finished the two books with this concept. And the third book is on the process. He is interested to do another research about the effectiveness of the books.

Conclusion

All language learning principles are found in the English Threshold 2. The principles are reflected how the book is arranged. The tasks in every chapter are represents the language learning principles. The tasks ask the students to complete, restore, restate, or repeat as the behaviorism task. The tasks ask the students to think, decide, and try as the cognitivism tasks. The tasks which ask the students to work in a group, express what they feel, and give a chance of self-actualization are the parts of the humanism. The fourth is the constructivism tasks which coach the students and construct the students understanding are the constructivism tasks. These characters of the tasks are found in English Threshold 2.

The researcher has found that the dominant language learning principle is the cognitivism (38.3%). The tasks with this principle are found in every chapter. I can notice that the materials which are presented in cognitivism are the reading comprehension. There is at least one reading text in every chapter except in the chapter 69. The chapter comes with three reading texts. There also at least one tasks which ask the students to decide and think.

The behaviorism is the second dominant language learning principles in the English Threshold 2 (37.5%). The principles form in the 5 branches such as completion, restatement, replacement, transformation, restoration, and repetition. The frequency of completion is the dominant in the dominant principle. The transformation is the least in this principle because it is only found in the one task only.

The third dominant is constructivism tasks (12.3%). I categorize the tasks into three. The first is the tasks which coach the students. It leads the students to understand the materials by training it. The second is the case based-instruction. These instructions let the students to solve such kind of problem. The last is collaborative learning instruction. Role-

play is the part of the collaborative learning. The instruction is only found one in the chapter 71.

The least dominant is humanism (11.3%). I categorize the principles into three types. They are instruction which lead the student to express their feeling. This task is found only one in the chapter 66. The humanism gives a chance for the students to build a social relation. The tasks like this can be found in every chapter, one for every chapter. The third are a self-actualization tasks, this kind of task let the student to express what they have or can in front of the class. Every chapter has the task with this type.

The writer can draw a conclusion that the English Threshold 2 is dominated by the cognitivism tasks (38.3%) with the 98 tasks from the total 256 tasks. Each chapter has tasks with this principle. The most is chapter 67 with 17 tasks and the least is chapter 72 with 5 tasks. The second dominant is the behaviorism tasks (37.5%) with 96 tasks from the total 256 tasks. The most chapter with this principle is chapter 65 (16 tasks) and the least is chapter 72 (3 tasks). The third dominant is constructivism (12.3%). It is also found in every chapter. The most is chapter 72 with 8 tasks and the least is chapter 68 (1 task). And the least dominant is humanism tasks (11.3%). Not found every chapter, the chapter with none of this principle is chapter 72. And three chapters have the same number (6 tasks) as the most. They are chapter 66, chapter 69, and chapter 70.

With the finding above, the materials development should be considered some points of view. One of them is the language learning principles. To concept and to organize the materials ought to be based with one principle or philosophy, they can use the combination of two or more principles. For me as the author of English text book and work sheet, it means so much.

The English Threshold 2 may reflect all language learning principles but it doesn't reflect the local philosophy and the curriculum of such country but I can totally understand about this. This book is used widely all over the world so it is impossible to put another principle like local philosophy. As I stated in the chapter one, the book is for the students with advance level of English so not including the other principles than language learning principles is not a serious problem.

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