THE APPLICATION OF LEARNING PRINCIPLES FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AT SMAN 2 NGAWI (A NATURALISTIC STUDY)

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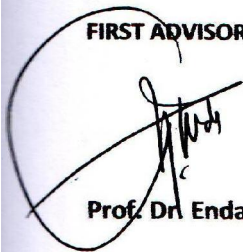# THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AT SMAN 2 NGAWI
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The thesis describes the learning principles applied to teaching English at SMAN 2 Ngawi. By doing the research, the researcher could investigate the learning principles reflected in English teaching process at SMAN 2 Ngawi, the classroom activities which are based on the learning principles used by the teachers as well as the teacher's purpose in using such classroom activities. Subjects of the research are three English teachers teaching at SMAN 2 Ngawi. The data collection was conducted through observation, interview and documentation. The data collected were analyzed qualitative. The findings of the research show that the three teachers applied the four learning principles in their teaching process through various kinds of classroom activities with certain purposes. The learning principles are the perspective in teaching English so the teachers can use the findings to assist them in teaching the students .Teachers can enrich themselves with various teaching techniques or classroom activities to make the lesson more attractive and meet the students' need.

Keywords: behaviorism, cognitivism, humanism, constructivism, English teaching

Introduction

There are several essential elements in language teaching which should be covered to establish a good condition and situation of the learning process itself. One of so many important elements is teachers should be familiar with the basic learning principles. The principles should be dealt with so many approaches and theories in language learning. It is done to make learners' progress in their achievement.

Learning principles encompass a number of significant aspects which enhance students' performance during the teaching and learning process. Teachers should understand that teaching is not merely teaching. It does have more things which should be given more concern, especially, on the process itself.

Dealing with learning principles, the researcher should relate it with the four major learning theories, namely, behaviorism, cognitivism, humanism and constructivism. All of the four major learning theories were emerged by the well-known scholars who dedicate themselves with language teaching and acquisition.

This research is considered important as good language teachers should be underpinned with the understanding of learning principles which are related to the application of each theory of language learning in the real English language teaching. They are behaviorism, cognitivism, humanism and constructivism. Those four major theories are prominent theories of language learning which teachers might apply during the process of teaching and learning.

Why SMAN 2 Ngawi? SMAN 2 Ngawi had once been a pilot project international standard school in the city. As the rule of the government repealed the project, then it was no longer the pilot project international standard school. However, SMAN 2 Ngawi still places the highest rank of senior high school in Ngawi for its achievement, input and quality of the human resources.

Therefore, the researcher believes that teachers at SMAN 2 Ngawi have high capability in pedagogy and knowledge of the field. Furthermore, the researcher is certain that teachers at SMAN 2 Ngawi have a number of teaching methods which are applicable in teaching process. Thus, the researcher has no doubt in taking them as the object of the research.

Research Methodology

The data are taken from the teachers' instructions and classroom activities of the three teachers during the teaching and learning process at SMAN 2 Ngawi. All of the classroom activities, including instructions provided by the teachers are used as the data.

This research belongs to a naturalistic research since it studies about teachers' behavior in a certain place. It investigates the way the teachers teach and whether they apply certain learning principles during the teaching learning process. This research also portrays why or for what purpose the teachers use such classroom activities.

According to L. Frey, et. al (1999) naturalistic research focuses on how people behave when absorbed in genuine life experiences in natural settings. It aims to develop context-specific statements about the multiple, constructed realities of all the key participants. A naturalistic researcher must identify and gain entry to the site they want to study, determine the role they will take, what and how they will observe, whom they will interview, and what they will ask, and how they record the information and present it.

The researcher employed some methods or techniques to collect the data. The researcher applied observation as well as field note-taking, video-recording and interview.

The data analysis conducted through several stages. The researcher used method triangulation to cross-check the data from both interview and observation. Secondly, to verify the data, source of triangulation was used to examine the data from one respondent to another. The last, the researcher used theory triangulation to explain the relation between one theory with others toward the research.

In this study, the researcher analyzed the data by using descriptive-analysis by doing some steps as follows: (1). Classifying the language learning principle applied in teaching

process; (2). Grouping the classroom activities based on the learning principles); (3). Describing the teachers' purpose in applying each learning principle; (4). Drawing pedagogical implication; (5). Making conclusion

Result and Discussion

Based on the research conducted at SMAN 2 Ngawi, there are four learning principles applied by the teachers. They are behaviorism, cognitivism, humanism, and constructivism.

As what the researcher observed during the observation, she found some teachers' instruction and classroom activities which reflect the principle of behaviorism. They are classified into: repetition, inflection, transformation, replacement, and rejoinder.

In repetition, students made errors while pronouncing certain words, thus, teachers gave corrective feedback about the correct pronunciation of the words. Afterwards, teachers asked the students to repeat after them the correct pronunciation of the words. Teachers repeated once more and students produced exactly the same pronunciation as their teachers. In inflection, one word in an utterance appears in another form when repeated. Here, the researcher found that students again made errors when using certain words within a sentence or utterance. Students chose incorrect words, such as, instead of choosing verbs, they used

noun within the utterance. In addition, students did not know about the plural forms of certain nouns. Thus, teachers gave students corrective feedback about the right words.

In transformation, the researcher found that teachers asked students to transform some words as the students studied grammar. The activity of studying grammar made the students used the right structures to build the utterances or sentences, such as, passive sentence, tenses changes, comparison, and well-structured interrogative sentences. In replacement, it was found when teachers gave a model by producing a sentence then students reproduce the same sentences by replacing one or two words within the sentences. It was done when there were some explanations of certain texts and there was a question-answer session. Students answered the questions exactly the same as the teachers' sentence but they replaced one or two words to make a new sentences as the answer.

In rejoinder, the student makes an appropriate respond to the given utterances. Here, teachers explain how to use certain expressions. By giving students a model, teachers asked students to make a dialog based on certain topic. The activity included how students should ask and respond to the given expression.

In cognitivism, classroom activities are classified into (1) activities which build on what the students already know, (2) activities which employ the first language, visual, or demonstration as a base from which to build conceptualization of meaning and form in the second language, (3) teachers use inductive, deductive, or discover learning procedures as the situation warrant, (5) activities which reinforce instructional effectiveness and creativity by generating students'

involvement in their development of learning activities, (6) expository teaching or reception learning.

In the activities which build on what the students already know, most of the teachers used brainstorming questions about the topic that they were going to discuss. They asked students some questions, found out whether students had any experience related to the topic being discussed. This technique was used to guide the students into the topic discussed. While in the activities which employ the first language, visual, or demonstration as a base from which to build conceptualization of meaning and form in the second language, most of the teachers used their first language since students do not really understand with teachers' instruction. The teachers' explanation was inserted with some instruction in their first language.

In using inductive, deductive, or discover learning procedures as the situation warrant, The teacher, Mrs Limyana and mr. Abdul Rauf,used different techniques in teaching grammar. The materials taught were simple past tense and simple future tense in Mr. Rauf's class and Relative pronoun in Mrs. Limyana's class. They both presented the form of the sentence not in the same time. Mr. Rauf used deductive technique while Mrs. Limyana used the inductive one.

Activities which reinforce instructional effectiveness and creativity by generating students' involvement in their development of learning activities was done by putting students as the center of the learning process. Here, the teachers' role is no more the only source of knowledge and information. The class is student-centeredness. The students prepare all of the information and share it to the class. While in expository teaching or reception learning, teachers direct students for learning. Teacher prepares students for learning, presents

information logically and clearly, connects the information to be learned with what students already know, and uses variety in presenting new information.

Humanism is the third learning principle applied by the teachers at SMAN 2 Ngawi. The teaching process at SMAN 2 which reflects the principle of humanism will be classified into (1) group work, (2) listening, (3) free conversation, and (4) inviting school success.

In group work, students work together with their partners to discuss and answer or solve problems. The number of each group is based on the total number of students in one class. In listening, Teacher read students some texts then students in group or individually listened to the teacher, interpreted and responded to the questions from the teacher. In free conversation, teacher asked students for what they thought about the lesson. Students felt free to express what they had in their mind. It happened when the class presented a certain topic of an explanation and spoof text. At the end of the session, teacher asked students for what they thought about the text as well as the activity, and in inviting school success, teachers and students respected one another. It could be seen when teachers invited students to respond by calling their names, teachers walked around and had individual contact to check students' work one by one. Teachers walked around the class to give assistance to the students in answering questions.

Constructivism is the last learning principle applied by the teachers at SMAN 2 Ngawi. Constructivism in teaching English at SMAN 2 Ngawi is reflected in some activities conducted by the teachers. It could be seen when the teachers taught genres of texts (explanation, recount and spoof). Most of the teachers taught the material by asking students to prepare the material

by themselves after teachers provided the model and later they should discuss their own text with the rest of the class.

As what is stated in genre based approach that teachers should get through two cycles to teach the lesson. Yet, what teachers at SMAN 2 Ngawi only had some stages in this approach. Genre based approach assists the students to create and construct their own knowledge to go down deeper on certain material. In applying Genre based approach, teachers had question-answer as well as reading activities to draw students' attention to the topic. Besides, teachers used group discussion (presentation).

The genre based approach here was not completely performed by the teacher. She didn't go through to cycles as what has been suggested in genre-based approach. The teacher started by giving the communicative purpose of the text and followed by its generic structure. Afterwards, she began modeling the text in written forms. It means that she skipped the stage of modeling text orally. Finally, she divided the students into some groups and asked each group to find their own text and presented it to the class using LCD and power point presentation.

The teacher's assessment was in the students' capability in mastering the topic, presenting the material and answering their friends' questions.

Conclusion

There are many reasons of the teachers concerning the using of such classroom activities. From behaviorism, the researcher can conclude that most of the teachers used such activities in order to provide some corrective feedback for the students. The corrective feedback could be in pronunciation, word-derivation, and grammar.

In cognitivism, there are several teachers' intentions of employing such activities. Teachers aimed to guide students to the topic that the teachers taught by building the students' knowledge with question and answer. Teachers are required to relate the material with the students' real life. Employing students' first language facilitates the students to understand the material as well as the teachers' instruction. Using inductive and deductive method is assumed to be appropriate when teaching grammar. In inductive method, teachers guide the students to discover the rules or form of the sentences. Thus, students are expected to create new sentences. Activities which create students' involvement are expected to create a classroom with student-centeredness. Teachers are only facilitator; the point is students' activeness and participation during the learning process. Yet, in expository teaching, all of the learning processes are directed by the teachers. This method was used when teachers wanted to strengthen students' understanding on the concept. Thus, teachers have more roles here than in the other techniques.

The next classroom activities which represent humanism mostly involve students' interaction not only among the students but also between students and the teachers. This occurred when teachers made group works in learning process. Yet, the finding shows that there are more interactions among the students than those between students and teachers. This is due to some factors, such as the reluctance of the students to offer some question or respond to the teachers or students' low ability. This happened in reflection where teachers opened question and answer session, yet students didn't use it properly. It might be because the time left was not much. In other techniques, like listening or inviting school success,

teachers tried to get closed to the students by calling their names and walking around to check students' work.

Genre based approach does represent constructivism. In this approach, students were mostly involved in reading activities. Though they were required to produce a certain text in the end of the session, most of the activities were dominated by reading inserted with some speaking activities like in question and answer. Teachers also divided students into group work to have a group discussion. In the end, teachers asked students to write a text based on the model provided before by the teachers. The focus of the teachers actually doesn't lie on the production of text but in understanding the text.

English teaching should be considered in many points of view. One of them is learning principles. To create a well-arranged teaching process, teaching process should be based on at least one learning principle or they can have a combination of two or more learning principles. Overall, teaching process should be suitable with the students' needs. To meet the need, the teachers should apply one or more learning principles during learning process.

English teaching at SMAN 2 Ngawi may reflect all learning principles. All of the three teachers have performed such classroom activities which represent the four learning principles. If the researcher may say the most frequent learning principle used is cognitivism and behaviorism. The researcher cannot deny that the two learning principles facilitate both the students and the teachers. Both sides get advantage in the application of the two learning principles. Students get the understanding while the teachers get easy in transferring the knowledge. What is important for the teacher is students understand the material.

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