

BIG OBSTACLES IN IMPLEMENTING LESSON STUDY

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Abstract

High spirit in enhancing teaching learning process in the framework of Lesson Study does not always show high performance in the overall management of the learning community. Big- unpredictable obstacles appeared in each stages and need certain reflection and specific treatment to cope with. In other words, it is really interesting to implement Lesson Study but, on the other hands, several phenomena appeared beyond the theory of Lesson Study it self.

This paper tries to uncover the obstacles of the practice of implementing Lesson Study to improve teaching learning process of TEAL (Teaching English as an Additional Language) class in the English Department of University of Muria Kudus. Stages of teaching learning process was done in the concept of Lesson Study: Planning, Doing, and Reflecting. These stages were implemented with the main purpose to switch what the so called teacher centered learning to students centered learning.

There are many obstacles appeared during teaching learning activity of “Lesson Study” of TEAL. Most of them dealt with how the colleagues of the teacher take the role as members of learning community who hopefully played important role in developing the concept of teachng learning and material development. The second obstacles had something to do with the learning habit of the students which has been established in mood of being good listener in the classroom. The third obstacles worked in the session of reflection where it seemed difficult for some of the involved person to portrait the real problem in lesson study class.

Keywords: lesson study, obstacles

1. INTRODUCTION

Students of English Teacher Education Department of Muria Kudus University have to take Teaching English as an Additional Language (TEAL) subject as one of the compliments to graduate from the department. This subject deals with teaching and learning English in Indonesia as a foreign language. However, as the subjectt has only 4 credit, the curriculum of it only cover the materials of several English teaching settings, approach, methods, strategies and technics. This subject does not cover English teaching materials for senior high school students due to the limited time allotment and the credit semester. Therefore, the English teaching materials for senior high students and the curriculum are taught in different subjects with their own credit semester and time allotments.

Teaching and learning process of TEAL subject is started by writing Semester Teaching Plan, teaching materials, assignments and the design of the teaching and learning itself. As usual, the starting step si done by the lecture of TEAL subject. When time for classes open, the lecturer starts teaching by having a brief discussion on everything which are written in the Semester Teaching Plan. This step is well know as the session of signing a contract of teaching and learning activity. Several important pints are discuss such as the presence of both lecturer and students, classroom and tasks management, the students’ achievement, etc. Teaching and learning activity is then going on under the framework of the contract of teaching and learning activity.

Those usual steps of teaching seem to be bored in everything and not efficiently and effectively enhance students participations and achievements. Therefore, the writer who is also the lecturer of TEAL subject initiate a research to improve teaching and learning process in the design of lesson study. The purpose of this research was to unmasked big obstacles in implementing lesson study which mostly undiscussed because the obstacles were never thought as important factor which influence the success of lesson study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 TEAL Subject

Teaching skill is one of the mean skills which has to be mastered by graduates of English Teacher Education Department of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Muria Kudus University. To obtain this skill, students have to take the subject of TEAL which is designed for 4 credit hours. The contents of this subject provide students the knowledge of TEAL such as setings of English teaching around the world, Language Teaching Approaches, methods, strategies, techniques, observing teaching and learning process and designing English teaching. The subject also deals with the knowledge and the attitude of being good and professional English teacher.

What is meant by the knowledge in this subject is all about teachers and teaching which simply directed to answer simple but difficult questions to answer, what makes a good teacher ? (Harmer, 2001). The scope for answering this question is not only how to make the leson interesting, but whether the teacher really enjoy his or her job and has lots of knowledge as well. Those materials will hopefully support students teacher to be able to manage to describe learning and teaching and to manage the classroom. Additionally, he or she has to own attitude of being good and professional teacher which can be screened form his or her teaching performance. Harmer (2001) uses the term a good teacher is an entertainer in a positive sense. He elaborates the term positive sense as the character or personality which in another word is also well known as attitude. Teacher's character or attitude is believed will influence the relationship between the teacher and the students in the whole teaching and learning process.

The material development of TEAL which also covers character of personality of being a good teacher is in line with the discussion that attitude are always discussed in the framework of building human character or morality which is always presumed as a matter of how a person builds transactions with his/ her communities. In this context of presumption, according to Damon (2002), children are demanded to prepare both to learn from their social settings and to follow their own consciences when the need arises. He further states that educators should understand that teaching morality means teaching as well as helping students to behave personal moral identity. The teaching is very important because morality is a common value that will bring and form the child's moral sense in any situation.

The material of attitude or character of being a good teacher is hoped to be able to provide students teacher to clearly differentiate between a teacher and a text book. It has been understood that a textbook, as stated by Buckingham (1958) in Tarigan (1993:11) is a simply learning material commonly used at schools and universities to support the teaching and learning process. Therefore Fauziati (2010) suggests that to meet the needs, the textbook must not contain language skills demanded by the curriculum but it also the needs of the students. Within this point,

it is clear that the mission to teach is to the needs of students, meaning that a teacher should also be able to understand his or her students.

That is why English teachers should be treated as persons who innovate English learning environment in such a way that the actual language used is the concern of both the teacher and students in an integral part of the interactions themselves (Harmer, 2007). For Wu and Wu (2008), Harmer's opinion is interpreted as how to maximize language exposure and to stimulate social interaction. On the other hand, in any social interaction of whatever its cultural background is, according to Kertajaya (2011), there will always be ethical interaction which shares six pillars of character or norm. It is quite sure then, that the material of TEAL should provide students teacher with good teacher personality.

2.2 Lesson Study

The design of teaching and learning process which is labelled as Lesson Study is formerly a kind of teaching and learning design which is applied in Japan namely *jugyou kenkyuu*, meaning instruction (lesson) and research (study). Although all lesson designs have the same purpose to develop and to better students' participation and achievement, lesson study differs from the others on the present of collaborators (teachers with the same educational background and the same subject) (Lewis, 2002).

Furthermore Lewis (2002) states that as a systematic way to develop teaching and learning process collaboratively, the design of lesson study is in the circle of planning, doing- observing and reflecting. He further states that all steps must also be done collaboratively with the teacher's colleagues. Planning is the step of determining teaching and learning process, material and material development, method, strategy, technique, students' and teachers role in teaching and learning process, etc.

The implementation of lesson study shows better improvement on both teaching and learning process and teachers capacity in participating the overall process of lesson study. Akerson et al (2017) states that, in their research, preservice elementary teachers were able to provide feedback to their peers regarding how to include Nature of Science (NOS) in their science lessons. However, the use of lesson study in teaching learning process have to be well informed to both the learners and colleagues. Elliott (2012) confirmed that Lesson study when informed by an explicit learning theory, such as variation theory, provides a strong basis for the development of a practitioner-based science of teaching.

Another value in implementing lesson study is experienced by Lamb and David (2006) who found that interactions of all stake holders during lesson study classroom enabled them to demonstrate enhanced forms of active agency and knowledge, developing practices beyond traditional support structures of the training programme. Simply writing, they says that Lesson Study is beneficial in developing creative, confident and reflective pedagogy. This idea is supported by Akerson et. al (2017) who found in his research that Lesson Study influenced preservice elementary teachers in their abilities to deliver science lessons that included nature of science (NOS) to their own students

However, the practice of lesson study has also obstacles as has been identified by Chichibu (2016) in his research on the impact on lesson study for initial teacher training in Japan. He found that – From simple problem to high-level cases in which finding the problem of a lesson is difficult, only a highly competent

mentor can find the problem and suggest improvements. Mentors need the competency to observe the lesson and the knowledge and skills to improve the lesson.

3. METHODS

The design of the research was descriptive qualitative which aimed at investigating big obstacles in implementing lesson study in the class of TEAL. The lecturer of the class was the first author and the second author and two other colleagues functioned as the observers.

The data was the obstacles which appeared during teaching and learning process of TEAL. Data resources were lecturers, students and the whole process of TEAL class which was managed in lesson study design. Data collection was done during the observation by recording teaching and learning activities, making some necessary notes and taking photographs.

The data were analyzed by first, searching words, phrases or utterances and all expressions which significantly created problems or difficulties in lesson study implementation. This step was done in order to help the description and interpretation of the so called obstacles in implementing lesson design in TEAL class. Second, analyzing situational and intertextual context to answer several questions dealing with the subjects position and the activity, topic, teaching purpose, who was involved during the class preparation, the process and the reflection.

Third, describing and interpreting the obstacles which appeared in the class of TEAL which was managed in the design of lesson study.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Several obstacles appeared during the teaching and learning process of TEAL in the class of lesson study. They covered all areas of teaching and learning process and human interaction. However, big obstacles were mostly in the area of the knowledge of TEAL and cultural as well as psychological aspects between the lecturer of TEAL and the colleagues who served as observers.

The cultural and psychological aspects were mostly caused by the teaching and learning activity in the English Teacher Education of University of Muria Kudus where each lecturer has his own subject to teach. There is almost no subject matter taught by more than one lecturer. If there is one, the teaching circumstance is still on individual responsibility although discussion and coordination may be done between them before, during and after teaching. However, the work is done under the framework of common collaboration and not under the management of lesson study.

In the common collaboration, senior lecturer is frequently assigned to teach collaboratively with junior one. In this context, junior lecturer will position himself as someone who will consult all teaching preparation and the teaching to the senior. In other words, the interaction between senior and junior lecturers is in such condition as ordinate and sub ordinate working atmosphere. In such interaction, discussion is usually dominated by the senior lecturer.

Unfortunately, the phenomenon also appeared in the design of lesson study where participants position should be the same. However, the habit of being senior and junior can not be eliminated as Indonesian (read javanese) has specific conventioned norm in the interaction between senior and junior people which make the junior tries to hold the idea and statement during the interaction. The result is

clear, that is the preparation (planning) step did not work well as most of idea in the brainstorming of the planning step came from the senior. The same condition also appeared in the reflection step where not all participants “dare” to contribute to evaluate the teaching and learning process.

The second big obstacle can be seen from the fact that each lecturer has his or her own teaching specification and responsibility that makes him or her does not learn material or subject matter which is beyond his or her responsibility. This condition created problem in discussing material development for TEAL subject. Fortunately, we are now in the era of open space-world where everything can be searched easily in a second. However, the mastery of the subject matter being discussed can not be gained in a second.

in such unbalanced discussion, the material development of the subject matter was still done under the big responsibility of the lecturer although the “rules” of lesson study as a matter of fact place all participants in the same position.

5. CONCLUSION

Lesson study is actually good for enhancing teaching and learning process as it facilitates the lecturer to prepare the teaching by having necessary contribution from his or her colleagues in developing the material, making better teaching and learning process and evaluating the learning. However, for Indonesian, the implementation should be negotiated with several things concerning with the socio cultural aspects which critically different from the country where it originally come from.

Several obstacles appeared in the implementation of lesson study in the class of TEAL subject which was taught in the English Teacher Education Department of University of Muria Kudus. Some are common obstacles as they appear in common class, and mostly technical ones. However, the big obstacles are the ones which never thought before and deal with cultural and psychological aspects and the knowledge on the subject matter of the participants

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