

JETA Vista

English Journal

1. Sudadi
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2. Margana
"Enhancing English Teachers' Pedagogical Competence through Lesson Study Activities"
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EDITORIAL

The Indonesian government via the Ministry of Education and Culture strongly claims that the quality of the English language teaching and learning process at schools becomes the primary concern of the national education. Such an issue could be achieved through a series of efforts which include advocating the 2013 National Curriculum, conducting in-house training for English teachers, encouraging English teachers to be actively involved in academic conferences, facilitating English teachers to write English text-books advocating English teachers to write articles, and others. Added to this, English teachers are encouraged to make networking with English lecturers, practitioners, and other parties to deal their professional development. Those are primarily targeted to improve their competencies. Through such practices, English teachers could assist themselves to revitalize their professionalism.

In reference to the above issues, JETA VISTA English Journal is still consistent in assisting teachers and anyone who are interested in English Language Teaching to share ideas, experiences, insights, and others by providing a means to publish their articles. In this third volume of January 2013, the accepted articles are more various in natures which embody some topics such as Technology in Language Teaching, Professional Competence, Pedagogical Competence, Teaching Material Development, Classroom Action Research, Reflective Teaching, and Evaluation issues. It is expected that in facing the Curriculum 2013, JETA VISTA would be more fruitful and meaningful. It can become an open and constructive forum for English educators to be more professional so that they are able to serve others, especially students at school far and wide.

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ENHANCING ENGLISH TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE THROUGH *LESSON STUDY* ACTIVITIES

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ABSTRACT

In the globalisation era, English teachers of any level of education including secondary school level are demanded to hold four types of competence. Those include pedagogical, professional, interpersonal, and personal competence. By holding those types of competence, teachers of secondary schools could facilitate their students to be qualified graduates so that they could survive in the tight competition due to the global demands. This implies that English teachers of secondary schools have to strive to achieve those four types of the required competence.

As one of the convincing efforts to enhance the four types of competence, pedagogical competence in particular, English teachers could be actively involved a well-planned and collaborative program which is called *Lesson Study* (LS). This program comprises three steps, namely *PLAN*, *DO*, and *SEE*. Such a program is believed to be effective to enhance English teachers' pedagogical competence on the grounds that it confers some benefits which include skills of lesson planning, of managing teaching and learning process, and of evaluating students' work through intensive participatory observation practices during the *DO* session.

Key words: Lesson Study, Pedagogical Competence

A. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the Indonesian government via its national education department has been promoting four national standard types of teaching profession. Those include personal, social or interpersonal, professional, and pedagogical competence. Those four types of competence are stated in Act 14 Verse 4 in 2005 which states that teachers of any level of education should hold four types of competence: personal, social or interpersonal, professional, and pedagogical competence. With regard to this act, all teachers of any level of education including English teachers of secondary schools are demanded to have

the four types of competence to successfully conduct their teaching and learning process.

Personal competence deals with the way teachers behave. It is concerned with good commitment, discipline, honesty, responsibility towards their duties, and the like. Social competence refers to the social, emotional, and cognitive skills and behaviours that teachers need for successful social matters. It is a term used to describe the teachers' knowledge of how to interact with their colleagues, students, and other parties. It also deals with one's ability to use a variety of social behaviours that suit a given interpersonal situation and that make others pleased in each situation. Social competence refers to possessing and using the ability to integrate thinking, feeling and behaviour to achieve social tasks and outcomes valued in the host context and culture. In a school setting, these tasks and outcomes include accessing the school curriculum successfully, meeting associated personal social and emotional needs, and developing transferable skills and attitudes of value beyond school.

Beside the two types of competence above, teachers are demanded to have high professional competence and pedagogical competence. The former relates to having high knowledge of the fields of their study backgrounds. For example, English teachers have to be good at their macro English language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and micro English language skills (vocabulary, structure/grammar, pronunciation, spelling, orthography, and the like) (see in Brown 2010). The latter is concerned with possessing skills of teaching skills which include (1) designing syllabus, lesson plan, materials, media, assessment, etc, (2) managing teaching and learning process, (3) conducting evaluation of the process of teaching and learning (Spratt et al., 2005)

Of the four types of competence, pedagogical competence should be intensively developed as it deals with how to engage in the process of teaching and learning which gives direct effects on students' English language achievement. In other words, improving pedagogical competence is urgent for

English teachers as it is more concerned with how English teachers manage classroom interactions that drive students to willingly learn the targeted English materials.

To improve the pedagogical competence can be done through many ways such as in-service training of how to teach English, team teaching, workshop, peer teaching or micro-teaching, lesson study, and others. Of the identified ways, LS is believed to highly contribute to the development of pedagogical competence of the English teachers on the grounds that LS offers direct experience on the aspects of the pedagogical competence. Added to this, all teachers who are involved in the Lesson Study actively engage in lesson planning, managing teaching and learning process, and assessment practices. For those reasons, this paper deals with promoting Lesson Study activities to English teachers of secondary schools to enhance their pedagogical competence.

B. THE ASPECTS OF PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE

Pedagogical competence refers to skills of teachers to deal with three aspects of teaching skills, namely lesson planning, implementing teaching and learning process, and assessing students' learning. In other words, pedagogical competence deals with any skills which are concerned with how to do with the teaching and learning process.

According to Act 4 Year 2005 Verse 3, pedagogical competence at least consists of eight issues, namely (1) having good insights of education aspects, (2) being familiar with students' characteristics, (3) having good understanding of how to develop curriculum and syllabus, (4) being able to design teaching and learning process, (5) implementing teaching and learning process, (6) having good skills at using instructional technology, (7) assessing students' learning, and (8) developing students to actualize students' potentials.

In support of those aspects of pedagogical competence, Tuan et al. (2000) propose eight categories of teaching competence. They include (1) designing

instruction to gain selected objectives; (2) getting information about learners' needs and learning progress; (3) performing acceptable written and oral expression and knowledge of the subject; (4) managing time, space, materials, and equipment for instruction; (5) having good communications with learners; (6) utilizing various and appropriate instructional methods; (7) maintaining a positive learning environment; and (8) maintaining appropriate classroom behaviours.

More specifically, Tuan et al. (2000) document sub-teaching competence applied in three steps of teaching, namely (1) before teaching (preparation), (2) whilst-teaching (classroom teaching), and (3) after teaching. In preparation step, English teachers are encouraged to deal with (1) analyzing of students' classroom culture, (2) analyzing students' characteristics, (3) identifying appropriate goals for the lesson, (4) analyzing the contents of the lesson, (5) identifying students' preconceptions and/or difficulties in learning the language focus, (6) providing curriculum resources for the lesson, (7) designing various teaching strategies for the lesson, (8) designing various content representations.

In main activities, English teachers are concerned with (1) explaining the materials concerned, (2) encouraging students to conduct communication practices, (3) monitoring students' learning, (4) assessment of students' learning outcomes, (5) stimulating students' willingness to participate in learning, (6) accomplishing of lesson goals, (7) controlling of classroom management, (8) promoting student cooperation, (9) establishing positive attitude toward learning target language, (10) providing a low-pressure learning environment, (11) emphasizing different students' abilities.

After teaching, English teachers deal with (1) reflecting on previous teaching flow, (2) reflecting on content representation, (3) reflecting on students' learning, (4) making suggestions concerning content coverage and organization of the textbook, (5) reflecting on construction of the learning environment, and (6) reflecting on peer and mentor teachers' suggestions.

C. THE NOTION OF LESSON STUDY

The term *Lesson Study* is originally derived from Japanese words, namely *jugyou* which means instruction or lesson(s) and *kenkyu* which refers to research or study (Lewis, et al., 2006). The term *jugyou kenkyu* means a large family of instructional improvement strategies by which a group of teachers conduct an observation of a live classroom lesson performed by a team member and analyze it collaboratively for the purpose of teaching profession improvement (Lewis, 2002a; Wong-Iversion & Yoshida, 2005). In other words, Lesson Study is one of the teaching modes which involves some people to be actively involved in a series of teaching and learning processes beginning with (1) designing lesson plans, (2) selecting and developing materials, media, assessment and the like, (3) implementing the teaching and learning process, and (4) doing a reflection of the process of teaching and learning with the use of students as the angel of conferring the feedback by observers.

In line with the definition above, Sum (2003) states that *Lesson Study* is a type of a teacher professional improvement program to collaboratively engage in some teaching activities which include planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting on the lessons conducted. Perry, Lewis, and Akiba (2002:2) also propose a definition of *Lesson Study* as a teacher-led instructional enhancement cycle in which a group of teachers deal with (1) formulating student learning objectives and long-term development, (2) sketching a research lesson targeted to achieve the designed objectives, (3) utilizing the lesson, (4) conducting a reflection of the lesson with regard to the peer observations conducted by teachers involved, and (5) implementing the revised lesson in another classroom, if preferred and improve upon it again.

With regard to the proposed definitions, in this paper *LS* is defined as a systematic teacher professional and pedagogical development carried out by a group of teachers to be engaged in a series of teaching and learning activities.

The activities include planning a lesson, implementing a lesson, and doing a reflection of the process of teaching and learning.

In conducting Lesson Study, there are some parties. They include a teacher as a model, students, observers, and a facilitator. The model teacher serves as a teacher who handles the teaching practice. As a model teacher, he/she should not be a senior teacher or professional teacher. He/she can be a junior teacher who wants to improve his/her teaching skills. Observers deal with conducting observations of the process of teaching and learning. They are assigned to complete the observation instrument and to note the interesting evidence performed by students during the process of the teaching and learning. The observers can have the same fields of the demonstrated teaching or have different fields. For example, the model of a teacher is an English teacher who teaches English as the subject, but the observers can be English teachers or non-English teachers. Even, stake holders or student parents can be observers of a lesson study. A facilitator has a role to facilitate the model teacher and other parties to successfully conduct lesson study. The facilitator provides valuable input in every step of lesson study. The entire process of *Lesson Study* is documented. This documentation is used to further analyze shortcomings and strengths of the lesson study. Cerbin and Kopp (2006:252) state that in documenting the lesson study there are two closely related parts of LS. They include (1) lesson documentation and (2) study documentation. The former embodies (a) the learning goal, (b) the lesson plan, (c) a rationale for the lesson topic and lesson design, and (d) additional materials. The latter consists of (a) the student learning goals, challenges, problems, and any issues gathered, (b) a description of the types of data gathered and method utilized to study the lesson, (c) a discussion of data analysis and a synopsis of findings, (d) conclusions about the lesson, and (e) supplementary instruments used in the LS such as checklist, rubrics, and observation guidelines.

In terms of steps of *Lesson Study*, Lewis, Perry, and Murata (2006) propose four cycles which include (1) the Study of Curriculum and Formulation of the Learning Goals, (2) Plan, (3) Conduct Research, and (4) Reflection. The four cycles are described in Figure 1.

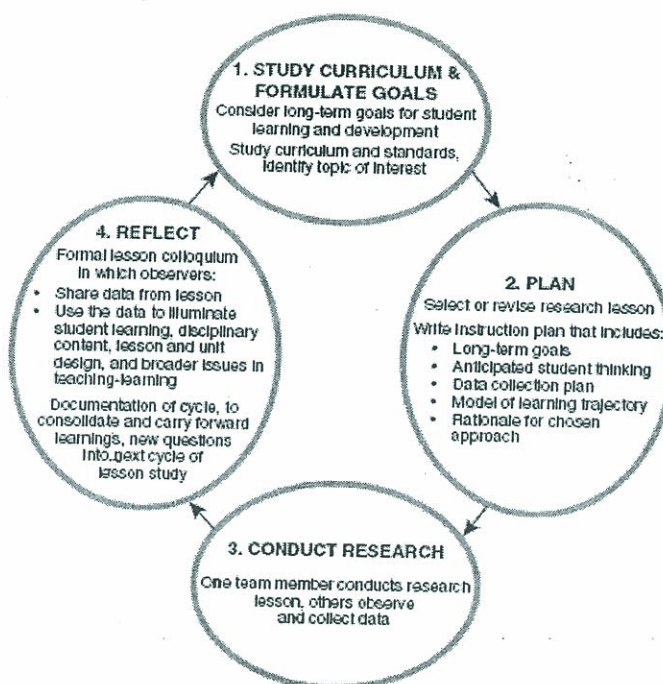


FIGURE 1. *Lesson study cycle.*

Different from the four cycles above, Saito et al. (2006) divides *LS* into three, namely (1) *PLAN*, (2) *DO*, and (3) *SEE (Plan-Do-See)*. In *PLAN*, the model teacher and other parties involved design the lesson plan together. They discuss the topic of the study, materials, media, teaching methods, teaching techniques, tasks implemented, assessments, and the like with regard to the curriculum and students' characteristics. They also design the observation sheets and the seat arrangements of students which are used during the observation activities.

In *DO*, the model teacher demonstrates his/her teaching in class while observers conduct a classroom observation. During the observation session, the observers note interesting evidence as performed by students starting from opening class to closing. For example, the observers do note-taking students'

response to the greeting of the model teacher. Also, they write the mode of interactions between teacher and students, students and teacher, students and students, students and the materials or tasks given by the model teacher.

In *SEE*, the model teacher is given an opportunity to reflect his/her own teaching demonstration with reference to the weaknesses and strengths that she/he performs. Following this, all observers present the results of the observations using students as the angle of giving comments. In this step, the facilitator is driven to confer valuable feedback for the betterment of the upcoming teaching practices.

D. THE STRENGTHS OF LESSON STUDY

In terms of the benefits, *LS* confers some valuable benefits one of which is enhancing the pedagogical competence. This is in line with a statement as performed by Lewis (2002) who advocates that *LS* can be used to enhance English teachers' pedagogical skills as they can see feedback for their own teaching and getting new ideas from observing others who conduct teaching practices.

Further, Lewis (2005:115) outlines multiple benefits which include (1) getting knowledge of subject matter and instruction, (2) improving the ability to conduct student classroom observation, (3) establishing collegial networks, (4) linking the daily practice to long-term goals, (5) having stronger motivation and sense of efficacy and (6) improving the quality of available lesson plans.

As far as the writer is concerned, *LS* also provides English teachers as participants with direct and real experience of pedagogical competence as performed in a series of three cycles of lesson study: *Plan*, *Do*, and *SEE*.

In *Plan step*, English teachers could enhance their pedagogical competence of skills of lesson planning which include (1) interpreting standard of competence and basic competencies; (2) developing learning objectives; (3) writing indicators; (4) selecting contextual and meaningful language materials;

(5) developing lesson plans; (6) selecting the language focus (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) of English teaching and learning; (7) selecting and developing materials, (8) developing learning tasks, (9) selecting suitable teaching methods and techniques; (10) selecting and developing media; and (11) designing tests used in English language teaching and learning process.

In *Do step*, English teachers involved in LS could gain real experience in managing teaching and learning process. In other words, they could enhance skills of managing teaching and learning process during classroom observation practices. More specifically, they could enhance their pedagogical competence in terms of (1) opening class; (2) attracting students' attention; (3) making elicitation; (4) outlining teaching and learning practices; (5) sequencing the step of teaching; (6) conducting a series of teaching practices (exploration, elaboration, and confirmation), (7) applying some teaching methods and techniques; (8) comprehending students' different characteristics; (9) managing learners' differences; (10) explaining learning materials; (11) asking students questions; (12) responding to students' questions; (13) encouraging students to learn; (14) giving students' reinforcement, (15) managing individual, group, and classical feedback; (16) personalizing students to do the given task; (17) monitoring students' activities; (18) assessing students' English learning, (19) summarizing the material learned; (20) conducting a reflection, (21) giving students advice; and (22) ending the class.

In *SEE step*, English teachers may get experience of how to give comments of teaching practices with the use students as the angles. Added to this, they share experience of how to do with teaching and learning process.

E. CONCLUSIONS

With regard to the benefits above, the utilization of *Lesson Study* to develop the pedagogical competence of English teachers should be institutionalized. This suggests that *Lesson Study* should be widely disseminated

to other English teachers at any education level. In other words, LS should be widely promoted to all teachers including English teachers of any education level as it confers many benefits one of which is to enhance pedagogical competence which include knowledge of planning a lesson, knowledge of managing teaching and learning process, and assessing students' language learning. To sum up, *Lesson Study* is a practical, integrated, and progressive model for professional pedagogical knowledge building and for establishing better networks and high self-confidence among teachers.

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