

The Program That Involves Some Integrated Lesson Topics to Help Students Understand How to Create Simple Sentences

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ABSTRACT

Some teachers believe that serving their students by the suitable approach is the most important. It may be true if they have already had students with sufficient English knowledge. If they don't have that situation, and they have to deal with the students with insufficient English knowledge, the first and the most important thing they have to do is creating a program with certain lesson topic. The lesson topics must be integrated and placed in a correct order. This research reveals a program that is tested to help some students with low English knowledge background to be able to create simple sentences. This research which were held in a private university with thirty participants have been able to prove that if some lesson topics are correctly arranged, they can support a learning language program with certain goals to be achieved.

Keywords: lesson topic, English background, simple sentence

INTRODUCTION

Although the teaching of English in secondary school was intended to prepare the students to continue their education at the university level, which obliges all students to be able to comprehend scientific books to support their field of education, many students who join universities tend to have low English background level. Most of their levels are only at the foundation and elementary. It is obviously hard for them to be able to understand the text provided by the lecturers. The students' lacking of English knowledge when they join university is caused by many factors that that were considered to be occurred when they were studying English at junior and senior high school levels, such as: unskillful teachers, low quality teaching materials, inappropriate learning programs, and big student's number in each class.

University students' lack of English background leads to the uncomfortable English learning atmosphere when the lecturers are conducting their learning activities. Since university students must deal with some English materials which are difficult because they are the extensions of the materials taught at the senior high school, most of the students aren't interested to seriously pay attention to what the lecturers are explaining. It occurs because those students don't have enough English prior knowledge to comfortably comprehend the explained materials.

The above condition will worsen the students' intention to be able to have adequate English skills which can support them during their study time and for their future. University students who are in this condition tend to join English learning activity only as an obligation because they have taken

it on their semester credit. They don't have both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that are related to the reason why they join the lesson. The worst, the students have traumatic feeling toward English subject and avoid dealing with any situations that involve English skills to be conducted when they are at the university and after they leave university.

Teacher Needs to Create an Effective English Learning Program

Generally, a person's English ability is leveled by three levels: elementary, intermediate and advance. Elementary is a level where the students are considered to have low ability in English. Intermediate is a level to consider that the students have average skill in English. Students who have high English skill is considered to be at Advance level. This leveling shows us that someone's English skill is not related to a person's age or education level. We can't directly measure that someone who has been at the university level must have better English skill than a junior or senior high school student. If a junior high school student is at the intermediate level, he must have better English skill than a university student who is only at the elementary level. This case reveals that students who join university can't be automatically considered to have a high level of English skill because they are university students now. Unfortunately, based on the diagnostic tests that were held at Institut Teknologi Nasional Bandung from 2008 to 20016, ninety percent students who join have only elementary English skill.

The real condition that is faced by lecturers who have students with low level English skill, becomes a problem for them to deliver English materials with high difficulty level. The problem then becomes worse when the aim of the lesson is to make students be able to read textbook which have high difficulty to be comprehended.

To make learning English becomes a valuable experience, it is obliged for the

students to learn English based on their level. To create comfortable English learning, teacher must have the students that have same level English background. The same level English background that each student has, will help the teacher to create suitable program for them.

The problem arises when the students who join the class are in different levels. It is hard for the teacher to create the suitable program to develop students' English skills. The various students' English levels will lead to different comprehension toward the explained materials. Some students will easily understand to the materials given, and some other feel on the other hand. This unbalance situation will create uncomfortable learning atmosphere. In order to solve the problem arises because of the described situation, the teacher must create a suitable English program which consists of some integrated lesson topics.

In universities, most students who join have insufficient knowledge of English (Huda, 1999). Unfortunately, many universities facilitate their students in English learning by using difficult advance texts to be comprehended. This situation obviously makes the students feel uninterested to join English subject.

Actually, the similar background of most students at the universities will be an advantage for those universities to create a program that will help their students to understand English step by step easily from very basic materials.

Learning Components

The core of learning is curriculum. Curriculum is perceived as a plan for the learning experiences that young person encounter under the direction of the school and its purpose is to provide a vehicle for ordering and directing these experiences (Oliva, 1992). It can be inferred that all school educators must use curriculum as their main guidance to facilitate students to develop their knowledge and skills. According to Sanjaya (2008), some components

create curriculum system. Those components are: aim, content, method and evaluation. All the components show us that they actually represent the components of a learning process circle.

Before a learning process is conducted, it needs an aim to be referred. The aim becomes teachers' guideline to help them stay focus to create and run the available topics which are considered to be step by step event to be held in order to achieve the aim. The content is represented by the syllabus which is arranged based on the mind mapping of some integrated lesson topics. Method is defined as the approach that the teachers must conduct when they are delivering lesson materials. There are some methods that can be applied in learning English. Method is a factor that can be an instrument of measurement whether the teacher can conduct the lesson well or not. Finally, all the learning process is ended by doing evaluation. Evaluation is the process of gathering information in order to determine the extent to which a language programs meet its goal (Maley, 2003). The evaluation is conducted to measure how effective students' achievement to the goal of the lesson.

Since teachers believe that their performance is valued based on the way they conduct the lesson materials, most of them think more on what method they must conduct when they teach. (Brown, 1994) described a method as assumptions, beliefs and theories about the nature of language and language learning. It can be inferred that most of the teachers think that the way of delivering the lesson and how to help their students understand the materials are the most important way. For the teachers who already have the students with sufficient English background that idea may be true. But, for those who must teach the students with insufficient English background, the idea

seems not quite right.

The best way to create students' interest in learning English for a whole semester is by growing their intrinsic motivation. (Deci, 1975) defines intrinsic motivation as an intention to master a knowledge because somebody thinks that the knowledge is important for him and mastering it will make him be satisfied. In this case, students who have intrinsic motivation will be good learners because they feel comfortable to learn the given materials.

In order to create students' intrinsic motivation, an approach is not the first thing to be thought over by the teacher. The teacher must firstly develop a suitable program which not only can be used to achieve the goal of the lesson, but also can represent student English background. A program is a plan that has learning objectives and goals. According to Ornstein (1990) a program objective is a stated goal that is written at the subject and grade level. Referring to the objective, then the learning contents are arranged. The learning content is defined as the lesson topics. They must be arranged wisely. The teacher must be able to develop the lesson topics from some which can be used as foundation to the ones that are hard but possible to be learnt because the students have already learnt the foundation to understand them.

To develop the materials for each meeting, the teacher can refer the lesson topics which have been provided in the program. According to (Harmer, 2007), materials are designed to enable students to develop specific receptive skill. It means that to help students to be able to understand the delivered lesson, teacher must be able to create or choose the suitable materials that support each lesson topic. Dick and Carey (2001) consider good materials as those that can permit the students learn the new information and skills without any intervention

from the instructor and fellow students. The description of the good materials reveals that the materials which can significantly support each lesson topic must be developed by the teacher with the intention not only to support the explanation of the lesson, but it also can facilitate the students to do the tasks individually. Individual practice can be an instrument for the students to measure how far they have acquired the being given lesson topic.

After the teachers fulfil all the components above, they are expected to be able to start a complete integrated program to facilitate their students in a semester. The suitable program is the most important foundation that builds a comfortable atmosphere in a learning process. This comfortable atmosphere will significantly help students to enjoy the learning process that helps them comprehend the materials given by the teachers optimally.

METHOD

The research was initiated by creating its goal. Its goal is to help students with low English level to be able to create simple sentences. The students who are considered to be the ones who have low English background are those who are at the level of foundation or elementary.

After The goal of the research was set, the writer then decides the most suitable research method to be conducted in order to gain the data and find out the result. Since the research tries to test a product, and its final result is producing a program, the writer decided to apply research and development method. Research and Development method in this research is conducted based on Dick and Carey's description. Their description is begun by deciding the goal and ended with a new product that has been put into trial and error beforehand.

Based on the aim of the research, the writer then took some steps from Dick and Carey's idea in their research development to be implemented in his plan related to what he would do to investigate necessary items in order to acquire important data to promote a program that is suitable to help students who have lack background of English skill to be able to create simple sentences.

In his plan the writer put integrated steps as follows:

1. Setting a goal
2. Creating a program
3. Developing materials
4. Selecting research participants
5. Testing the program
6. Acquiring feedbacks about the program
7. Reviewing the feedbacks for the program
8. Publishing the final program based on the feedbacks

Since the goal had been set, the writer then created the program to be conducted. The program that the writer would like to be implemented was a program that in his consideration could help students with low background of English skills create simple sentence. The simple sentence in this case is defined as the sentence which consists of subject, predicate, object and adverb or two sentences that are combined by a conjunction. Based on his opinion, the writer formed a program with the following lesson topics:

1. Noun
2. Pronoun
3. Verb 'be'
4. Comparison
5. The tenses
6. Modals
7. Passive Voice

8. Conjunctions

9. Adjective Clause

The writer supposed to promote those lesson topics because he thought that they were integrated basic knowledge for students

with low English background to be acquired in order to be able to create sentences with simple part of speech.

After the integrated topics were selected in his program design, the writer created the complete program as follows:

MEET-INGS	TOPICS	SUB TOPICS
1	Introduction	Explaining things that related to the lesson
2	Nouns & Pro-nouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countable & Uncountable Nouns • The Pronouns in English
3	Verb Be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb Be • Verb be with adjectives, noun & Preposition
4	Comparison	Similarity, Comparative & Superlative
5	TEST 1	Reviewing sentences with verb be
6	Present Contin-uous Tense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Present Continuous Tense • The functions of Present Continuous Tense
7	Simple Present Tense (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Affirmative Simple Present Tense • The Functions of Simple Present Tense
8	Simple Present Tense (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Negative and Interrogative Simple Present Tense
9	TEST 2	Reviewing present continuous and simple present tense
10	Past Tense (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Past Tense • The Functions of Past Tense
11	Past Tense with Past Continuous Tense (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Past Continuous Tense • The Functions of Past Continuous Tense • Past Tense with Past Continuous Tense
12	Present Perfect Tense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Present Perfect Tense • The Functions of Present Perfect Tense
13	Future Tense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Future Tense • The differences of Will and Going To
14	All Tense Review	Practicing all tenses
15	TEST 2	Reviewing all acquired tenses
16	Modals	- Explaining the Functions of Modals
17	Passive Voice I	- Explaining Passive Voice for: Present Continuous Tense & Simple Present Tense

18	Passive Voice II	- Explaining Passive Voice for: Past Tense & Past Continuous Tense
19	Passive Voice III	- Explaining Passive Voice for: Present Perfect Tense, Future Tense & Modals
20	Conjunctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of Conjunctions • The Use of Conjunctions
21	Relative Clause	- How to Create Relative Clause for Subject or Object of a Sentence
22	Comprehensive Test	Reviewing all lessons

In order to support the application of the program, the writer chose some materials which in his consideration could facilitate the students to acquire knowledge which each lesson topic intended. The materials chosen had elementary to intermediate levels of difficulties.

After all components in the part of the program was ready, the writer then selected participants who were needed in this research. The participants that needed for this research were lecturers and students. The writer chose 3 lecturers included himself to manage the program. The writer and the two other lecturers would present the lesson integrated topics for 23 meetings. These 23 meetings were planned to be packed in two months. The writer and his fellow lecturers decided to conduct the program in June to August 2017 during semester holiday. The writer and his fellow lecturers opened the opportunity for 45 students as participants before June 2017.

In order to join the program, students had to match the qualifications and agreed to have full commitment in this program. The qualifications for this program were: the students had to join a diagnostic test and they had to get score 30 of maximum 100 in this test. If they acquired more than 30 for their scores, they are not qualified to join. The diagnostic material was designed to have the similar contents with all the materials as planned in the lesson topics.

From the diagnostic test the writer could only select 30 qualified student participants to join this program. The participants who agreed to join had understood all the requirements and consequences of this research. It meant that this research had completed the aspect of students' intrinsic motivation because all participants joined this research with no perforce feeling and they joined with the only thought that they could develop their English skills.

The research was conducted at a private university in Bandung. The program was conducted with no connection with the formal English class in that university. The 30 participants were divided into 3 classes and they were taught by the writer and 2 senior teachers who had already been trained for this research. The meetings of the program were held 3 times in a week. The duration of each meeting was 90 minutes. The process of the research activities could be covered in two months.

Since the intention of this research was to gain information about a program to help students with low English background skill to be able to create simple sentence, the writer used observation, questionnaires, and some documents related to the learning process as his instruments to collect the data. Each instrument had their own functions. The observation facilitated the writer to find out the teachers and students' reactions toward the available lesson topics provided in the

program. The questionnaires shared in this research would inform the opinions from both teachers and students about the learning process related to the program. Some related documents showed to the writer all the students' results after they joined the tests which were conducted in this research.

All the instruments using to collect the data of this research were important. The observation and questionnaires instruments had their importance to help the writer find the enjoyment of the program during its application. They also provided the writer with the opinions about the effectiveness of the lesson topics and learning process in supporting the program. Some related documents were considered as the most important in conducting this research. They informed students' achievement after joining this program. It is because the result of students' achievement in this program would give significant information to decide whether this program could be a suitable guidance to be conducted to help students with low English background to be able to create simple sentence.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The diagnostic average score of the 30 participants who joined this test was 28.73. It fulfilled the requirement to place them into the level of foundation or elementary which was needed by this research. The first test which was held in order to measure their

comprehension of simple sentences using verb be informed 73.31 as the average score. The test 2 which was conducted with the aim to find out how good they understood the tenses revealed 54.20 as the average score. While the last test which was considered as the comprehensive test and was meant to get information about all the students' full comprehension of the integrated lesson topics they had acquired, gave 62.37 as the average score. All average scores were taken by generating the total sum of each class and divided into three. The last average score that was held to find out students' comprehension of all topic lessons they have dealt reveals that the lesson topics give significant assist to help them understand how to create simple sentences. It can be concluded from the average score of their comprehensive test which could increase more than a hundred percent.

Based on the interviews and questionnaires which were given to teachers, it was found that actually the program should eliminate some lesson topics which were too complicated for students to comprehend. The lesson topics which need to be eliminated are the topics which impossible to be comprehended by the students before they actually understand completely the lesson topics that are considered to be foundation to help students to understand in producing some basic tenses. After reviewing the data from the interview and questionnaires, the writer revised the program as follows:

MEET-INGS	TOPICS	SUB TOPICS
1	Introduction	Explaining things that related to the lesson
2	Nouns & Pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countable & Uncountable Nouns • The Pronouns in English
3	Verb Be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb Be • Verb be with adjectives, noun & Preposition

4	Comparison	Similarity, Comparative & Superlative
5	TEST 1	Reviewing sentences with verb be.
6	Present Continuous Tense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Present Continuous Tense • The functions of Present Continuous Tense
7	Simple Present Tense (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Affirmative Simple Present Tense • The Functions of Simple Present Tense
8	Simple Present Tense (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Negative and Interrogative Simple Present Tense
9	Simple Present Tense (Final Comprehension)	More practice
10	TEST 2	Reviewing present continuous and simple present tense
11	Past Tense (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Past Tense • The Functions of Past Tense
12	Past Tense with Past Continuous Tense (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Past Continuous Tense • The Functions of Past Continuous Tense • Past Tense with Past Continuous Tense
13	Past Tense and Past Continuous tense (Final Comprehension)	More practice
14	Present Perfect Tense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Present Perfect Tense • The Functions of Present Perfect Tense
15	Future Tense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forms of Future Tense • The differences of Will and Going To
16	All Tense Review 1	Practicing all tenses
17	All Tense Review 2	Practicing all tenses
18	TEST 2	Reviewing all acquired tenses
19	Modals	- Explaining the Functions of Modals
20	Conjunctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of Conjunctions • The Use of Conjunctions
21	Comprehensive Test	Reviewing all lessons

The data which was acquired from the interview and questionnaires given to the students revealed that most students also think that the lesson topics taught by the teacher help them to understand how to create

simple sentences in English step by step. It could occur because in the questionnaire they admitted that they wouldn't understand the next lesson provided if they didn't comprehend the previous one. This case

also can be proven by analyzing the test documents which show that students who don't understand simple sentences in verb be, will not be able to comprehend how to create simple sentences which have certain tenses to be developed.

Some students who failed to be trained by using this program revealed that the time provided in this program too short, so before they could understand a topic completely, the teacher had already brought them to another one. Obviously, they had to face the difficulty to understand the next lesson because their comprehension of the lesson topic beforehand was not sufficient to support them to understand the next lesson topic. This similar case happened many times in several lesson topics, so it caused some students' total failure to get their success in joining this program.

CONCLUSIONS

The program which were conducted in this research could help the students who have low background of English knowledge to be able to create simple sentences. The program was also able to show that its lesson topics have been correctly put in sequence so that the students who learn through it can understand how to create simple sentences step by step, in other words, the students must complete their comprehension of a lesson topic, otherwise they can't understand the next lesson topic.

If you, as a teacher, would like to refer this program to help your foundation or elementary students, you must carefully consider the time your students need to finish this program. If it is necessary, you can add some more time to certain lesson topics

in order to make sure all your students have deserved to join the next lesson topic.

The final product of this research is a revised program. The writer has eliminated some unnecessary lesson topics in the revised program. He also corrected the length of time for the lesson topics which he thought were necessary to be given with longer time extension because their complexity. Since the revised program hasn't been conducted yet, the writer hopes the next researcher will do a research to prove the its effectiveness.

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