PRINCIPLED ECLECTICISM: THEORY AND APPLICATION IN THE TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Rizki Eka Widyana Hanafi and Puspa Fortuna Zulfa
Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta
kikiihanafi@gmail.com

Abstract
The purpose of this paper is to present insights regarding the principled eclectic approach in the teaching field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). ESP has learners’ needs as the central importance when conducting a course in which all designed contents and methods are based on the learners’ reasons for learning. In the teaching and learning processes of ESP, flexibility is the key value needed. Hence, that implies an eclectic approach to the teaching methods by means an effective program of ESP should meet the needs of the learners who learn language concerning to specific profession, subject or purpose and vary the teaching methods in the teaching and learning processes. One teaching method might not be adequate to take into account the essential needs of the ESP learners. Various teaching methods should be selected and combined in order to perform the teaching and learning processes efficiently.

Keywords: ESP, teaching methodology, principled eclectic approach

Introduction
Teaching English to ESL/EFL has its own intrinsic problems which can derive from students, teachers, or all included in the teaching and learning process. However, various approaches and methodologies have been introduced and employed to teach English for ESL/EFL learners. It can be seen from the development of the approaches/methodologies of English learning in the pre-method era, method era, and post-method era.

What is the problem? Those all approaches are considered in doubt to be implemented since the comprehensive difference involved in the learning activities. It is due to the criticisms for those lacks that do not meet the needs and reasons for learning language. Especially in the teaching English for Specific Purposes that it should meet the specific purposes of English learning. In addition, students have different characteristics. While the language learning in the ESP class still uses methods/approaches for general English learning and it is considered to unsuitable decision. Further, the use of one only method/approach in language learning is insufficient applied to ESP.

Language learners come with diverse experience goals; therefore, language learning must be designed in response to their goals and objectives (Alharbi, 2017). It is for this purpose that a realistic approach to language learning has to be introduced. It is what principled eclecticism stresses. The principled eclectic approach has appeared as the most effective way of learning and teaching English to ESL/EFL learners.

Principled eclecticism starts with the combination of some approaches/methodologies in the teaching English, especially in the teaching ESP. Thus, this paper aims at promoting and exploring principled eclecticism to be proposed as one of alternatives to teach ESP with those merits and demerits.
Literature Review

The Conception of Principled Eclecticism

Principled eclecticism is not a concrete, single method, but as a method which combines listening, speaking, reading and writing and may include some practices in the classroom (Luo, He & Yang, 2001). In short, principled eclecticism is a combination of some approaches/methodologies/skills in one connecting structure to teach English. Further, Larsen-Freeman (2000) devised the term principled eclecticism to demonstrate a coherent and pluralistic approach to language learning. The term of principled, when applied to the approach, indicates the use of a variety of language learning activities that must be guided by giving appropriate importance to the different components of language learning rather than separating them into chunks of grammar and vocabulary. The different components of language (pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, etc.) have no meaning when they are isolated from each other (Larsen-Freeman, 1992, cited in Kumar, 2013).

Brown (2002) proposed “principled eclecticism”, as a possible way where teachers select what works within their own dynamic contexts based on sound theories and research knowledge. Teachers have right to select what methods/approaches suitable with the students’ needs, wants and lacks. Those combination of methods/approaches of teaching effectively work for any kind of learners’ irrespective of age and standard. Learning will be fun and innovative due to the unique nature of the learning process (Kumar, 2013).

Characteristically, by applying Principled Eclecticism, it helps language teachers participate in teaching process of diagnose, treatment and assessment (Brown, 2002). It is easy for the teacher to know and comprehend the students’ characteristics and what they need, so that they will find the treatment easy to do by choosing the suitable methods to be applied and assessing the students’ activities. It is expected that the students can reach a great deal without much pressure on the students. Beside, eclecticism also involves the use of variety of language learning activities, each of which may have different characteristics and objectives (Kumar, 2013). Moreover, learners have clear vision what they are learning and then there are multiple tasks in which the task does not stop in the learning process, those task have to be applied in their real life. Principled Eclecticism also emphasizes on the high interaction between teacher-students and student with another student communicatively and employs situational approaches. In short, it is included to students-centered instruction.

Then, the effective eclecticism requires efforts and depends on the teachers’ ability to choose materials and procedural steps on the basis of a set of principles (Popova). Teacher should have knowledge about the methods or approaches he will use in the learning process and how to implement those. Further, the purpose of advocating eclectic method is to connect life experiences to the ideas presented in learning of the language (Kumar, 2013) since the selection of the learning activities often directly related to students’ experiences in the real world.

In addition, Tarone & Yule (1989) stated that Principled Eclecticism “involves a philosophy of local solutions to local problems”. It means that Principled Eclecticism can solve the small or big problem of learning, in the town, region, country, or a union of the countries. That statement is considered to the strong advantage of Principled Eclecticism itself.

The Conception of English for Specific Purposes

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an approach within the language teaching
process of which the aim is to meet students’ particular needs. Further they explain that ESP is provided for the particular group of learners that need specific use of English that could be identified by analyzing the linguistics characteristics of their specialist of work or study.

ESP students have different language instruction from which general English. They are taught English to achieve specific language skills using real situations, to adjust with their future profession, or to comprehend English related to their area of specialty. Thus, they do not merely learn language for general education, but they are prepared for greater linguistic efficiency in academic, professional or workplace environments by learning the language.

In addition, ESP is distinguished by two basic things. They are the target needs defined as what the learners need to do in the target situation and the learning needs referred to what the learners need to do in order to learn (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987).

There are two characteristics underlying ESP which are absolute characteristics and variable characteristics (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). The absolute characteristics consist of:

a. ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner.
b. ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves.
c. ESP is centered on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills (e.g. reading), and discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

d. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English.
e. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation.
f. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.
g. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners.

Procedure to Implement Principled Eclecticism on the English for Specific Purposes Class
1. The major: Tourism guiding
2. The teaching skill: Speaking
3. Learning material: Self-Introduction and Trip Introduction
4. Instructional Procedure
   a. Pre-activity
      Teacher divides the class into some groups and then a group consists of three students. The division of the group employs **number heads together technique** in which three students have their own duties. The students who get number one will be a tourist guide, while the others two will be the tourists.
      In this activity, teacher distributes the itinerary of the trip in one day. This itinerary is given to the number one students. Next, they are asked to discuss with other number one students as tourist guides for discussing the itinerary and how to introduce and guide the tourists. This activity automatically employs **Cooperative Learning Model** by discussing and exchanging knowledge each other.
   b. The time of discussion is up. After discussing, students are asked to practice to introduce to the tourists and tell them the short explanation where they will be and the places they will visit in that day. The tourist guides
(number one students) also give short explanation about the history of the places. In this activity, employing Contextual Teaching and Learning is the best way to choose since the aim of this model is to…. In this activity, the target language is a must to deliver the explanation of the trip.

c. It is the last activity suitable with the speaking skill. The students number 2 and three that become tourists are asked to re-explain or present where they have been with the tourist guide. They also explain the history of the places like what the tourist guide has done before they have trip. In this activity, Direct Method is employed. Students directly practice speaking in front of the class with the preparation from the tourist guide’s explanation before. The target language is English which must be used in explaining.

Assessment of the Practice using Principled Eclecticism in the ESP Class

Basically, the assessment of the practice using principled Eclecticism is the same as the assessment of skill-based language learning. If the skill tested is speaking skill, the better assessment used is assessment for speaking skill and others. The scoring profile can be from any experts as long as the use of that assessment covers and scores fairly.

For example, in those samples of implementation, the skill tested is speaking skill. The assessment employed is Huge’s scoring rubric which assess pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and expression (Huges, 2003). Pronunciation must be clearly intelligible even if some influences from L1 remain. The grammatical/lexical accuracy is high though grammatical errors which do not impede communication is acceptable. Beside, the use of accurate and extensive vocabularies as an educated native speaker or native like is needed. The fluency refers to speech on all professional and general topics as effortless and smooth as a native speaker. Then the last one is expression showed suitable with what the matter is talked about.

Conclusion

Principled Eclecticism is the combination of some approaches/methods to teach English particularly suitable with the students’ needs and characteristics. While, it can be implemented to teach English for Specific Purposes in which it has the same goal and characteristic, it is to help students accomplish and master English based on their wants, needs and lacks.

References


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