METHODS USED IN TEACHING ENGLISH
AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN CENTRAL JAVA

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Abstract

English as a compulsory foreign language to learn in Indonesia, has an important role in our education. In the teaching learning processes, teachers at schools have the authority to select methods which support the learning objectives. This study is aimed at mapping the English teaching processes, identifying, and deciding whether the English teaching methods used by the teachers of Junior High School in Central Java were appropriate or not. The research used descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected through classroom observations, field note and documentation (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007: 80). The result showed that they were only 27.8 % teachers at junior high schools using the teaching methods which support learning objectives, while the most popular methods used were grammar translation, communicative language teaching, and three phase technique.

Keywords: English teaching process, teaching methods, learning objectives

Background

Related to the global communication era where English is used in most aspects of media, the ability to use this international language either in the form of oral or written is unavoidable. When this condition is applied to our teaching learning process, there is a moral inquiry intended to English teachers to teach this subject in a better, effective and efficient way. As stated by Muchith (2008: 113), teachers’ responsibility is to choose and use the appropriate method to create a better, effective, and efficient teaching learning process. By applying a good method of teaching English to the students, teachers can develop students’ skills and the result of learning objectives can be improved. To do this, teachers competence must also developed. The Act No. 14 Year 2005 (1:10) explains that English teachers in every level of education must have a knowledge about English linguistic aspects (linguistic, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategies), understand spoken and written English, and understand receptive and productive skills communicatively.

One of problems faced by the teachers in teaching is how to use the right methodology. Not every teacher has skills in developing learning materials themselves and applying the suitable learning methods. This condition affects the application of School Based Curriculum in the field. Some teachers slavishly deliver the material based on books formats without considering the students’ ability and it will affect the learning result accordingly. Ideally, the teachers need to know teaching arts rather than theoretical skills in delivering the material to their students. The longer the teaching experience, the better theoretical skills the teacher has, and this is inclusive of arts of teaching. Surahman (1973: 19) in Nurdin (2004) about model of arts and science in teaching.
A teacher’s competence, as an individual capability can be seen through his teaching performance. Having the same method, the result achieved by the students can be different, this is because the teaching process is affected by many factors like the arts of teaching which varies from person to person.

Brown as quoted by Sardiman (1996), teachers’ responsibilities and roles are to comprehend and develop the teaching material. Comprehending the material means understanding holistically and comprehensively. Develop means provide, adjust and explain the material to the students and make them understand. However, the fact shows that teachers in the field, have not developed the teaching material to be adjusted to the students’ ability.

**Review of Related Literature**

One of language study areas in English teaching is the use of methodology. For example, when the students are expected to be able to communicate using the target language, the teacher as a facilitator has to use appropriate teaching methods which highlight the oral activity. The following is an example of a research using certain teaching methods.

Mukaromah (2008) in her study entitled The Application of Drama Method in Improving English Achievement of the Seventh Grade Students of SMP Negeri 2 Paciran Lamongan discusses that method includes some activities and information which are designed by teachers to help students to learn. The teaching learning process will be creative if the teacher gives students opportunities to participate. When the students’ English achievement is low, this is assumed because they do not participate in the teaching learning process. Sometimes, the teacher is communicating with the students while he is only sitting on the chair all the time. It becomes a different atmosphere when he is applying a drama method acted by the students in front of the class.

Shortly, it can be explained that (1) the application of drama method may become an alternative for teachers to improve students’ English achievement in more interesting and fun learning situation, and (2) the English learning by using drama method can be applied to improve students’ activeness in the class and increase their self confidence.

**a) Teaching and Learning Method**

The word *method* comes from *methodos* (Greek) means a road or a way. Related to learning, method is a way used by teachers in managing information as fact, data, or concept in teaching learning process which may happen in a strategy. Because of that, method is meant a way to do something and learning method is meant a way used by teachers in delivering the material to students effectively based on the time allocated so the result will be
maximum (Thoifuri, 2007). In another word, method is a technique used by teacher to teach or to give a material to students in the class so the material can be understood and used well. In learning, method is also meant as a way to reach an aim. In line with the definition above, it can be concluded that method is a good way to reach an intention. In this case, method needs aim, content, process and teaching learning activity, tool, time allocation, material type, students’ and teachers’ ability as well.

Shortly, a teaching method includes three activities. They are preparation, presentation, and evaluation. Each level has specific activities. Preparation step done by teachers at home. It proves that teaching method has a wide range, including teachers’ activities in reaching goals. Winarno in Suryosubroto (2002:148) exclaims that teaching method is a presentation way or how a material is given to students at school technically.

Method is one of tools to reach an objective. By using method accurately, it is expected that the teacher can reach learning objectives. A teacher has the right to choose and decide what method will be used so that learning activity may run effectively and efficiently.

b). Teachers’ Competency and Roles in English Learning

A teacher’s professional competency is a set of ability to do teaching responsibilities. Teachers are expected to be able to manage learning system including: defining goal, choosing material priority, choosing and using a method, choosing and using learning source, and also choosing and using learning media (Uno, 2010: 18-9). It means that teachers must have good knowledge in their fields, understand methodology, have theoretical concept, and choose method in teaching learning process. In a teaching learning process, teachers’ competence will affect whether or not the material can be delivered to the students. Teaching method will also affect students’ motivation and attitude to a learning program. Based on Government Decree No. 19/2005 National Education System VI, 28 (3), teachers should have pedagogic competency that is a set of ability related to the teaching learning interaction between teacher and students in a class including material explanation, teaching-learning method, presentation, giving and answering questions, class management, and evaluation.

The Standard of Competence in English curriculum in most level will include the four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Krashen (2000) and Spolsky (1989) propose a concept that language learning will be successful if it is supported by unity between sufficient language model and environment where the language used. It means that language skills must be integrated. After students get sufficient language use model in listening and reading, then they are trained to speak and write. This adequate model will aid language process because students in low anxiety situation produce the language which they are learning (Krashen, 2002).

Research Methodology

This research uses descriptive qualitative method. It aims to describe a situation, characteristic, quality, or achievement level. Furthermore it is used to identify, explain, and elaborate (Saleh, 2008: 3-4).
a). Population and Sample.

The population of this research covers state junior high schools English teachers and students (SMPN) in Central Java. Because of the limited time and budget, not all English teachers of state junior high schools are observed. For practicability, the area of observation (Central Java) is divided into six (6) areas based on ex Karesidenan (district) namely: Semarang, Pati, Surakarta, Kedu, Banyumas and Pekalongan, where three (3) schools in every area are randomly taken as sample. Shortly the sampling technique used is purposive random sampling.

b). Technique of Collecting Data

Source of data was the interaction between teacher and students in English learning. The data were method used in teaching English and teaching learning process. The techniques used were observation, field note and documentation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007: 80).

c) Technique of Analyzing Data

There were three technique analyzing data used in this study. First, the data of English learning process were observed then mapped to find a clearer description. Second, methods used during learning process were identified. Third, the methods were decided in terms of appropriateness.

Aspects analyzed in detail were:

a. Learning process during teachers interacted with students during the learning
b. The teacher’s skill in using teaching method in learning
c. Identification of teaching method used by the teachers
d. Appropriateness between teaching method and learning objective.

From the analysis, the conclusion was drawn about English teaching method with learning objectives and explained whether the teaching method used by the teachers were appropriate or not.

Result and Discussion

a). English Learning

Not all of learning processes done by the English teachers in Junior High School in Central Java were appropriate to the learning objectives. For example, a teacher taught students about degrees of comparison but the material should have been recount text based on the lesson plan. So, the material taught was not appropriate to the learning objective that is students are able to identify, get the information, and create a recount text. In this case, between planning and learning process was inappropriate.

Learning process was also inappropriate with the learning objective when there was a teacher who was intended to the method used without applying techniques in that method and ignored the result achieved by students in learning. For example, a teacher used grammar translation method but he did not lead students with any technique in that method to tell a narrative text as a learning objective.
b). English Teachers’ Educational Background

Junior High School teachers must have educational background minimum D-IV or S1 degree of study program which is in line with the subject taught, and achieved from an accredited study program (Educational Minister Decree No.16 Year 2007).

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Educational Background</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>S1 English Education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>S1 English Literature</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>S1 Transfer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>S1 Open University</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>D2 English Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total | 18 | 100% |

Table 4.1 shows that the biggest percentage of English teachers’ education background in Junior High School in Central Java is S1 English Education, 61.1 %. With this percentage, it should reflect better teaching skill among others. How precise the teaching method used in learning process directly will affect a teacher’s teaching skill. Because during the lecture, they must have got pedagogic knowledge about the use of teaching method to students compared to others.

Meanwhile, for graduates having the same percentage, 11.1 %, are S1 English Literature, S1 Transfer, and S1 Open University. The least percentage is D2 English Education, 5.6 %. Based on the data above, there is one teacher who had not fulfilled the qualification requirement, D2 English Education, deals with Educational Minister Decree No. 16 Year 2007.

c) Teaching Period

Teachers having experience will feel easier in facing students’ problems in teaching learning process related to the subject material. Moreover they can motivate and support students and also empowers their skill. In some cases, teachers having longer teaching period will be expert in doing learning compared to the new ones.
Table 4.2
The Percentage of English Teachers’ Teaching Period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Teaching Period (Year)</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 displays the English teachers’ teaching period in Junior High School in Central Java. The biggest percentage is 27.7% with the teaching period 1-5 years. There are two groups having the same percentage, 22.2%, they are group 6-10 years and group 26-30 years. However, group 11-15 years has the percentage 16.7%. The least percentage, 5.6%, owned by two groups, they are group 16-20 years and 21-25 years. It can be indicated that teachers having a good teaching skill are those who have taught more than 15 years. It happens because longer teachers teach, more methods they use. So, they are so innovative to use the most appropriate method to reach learning objective.

d). Teaching Method Used

In this study, teaching methods usually used by the English teachers in Junior High School in Central Java are: grammar translation method, direct method, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), three phase technique, and Task Based Instruction Approach (TBIA).

Table 4.3
The Percentage of Teaching Methods Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Teaching Method Used</th>
<th>Appropriate to Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Inappropriate to Learning Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Teachers</td>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Grammar translation method</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Direct method</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Three phase technique</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>TBIA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 describes that there are five teaching methods used in English learning. Nevertheless, not all of the teachers used those methods based on the learning objectives. There are only five teachers using the teaching method based on the learning objectives. The teaching methods used were grammar translation method, CLT, and three phase technique. There were two teachers used grammar translation method with the percentage, 11.1%. With the same percentage, teachers used CLT as the appropriate teaching method to the students. In other hand, there was only one teacher used three phase technique based on the learning objectives, with the percentage 5.6%.

From the comparison above, it shows that the total number of teachers using teaching method based on the learning objectives was so small. It clarifies that not all of the teachers used appropriate teaching method to the students so that it affected in failing to reach learning objectives.

e) Grammar Translation Method

There are some techniques applied to the students in this method: translation of a literary passage, reading comprehension questions, antonym synonyms, cognates, deductive application of rule, fill-in-the-blanks, memorization, use words in sentences, and composition, however, only some technique used in the learning. For example, a teacher only used four techniques: translation, reading comprehension, fill in the blank, and antonym synonym.

In translation technique, there was a teacher asking the students to use dictionaries in translating difficult words. Another teacher helped the students to translate and write some difficult words in Indonesia. Technique used by those teachers was not so appropriate; students translated a reading text from English into Indonesia; in which the text focused in vocabulary and grammar. Then, reading comprehension technique used by the teacher was by asking the students to read a text loudly. This technique was not so appropriate because the students had to answer questions in English based on their understanding. The students should have been asked about the information in the text and related the text to their experiences. In antonym synonym technique, the students should have been given a word list, asked to find the antonym synonym, or asked to translate those words based on their experiences. However, the teacher just asked the students to translate by dictionary, so the process of word understanding did not run based on the techniques applied in this method. The examples above assume that not all of the teachers applied all techniques in grammar translation method correctly.

Some teachers used grammar translation method in learning, but it was not appropriate with the learning objectives. It was caused by the teachers who did not apply some activities and materials mentioned in the lesson plan. In speaking skill, a teacher only asked the students to read a text and find difficult words. This simple process was not followed by any technique to improve students’ speaking skill. So, the objective in the lesson plan, as students can retell their experiences, was not reached. In conclusion, although the teacher stated the objectives and method firmly in the lesson plan, he did not use the
techniques in that method. This condition made the learning process was not related to the lesson plan.
f). Direct Method
The teaching techniques used in this method are: reading aloud, question and answer exercise, getting students to self correct, conversation practice, fill in the blank exercise, dictation, map drawing, and paragraph writing. In this study, a teacher could not apply direct method. It happened because he mostly used Indonesian in the teaching process. In reading skill, a teacher decided a learning objective to make students able to know descriptive text, understand its function, and identify the information. However, the learning process was not arranged well. The learning technique was also ignored. These reasons made direct method was used incorrectly. If this method applied based on the learning objectives, the students would understand the given material and automatically their reading skills improved.
g). Three Phase Technique
In this study, a teacher used three phase technique to teach writing about descriptive text. In pre reading, the teacher showed a cat picture so the students got information about the material. In reading, the students read a text with the teacher. In post reading, the teacher helped the students in identifying the information in the descriptive text. Based on the explanation related to the steps done by the teacher, the three phase technique used was based on the learning objectives.
h). Task Based Instruction Approach
All principles had been done by the teachers but it could not be said that they were successful in using Task Based Instruction Approach. It can be seen from the given material during learning process. In the lesson plan, a teacher firmly stated that the learning objectives of report text writing were that students could identify the main idea of report text, achieved information from the text, could compose a text, and capable in creating a paragraph with a certain title. In the learning practice, the teacher could not apply the technique or principle leading to the learning objectives correctly. The teacher tended to teach a material of comparison degrees and it could not contribute to the students’ writing skill. Because of the inappropriateness between the material and the learning objectives, the method’s role was not successful in the learning process although the technique or principle had been applied.
In summary, a teacher used teaching method which was not based on the learning objectives. This condition occurred because there was no appropriateness between teaching method and learning objectives, inappropriateness between teaching method used with the material given to the students, and the learning process was not relevant to the lesson plan.
i). The Appropriateness between Teaching Method with Learning Objectives

Table 4.4
The Percentage of Total Teacher Used Teaching Method Based on Learning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Appropriateness between Teaching Method with Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Appropriate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Inappropriate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the Table 4.4, it can be identified that only five out of 18 teachers used teaching method and appropriate to the learning objectives. So, the percentage of teachers using appropriate teaching method to the learning objectives was so small, 27.8%. It means that those teachers applied appropriate method based on competency standard and standard competency of a skill. Some factors affecting teachers’ success in using teaching method are education background and teaching period.

Table 4.5
The Percentage of Teachers’ Education Background Using Teaching Method Based on Learning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Education Background</th>
<th>Numbers of Teachers</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>S1 English Education</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>D2 English Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 informs that all teachers using teaching method which was based on the learning objectives were graduated from English Education Program both in D2 and S1 degree. There are four teachers graduated from S1 degree with the percentage 80% but there is only one teacher graduated from D2 degree with the percentage 20%. It is because they had been taught about teaching skill in how to teach English as a foreign language correctly so that they could teach by using appropriate method.

Table 4.6
The Percentage of Teachers’ Teaching Period Using Teaching Method Based on Learning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Teaching Period</th>
<th>Numbers of Teachers</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Less than 15 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>More than 15 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.6 illustrates that teachers having experience more than 15 years were successful in using teaching technique. There were three teachers with the percentage 60%. There were two teachers with the percentage 40% having teaching experience less than 15 years. It describes that between teaching period with teaching method based on learning objectives. Longer a teacher taught, better teaching method they used in learning. Teachers kept choosing what method which was appropriate to be used for students without ignoring the appropriateness to the learning objectives.

**Teaching Skill**

Teaching skill becomes very important in teachers’ duties and functions. Without a good teaching skill, a teacher can be innovative or creative to a material in the curriculum. One of the factors affecting teacher’s teaching skill is the use of appropriate teaching method. It means appropriate for students and material to reach the learning objectives.

**Conclusions and Suggestions**

Teaching methods used by the English teachers in Junior High School in Central Java were grammar translation method, direct method, communicative language teaching, three phase technique, and task based instruction approach. An appropriateness of teaching method use to the learning objectives really impacts to the teachers’ teaching skill. It is suggested that the teachers should apply various teaching methods and based on the learning objectives to improve students’ English skills.

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