English Teachers' Perceptions of Implemented Professional Development Strategies at SMPN Batang Anai

Novi Dwi Amelia Putri[1], Yati Aisya Rani[2]

Student of English Language Education[1] (English Department, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Padang), Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka Air Tawar, Padang, 25173
Lecturer of English Language Education[2] (English Department, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Padang), Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka Air Tawar, Padang, 25173
Correspondence Email: novidwiamelia09@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to find out the perceptions of English teachers of professional development strategies that they implemented. There were 8 English teachers as subjects of this research. This descriptive research used a semi-structured interview as its instrument. The data analysis shows that English teachers at SMPN Batang Anai implemented 8 professional development strategies and most of them had positive perceptions toward those strategies that they had implemented. The 8 strategies that those English teachers implemented were team teaching, peer coaching, analyzing critical events, teacher support groups, self-monitoring, workshops, keeping a teaching journal, and case analysis. Unfortunately, they never did action research and peer observation as well as made their teaching portfolios. Thus, it is suggested to the English teachers to carry out not only 8 but 11 professional development strategies during their teaching career in order to make their teaching better and better.

INTRODUCTION

It is already known that the education system keeps changing and developing. The education system that is increasingly experiencing significant development also requires a teacher who is rich with knowledge and professional in their respective fields. In addition, teachers must also be reflective and evaluative in their teaching (Fatemipour, 2013). The reflection and evaluation that they do will affect their teaching and will later impact their students (Avalos, 2011).

The professional development of teachers is fundamental and essential in contributing to student learning in schools (Carlos, 2009). To achieve a good contribution, the teacher must continue developing his/her professionalism. committed to self-improvement in carrying out the duties and obligations of being a teacher (Hasan & Baharin, 2014).

There are several experts that share their ideas of professional development strategies that can be implemented by English teachers. Suyanto & Jihad (2013) update their knowledge, insights, and attending educational seminars, training, and reading-related journals.

The second theory is proposed by (Hismanoglu, 2009). According to him, there are three strategies. They are: Mentoring, According to (DuBois & Michael, 2005) benefits of mentoring; can develop or improve careers, increase creativity, motivation and make the learning process faster (Greenhaus & Callanan, 2006). Second, peer coaching. According to (Bresser & Wilson, 2010),peer coaching benefits developing potential and maximizing performance. Instead of that, English teachers who want to develop their professionalism in teaching which can provide benefits, including; building a knowledge base about teaching together, can make teaching practices in the classroom run smoothly and successfully (Thorn et al., 2007). Last, action research to explore the ability their English students (Ferrance, 2000). that action research is a research method to obtain evaluations in teaching practice (Davidson et al., 2004).

The team of (OECD 2009): the first, Seminars, English teachers discussion, exchanging ideas that raise a theme about the education system led by experts (Alestre, 2016). The benefit of seminars is to make English teachers become more effective teachers (Weber et al., 2007). Therefore, this seminar can be used as a medium to hone the skills of English teachers in-depth and critically. Second, Qualification programme to English teacher is asked to improve and add new knowledge or skills(Timperley, 2008). Last, Peer observation is that involves two teachers in improving teaching competence by observing the teaching process for self-development (Gosling, 2002). According to (Crandall & Miller, 2014), peer observation is useful for teachers and students who are taught to understand learning material easily.

Other experts are Richards and Farrell (2005): The first strategy is a workshop. By attending a workshop to discuss and exchange their knowledge about English and English Language Teaching. The second strategy is self-monitoring. While teaching, an English teacher can record or document him/herself and later observe and evaluate their teaching. The third strategy is team teaching. English teachers have to form a group or a team either at school or outside to discuss techniques, strategies, theories, and media used in English subjects.

The fourth strategy is the teachers' support group which is a group consisting of two or three English teachers talking or exchanging ideas about the teaching-learning processes and learning strategies. The fifth strategy is the teaching portfolio which is writing a document containing various items with personal information about the English teacher.

The sixth strategy is keeping a teaching journal. English teachers have to keep and write a teaching journal with essential competencies, indicators, learning activities and assessments to reference progress and obstacles in each teaching and learning process. The seventh strategy is peer observation in which one English teacher has a role as an observer and the other has a role as the observee and vice versa.

The eighth strategy is peer coaching—a form of collaboration between fellow English teachers to discuss the English syllabus, curriculum, and instructional design. The ninth strategy is action research. Try to find answers to his/her problems in teaching. The tenth strategy is analyzing critical incidents that occur during the teaching process. Last but not least is case analysis. This case analysis collects information about teaching activities or situations to understand the English teacher when dealing with these situations.

The implementation of those professional development strategies will, of course, bring advantages for English teachers especially to the quality of their teaching. This is the reason why the researcher thinks it is important to conduct a research discussing how English teachers perceived the strategies they implemented. Their thoughts on whether those strategies really contribute to their teaching or not are important especially for them in order to be able to do reflection and evaluation later.

METHOD

In this research, the researcher used descriptive research because the researcher wants to describe an event or phenomenon factually and accurately. A descriptive method is used to describe or analyze a research result (Sugiyono, 2005). The instrumentation of this research was semi-structured interview. Interview is a method that meets and asks directly or face-to-face between researchers and participants (Moleong, 1991).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

1. Professional development strategies that were implemented by the English teachers at SMPN Batang Anai.

The data analysis found that the English teachers at SMPN Batang Anai implemented eight professional development strategies. They were:

a. Team teaching

Six out of 8 English teachers implemented the workshop. They joined workshops about media and lesson plans.

b. Peer coaching

Four out of 8 English teachers had attended peer coaching. Peer coaching could broaden their knowledge of students' exam materials and find ways to make learning effective.

c. Analyzing critical incidents

All English teachers at the Batang Anai level have analyzed critical incidents in online teaching. They adapt the learning material to the current learning situation by analyzing critical incidents.

d. Teachers support group

All English teachers at SMPN Batang Anai collaborated with other teachers; the teachers' support group updated the quality of learning and evaluated the lesson plans.

e. Self-monitoring

One out of 8 English teachers did self- monitoring. She was self-monitoring to improve her pronunciation skills.

f. Workshop

Four out of 8 English teachers attend workshops related to technology as an online medium.

g. Keeping a teaching journal

Seven out of 8 English teachers have made this teaching journal. An English teaching journal at SMPN Batang Anai controls learning design, manages and adds insight into English language learning theory, and makes essential competencies and learning indicators reference teaching activities.

h. Case analysis

Four out of 8 English teachers had done a case analysis. They find out or collect related information used in online learning.

2. English teachers' perceptions of the implemented professional development strategies.

From the data analysis, it was found that almost all English teachers at SMPN Batang Anai had positive perceptions of the implemented professional development strategies. First, the teachers confirmed several advantages in team teaching that they could get formed. They said they learned to use several online media, including WhatsApp, Kinemaster, Google Form, Google Classroom, Google Form, and Google Meet. Then, they could discuss the simplification of essential competencies for the students in the English curriculum since the curriculum used during the pandemic of COVID-19 should be rearranged. Second, peer coaching can develop their online learning potential by jointly making daily test questions, exam questions, and assignments by using Google Forms and making groups for online learning because some students did not have cellphones.

Third, analyzing critical incidents, English teachers get benefit from analyzing critical incidents. They said they created a syllabus suitable for COVID-19 and simplified English learning theory, such as making videos containing simple present learning sentences. Fourth, teachers support group, English teachers feel the advantages of this teacher support group, such as being accessible to found learning theory by taking YouTube learning videos. English teachers at SMPN Batang Anai can evaluate their lesson plans by changing core competencies and closed activities.

The fifth is self- monitoring. Only one English teacher did it. So, the advantage she gets is that self-monitoring can improve English pronunciation. In the sixth workshop, English teachers attend workshops on online media. Then by participating in the workshop, they can use Google Meet, Google Classroom, Kine master, Canva, Zoom, and Google Form. Seventh, keeping a teaching journal, the advantage of English teachers getting into Batang Anai by making a teaching journal was that they knew the limits of the material taught. Teaching journals could be used as a reference for measured learning activities. They added their knowledge about the KD theory and learning indicators. Lastly, case analysis with case analysis, English teachers at SMPN Batang Anai said they could find new information about online media, such as WhatsApp, Google Met, Google Form, and Google Classroom.

Discussion

Among all professional development strategies the English teachers did eight: team teaching, peer coaching, analyzing critical incidents, and teachers support groups, self-monitoring, workshop, keeping a teaching journal, and case analysis.

Unfortunately, there are three strategies that the English teachers never made on action research, teaching portfolios, and peer observation. The first one is action research; the English teachers at SMPN Batang Anai admitted that they did not conduct the action whenever they wanted to get a promotion or asked by the principal. In fact the action research provides many advantages to English teachers to develop professionalism. The action research conducted by teachers can improve the quality of educators in the teaching process in the classroom (Kunandar, 2008). In addition, when the teacher conducts this action research, his/her increase, and she/he has full responsibility for managing the learning processes (Sanjaya, 2009). Thus, even if the learning system is done online, whether offline, the English teacher still needs the action research to improve his/her quality in English teaching.

The second one is teaching portfolios. The English teachers claimed that they did not generally know the purpose of writing a teaching portfolio. Thus, they are still lacking information on this teaching portfolio. In fact, the English teacher must complete a teaching portfolio because it has many advantages for their professional development. By making this teaching portfolio, the English teachers will be inspired and encouraged to develop their teaching and learning skills and display better teaching quality. They will focus more on their teaching in the field of English. The English teacher can also write down their achievements while being a teacher (Gusthart, 2002). In conclusion, making teaching portfolios is a medium for self-evaluation for English teachers and a reference tool for assessing their abilities to develop and become English teachers who keep up with the times.

Last, the strategy that the English teacher at SMPN Batang Anai did not do was peer observation. The English teachers at SMPN Batang Anai found it challenging to do peer observation because they have different teaching schedules. Peer observation involves peers who help evaluate teaching performance and improve the competencies that must be mastered (Liu & Yuan, 2003).Peer observation is needed to see, hone, and evaluate each English teacher's ability and assess the limits.

In conclusion, being a professional English teacher must hone their abilities thus that he continues to develop according to the progress of the times. Professional teachers are teachers who have broad experience and knowledge (Martinis, 2009).

CONCLUSION
1. There are 8 professional development strategies that were implemented by English teachers at SMPN Batang Anai. They are team teaching, peer coaching, analyzing critical incidents, and teacher support groups, self-monitoring, workshop, keeping a teaching journal and case analysis.
2. Those English teachers have positive perceptions of the implemented professional development strategies. They agree that the strategies contribute some advantages to their teaching.

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