

ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION: HOW FAR DO WE GO?

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Abstract

This paper reviews some phenomenon on English Language Teaching Instruction. A reflection on the ELT method, material development and production, classroom management and assessment were used as the basis to shape a new trends in English Language Teaching Instruction. This paper gives an insight to English Foreign Language Teacher which becomes a direction to go after a reflection was done. Trends offer by this article guides the English Foreign Language Teacher to a more-innovative way in EFL instructions.

Key words : reflection on EFL instruction, trends in EFL instruction, innovation in EFL instruction

Introduction

As a teacher trainer, I could see very clearly that during the past decades, academic consideration focused on the of concept teachers' professional knowledge and effort to reform teacher education. Development of teaching competencies then becoming the government responsibilities in Indonesia. A large number of teacher training had done by the government to meet the effort such as improving the teachers' knowledge in (1) content knowledge of the subject matter (English language), (2) knowledge of science and pedagogy: pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of generic teaching strategies, beliefs, and practices; along with support knowledge, the knowledge of the various disciplines that would enrich teachers' approach to the teaching and learning of English, and (3) knowledge/competency of teaching in reality: pedagogical content knowledge, the specialized knowledge of how to represent content knowledge in the classroom.

For the above efforts then this paper gives some insight related to some pedagogical knowledge of English language by giving some reflection as the basis to attain the new shape of teaching in reality.

A REFLECTION ON ELT

The reflection on EFL in this paper focuses on the EFL practice on the nineteenth century which is seen from some points of view, namely: teaching method, material development, classroom management, and assessment.

Teaching Method

Teaching method in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) has been developed from time to time. If we review the development of teaching method in FLT at least there are 8 well know methods, namely: The Grammar-Translation Method, The Direct Method, The Audio-Lingual Method, The Silent way, Desuggestopedia, Community Language Learning, Total Physical Response, and Communicative Language Teaching (See Richard & Rodgers, 2001; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). The development of FLT method is influenced by the needs of the learners and the goal of the study. Brief description about those strategies can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Foreign Language Teaching Methods in nineteenth century

| No | Method | Goal | Teacher's Role |
|----|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Grammar-Translation Method | To read literature written in the target language | Teacher is the authority in the classroom |
| 2. | Direct Method | To communicate in the target language | Teacher and students are partners in the teaching/learning process |
| 3. | Audio-Lingual Method | To use the target language communicatively | Teacher is like an orchestra leader, directing and controlling the language behavior of the students. A good model of the target language |
| 4. | Silent Way | To be able to use the target language for self-expression to express their thought, perceptions, and feelings | Teacher is a technician or engineer. |
| 5. | Desuggestopedia | To accelerate the process by which | Teacher is the authority in the |

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|----|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | students learn to use a foreign language for everyday communication | classroom Teacher should make the students feel secure so that they can be more spontaneous and less inhibited |
| 6. | Community Language Teaching | To learn how to use the target language communicatively | The teacher's initial role is primarily that of a counselor, skillfully understands and supports the students in their struggle to master the target language. |
| 7. | Total Physical Response | To reduce the stress of students feel when they are studying foreign language and thereby encourage students to persist in their study beyond a beginning level of proficiency | Teacher is the director of all student behavior |
| 8. | Communicative Language Teaching | To enable the students to communicate in the target language by emphasizing the knowledge of linguistic forms, meanings, and functions. | Teacher facilitates communication in the classroom, promotes communication, acts as an adviser, answers students questions and monitors students' performance. |

(Source: Larsen-Freeman, 2000)

From those methods above, it can be seen that most of those methods are based on structuralist and functionalist theory of language (Richard & Rodgers, 2001). Most of the activities in those teaching methods are controlled by the teacher or teacher-centered activities. If it is seen from the goal of the study, those methods require the students to acquire English native speakers' ability, that is why accuracy (grammar and pronunciation) becomes a very important aspect during the era when those methods were applied. In addition, teacher was still became the source of learning and a good model of the target language. The interrelationship between the FLT method and the theory of language and the syllabus use for that method could be seen in the following table.

Table 2. Theory of Language, Syllabus, and Method

| Theory of Language | Syllabus | Method |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Structuralist | Structural | Structural Method, GTM, Audiolingual, |
| Functionalist | Notional, Functional | Communicative Language Teaching |
| Interactionist | Situational, Topical, Skill-based, Task-based | Oral/Situational, Skill-Based, Task-Based |

Material Development

Language learning materials can be defined as anything which can be used by teachers or learners to facilitate the learning of a language. Materials may be linguistic, visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, and they may be presented in print (e.g. coursebook, dictionaries, grammar books, workbooks, or photocopied exercises), cassettes, videos, CD-ROMS, on the Internet or through live performance or display (Richards, Schmidt, Kendrick, & Kim, 2002; Tomlinson, 2007). There are some factors which influence the types of language learning materials, such as student needs, study objectives, approach in delivering the materials, design in delivering the materials, procedure in delivering the materials, technology, infrastructure, and human resource. The classification of the educational technologies that support the teaching and learning process can be seen on Figure 1 below.

Internet, tablets, smart phones, wi-fi
 Language Laboratories, videos, computers, LCD
 Cassette recorders, OHPs, Photocopiers
 Whiteboards & Books
 Paper & Pens
 Blackboard & Chalk
 Nothing

Figure 1. Reversed Resources Pyramid
 (Adapted from: Harmer, 2007)

If we look back to the EFL teaching methods that have been explained previously, the teaching materials that were used by the teachers during those era were realia, coursebook, worksheet, pictures and cassette. Since the educational technology grows rapidly, nowadays various type of teaching materials are available. The explanation on the current teaching materials is given on the current trends section.

Classroom Management

Classroom management deals with rules and procedures, disciplinary intervention, teacher-students relationship and mental set (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). Classroom management normally can be seen from the teaching methods which are applied in conducting the teaching and learning process. Since the reflection here is made to review the former practice of ELT, in this section the writer review the classroom management that was applied during the implementation of the former ELT metods. Those methods are reviewed based on aspects of classroom management. The detail review can be seen on the following explanation.

Table 3. Rules & Procedure

| No | Method | Beginning and Ending the period | Materials & equipments | Group Work | Seat-work & Teacher led-activity |
|----|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1. | Grammar-Translation Method | Translate from one language to another language, learn grammar deductively, do a written test in which students are aksed to translate another test or answer questions about target culture or grammatical rules. | Written text, dictionary, | Individual work | Whole class instruction |
| 2. | Direct Method | Start by reading aloud and end by writing a paragraph | Reading text, realia, pictures, worksheet, | Small group work/ work in pairs | Whole class instruction |
| 3. | Audio-Lingual Method | Start by memorizing and performing a dialog and end by introducing target | Worksheet | Individual | Whole class instruction |
| 4. | Silent Way | Start by introducing target language sounds | Worksheet | Peer correction | Whole class instruction |
| 5. | Desuggestopedia | Creating a bright and cheerful classroom, engaging students in a fun activity | Posters, worksheet | Small group work | Whole class instruction |
| 6. | Community Language Teaching | Building good relationship with the students | Tape player, worksheet | Small group | Whole class instruction and cooperative |
| 7. | Total Physical Response | Giving command in the target language, | Realia | Whole class instruction | Whole class instruction |
| 8. | Communicative Language Teaching | Introducing authentic language use of the target language | Authentic materials | Group work | Whole class instruction & cooperative |

From Table 3 above, it can be seen that most of the teaching methods were conducted in whole class instruction. It means that the teacher dominated the teaching and learning process. Eventhough some of those method applied pairs work and small group work, but the activity was still based on the teacher's instruction.

Table 4. Disciplinary Intervention

| No | Method | Respond to students' errors |
|----|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Grammar-Translation Method | Teacher supplies the students with the correct answers |
| 2. | Direct Method | Teacher uses various ways to get students to self-correct whenever possible |

| | | |
|----|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3. | Audio-Lingual Method | Giving positive reinforcement whenever students answer questions correctly. Teacher helps the students to correct their errors |
| 4. | Silent Way | Teacher gives clues to help the students correct their errors |
| 5. | Desuggestopedia | Errors are corrected gently, with the teacher using soft voices |
| 6. | Community Language Teaching | Teacher repeats correctly what students has said incorrectly |
| 7. | Total Physical Response | Teacher should tolerate students' errors |
| 8. | Communicative Language Teaching | Teacher collects students' errors and explains them during the accuracy-based activity |

The way in building and maintaining students' discipline through punishment or reinforcement almost cannot be identified from the former ELT methods. It is because the theory about those methods does not explain the way of the teacher in responding students' behavior. From those eight ELT methods, only in Audio-Lingual method it is clearly stated that when the students answer the questions correctly, teacher should give positive reinforcement. Even though it is not explicitly stated in the design and procedure of those methods about the way to build and maintain the students' discipline, however, from those methods, the way how the teacher responds students' errors can be explained. Table 4 above shows that teacher responds students' errors through various techniques. Most of the techniques require the teacher to correct students' error immediately when the students produce it and most of the correction are in oral.

Table 5. Teacher-Students Relationship

| No | Method | Teacher | Students |
|----|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Grammar-Translation Method | Leader | Follower |
| 2. | Direct Method | Learning Partner | Learning Partner |
| 3. | Audio-Lingual Method | Leader and model | Imitator |
| 4. | Silent Way | Supporter | Player |
| 5. | Desuggestopedia | Entertainer | Audience |
| 6. | Community Language Teaching | Councillor | Patient |
| 7. | Total Physical Response | Director | Imitator |
| 8. | Communicative Language Teaching | Facilitator | Communicator |

In terms of teacher-students relationship, as what is shown in Table 5, most of those conventional ELT methods put the English teacher as the authority or leader during the teaching and learning process. It means that the teacher takes control on the teaching and learning process. While the students become the follower or imitator of their teacher.

Assessment

Assessment is a systematic approach to collecting information and making inferences about the ability of a student or the quality or success of a teaching course on the basis of various sources of evidence (Richard & Schmidt, Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, 2002). Assessment may be done by test, interview, questionnaire, or observation. Considering the conventional ELT methods, the assessment which was done by the English teacher who implemented those ELT methods can be classified into product-based test. Most of those assessment were delivered through printed text. Types of assessment that were done in those conventional ELT method are can be seen on Table 7 below.

Table 7. Types of Assessment in Conventional ELT Methods

| No | Method | Assessment |
|----|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Grammar-Translation Method | Translating, reading comprehension test (completion) |
| 2. | Direct Method | Oral questions, fill in the blanks |
| 3. | Audio-Lingual Method | Oral questions |
| 4. | Silent Way | Oral commands |
| 5. | Desuggestopedia | Oral questions |
| 6. | Community Language Teaching | Writing a conversation |
| 7. | Total Physical Response | Oral Questions |
| 8. | Communicative Language Teaching | Reeading comprehension |

Trends In ELT

Nowadays, there are more non-native speakers than the native speaker who speak English. It is because more and more countries are aware of the importance of global language. Therefore, there is a big possibility that more non-native speakers speak English with the other non-native speakers than non-native speakers to the native speakers. According to Crystal (2003), once a language becomes a global language it means that nobody owns that language no more. Furthermore, he explains that everyone who has learned it now owns it and has the right to use it in the way that they want. This condition stimulates the new dialect of English, such as Singaporean English, Malaysian English, and etc. Those localized or new dialects of English sometimes have different linguistic system especially in the phonological, morphological, and syntactic forms. In addition, it also leads the EFL teaching goal to a different direction, as what Penny Ur (2009) noted that the goal of EFL nowadays is to produce fully competent English-knowing bilinguals rather than imitation native speakers.

As a result of the redirecting the goal of teaching English above, then, it is undeniable that English Language Teaching develops rapidly and have a continuous evolution especially in terms of ELT method and Research in ELT. The multiple changes in sociological, economic and paedagogical (Varela, Pólo, Garcia, and Martinez: 2010) resulting a turning to important innovation and adaptation in teacher training and development, curriculum design, material development and production, classroom management and assesment. The most recent direct impact of the development could be seen from the quick emergence of the new communication and information technologies (ICTs).

The changes from using audiovisual aids in the classroom and traditional language laboratory to the use of internet and all resources connected to it is also becoming a crucial in ELT, especially when this instrument is used for outside the classroom.

To see how far do we go in EFL instruction, the following are a brief description on trends in teaching method, classroom management, material development, and assesment.

Teaching Method

As what has been explained previously, English is now used as lingua franca and the goal in teaching English is no longer to make the learners to be able to speak English like its native speaker, the method in teaching it as a foreign language is also different from the conventional methods that we have known. If the former teaching methods are influenced by structuralist, functionalist, and interactionist language theories, the current teaching methods in EFL are influenced by constructivist education philosophy. It means that the students have to construct their own understanding through various ways and sources. In short it could be seen in the following table.

Table 8. Trends in English Foreign Language Teaching

| Education Philosophy | Learning Theories | Syllabus | Method/Approach |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Constructivist | Discover Learning, Multiple Intelegences Theories | Competency-based syllabus | Jig Saw, STAD, Student Research, Problem-based, cooperative, SALL, CALL, E-Learning, Blended Learning, Mobile Learning, Inquiry based Learning |

In addition to the information on the table, the development of teaching method in EFL is also influenced by the development of educational technology. That is why there are various teaching methods that integrate current technology are available for teaching EFL. Those methods are Computer Assisted Language Learning, E-learning, Blended Learning, Mobile Learning, and Inquiry based Learning. The development of educational technology makes the teaching and learning process does not take place in a classroom only. Through virtual learning system, English language learners can learn English anywhere and anytime. Students may learn through their tablets or smartphones. That is why new teaching methods that integrate current tehnology become new trends in ELT method.

Material Development

Since we are in internet era, there are various teaching and learning materials are available to be used for teaching EFL. Printed materials is no longer the only source that we have. Books which are normally in the form of printed materials now become electronic books. Cassette for audio materials are now replaced by Compact Disc or memory stick. The existance of internet drives teaching and learning materials to a new form. When a student need to study a new theory, they can directly access the information of that theory from the internet through seach engines, such as: google and yahoo. Conventional library does not the major source for the students to access information. That is why there are more and more library upgrade their service into e-library. Books, journals, magazines are all in the form of electronic materials. That is why

some people argue that in few years, no printed textbook are needed to be used for teaching and learning process.

The use of ICT outside the classroom promote learner autonomy where they provide the learners not only with unlimited number of learning materials that suit to the students learning style and need, but also with the instrument to organize and plan their learning. This could be seen in the use of podcast, wikis, moodle and blogs in ELT class.

Classroom Management

As discussed previously, classroom management deals with rules and procedures, disciplinary intervention, and teacher-students relationship (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). The above trends nowadays should be renewed by considering some aspects in classroom management. The inclusion of differentiated instruction in EFL class couldn't be ignored.

Differentiating instruction is a technique that teachers use to accommodate each student's learning style and instructional preferences (Tomlinson, 1999). This strategy may involve teaching the same material to all students using a variety of instructional methods, or it may require the teacher to teach content at varying levels of difficulty based on the readiness and ability of each student.

This kind of techniques give some changes in learning environment that could be seen as the followings :

- While some students prefer a learning environment in which they can discuss subject matter with their peers, other students would rather learn alone. In this case, teachers can differentiate instruction in the classroom by allowing students to choose between working in groups with other students or completing assignments individually
- Some students learn better through direct instruction, while others would rather read or look at pictures. Some teachers differentiate instruction in the classroom by offering options to students during lessons. For example, students may be able to learn the same material by reading a book, listening to a lecture on tape or completing an interactive assignment online.
- Because some students learn course material faster than others, teachers may also differentiate instruction by tailoring each student's lesson for the day to his or her skill level.
- Not all students require the same amount of support from the teacher. While some students may benefit from one-on-one interaction with a teacher or classroom aide, others may be able to progress by themselves. Teachers can enhance student learning by offering support based on individual needs.

Another development occured in role of the teacher which moving forward from to the new role of teacher such as : animator, collaborator, mentor, assesor and facilitator (Wright, 1987). This new roles also influence the management of EFL instruction.

Assessment

Along with the implementation of competence-based EFL learning that formally commenced in 2004, a new trend in assessment was introduced. The development from conventional teaching and learning which practised a 'product-oriented' assesment to competence-based learning that requires a more complex assessment method which is more process oriented is becoming a new consideration in EFL method of assesment. This is why then, the term 'authentic assessment' which was popularized by Grant Wiggins (1989) becoming the trend in assesment for this kind of assesment method are considered as enabling the students to apply the knowledge and skills in the same way they are used in 'real world' outside school" (Marzano, et.al., 1993:13).

Authentic assessment describes the multiple forms of assessment that are consistent with classroom goals, curriculum and instruction. The most popular method of authentic assesment is portfolios.

To give a clearer idea of the differences between portfolios and traditional assessment, the following comparison is presented.

Table 9: Differences between portfolios and Traditional assessment (Quoted from Popham, 1995).

| Portfolios | Traditional Assessment |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents the range of reading and writing students are engaged in • Engages students in assessing their progress and / or accomplishments and establishing ongoing learning goals • Measures each student's achievement while allowing for individual differences between students • Represents a collaborative approach to assessment • Has a goal of student self-assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assesses students across a limited range of reading and writing assignments which may not match what students do • Mechanically scored or scored by teachers who have little input • Assesses all students on the same dimensions • Assessment process is not collaborative • Addresses achievement only |

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses improvement, effort, and achievement • Link assessment and teaching to learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate learning, testing, and teaching. |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

In addition, the current assessment is not only in the form of printed test, but many of the assessments are now conducted in the form of electronic test, as what it is called as Computer Assisted Test (CAT). Social media, blogs, wikis are also used for delivering the assessment especially when the teacher wants to conduct portfolio assessment.

Conclusion

To conclude this article I end up this paper by giving the quote below:

The true teachers are those who use themselves as bridges over which they invite their students to cross; then, having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create their own (Nikos Kazantzakis)

The above quote represent the role of method, teaching material, classroom-management and assesment in EFL instruction. It is implicitly stated that there is no best method of teaching, managing the class and assesing the students. All are implemented based on the need, the inputs and the environment. Teachers have to provide a joyful learning situation so that the students are actively involved. The role of the teacher as a facilitator who provide facilities for any activities in EFL instruction should be optimized so that the students could choose their best learning style. In addition, the use of ICT in EFL instruction is recommended to promote the students to inquire the knowledge from a varieties of sources. Then it is wise to say that 'Teaching method is just like the pendulum which is moving following the time'

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