

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

Enrichment of Career by Knowledge of Language and Literature I

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ADDRESS OF THE SEMINAR COMMITTEE

Assalammualaikum Wr. Wb.

Dear Seminar Participants,

It is really a good pleasure for the seminar committee to welcome you to the first ECKLL international seminar on *Readjusting Foreign Language Teaching: Strategies & Practices*. In today's dynamic and continuously evolving world, our profession as educator must address the learning needs of today's learners and the educators. If learners are to develop the 21st century skills needed for success in their career pathways, educators have to be prepared with the tools necessary to deliver instruction that integrates the learning of languages with instructional strategies that motivate learners.

In this seminar about 100 lecturers and students, linguists, researchers and experts from different parts of Indonesia are gathering to share their views on how foreign language teaching can be readjusted to enrich the learners' ability to master a foreign language.

The seminar committee is very grateful to all paper contributors, who have made the publication of this compilation possible.

Wassalammualaikum Wr. Wb.

The Seminar Committee

ADDRESS OF THE DEAN

Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarokatuh

Good Morning

First of all, I would like to invite you to express our grateful feeling to Allah for His blessing so that we are able to attend this international seminar. And I would like to extend the warmest welcome and sincerely greeting to all participant attending this occasion.

Distinguished participants

On behalf of the Faculty of Letters Dr. Soetomo University, I do hope that this international seminar will run well and be able to contribute to the improvement of the English teachers' quality. We all feel and do believe that teachers as the key figures in a class play an important role in shaping the future of generation. Thus, it is my hope that all participants are able to keep these responsibilities enhancing their skills and abilities and they never stop being active and creative in the process of teaching and learning.

Ladies and gentlemen

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the seminar committee for their outstanding support to the Faculty of Letters to host and to organize this seminar with full commitment and dedication.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

Finally, I hope every participant will find this forum inspiring to enlighten practitioners for the enhancement of the quality of Language Teaching.

Thank you very much for your attention

Wassalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarokatuh

Drs. Syamsuri Ari Wibowo,MPd

Dean of the Faculty of Letters

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Teachers Empowerment: Strategies in Foreign Language Instruction

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Abstract

Research has proved that the quality of education relies much on the quality of teachers and that the role of teachers in foreign language teaching is of paramount importance to support the learners' success in their foreign language acquisition. Attempts to enhance the quality of foreign language teachers must therefore be made through teachers' empowerment in and beyond the classroom. Strategies to improve the quality of foreign language instruction must focus on honing the qualities of teachers' competencies - communicative/ language competence , and instructional competence.

The Directorate of Quality Assurance of Universitas Surabaya/ Politeknik Ubaya has been set up in order to, among others, measure the effectiveness of teachers of Universitas Surabaya/ Politeknik Ubaya in delivering their instruction and to encourage the Ubaya learners to get involved in helping increase the quality of instruction at Universitas Surabaya/ Politeknik Ubaya by making assessments of their teachers. This paper aims at sharing our experiences in implementing Quality Assurance scheme at Politeknik Ubaya and seeks to recommend strategies to help empower foreign language teachers in their foreign language instruction.

Key words : teachers' empowerment, strategies, foreign language instruction, the quality of foreign language teachers

Teachers Empowerment: Strategies in Foreign Language Instruction

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1. Introduction

The role of teachers in foreign language teaching, that is to support the learners' success in their foreign language acquisition, is important. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development /OECD Publishing (2011) describes that in this 21st century, teachers transform their educational competencies in more challenging situation. They are being challenged to equip students also with the competencies they need to become active citizens and human resources. Thus, teachers need to personalize learning experiences to ensure that every student has a chance to succeed and to deal with increasing cultural diversity in their classrooms and differences in learning styles. Fabrice Henard and Deborah Roseveare (2011) stated that teachers do not only need to keep up with innovations in curricula, pedagogy and the development of digital resources but also need to co-operate with students, colleagues from other departments, and with external stakeholders as members of a dynamic learning community. In other words, teachers need to extend their knowledge, skill, networks in order to attain fruitful learning. Teachers need to empower themselves.

1.1. Empowerment

Bolin (1989) defines empowerment as investing teachers with the right to participate in the determination of school goals and policies and to exercise professional judgment about what and how to teach. Lucas, Brown, and Markus (1991) defines teacher empowerment as a function of the readiness of building-level administrators to share their autonomy with those whose commitment is necessary to make the educational program function at the highest degree of efficiency. Lee (1991) shares this outlook by defining teacher empowerment as the development of an environment in which the teachers act as professionals and are treated as professionals. He further explains that empowerment means that school authorities provide teachers with the authority to make decisions that have, in traditional systems, been made for them, a time and a place to work and plan together during the school day and a voice in efforts to deepen their knowledge and improve their teaching.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development /OECD Publishing (2011) illustrates that through empowerment, teachers update their skills and knowledge beyond their initial education to serve a range of purposes, including to:

- update knowledge of a subject in light of recent advances in the area;

- update skills and approaches in light of the development of new teaching techniques and objectives, new circumstances, and new educational research;
- be able to apply changes made to curricula or other aspects of teaching practice;
- enable schools to develop and apply new strategies concerning the curriculum and other aspects of teaching practice; exchange information and expertise among teachers and others, *e.g.* academics and industrialists; or
- help weaker teachers become more effective.

1.2. Strategies to conduct teachers empowerment: evaluation/assessment

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development /OECD Publishing (2011) states that teacher evaluation is essential for improving the individual performance of teachers and the collective performance of education systems. Fabrice Henard and Deborah Roseveare (2011) emphasize that fostering quality teaching and improving student learning outcomes requires a realistic assessment of the starting point – the current level of teaching quality – and a way to measure the progress made.

A crucial feature is what criteria teachers are appraised against, including, but not limited to, student performance. Also important are the degree to which teachers improve their professional skills and, crucially, the part they play in improving the school and system as a whole. Teacher appraisal is advancing from checking whether teachers are doing their job to help them improve. Indeed, new approaches to teacher appraisal seek to improve learning outcomes through fostering and targeting teacher professional development and holding teachers accountable.

Effective teacher appraisal can help to improve teachers' practices by identifying strengths and weaknesses for further professional development – the improvement function. This involves helping teachers learn about, reflect on, and adjust their practice. Teacher appraisal can also help to hold teachers accountable for their performance in enhancing student learning – the accountability function.

Teachers are judged on a range of criteria, such as:

- teacher qualifications, including teacher credentials, years of service, degrees, certifications and other relevant professional development;
- how teachers operate in the classroom setting, including attitudes, expectations and personal characteristics, as well as strategies, methods and actions employed in their interaction with students; and
- measures of teacher effectiveness, based on an assessment of the degree to which teachers contribute to students' learning outcomes as well as their knowledge of their field and pedagogical practice

Fabrice Henard and Deborah Roseveare (2011) describe that improved appraisal and feedback can have beneficial effects on teachers, improving their job satisfaction and personal development as well as their effectiveness in implementing priorities for improvement. The results of appraisal are often also used to plan the professional development of individual. Furthermore, IMHE claims that good appraisal and feedback can contribute to the improvement of schools as learning organizations. Appraisal of teachers and subsequent feedback can help stakeholders to improve schools through more informed decision making. Such improvement efforts can be driven by objectives that consider schools as learning organizations that use evaluation to analyze the relationships between inputs, processes and outputs in order to develop practices that build on identified strengths and address weaknesses.

In addition, teachers take responsibility for their own actions and acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and repertoire of activities to increase their participation in the school workplace environment. Adult learning theories in line with situated cognitive perspectives on learning (Anderson *et al.*, 2000; Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002; Jarvis, 1987; Kwakman, 2003; Putnam and Borko, 2000; Smylie, 1995) highlight that teacher learning is seen as an active and constructive process that is problem-oriented, grounded in social settings and circumstances, and takes place throughout teachers' lives.

The learning action for improvement may vary from attending course, workshop, seminar, building professional development network, conducting individual and collaborative research, mentoring and peer tutoring, and reading professional literature.

1.3. Teachers assessment in Politeknik Ubaya: The Quality Assurance Scheme

The Directorate of Quality Assurance of Universitas Surabaya/ Politeknik Ubaya has been set up to help increase the quality of education at Universitas Surabaya/ Politeknik Ubaya. The directorate conducts an assessment of Ubaya teachers in order to measure the teachers' effectiveness in delivering their instruction. The assessment is carried out at the end of each semester by encouraging Ubaya learners to complete questionnaires. The questions, among others, assess teachers' punctuality, students' interest and motivation in the subject taught, teachers' delivery method, how much learners are able to comprehend the material, and how wise the teachers are in responding to the learners' complaints.

Since 2011 the assessment has been made online and learners can complete the questionnaires through Ubaya website. The following semester, teachers will get feedback from the result of assessment. Based

on the result, the teacher together with teaching team and the supervisor, will complete evaluation form of subject taught in the previous semester, discuss the improvement needed for upcoming semester.

Improvement may in the format of teacher development (mentoring, attending course, workshop etc), content / method changing, or classroom facility. The supervisor then supports the improvement by budgeting the financial needed for those improvement action.

Hopefully, teacher can reflect the feedback from The Directorate of Quality Assurance of Universitas Surabaya/ Politeknik Ubaya. He/she is able to identify strengths and weaknesses, do needed improvement and finally quality teaching and student learning outcomes will expanded.

2. Discussion

2.1. Research instrument

The study analyzes the results of assessment of teachers of Business English Study Program of Politeknik Ubaya who taught English Communication Skills and related subjects from the even semester of academic year 2009-2010 throughout the odd semester of academic year 2012-2013. The researchers examine teachers who taught the same subject in even / odd semester consecutively. The researchers consider that we can see the progress evidently if the teachers taught the same subject in the even / odd semester consecutively.

Teachers get the assessment report from the supervisor at the beginning of subsequent semester after the assessment done. Moreover, since 2011, teachers can get it online from internal website of Universitas Surabaya. The report shows teachers progress/position in teaching in the classroom. It is indicated by the score of 1-4 scale. Score 1 indicates that teachers performance is not good. Score 2 indicates that teachers performance is fair. Score 3 indicates that teachers performance is good. While Score 4 indicates that teachers performance is excellent. Teachers also get comments from students about their way of teaching, in what way students like or dislike their way of teaching. Indeed, we study the shift of the teachers' score of assessment report together with students' comment during those three semesters of even / odd semester.

Furthermore, we divide the analysis into two aspects that are teachers' attitude and teachers' teaching and learning knowledge. Teachers' attitude aspect consist of teachers' punctuality and how wise the teachers are in responding the learners' complaint. Whereas teachers' teaching and learning knowledge - aspect consist of teachers' delivery method, how much learners are able to comprehend the material, and students' interest and motivation in the subject taught.

2.2. Result

2.2.1. Teachers' attitude aspect

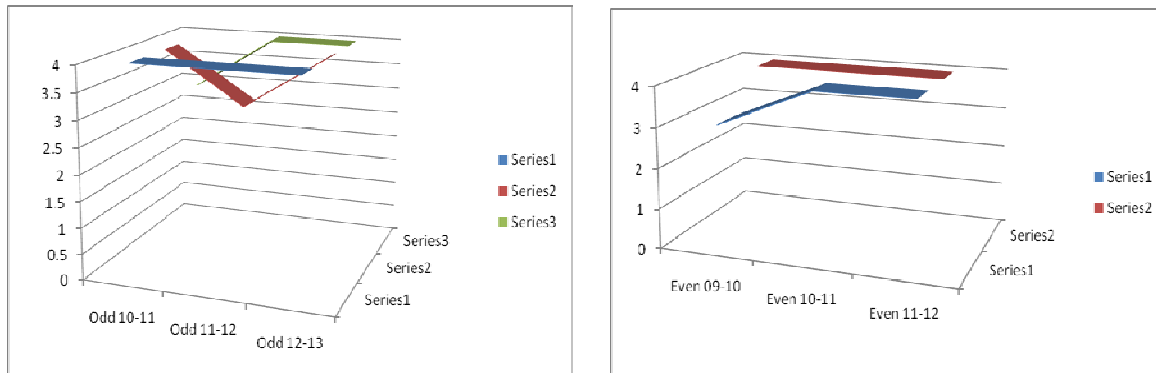


Figure 1. Teachers' attitude trend

The figure shows that teachers' attitude is good since the score range is from 3 until 4 (identified as good to excellent). Students consider teachers' punctuality and how wise the teachers are in responding their complaint as good.

Furthermore, some teachers conduct good attitude for the whole semester, some show improvement until the last semester and some show less good attitude in the second semester but finally they improve it at the last semester.

Teachers are able to identify their progress of attitude aspect from assessment report, in which part they do good, and which part they do fair. Acknowledging their low point in certain aspect, allow them to priority the aspect they must improve.

2.2.2. Teachers' teaching and learning knowledge – aspect

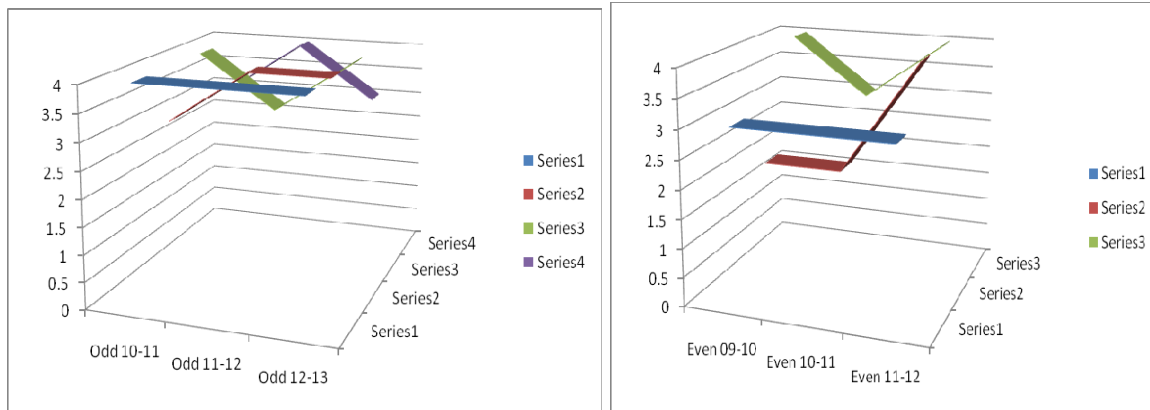


Figure 2. Teachers' teaching and learning knowledge trend

The figure shows that teachers' teaching and learning knowledge is fair good to excellent since the score range is from 2 until 4 (identified as fair to excellent). Students consider teachers' delivery method, how much learners are able to comprehend the material, and students' interest and motivation in the subject taught as fair good to excellent.

Furthermore, some teachers conduct good teaching for the whole semester, some show improvement until the last semester, some show less good teaching in the second semester but finally they improve it at the last semester and some show decrease at the last semester. Hopefully, acknowledging their low point in certain aspect, make teachers priority the aspect they must improve.

2.2.3. Students' comment of teachers' performance

Besides doing assessment of the way teachers are teaching the students, some students also give comments expressing what they like and dislike related to the way their teachers taught. The comments obviously emphasize the strength and the weakness of teachers, thus make teachers be easier in identifying which aspect they need to improve. The following tables show students' comments for both aspects of teachers' attitude and teachers' teaching and learning knowledge.

| Constructive comments | Positive comments |
|---|-------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher is lack of wise in responding students' complaint | - |

Table 1. Students' comment of teachers' attitude in odd and even semester

| Constructive comments | Positive comments |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher should add cases / exercises More games please | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joyful teaching Interesting teaching |

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't be too fast in explaining the problem / case • More variety in delivering the lesson • Louder please • Lack of interaction with students • Teaching method should be prepared in such a way that can stimulate students, not just explain the theory • Boring in the way of teaching | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good teaching even though the teacher is sick • You're rock!! Two thumbs! • Lovely. Teachers can get along well with students • Professional teachers |
|---|--|

Table 2. Students' comment of teachers' teaching and learning knowledge in odd and even semester

The tables reveal that students consider teachers' attitude is good since there is not much comment on it. Just a comment that states a teacher is lack of wise in responding students' complaint. This condition is inline with the score range of assessment that is from 3 until 4 (identified as good to excellent).

Moreover some students are satisfied with some teachers' way of teaching, while some are not satisfied. We can notice it from the second table that students appreciate the way teachers deliver instruction in the classroom such as the words "joyful teaching, two thumbs etc". Whereas some students remark that teachers need to add cases / exercises / more games etc. The comments are mostly about delivery method, indeed students state in more specific words that are about voice, games, cases, exercise, interaction with students and so on. This situation is aligned with the trend of teachers' teaching and learning knowledge aspect that is constant, decrease and increase. It describes that some aspect need to be improved. The comments of students surely give the specific clue for teachers of aspect to be enhanced.

2.2.4. Institutional support

Fabrice Henard and Deborah Roseveare (2011) state experience showed that fostering quality teaching is a multi-level endeavour. Support for quality teaching takes place at three inter-dependent levels:

- *At the institution-wide level:* including projects such as policy design, and support to organisation and internal quality assurance systems.
- *Program level:* comprising actions to measure and enhance the design, content and delivery of the programs within a department or a school.

- *Individual level*: including initiatives that help teachers achieve their mission, encouraging them to innovate and to support improvements to student learning and adopt a learner oriented focus.

Teachers empowerment will be accomplished if it is supported by institution. Teachers may not do anything although they get the feedback from assessment, if there is none monitor the progress and support the action for enhancement. Thus, once teachers get the assessment report, they will be supervised by the supervisor to complete evaluation form of subject taught in the previous semester. In doing so, they will discuss with teaching team and then verified by the supervisor for the improvement needed for upcoming semester. Improvement may vary. It may teacher development such as mentoring, attending course, workshop etc, changing of content of the lesson, varying teaching method / evaluation, or improving classroom facility. The supervisor then supports those actions for improvement as the department's upcoming plan and surely prepare the financial needed for those actions.

3. Conclusion

The study primarily investigated teacher empowerment strategies by analyzing the results of the assessment of the teachers of the Business English Study Program using the Quality Assurance scheme of Politeknik Ubaya. The assessment serves as a starting point of the current level of teaching quality, a way to measure the progress made. The findings reveal that the feedback of teaching given to teachers, present them information about their strengths and weaknesses. Moreover the trend of the shift of scores of evaluated aspects, teachers' attitude and teachers' teaching and learning knowledge, show significant evidence that most shift come to improvement at the final semester. This condition is in accordance with Fabrice Henard and Deborah Roseveare (2011) description that teacher appraisal can help to improve teachers' practices by identifying strengths and weaknesses for further professional development – the improvement function. This involves helping teachers learn about, reflect on, and adjust their practice. As foreign language teachers, they should seek to enhance their competencies continuously by attending training courses or seminars / conferences to meet their needs such as advanced courses to improve the corresponding language skills, methodology training, material development course, or other professional development programs. Empowered teachers love to learn to pursue their continuous development. Institutional support is obviously needed to support the empowerment. Otherwise, the feedback for improvement is just a feedback without any follow up action of improvement conducted.

The writers also suggest that institution need to have a kind of Teaching Standards Framework that articulate the goals of the institution's programs, evaluate attempts to achieve them, and provide staff with a language in which they could explain and reflect on their teaching for developmental purposes as explained by Fabrice Henard and Deborah Roseveare (2011). The emphasis of the Teaching Standards

Framework is not on applying fixed criteria but encouraging institutions to report their performance on their own terms, thus linking quality assurance and quality enhancement in a single process.

The writers are aware that this is a preliminary study and that extensions of the study could be made by including data from the other departments/ study programs in order to bring about a more effective strategy for teacher empowerment in teaching a foreign language

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