Habiburrahim
A REVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Marisa Yoestara & Zaiyana Putri
PODCAST: AN ALTERNATIVE WAY TO IMPROVE EFL STUDENTS’ LISTENING AND SPEAKING PERFORMANCE

Waliyadin Nuridin
DEVELOPING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF INDONESIAN EFL LEARNERS THROUGH TEACHING SPEECH ACTS OF ORAL AND WRITTEN COMPLAINTS

Bustami Usman, Ika Apriani Fata, & Ratih Pratiwi
TEACHING READING THROUGH KNOW-WANT-LEARNED (KWL) STRATEGY: THE EFFECTS AND BENEFITS

Zulfikar
RETHINKING THE USE OF L1 IN L2 CLASSROOM

Khairil Razali & Teuku Zulfikar
I LOVE TEACHING: THE REFLECTIVE STORIES OF ENGLISH TEACHERS AT ACHIEVING SCHOOLS IN BANDA ACEH
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Englisia
Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities
Vol. 6 No. 1, November 2018

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Pusat Penelitian dan Penerbitan, Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, Kopelma Darussalam Banda Aceh, 23111, Indonesia. | Phone: +651 755 1423, Email: englisia.journal@ar-raniry.ac.id
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1-14 Habiburrahim
A REVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

15-26 Marisa Yoestara & Zaiyana Putri
PODCAST: AN ALTERNATIVE WAY TO IMPROVE EFL STUDENTS’ LISTENING AND SPEAKING PERFORMANCE

27-34 Waliyadin Nuridin
DEVELOPING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF INDONESIAN EFL LEARNERS THROUGH TEACHING SPEECH ACTS OF ORAL AND WRITTEN COMPLAINTS

35-42 Bustami Usman, Ika Apriani Fata, & Ratih Pratiwi
TEACHING READING THROUGH KNOW-WANT-LEARNED (KW/L) STRATEGY: THE EFFECTS AND BENEFITS

43-51 Zulfikar
RE Thinking THE USE OF L1 IN L2 CLASSROOM

52-63 Khairil Razali & Teuku Zulfikar
I LOVE TEACHING: THE REFLECTIVE STORIES OF ENGLISH TEACHERS AT ACHIEVING SCHOOLS IN BANDA ACEH
A REVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

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Manuscript received October 18, 2018, revised October 24, 2018, first published November 30, 2018, and available online January 12, 2019. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/ej.v6i1.3529

ABSTRACT

A review of the current literature on curriculum development elucidates that much of the existing work either: (i) focuses on the development of educational resources; (ii) rectifies the concept of curriculum; (iii) or identifies desirable features of development methods without providing any practical guidance that synchronizes the needs of any particular education systems and geographical status where students are living. This paper scrutinizes the development of the Department of English Language Education curriculum of Ar-Raniry State Islamic University (Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh) Indonesia in line with Aceh context. It is flexible and evolutionary, and is soundly underpinned by proven theory and practices from contemporary curriculum development concepts. Systematically this article explores three pivotal aspects: educational foundation in Aceh, curriculum development in Indonesia, and an ideal curriculum of the Department of English Language Education, particularly in Aceh context.

Keywords: curriculum; curriculum development; English language teacher education; higher education

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum is a means to delineate the philosophy, objectives, teaching and learning materials, teaching and learning approach, and assessment of a specific educational program (McFadden & Roehrig, 2017). It is through the curriculum that an educational institution formulates the skills and experiences that students could master after accomplishing a certain study program. Students will be equipped with
particular skills that enable them to achieve their gleaming future and get involved with development process if curriculum is well developed and taught. However, it is not impossible that students will be powerless and unskillful if specific graduate attributes fail to be integrated in education curriculum. Hence, to empower students to reach their promising future, educational institutions should be able to develop their curriculum that enables students or learners to enhance their skills and competences, and implement such skills and experiences in real life.

In fact, curriculum development in Higher Education institutions (HEi) has multiple functions. The responsibility of ensuring that students obtain updated information regarding educational advancement is one of the tangible reasons. As such academic has an obligation to adapt to new circumstances including reviewing the programs offered to students, and priorities to be placed on the programs. Academic community also “has moral compulsion to discharge their fiduciary responsibility to students and community for developing and maintaining quality, current, and relevant curricula” (Kupperschmidt & Burns, 1997, p. 91). To meet the current educational and employment prospects and students’ needs, curriculum should be periodically assessed and developed.

At baseline the purposes of developing curriculum at academic level is to adjust with the institution missions and visions. In this sense, academic entails the need to become familiar with institutions’ missions and visions, and to understand the educational values adhered in the community where the educational institution is constructed. Therefore, academic community should ensure that the development of curriculum accommodates appropriate values generated from institution missions and visions, state mission, student’s needs, and employment orientation.

To this end, Barnett vigorously urged academic to contemplate the curriculum in the light of generating learners not only to have an ideology of academic “knowing-that”, but also “knowing-how” (Barnett, 1994). This enables them not only to know things, but also to do things. The application of these approaches into curriculum development does not mean that this reforms the traditional education purview, but this is to put new emphasis in the curriculum upon skills, competence, experimental and problem-based forms of learning (Nicholls, 1995). This paper attempts to answer the following main questions: (1) What is
Indonesian HEi curriculum? (2) What is the curriculum foundation of Aceh? and (3) What is an ideal curriculum of the Department of English Language Education of UIN Ar-Raniry?

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIA

In developing curricula, Indonesian HEi is required to refer to the Ministry of National Education Decree number 73, Year 2013 regarding the core curriculum. HEi should apply a Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia (KKNI) curriculum that empowers learners to have a specific skill after graduating from a university or a college. The KKNI curriculum is defined as a curriculum that emphasizes on a particular disciplinary study focus. Additionally, the study focus will forge learners to master such the skills to be able to handle certain tasks based on the focus of their study.

This regulation also legalizes the HEi throughout Indonesia to design and develop their curriculum in line with the missions of the HEi and the focus offered programs. Despite consenting HEi to freely develop their curriculum content, the department requires HEi to accommodate three basic competencies in their curriculum development. This is intended to provide a wide access to local authority both as the government and educational developers and practitioners to design educational curriculum that matches the local context. It means that curriculum should be developed based on the exclusiveness of local needs and strategies to empower students as an integral part of human empowerment based on particular condition and local geographic circumstances.

In this sense, the Department of English Language Education for instance should learn particular English courses as the core competence. Core courses consist of four English language skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. In addition, as the teacher students, they should also learn certain pedagogical courses as the supporting competence to be teachers. This includes teaching methodology, teaching evaluation, and curriculum analysis. Other additional competences emphasize on local values and traditions as well as the visions and missions of the institution. In this regard, UIN Ar-Raniry offers some elective Islamic courses that
students can choose to study as part of their courses. The courses are ranging from Islamic law to Quranic interpretation and recitation.

As stated in national strategic planning, the focuses of national educational empowerment rely on three conceptual frameworks; affective, cognitive, and psychomotor. The regulation affirms that affective domain should nurture learners’ competency in enhancing spiritual values, noble akhlak (moral) and other aesthetic values. The cognitive domain on the other hand should sharpen learners’ competency in empowering intellectual to master, develop, and apply specific knowledge and technology. Finally the psychomotor domain stresses on the ability of learners in term of specific technical skills acquisition, and kinesthetic competency.

All those values, indeed, ensure that students should have particular competence and should also behave as a noble person after they graduate from an educational institution. However, it seems that the regulation does not clearly illustrate the specific knowledge and graduate attributes that students should master. Therefore, educational institutions must be able to formulate the skills students should master in order for them to be able to expand their knowledge and experiences to be applied in their life. Nevertheless, to synchronize the basic concept of education across the country, educational institutions are expected to accommodate the above three conceptual frameworks.

Over the years to unite students in the distinct archipelago, the Indonesian government adopted the national curriculum based on the principles of Pancasila (Indonesian national philosophy). These principles emphasize on the belief in one god, human rights, national unity, democracy, and social justice (Kopong, 1995). This approach strongly influenced the development of curriculum throughout the nation.

The enactment of regional number 22/1999 regarding the empowerment of local government has significant influence on educational empowerment (Tilaar, 2002). This regulation shifted the state centripetal power to local actors and institutions (Bjork, 2006). Under the management of General Directorate Higher Education in Jakarta, HEi may develop their own curricula and course to adjust with the local conditions. This enables HEI to decide and assess the programs in the light of local needs and local contexts. As a result, HEi can develop various programs
and accommodate local values in developing their curricula. By accommodating the local needs, HEi can maximally empower its curriculum in providing life skills to its graduates.

“Dalam konteks otonomi, lebih baik lagi apabila pendidikan yang diselenggarakan lebih diarahkan ke potensi yang dimiliki oleh daerah dan dalam konteks kemandirian lokal” [In the context of autonomy, it is better that education is directed towards the potential of the region itself and in the context of local independence] (Tilaar, 2002, p. 228).

This regulation, in principal, provides a wide opportunity for all educational institutions throughout Indonesia to empower their own schools and people based on the heritage and culture of its community entities. By accommodating the local needs into a specific educational empowerment, it is expected that the local community will be well developed. Educational developers at local level may have sufficient knowledge in formulating the target of education for every individual and school. Through the implementation of this regulation, it is expected that the education quality throughout Indonesia can be empowered without facing any significant difference.

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION OF ACEH

The Aceh self-governed regulation (UUPA) stipulated in the national regulation number 11 of 2006 (Undang-Undang Pemerintah Aceh, 2006) that there is a special regulation on the Aceh government. The regulation affirms that Aceh has its self-governed government that enables the local government to develop and manage its own government policy. The regulation also includes provisions concerning political issues, human rights, rule of law, educational systems, and economic matters (Aspinal, 2005). Some politicians believe that this regulation is the result of political will from central government in Jakarta to hush the political flaming in Aceh regarding the potent demand of Acehnese for an independent state; Aceh vigorously wanted to get free from Indonesia.

Regarding the education, the regulation affirms that the foundation of Aceh’s education should be based on Islamic values, Quran and Sunnah, national state philosophy, national regulation 1945, and local culture (UUPA, 2006). However,
there is no specific information confirming detailed concept of those essences. As such, higher education institution (HEi) may interpret and apply those concepts loosely, depending on the visions and missions of respective institutions.

As Aceh region is inhabited by Muslim majority, Acehnese view education from Islamic perspective in which education is a form of worship (Qanun No. 23, 2002). Education in Islamic standpoint means “a lifelong learning process of preparing individuals to actualize their role as a Khalifah (vicegerent) of Allah on earth and thereby contributes fully to the reconstruction and development of their society in order to achieve well-being in this world and hereafter” (Hashim & Langgulung, 2008, p.1).

From Acehnese cultural perspective, education is the righteous media in empowering students’ personality as part of the process of forming Acehnese society at large to be civilized, and increasing their dignity (Qanun Aceh No. 5, 2008). Education should be an active vehicle to improve society’s welfare by means of transforming religious and science values into community lives. Therefore, HE should nurture students not only in scientific spheres, but more importantly in moral principles. Universities should play more visible roles in the educational, social and economic well-being of local communities (Jongbloed, Enders, & Salerno, 2008).

Graduates of universities are regarded as individuals who have certain competencies and they are professional in their fields. This is in accordance with the strategic planning of Aceh education in which it ensures that all secondary and higher education graduates are able to work in increasingly competitive global, regional, national and labour markets. Graduates should be well prepared to contribute to the development of social, economic, political and community life of Aceh (NAD strategic planning, 2007). If they are teachers, for instance, they should be able to teach students appropriately; they should be able to add values by being teachers. The added values can be tolerant, abiding by law, care towards others, generous, skillful in their study field, honest, trustworthy, and other social attributes.

To answer this need, it is imperative that the academic at this department work very seriously to integrate the Islamic teachings, which has sacral values for Acehnese, and general knowledge into a comprehensive format. It is well understood that the integration of knowledge is well accepted by most scholars.
throughout the world. There is no more knowledge segregation to be proposed to make a specific barrier between one specific knowledge concentration and other study fields. Students need to study Islamic religious teachings to strengthen their knowledge on religious values. Through these values, it is expected that students may have good moral to act and behave wherever they are.

Furthermore, from Acehnese cultural perspectives, it is believed that knowledge is a means to make people reach their happiness both in this world and there in hereafter. To reach this happiness, both Islamic knowledge and general knowledge should be studied and mastered by students. Department of English Language Education, a department that integrates Islamic teaching and general knowledge, must be able to answer this challenge. The department should be able to produce graduates who have good understanding on Islamic values as a core mission of Acehnese culture and Ar-Raniry Institute, and English skills as a core competence of the department.

Department of English Language Education as part of Islamic education institution must be able to play pivotal roles to fulfill the need of this expectation; to provide strong Islamic knowledge foundation and excellent English education knowledge for the students studying at this department. To reach this objective, there are various steps to be taken into serious consideration by all stakeholders at this department. Curriculum is part of it. The curriculum of this department should be able to provide students adequate life skills. It should also be able to produce graduates who have satisfactory Islamic knowledge to be good Muslim citizens.

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

According to Malgoire the “common purpose of general education is to provide students with fundamental basis of knowledge, skills, and experience that will enable them to thrive professionally, personally and as citizens” (Magloire, 2010, p. 24). Department of English Language Education of UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh is one of the departments under the management of Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan (Teacher Training Faculty). The primary objectives of the department are to educate students to be professionals in English language and to be professionals
English teachers, who will teach at junior and senior schools (Panduan Akademik Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, 2016).

Despite the department has proposed to implement the KKNI curriculum for students enrolling in academic year 2017/2018, the department still uses the former curriculum. The former department’s English Language Education curriculum states that to achieve a bachelor’s degree in English language and to be able to teach at senior and junior high schools throughout Aceh province, students should complete 144-160 credit hours. In shaping its graduate to be professional in English language, the department offers three course components; core competence comprises of English related subjects, supporting courses emphasize on pedagogical related courses, and elected courses focus on certain Islamic teaching values.

The compositions of these courses are recognized as the three basic elements of general education structures (Zeszotarski, 1999). The structures enable students to concentrate on the core coursework while they are free to select other courses that they may be interested in. However, it is essential to stipulate particular knowledge students should learn and how the performance is to be displayed (Biggs & Tang, 2007). If those courses are poorly designed, students may fail to develop their particular competence and the university itself cannot assure the quality of its graduate in this regard.

At the department, students are offered some core courses as well as optional courses. Students can select optional courses that meet their preferences. As a matter of fact, this concept provides students greater freedom of choice and enables courses to be constructed flexibly. Yet, most of the provided courses are often lack of coherence between the concept of teaching and learning, and how to improve students’ competence to be good Islamic citizens. In addition, when students are requested to study so many subjects, this can lead them to study a course at a superficial level. As a result, shallowness of learning and inadequate opportunity for students to grips with a specific knowledge discipline is unavoidable (Rowland, 2006).

Rowland illustrates that asking students to pick up some courses for the sake of their knowledge development interest is the same as we treat students as consumers in a supermarket. These students pick and mix their educational
commodities with little sense of continuation and development. To some extent, the intention of HE to offer some elective courses is worthwhile in which students may freely select the courses that match their interest. However, when students study only a few credit hours, they are studying at superficial level, their depth study is insufficient to enable them engage in critical approach and values of any particular scholarship.

An ideal content of curriculum for this department should accommodate a comprehensive concept how to teach students to be good citizens, namely the citizens who have strong Islamic faith as the primary values acknowledged by UUPA (Habiburrahim, Orrell, Conway, 2016). The department should reconceptualize some specific subjects in the light of UUPA and local culture mainstream. This concept does not mean to add more irrelevant subjects for students studying at the department, but some existing irrelevant subjects can be omitted, and then more appropriate subjects can be added. Apart from this specific academic metaphor, higher education students should be educated to be individuals having critical abilities to be a democratic society to enable them make changes in community lives.

Higher education should “both comply with the demands of disciplinary knowledge and also contest its assumptions and transgress its boundaries” (Rowland, 2006, p. 39). As candidate of teachers, students studying at the department should master necessary skills to acknowledge the practicality of teaching as core to the nature of their future career. Students then can apply this knowledge within professional development experiences for being qualified school teachers.

Barnett and Coat proclaim that within the scholarly context, any formal course at HE institutions should be able to be assessed in terms of its capacity to promote and develop knowing (dealing with teaching and learning), acting (applying the mastered knowledge into practice), and being (integrating the knowing and acting into oneself in order to contribute to the real world) (Barnett & Coate, 2005). This notion is acknowledged by Stein and Walker (2010) stating that HE curricula should support the development of learning and the application of knowledge in a variety of contexts and situations. Teaching and learning process should become an
integral part that may influence students’ thought and actions. Ultimately, this process brings positive implication toward students’ social lives and works.

In the contemporary workforce world, university graduates are required to master several practical important abilities. As such, curriculum developer at this department should be able to envisage this requirement. Self-directed learning, critical thinking and reasoning, finding and using appropriate learning resources, information and technology, teamwork, and leadership skills are part of the core skills that are highly demanded nowadays (Kwan, 2009). All these skills can be best acquired through IBL (inquiry-based learning), EBL (enquiry-based learning), and PBL (problem-based learning) learning approaches (Dickson, 2010).

Ramsden (2003, p. 141) reminds us that though the PBL approach is “more applicable in professional fields and discipline, the key to its use in all fields lies in its focus on realistic issues that bring together teaching, research, and practice”. Since the graduates of this department are trained to be professionals in English language, they should possess these skills to also work in non-pedagogy domain realms. Some of the graduates are actively involved in non-pedagogical world. They are serving as key players at private international companies such as Exxon Mobile, Chevron, and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) such as Oxfam, Islamic Relief, and International Relief Development. This is a part of prestige that has been recognized by people in Aceh, particularly those who graduated from the department. To more enhance the quality of education at this department, those mentioned skills should be part of curriculum content of the department of English Language Education.

Recent research conducted on students’ opinion on the department curriculum elucidates that students are not satisfied with the ongoing curriculum (Habiburrahim, 2017). Most of research participants claim that there are courses that overlap and are not interrelated. Regarding the Islamic courses, department should assess the current offered courses. Some of the courses are obscure in terms of content and focus. Even, some of the courses have different names but they have similar goals. Indeed, the department should be able to justify one course based on the needs and the objectives to be achieved after students learn such the course.

Students also expect that lecturers who handle the Islamic courses should be able to actively communicate in English. This means while lecturers transforming
their Islamic knowledge, they are actively communicating by using English as the recommended language of the department. This brings multiple advantages for students in which they can study English while they are learning Islamic values. If department has strong intention to implement students’ expectation, the department can assign lecturers who have adequate Islamic knowledge graduated from various overseas universities. If the department does not have sufficient lecturers who have good Islamic knowledge on Islamic substances, it should find others who have both skills in English and religious knowledge.

In accordance with the general knowledge, students claim that the department does not offer updated life oriented-skills that students can acquire. For instance, those who want to be translators should be provided extra hours and courses on being able to empower their competence to be translators. In this regard, students also expect that the department should foster a strong collaboration with other institutions that may bring mutual benefit. The department should have initiate cooperation with both government and non-government organizations which in the end may use services of students from the Department of English Language Education. For example, those who want to deepen their life skills on translation can do some internship programs with English course institutions that have translation project, or those who want to be English writers can do some internship programs with English magazine or newspaper agencies.

The curriculum of the department should also encourage students to learn practical knowledge. Students after having adequate knowledge on theoretical aspects should implement them into a real practice. This can be done by recommending students to do some practical works after taking a particular course. A literature course for instance should stress on empowering students to be able to produce a drama or other entertainment programs. When students have this skill, they may have another non pedagogical competence to play. And there is no doubt that this will open positive employment prospects for students.

In terms of ICT, the department should incorporate communication and computer skills into its curriculum. Students have to be trained to master enough communication skills that may help them to mingle with different background and ethnicity of people working in an organization. Students should be trained to master
interpersonal skills to be able to successfully adapt with various organizational cultures. Computer skills in addition should be part of integral competences that students should master. To this end, the department should be more aware of integrating computer skills into its curriculum. Students are expected to be able to have at least basic skills in drawing and calculating. This may include skills to operate common use of Microsoft Offices. It is arguable that computer skills have become critical values for those seeking job nowadays. All those things will be true, and increasingly true, as far ahead as anyone can see.

CONCLUSION

Curriculum plays a critical role in equipping students to have practical skills and competencies after studying at an educational institution. To provide updated information and skills that match the current employment markets, educational developers assert that curriculum should periodically be assessed and developed. As a state Islamic university, UIN Ar-Raniry through its faculty and department could integrate Islamic and general education into one educational concept. This enables students studying general education to also study some Islamic courses to strengthen their religious understanding.

The Department of English Language Education of UIN Ar-Raniry is responsible for preparing its graduates to master adequate knowledge both in English and Islamic field. Therefore, the department must be able to integrate its curriculum that matches the needs of students and the expectation of Acehnese educational values. To widely open employment prospects for its graduates, in addition, the department should also foster a strong cooperation with various institutions in order for students to have opportunities to do internship programs. Finally, ICT, interpersonal skills, problem solving skills, and communication skills as part of bachelor’s generic skills should be incorporated into the department curriculum.

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PODCAST: An alternative way to improve EFL students’ listening and speaking performance

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*Manuscript received November 12, 2018, revised December 29, 2018, first published December 30, 2018, and available online January 12, 2019. DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/ej.v6i1.3805](http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/ej.v6i1.3805)*

**ABSTRACT**

This article aims to view the impacts of using podcast in improving listening and speaking performance. As there is a trend of using ICT in language teaching, the authors intend to discuss about the media that can be used in enhancing students’ ability in listening skill and speaking performance. The authors collected the information related to the topic of this article from several sources such as, books, journals, articles, and previous studies. From these sources, it can be concluded that podcast can bring many benefits in teaching listening and speaking for EFL learners.

**Keywords:** podcast; listening comprehension; speaking performance

**INTRODUCTION**

In developing countries, such as Indonesia, English is considered as a foreign language (Kachru, 1992), which is a compulsory subject to learn, especially in Indonesian secondary schools. This means that Indonesian students have limited exposure to English as they only have English in formal setting, as English is not normally used outside the classroom. Consequently, the students’ English performance is still considered low and needs improvement (Mulyadi, 2011). This is in accordance with the previous study by Sawir (2005) who claims that most
international students from Asia, including Indonesia, had listening and speaking difficulty due to the fact that they were not well-prepared with those skills in their secondary schools. In fact, the students’ listening skill should be one of the focus skills to acquire in order to improve their students’ speaking skill (Hasan & Hoon, 2012; Weiler, 2012). Thus, the secondary school English teachers should consider employing podcast as one of the possible alternative to overcome this issue as suggested by Rosell-Aguilar (2007). Podcasting (the combination of the word iPod and broadcasting) is an asynchronous CMC (Computer Mediated Communication), which contains audio/video that are published on the Internet and updated in a regular interval (Stanley, 2006).

The advantages of using podcast in language learning—particularly to assist the students in listening and speaking skill—have been researched, and the results show increase in the students’ listening and speaking performance (Stanley, 2006; O’Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007; Rosell-Aguilar, 2007; Lord, 2008; Knight, 2010; Ashraf, Noroozi & Salami, 2011; Istanto, 2011; Hasan & Hoon, 2012, 2013; Al-Fadda & Al-Qasim, 2013). In addition, some other studies also found that the students’ motivation and positive attitude towards language learning increased when podcast was used to support the learning process (O’Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007; Rosell-Aguilar, 2007; Ducate & Lomicka, 2009; Ashraf et al., 2011; Hasan & Hoon 2012; Al-Fadda & Al-Qasim, 2013). Moreover, an experimental study with Iranian EFL students also revealed that the students who used podcast had higher listening comprehension score and higher learning motivation, compared to those who did not (Shiri, 2015). Shiri (2015) further explained the interview result in which the students considered podcast as being an important learning tool to support their listening and speaking performance. These previous research results obviously support the use of podcast in language learning. Therefore, in this article, we firstly elaborated four main reasons of why podcast could help improve Indonesian secondary school students’ listening and speaking performance. Additionally, we also discussed some important consideration in employing podcast as a learning tool with TPACK framework. Finally, we highlighted some possible challenges in integrating podcast into language classrooms in Indonesia.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Using Podcast in Teaching Listening and Speaking

In this digital era, the influence of ICT in language teaching is undeniable. Teachers can easily obtain the teaching material from various sources. Varied teaching media that can be enabled in language teaching are also developed recently. Podcast is one of the media that is currently discussed today. According to Jordan (2007) as cited in Bustari, Samad & Ahmad (2017, p. 97) “the term podcast is a combination between the words pod (i.e., from the brand name iPod) and broadcast." Related to the definition above, podcast can be categorized one of the media that can be implemented in teaching and learning process especially teaching English.

Listening and Speaking are two interrelated skills. Speaking is indeed a vital skill in communication that needs to be taught. However, it is also important to teach listening skills and ensure that they can listen effectively and critically. Listening is considered profound in the development of speaking since it provides input that can promote speaking (Ramli & Kurniawan, 2017). Furthermore in order to get a better comprehension in listening, we also have to consider some components of speaking (Fitch-Hauser, Powers, O’Brien, & Hanson, 2007; Richards, 2008). Usually when teachers want to teach listening to their students, they also include speaking in it. Consequently, they have to find the media which are appropriate to be applied in both skills. Particularly, podcast is one of the media which is considered can deal with both skills.

Specifically speaking, curriculum changes periodically in Indonesia. Several years ago, the objective of teaching English to the EFL’ learners emphasized on receptive skill only, but now it has changed as the new trends of teaching rose in language teaching. To obtain the synergy, the new trends of language teaching tools also need to be utilized; one good tool is the podcast.

One of the skills in English that is considered difficult to be learnt for EFL learners in Indonesia is listening since it needs listeners’ focus and concentration. Ahmed (2016) in her study found that implementing podcasts in language teaching
Podcast: An alternative way to improve EFL students’ listening and speaking performance

Podcast can assist learners to have a good understanding about the content and to develop their ability in listening comprehension. Further, speaking is one of the productive skills that is widely learnt in Indonesia. Someone is considered to be able to speak in English when she/he is able to communicate fluently in English (Richards, 2008). Henceforth, teachers have to implement various methods in teaching speaking in order to make students able to speak English well. Besides providing suitable methods, teaching media also play an important role in teaching and learning process (Smaldino, Lowther, Russell, & Mims, 2008). Particularly in this article, the use of podcast is pondered to be useful in both listening and speaking as it can also provide ample classroom activities (Sze, 2006). In short, related to the explanation above, podcast is considered as the appropriate media that can be used in teaching speaking.

A number of previous studies have been conducted on this topic. Edisitingha (2007) as cited from Fitria, Vianty & Petrus (2015) found that Podcasts can ease students to practice listening. Besides, it also helps them to enhance their speaking performance. Then Baehaqi (2014) claims that using podcast in language teaching classroom can engage learners’ motivation to be involved in the activities provided. Furthermore, Ramli and Kurniawan (2017) proved that podcast can bring many interesting topics that pose a lot of language inputs to students.

Discussion

There are some rationales why podcast can be used in order to improve the students’ English listening and speaking performance. The first reason of why podcast could help Indonesian students enhance their listening and speaking skill is the fact that podcast enables students to be exposed to authentic language use of English. This is, particularly, because the materials in podcast cover a wide range of topics with real life speech and are generally prepared by native speakers (Thorne & Payne, 2005; Stanley, 2005; Rosell-Aguilar, 2007; Hasan & Hoon, 2013). For example, from the authentic podcast materials, the students can listen to everyday conversations in the real life situation, familiarise themselves with English pronunciation and practice their listening as well as speaking skill. The exposure to
the authentic materials is unquestionably important to provide a meaningful language learning experience (Brown, 2007), especially in Indonesia, where the students have limited experience in real life communication outside the classroom (Hapsari & Ratri, 2014). This meaningful learning experience will further increase their engagement and motivation to learn English and improve their listening and speaking performance, as explained by O’Bryan and Hegelheimer (2007). Then, Fata and Ismail (2017) conform to the fact that media exposure such as internet, webpages, English songs, English movies, and English TV shows has numerous contribution in language learning process for Indonesian students. This is also in line with Hasan and Hoon (2012) who claimed that 87% students enjoyed using podcast as it was an interesting way to learn English and the students also admitted the role of podcast in improving their listening skill.

The second underlying reason is that podcast could encourage self-regulated learning outside classroom. The facts that, first, there are a large number of students at Indonesian secondary schools (around 35 students per class) (OECD, 2012); and second, that there is a limited time allocated to learn English in class, contribute to the students’ poor listening and speaking performance. Therefore, the English teachers should motivate students to be able to learn English independently by using podcasts, particularly outside the classroom (McCarty, 2005; Thorne & Payne, 2005; O’Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007). The convenience that podcast offers, such as 24/7 accessibility, automaticity, simplicity and portability, allows students to listen to English language repeatedly at almost anytime and anywhere (Lee & Chan, 2006, 2007; Jowitt, 2008; Abdous, Camarena & Facer, 2009; Ashraf et al., 2011; Hasan & Hoon, 2013). For example, students can practice their listening through podcast materials that have been downloaded to their personal computer, mp3 players, or iPods in their spare time at home. This self-regulated listening activity will likely result in English improvement, particularly because the students are responsible and have control over their own learning in terms of choosing what, when, and where to listen from the podcasts (Lee & Chan, 2007; Istanto, 2011). Since students can choose which content they want to listen, the students’ motivation can also incline as they can integrate their interests into the learning process (Dornyei, 2001).
This self-regulated learning is also essential to develop students’ autonomy, which will further improve their language learning performance (Brown, 2007; Al-Fadda & Al-Qasim, 2013).

The third reason is that podcasts could help increase students’ confidence in listening and speaking skill. The fact that Indonesian students have lack of confidence in listening and speaking skill is also confirmed by Juhana’s (2012) study about psychological factors. She clarified that low confidence impede Indonesian students from speaking English. Using available podcast material independently and producing podcast talk through collaborative learning are two possible podcast activities that can enhance students’ confidence in listening and speaking skill (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). For instance, when listening to podcast independently, students can comfortably learn English without being afraid to be judged by their teacher or peers, as clarified by Knight (2010). In addition, the activity of creating podcast in a small group work could also help less confident students to feel more prepared and supported, as they will collaboratively work together to rehearse the talk before they publish it (Chan & Lee, 2005; Lee & Chan, 2006, 2007; Sze, 2006; Lord, 2008; Knight, 2010). This activity will further result in the increase in students’ motivation as well as the improvement in students’ speaking skill, particularly for less confident students.

The final reason is the fact that podcast could encourage active learning. This is in accordance with Stanley (2006) who believes that when the podcast content is successfully chosen (by the teacher/students), the active class discussion can be encouraged. Besides, Rosell-Aguilar (2007) recommends producing podcast as an effective group work activity, particularly because it will engage students in practicing their speaking skill. The most engaging part of activity in creating podcast materials is the community building (Lord, 2008; Al-Fadda & Al-Qasim, 2013); not only when the students work collaboratively in group to produce the podcast, but also when the podcast is published, in which the students will have real audience around the world, listening to their talks (Stanley, 2006). Stanley (2006) further suggests English teacher to get involved in an inter-school podcast project that allow to exchange the podcast talk as well as comment and respond to each other (as
asynchronous activity). Additionally, the combination of podcast and Skype will serve as another possible follow-up synchronous activity that the teacher could employ. In this manner, the students could have a face-to-face (online) language interaction through Skype (Stanley, 2006). The active learning activities will finally increase the students’ motivation and English performance, particularly in listening and speaking skill.

Even though integrating podcasts in language learning has been claimed to benefit the students in improving their English skill (Abdous et al., 2009; Kim & King, 2011; Hasan & Hoon, 2013), it is important to remember that in order to integrate podcast into the process of teaching and learning listening and speaking skill effectively, the teacher should apply TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) as the teaching framework, as suggested by Koehler & Mishra (2009). This teaching framework has covered necessary knowledge that the teachers should have before conducting the process of teaching and learning with technology. In terms of pedagogical and content knowledge, the English teachers should consider the appropriateness of materials and classroom tasks, including the follow-up activity to actively engage the students in the learning process and successfully achieve the set learning goals. This is in line with Rosell-Aguilar (2007) who urges teachers to use their creativity in selecting the podcasts materials to meet the purpose of learning in order to help students develop their listening and speaking skill effectively. For example, in integrating the use of podcast into the language learning process, it is important to remember that Indonesian students have different level of English proficiency, so that task differentiation is needed. Therefore, English teachers could assign more advanced students to listen to podcast materials that are more authentic (a normal speech conversation with more informal language use/everyday vocabulary); while low level students could listen to a specifically designed podcast materials with a slower speech to help them get used to English pronunciation and learn the listening and speaking skill (Sze, 2006; Rosell-Aguilar, 2007; Chan, Chi, Chin, & Lin, 2011). In addition to the pedagogical and content knowledge, Shiri (2015) also highlights the importance of technological knowledge, particularly on how to access (subscribe and download) the podcast materials and how to make the
Podcast: An alternative way to improve EFL students’ listening and speaking performance

effective use of the tool. To have this technological knowledge, the teacher can learn from relevant teacher training (Koehler & Mishra, 2009) or from their peers. The teacher should then ensure that students are also aware on how to access podcasts before having the students to learn with it (Hasan & Hoon, 2012, Abdous et al., 2009). This technological knowledge is important for both teacher and students to receive maximum benefits of podcast in supporting language-learning process, as highlighted by Istanto (2011).

Nevertheless, there are several possible challenges, including the Internet problem (Hur & Suh, 2012) and insufficient technological devices, which might obstruct the use of podcast in Indonesian teaching and learning context. In terms of Internet connection problem, the teachers could either download the podcast content into CDs/mp3 players to be presented as teaching and learning resources in the classroom, as recommended by Stanley (2006) or suggest the school to provide better Internet connection. Meanwhile, for the lack of technological devices problem, the teachers should manage to allow all students to get access to podcasts equally by having the students to use the device interchangeably or by encouraging the schools to provide borrowed portable device, such as iPods to assist the process of teaching and learning foreign language (McCarty, 2005). The later solution, of course, will take time. However, we believe that it is possible to do, particularly with the support of all stakeholders.

Conclusion

In conclusion, podcast is an effective teaching tool to enhance the Indonesian students’ speaking and listening skill since it can provide access to authentic materials, support self-regulated learning, increase language confidence as well as create active learning. However, in order to integrate the use of podcast effectively into the language classroom, the teacher should consider TPACK framework and should be aware of the possible obstacles. More studies, particularly in Indonesian context, are required to find out more about the effective use of podcast in the process of teaching and learning English, particularly the listening
and speaking skill. Additionally, it is also important to bear in mind that podcast is only a medium to support, but not to replace the teaching and learning process.

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DEVELOPING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF INDONESIAN EFL LEARNERS THROUGH TEACHING SPEECH ACTS OF ORAL AND WRITTEN COMPLAINTS

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Manuscript received June 13, 2018, revised December 29, 2018, first published December 30, 2018, and available online January 12, 2019. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/ej.v6i1.3167

ABSTRACT

The lack of pragmatic competence could result in unexpected effects on the speakers; for example, the speakers are considered as rude and aggressive people. Accordingly, developing pragmatic competence for EFL learners should be a great concern. This article is aimed to fill in the needs of pragmatic teaching by providing examples of teaching practices that could be used to develop EFL learners’ pragmatic competence. There are two tasks that have been designed by drawing on discourse processing framework proposed by Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) to achieve the production of both written and spoken discourses. The first task is on speaking, particularly on the speech act of oral complaints. The second task is on writing a letter of complaint. This article suggests that developing pragmatic awareness through the speech act of oral and written complaints is desirable.

Keywords: pragmatic competence; pragmatic awareness; speech acts; complaints; Indonesian EFL learners

INTRODUCTION

A relatively recent research in Indonesian EFL learners’ complaining behaviors shows that status levels and social distance between interlocutors led different frequencies and strategies of impoliteness, such as bald-on record, negative and positive impoliteness (Wijayanto, Prasetyarini & Hikmat, 2017). Furthermore,
the researchers argue that the frequent use of impolite complaints was influenced by several factors, such as the low level of learners’ understanding about the speech acts, their perceptions on the social distance and status level of interlocutors, intensity of social situations in the Oral Discourse Completion Tasks (ODCTs), their pragmatic competence, and the nature of research instrument. In other words, socio-cultural knowledge plays an important role in influencing people to use language for communication appropriately.

The above-mentioned idea is confirmed by the concept of discourse processing framework proposed by Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), asserting that speakers not only need linguistic knowledge, for example, grammar, syntax, and phonology but also knowledge of sociocultural rules, knowledge of presupposition and context, and discourse knowledge. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain further add that the inability to fulfil the aforementioned knowledge could lead to wrong production of spoken discourse (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). In the same token, the production of written discourse is also influenced by the language knowledge, discourse knowledge of writing conventions, prior knowledge and writing experience (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). Referring to Celce-Murcia and Olshtain’s (2000) discourse processing framework, pragmatic competence results from such processes as the top-down processing of prior knowledge and experience; discourse knowledge; sociocultural knowledge; and assessment of context, purpose, and interaction. Thus, pragmatic competence here plays important role in interpreting and producing discourse.

By obtaining pragmatic competence, EFL learners can communicate effectively and culturally in appropriate ways. Conversely, the lack of pragmatic competence could result in unexpected effects on the speakers; for example, the speakers are considered as rude and aggressive people. Accordingly, developing pragmatic competence for EFL learners should be a great concern. Firstly, research studies on pragmatic area show that Indonesian teachers of English and learners lack pragmatic competence so that they need to be given many opportunities to develop their pragmatic competence (Aridah, 2001). Secondly, the acquisition of
pragmatic competence takes much time. According to Olsthain and Blum-Kulka (1985):

“If there is no formal instruction of pragmatics, learners may take an extended period of time—typically over 10 years—to acquire native-like pragmatic ability, even in second language setting where learners are exposed to the target language on a daily basis” (as cited in Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 201).

Finally, the empirical research conducted by Wijayanto et al. (2017) suggest that without obtaining pragmatic instruction, the EFL learners tend to adopt impolite complaints. Therefore, EFL instruction needs to incorporate pragmatic competence in its curriculum. It is because if learners fail to meet pragmatic competence may lead to unsuccessful communication. Therefore, this article is aimed to fill the needs of pragmatic teaching by providing examples of teaching practices that could potentially develop learners' pragmatic competence. There are two tasks that have been designed by drawing on discourse processing framework proposed by Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) to achieve the production of both written and spoken discourses. The first task is on speaking, particularly on the speech act of oral complaints. The second task is on writing a letter of complaint.

TEACHING CONTEXTS

Before explaining both tasks, the target audience of these tasks needs to be explained. The target audience of this lesson is Indonesian senior high school students in year 12. Based on the result of the English proficiency test, the level of students' English proficiency is heterogeneous; some of them are already at the intermediate level, but the others are at the beginner level. The age of the students ranges from 17-19 years, and the class consists of around 40 to 50 students. In English class, the students learn four macro skills, including reading, speaking, writing and listening. They also learn speech acts, such as complaining, requesting, apologizing, and so forth. Based on the syllabus, the speech act of complaints is included in grade 12, therefore, this article focuses on spoken and written complaints. According to my experience in teaching English for senior high school students, they express the speech act of complaining directly to the point of the
complaints and there are no sets of strategy as exemplified by Murphy and Neu (1996) as cited in Hilliard (2017, p. 3), including (1) initiation and explanation of purpose, (2) a complaint, (3) justification, and (4) a request. Therefore, in these speaking tasks, these strategies are illuminated.

**Task 1: Speaking task**

This task is designed to achieve the purpose of producing a socially appropriate spoken discourse in the form of oral complaining in English. Since there are several differences in the norms both in first language (L1) and second/foreign language (L2), this task is aimed to promote learners’ awareness about the differences by taking into account some components of discourse processing framework, such as the socio-cultural knowledge, discourse knowledge, assessment of context and intention. Additionally, pragmalinguistics aspect is another consideration which includes the knowledge of vocabulary, phrasal chunks and the grammar of complaining. In this task, there are several activities which I adapted from Hilliard (2017). The explanation of the speaking task is as follows.

**Activity 1: Discussion of the speech act of complaining.**

In this activity, students discussed questions for complaining. The questions are adapted from Hillard (2017). The questions include (1) what is the complaints? what are some situations in which you might complain to someone? (2) what do people say to express a complaint your first language? how is it different from what people say to express complaint in English? (3) is it common to complain about bad service in your country? is it common to complain to a parent, a boss, or a teacher? why or why not? (4) would you complain differently to a friend, a server, and a teacher? why or why not?

**Activity 2: Developing pragma-linguistics through vocabulary**

In this activity, students will review and practice the grammar, vocabulary, and phrasal chunk of complaining. This activity is following the discourse processing framework from the bottom-up processing for student linguistic knowledge, particularly about complaints, is activated. Students are introduced with the examples of grammar, vocabulary, and phrasal chunks of oral complaining. The table of useful language for the complaints speech act is attached in Appendix 1.
**Activity 3: Role play and discussion**

In this task students have role-play based on a variety of context and social setting, including the situation that varies their social status and that of the interlocutor, for example, the same status, a higher status, and lower status. After having role play, the teacher may lead a discussion of the students’ word choice, complaint style, and reaction to their partner. The scenario of the role play can be seen in appendix 2.

**Rationales of the Speaking Task**

The rationale for designing a speaking task by employing the framework of discourse processing is clear. Firstly, to achieve appropriate discourse students need to be exposed to the sociocultural knowledge, the context and the intention of the speaker. When people communicate with people from different countries, there will be different sociocultural norms of the language. For example, in complaining, Javanese learners of English frequently use rhetorical questions without incorporating hedges to mitigate them (Pratiwi, 2013). Japanese learners of English rarely employ softener to mitigate their complaints (Rimer & Iwa, 2002 as cited in Wijayanto et al. 2017). By discussing questions in the activity 1, students become aware of the different way in expressing complaints in L1 and L2; thus, students can complain appropriately and misunderstanding could be prevented.

Activity 2 is designed to provide students with formulaic competence as it is one of the components of communicative competence developed by Celce-Murcia (2007). This component including the knowledge of microlevel language including the phrasal chunks of L2 that cannot be translated in L1. Referring to discourse processing framework (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000), language knowledge is needed because this knowledge leads to production of spoken discourse from the bottom-up activation as the companion of top-down processing. Additionally, having pragmalinguistics competence could help students to express complaints politely. Conversely, incapability of selecting appropriate pragmalinguistic forms cause many Korean EFL learners of English to produce aggressive complaints (Murphy & Neu, 1996 as cited in Wijayanto et al., 2017, p. 2). Furthermore, gaining the expertise of realisation strategies of speech act, a range of functions and
some target culture-specific is as one of the principles in developing pragmatic awareness (Limberg, 2015).

Activity 3 in this speaking task is undertaken to make students be familiar with a variety of situation and context of complaining. By practicing many different scenarios of complaining students could reach the approximate native-speaker pragmatic competence although the ultimate purpose of developing pragmatic awareness is not native-like pragmatic competence. This activity is also aimed to train students to express complaints spontaneously. In other words, the fluency of expressing complaints is the targeted goal of this activity.

**Task 2: Writing a letter of complaints**

This writing task I adapted from my teaching practice in senior high school in Indonesia. This task is aimed to raise students’ critical thinking and awareness about social problems in society. The outcome of this task is the ability to write a complaint letter for the newspaper or social media platforms like Facebook or Twitter. This writing task is based on the genre-text writing process, including several stages: building knowledge of the text, modelling of the text, joint construction of the text, and independent construction of the text (Setyowati & Widiati, 2014). Generally, genre-based writing is used to teach writing text such as narrative, descriptive, recount, exposition. However, it is also possible to be implemented in the functional text, such as a complaint letter.

In this task, there are several activities that follow the stages of genre-based writing. In the first of building knowledge of the text, students discuss some social issues. Since the topic of this lesson is writing a complaint letter, students are led to observe some disappointing experiences in receiving public services. For example, the problem of the uncertainty of the public transport schedule. Another issue that can be discussed is the problem of establishing cement in Kendeng Mountain, Central Java-Indonesia. The establishment of this factory could result in some environmental problems. By discussing this problem, students could write a complaint letter and submit to the newspaper to ask for the response from the government.
In the stage of modelling of the text, students are exposed to a different variety of complaint letter, and they compare the complaining strategies, which are used in the text. They could also identify the social distance and the level of status of the addressee and these influences the different style of the complaint letter, whether there is a difference between oral and written complaint. In the stage of joint construction of the text, students and teacher work together to write a complaint letter. The teacher begins this stage with brainstorming, outlining, drafting, editing and revising. The participation of the students in this activity is encouraged. In the last stage, students are instructed to write a complaint letter based on the topics that have been discussed in the first stage and teacher promote students to submit the letter in the newspaper or the social media platforms belongs to the government.

The writing task that I have developed reflects the written text production framework (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000), where the interactive strategy of bottom-up and top-down occur. The genre-based writing also follows the written discourse framework. The stage of building knowledge of the text is in line with the top-down process of Celce-Murcia and Olshtain’s (2000) discourse processing framework. The objective of employing building knowledge is salient. When students have been familiar with the knowledge of the field or the content, they will have the inspiration to write. However, only the knowledge of subject matter is not enough, if there is no model or genre of the writing. Therefore, modelling of the text needs to be undertaken to understand the writing convention. Furthermore, the process joint construction enables student and teachers to identify the intention of the writer and the target audience. Therefore, when students write a complaint letter, they could use the appropriate language because writing complaint letter does not necessarily use rude language allowed.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, even though the focus of this article is on the developing of pragmatic awareness, the discourse competences could also be improved. This is because pragmatic awareness is part of the discourse competence. According to the model of communicative competence proposed by Celce-Murcia (2007), discourse
competence is the centre of the other competencies, including linguistic competence, interactional competence, sociocultural competence, and formulaic competence. Regarding the tasks, several activities both in speaking and writing tasks reflect the principles of processing discourse framework which is adapted to language skills. The interaction of top-down and bottom-up process is also implemented in both tasks aimed to achieve production of spoken and written discourse. The employment of genre-based writing in task 2 also supports the discourse processing framework proposed by Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000).

REFERENCES
TEACHING READING THROUGH KNOW-WANT-LEARNED (KWL) STRATEGY: The effects and benefits

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Manuscript received October 22, 2018, revised October 29, 2018, first published November 30, 2018, and available online January 12, 2019. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/ej.v6i1.3607

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to chart out the effects of teaching reading using Know-Want-Learned (KWL) strategy of Blachowicz and Ogle. This study employed quantitative method by having one pre-test and posttest research design, conducted at SMPN 2 Kejuruan Muda, Aceh Tamiang District, with a total sample of 26 students. The test was analyzed by using t-test. The study revealed that there was an improvement from the pre-test to the posttest and that the teacher had implemented KWL strategy accordingly so that the students improved their reading comprehension skill. In addition, KWL is one of the basic strategies developed to know the extent of learners’ ability and the way they commit it on their own. Thus, the strategy itself has an effect to trigger the students to be autonomous learners. However, it is suggested that the teachers modify some steps in the KWL procedures to eventually motivate the students in learning reading.

Keywords: reading; effects; benefits; KWL strategy
INTRODUCTION

Commonly, students’ difficulty in reading comprehension mostly lies on the students’ weakness to grasp information from a text. The students usually only read the text word by word without understanding the meaning. A skilled reader, however, not only focuses on each word of the text but also its meaning (Zare & Othman, 2013) since the main purpose of reading is to sharpen the understanding (Youniss, 2013). Many students are good in reading but when asked about the summary of the text, they fail to do so. In other words, comprehension refers to a readers’ capability to fully know what they have read. West and Chew (2014) reaffirm that people who love reading become a good reader, which leads them to have more chance to success in the education field and others. Conversely, people who dislike reading will fail to acquire a habit of literacy, causing a difficulty in sharpening the skills and chance to success in the education field. Teachers carry on the important task to help learners develop ways to engage actively with both of the author and the text and to think about the content. KWL is one of the basic strategies developed to guide the learners’ reading ability and the way they commit it on their own.

Assessment of reading comprehension (Klingner, Vaughn, & Boardman, 2007) is full of challenges due to the problem in determining how far a student actually know and think. There are two forms of reading assessment. The first is to investigate how well a student is reading while the second is to evaluate how much improvement the student has made (Pang, Muaka, Bernhardt, & Kamil, 2003). Both forms of assessments are necessary in order to achieve effective reading instruction. The assessment for beginners is usually conducted by checking out the student’s reading aloud. In this way, the teacher assesses the student’s fluency and word recognition. Beyond this level, assessment concerns on text comprehension.

Assessment occupies the crucial position n to analyze the students’ ability and also to evaluate their potential in learning. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) mention that a test has several objectives including to diagnose the students’ strengths, weaknesses, and difficulties; to assess the students’ achievement; to assess the students’ aptitude and potential; and to analyze the students’ readiness for a
plan. In this present study, the test aimed to assess the students’ reading ability, which was administered in a multiple-choice format.

There are many different techniques for developing reading comprehension. Reading comprehension depends upon the readers’ ability to connect prior knowledge with the text. This concept is strengthened by Klingner et al. (2007) that reading comprehension is a number of complicated process which causes the feedback interaction between readers and the text, which is between readers’ experiences and background knowledge towards thoughts or ideas which the author implied until reaching a boundary of understanding. As stated by Blachowicz and Ogle (2008), KWL is an activity in which the teacher leads active readers to engage with reading texts. The activity processes any information and knowledge that the students possess in order to help their friends in a group to establish a good learning condition and to communicate the results of their reading. In other words, this strategy stimulates the students to activate their prior knowledge when reading. They also become active readers who analyze texts in three steps, starting with K table (what they know), then W table (what they want to learn more), and end with L table (what they have learned). Thus, to promote reading comprehending, this study tried to implement Know, Want to Know, Learned (KWL) strategy to further the students’ reading ability. The question posed in the study was: “How does KWL strategy improve the students’ reading comprehension?”

**METHODOLOGY**

This study employed the experimental research with one pre-test and post-test design (Creswell, 2008), conducted at SMPN (public junior high school) 2 Kejuruan Muda, Aceh Tamiang District. The population was the second year students of SMPN 2 Kejuruan Muda consisting of 180 students from six classes. The sample was one second-year class of 26 students, taken by the random sampling technique. The alternative hypothesis (Hₐ) of the study was: “There is a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores after applying KWL strategy in reading comprehension.” The hypothesis was tested by using t-test formula.
The instrument of data collection was a reading test comprised 20 multiple choice items, for pre-test and posttest. The reading material used was a descriptive text. Pre-test was administered to figure out the background of the students’ ability in reading comprehension before applying the KWL strategy. After the pre-test, the descriptive text was taught to the students by practicing the steps of Know, Want, and Learned (KWL) Strategy. The social functions of a descriptive text were explained to the students in order to allow the students to understand the usefulness of the descriptive text in daily life. Afterwards, the structure of the text was also introduced so that the students had a clear idea about identification and description.

During the experiment, the students were also taught to deal with language features of the descriptive text, such as using present tense, focusing on specific participants, and using adjectives and verbs. In the last meeting, they were given an example of the descriptive text with some simple questions based on the text. They were asked to understand the meaning of the text given and to distinguish between paragraph of identification and paragraph of description. In addition, they were asked to directly mention the adjectives, adverbs, and sentences of simple present tense.

After the students had been taught with the descriptive text, they learned about the KWL worksheet and how to use it in the reading activity. The step Know (K) refers to what students know about topic, which was done before the students began to read. In this step, the students wrote down the words or phrases that they already knew related to the topic. The more things they knew, the better chance for them to comprehend the content of the text given. Next, the step Want (W) means what students want to learn more about the topic. In this step, the students made a list of questions about what they expected to learn in the topic during the reading activity. If they were curious about something related to the topic, they were supposed to write down the question. Here, the students were engaged in critical thinking on the text material that they had. By thinking critically, many questions could emerge in their minds. The last step Learned (L) indicates what students have learned. In this step, they paraphrased the important information, such as surprising
or interesting ideas obtained from the text (Wiesendanger, 2001). Then, they checked the ideas against those in the W column. The L step occurred after the students had finished their reading. They practiced the KWL strategy for three meetings. The post-test was provided at the end of the experiment, aimed to measure the students’ ability in reading comprehension after the use of KWL strategy.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The results obtained in the pre-test are illustrated in the following chart.

Chart 1. Students’ Pre-test Scores

Chart 1 above shows that the students’ pretest score before the treatment ranged from 30 to 95. It can be seen that the highest score was 95 while the lowest score was 30. Out of 26 students, only four students passed the minimum completion criteria (KKM) of 72, whereas the majority had lower scores.

Chart 2. Students’ Post-test Scores
Chart 2 depicts the students’ scores in posttest after the treatment, ranging from 40 to 90. In this test, the highest score was 90 while the lowest score was 40. Here, the number of students who passed KKM score increased considerably to 13 students.

The following table below was the results of hypothesis testing. It was found that sig. (2-tailed) was lower than the significance level (0.05), which was 0.010<0.05. Hence, \( H_0 \) was rejected and \( H_a \) was accepted, indicating that the application of the KWL strategy was effective in increasing the students’ achievement in reading comprehension skill.

Table 1. Statistic results of hypothesis testing

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
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<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
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</thead>
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<td>15.02946</td>
<td>2.94752</td>
<td>-14.33976 -2.19870</td>
<td>-2.805</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.010</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The result of the analysis affirmed that the KWL (Know, Want, and Learned) strategy is one of the appropriate ways that helps students who has a weakness in comprehending the reading materials, making the students be able to discover the main ideas, surprising ideas, and interesting/important information after the reading activity has been done (Blachowicz & Ogle, 2008). In general, this strategy assists the students to become more effective readers of certain texts, i.e. expository, descriptive, and narrative texts (Fengjuan, 2010). Moreover, it also helps the teachers to be more interactive in their teaching class (Blachowicz & Ogle, 2008). Corner (2006) as cited in Fengjuan (2010) also adds that the KWL strategy guides the learners to set a specific aim for reading and write down what they learned.

As stated by Blachowicz and Ogle (2008), the process in the KWL reading activity allows for reading engagement for the readers. Thus, this strategy can
stimulate the students to activate their prior knowledge when reading, starting from finding out what they Know, followed by understanding what they Want to learn further, and ended by identifying what they have Learned.

The finding here also confirmed that the KWL is reading strategy which tends to sharpen students’ prior knowledge about information which they are ever had and interpret them based on their own experience (Wiesendanger, 2001). Thus, it is suitable for the students in the intermediate level to use it for seeking the detail information in the texts. In short, the students’ success in increasing their acquisition in reading comprehension was greatly affected by the implementation of the KWL strategy as proven by the students’ posttest scores.

CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

In general, the study concludes that the KWL strategy could increase the students’ reading ability. The strategy could be properly applied in reading class skill since it helped the teachers to engage students in a group work. However, it is suggested that the teachers choose topics suitable for their lesson material so that the KWL strategy can work properly, allowing the students to discuss about familiar issues. The teachers should avoid giving topics without prescreening and checking the background of knowledge of the students because the KWL strategy involves activating the students’ prior knowledge on a given topic.

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ABSTRACT

Using mother tongue (L1) in a foreign language (L2) classrooms is inevitable. Despite the debate over the adequacy of using L1 in the teaching of L2, this paper argues using L1 in the classroom does not hinder learning, and that L1 has a facilitating role to play in the classroom and can help L2 learning and acquisition. This paper shows that L1 is an inseparable part of language teaching, and it has several functions for both the students and teachers in English language learning and teaching. Therefore, those who believe L1 has a minimal role to play in the teaching of a foreign language are invited to think again of its role and contributions it makes to the fields of language learning and teaching.

Keywords: Mother tongue; foreign language; language learning; language teaching

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in language pedagogy has caused many English teachers and instructors worldwide to disregard the use of learners’ mother tongue (L1) in teaching English. CLT, also referred to as the Communicative Approach, strongly advocates that “the target language system is learned through the process of struggling to communicate” (Brown, 1994, p. 45). Some proponents of this approach also believe that “L1 use actually interfered with L2 learning and brought about “error transference” (Pacek, 2003, as cited in Miles, 2004, p. 9), and thus, hampering language acquisition and learning. The approach, however, has also brought about a serious and long-standing debate
about whether learners’ mother tongue can be used when they are learning a second or foreign language (L2). While the proponents of the Communicative Approach firmly argue that the use of L1 may hinder L2 learning, its opponents claim that the use of L1 can actually facilitate the acquisition of L2 (Schweers, 1999). Some other researchers, however, take a more neutral standing by saying that mother-tongue use should not be banned, nor be encouraged. In the author’s point of view, an appropriate use of L1 in an L2 learning classroom can be beneficial and does not obstruct L2 learning. In fact, the careful use of L1 can facilitate L2 learning because it has a number of benefits.

**ADVANTAGES OF L1 USE IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS**

While many teachers and heads of department prohibit the use of L1 in language learning contexts on the grounds that an English-only environment actively promotes communication in English, there are also good reasons for using L1 in L2 classrooms. First, EFL or ESL learners, especially low proficiency ones, can utter more clear and effective expressions their L1 (Atkinson, 1987 as cited in Wharton, 2004). Many confusions and communication breakdown in a monolingual language classroom occur due to a teacher’s strict adherence to L2-only policy. For learners with limited L2 proficiency, this situation can be restraining since they are unable to express themselves very well. They may have difficulty understanding a concept, but fear of being reprimanded for using their L1 to show their confusion prevents them from speaking up. In this case, teachers themselves will find it difficult to determine whether learners have fully understood the introduced concepts. In contrast, when L1 use is allowed, learners will feel more secured to “… express themselves, [and] teachers can diagnose what has been learned, what remains to be taught and which students need further assistance” (Benson, 2004, p. 3). According to Auerbach (1993, p. 13), the integration of L1 into L2 classroom improved classroom dynamics as it “… provides a sense of security and validates the learner’s lived experiences, allowing them to express themselves”. Ghorbani (2012) supports this notion, stating, “Creating a sense of security and bridging from the familiar to unfamiliar are the responsibilities of L1 in the classroom. … this role has been
heightened to a point where some sessions of the class can be devoted to learners to express their feelings in their native language” (p. 65-66). Further, Shamash (1990, as cited in Auerbach, 1993), in teaching ESL students at the Invergarry Learning Center, provided an example case of how his ELLs could benefit when they were allowed to work using their L1. In assigning a writing assignment, he prompted the learners to start by writing about themselves in their L1 or a mixture of their L1 and English before getting the texts translated into English by more proficient English speakers. He describes such approach as “a natural bridge for overcoming problems of vocabulary, sentence structure and language confidence.” Thus, as stated by Bowles and Seedhouse (2007), “One of the key pedagogic goals of classroom… is to allow learners to express themselves clearly” (p. 126), and by letting them explain ideas or make inquiry in their L1, teachers have shown their commitment to reach the objective.

Second, using L1 can stimulate collaborative dialogue among L2 learners in classes. Collaborative dialogue, according to Swain (2000, as cited in Vanderheijden, 2010, p. 29), occurs when learners are producing utterances and responding to their partners as they work together to solve a language task. In collaborative dialogue, learners are engaged in exchanging information with their partners or teachers to clarify meaning and develop an understanding of a given linguistic task. More specifically, in collaborative interaction, they “discuss how to approach specific problems, and build upon one another’s partial solutions” (Yough, 2010, p. 29). In this interaction, EFL or ESL learners will usually have conversations in their L1 discussing the task’s important elements, such as an appropriate word choice and register, before performing it. In this case, learners could compare and contrast their responses in order to get a better understanding of the L2. In other words, L1 functions as a means for them “to control interactive discourse with one another, which supports L2 production” (Williams, 2010, p. 24), which eventually leads them to the mastery of the target language. During the discussion, L1 use is especially valuable since it “… provides scaffolding for the students to help each other” (Cook, 2001, as cited in Gomathi & Kiruthika, 2013, p. 25) and “… acts as a critical psychological tool that enables learners to construct
effective collaborative dialogue in the completion of meaning-based language tasks by performing” (Cook, 2001, as cited in Vanderheijden, 2010, p. 7). In their study on the importance of L1 in ESL class, Antón and DiCamilla (1999) concluded that “to prohibit the use of L1 in the classroom situations... removes, in effect, two powerful tools for learning: the L1 and effective collaboration” (as cited in Yough, 2010, p. 29). Similarly, in an attempt to investigate the use of L1 in mediating Malaysian EFL learners’ understanding of the English tense, Harun, Massari, and Behak (2014) reported that L1 use allowed learners to discover and to understand the L2 grammatical concept. Their findings were in line with the Vygotskian view: language serves not only as a tool for communication but also as a psychological tool in developing an individual’s cognitive process. Furthermore, in a qualitative study on the role of L1 in French and Spanish L2 classes, Scott and Fuente (2008) highlighted that in the group where the learners were allowed to use the L1, in contrast to the one where the learners were required to use the L2, there was “continuous interaction; few pauses, balanced contribution to interaction, ample evidence of collaborative dialogue, [and] use of metalinguistic terminology” (p. 106).

Third, L1 use can save classroom time. Harbord (1992, as cited in Miles, 2004, p. 14) states that the use of L1 saves time and avoids confusion and this is, “Perhaps[,] the biggest reason for using L1 in the classroom”. When a teacher is trying to introduce and confirm the meaning of new vocabulary, for instance, using learners’ L1 might save time and effort. Garcia (2007, as cited in Hidayati 2012) highlighted the importance of the teacher’s use of L1 in breaking communication barriers, emphasizing key ideas, and managing the classroom in order to save time. Correspondingly, Tang (2002) in his investigation on teachers and learners’ perception on Chinese L1 use in English L2 classroom, conducted a study in eighteen Chinese schools and reported that L1 was predominantly used in the classroom to explain the meaning of new vocabulary, and partially to highlight grammar points. The Chinese teachers based their practice on the belief that the use of L1 saved class time and was more efficient. Likewise, Zakaria (2013) remarked
how letting his English L2 learners use their L1 helped him save time in his class, stating:

When I taught English in my country (Indonesia), I always tried not to use my students’ mother tongue during the teaching/learning process especially when facilitating speaking activities. However, I also had to end up using students’ L1 when I explained students’ errors, grammatical rules, and meaning of difficult words. If I insisted using L2, students seemed not to be receptive and enthusiastic to our classroom activities. Based on this experience, I believe, in these particular cases, L1 will aid students’ comprehension and save time for both students and teacher. I am convinced that L1 is an effective tool to help students understand L2 more comprehensively in non-threatening ways. When I was learning English myself, my first language helped me learn complicated linguistic features or difficult words more comprehensively in a fast manner (pp. 380-381).

In a similar tone, Al-Buraiki (2008, as cited in Al Sharaeai, 2012) found that the majority of the teachers who provide task direction and explanation in their learners’ L1 agreed that using L1 could accelerate L2 learning and improve learners’ linguistic competence as well. Using L1, those teachers argued, could save valuable time in explaining key ideas that otherwise would take a lot more time if explained in L2.

Fourth, while the limited exposure to L2 outside of classroom in EFL learning setting has been used as a reason to expose the learners only with English L2 in class (Wharton, 2004), the use of English only in an EFL setting is far from being authentic. As opposed to an ESL context, where “the process of acquiring an additional language [occurs] within the context of a language community which dominantly includes members who speak it natively” (Saville-Troike, 2010, p. 204), English L2 learned in an EFL setting “… is not widely used in the community” (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 217) and, therefore, hardly has any immediate association with the L2 speaking community. Forman (2010) mentions that “in many EFL contexts, students do share a first language (and culture) with each other and their teacher, and bilingual teaching in fact operates as a default mode” (p. 56). In a study on the use of Bahasa Indonesia L1 in EFL classroom, Hidayati (2012) found that the majority of the EFL learners believed that the use of their L1 was needed in their learning. Further, in a study on the use of translation in EFL learning context,
Heltai (1989, as cited in Wharton, 2004) found that, in learners’ real life use of English L2, they were often faced with the task of converting texts or statements in L1 into English L2. He, then, conclusively insisted that, while language teachers had been too reliant on the use of translation in the past that their lessons were too form-focused, dull and unproductive, appropriate use of translation could actually motivate high-proficiency EFL learners; in fact, it allowed the learners to understand the distinction between their L1 and L2. Wharton (2004) also supported this finding, stating:

A few examples immediately come to mind from my own advanced classes this year where students have been asked to translate restaurant menus, company brochures, and even letters from African children to their Japanese sponsors. Others have also been asked to be interpreters for foreign guests and visiting dignitaries. It is truly an unavoidable fact of the EFL context (p. 15).

Additionally, in supporting the use of Korean L1 in the EFL context, Williams (2010) believed that his Korean learners’ L1 played a significant role in L2 classroom, especially when learners were tasked to work in pairs to complete an oral assignment. Thus, when allowing an L1 use in an English L2 classroom, a language teacher should make a well-grounded decision as to when and why it can be used. As stated by Clanfield and Foord (2000, as cited in Zakaria, 2013, p. 383), “if a teacher can do this, the classroom will probably be more authentic in regard to reflection of ‘the natural interplay of L1 and L2’.” Leaving out L1 will raise “input modification (e.g. repetition, speaking more slowly, substituting basic words for more complex ones, simplifying syntax, etc.)” which negatively impacts interactions and eventually creates “less realistic” conversation (Macaro, 2001, as cited in Mart, 2013, p. 10). Perhaps, the ‘inauthenticity’ of imposing an English-only policy in a classroom is best summed up by Stern (1992, as cited in Mart, 2013, p. 9), who believed that teachers who tried to fend off L1 from L2 classroom are fighting a losing battle because “the L1-L2 connection is an undisputable fact of life; whether we like it or not the new knowledge is learnt on the basis of the previously acquired language.”
Last but not least, L1 use can help a teacher explain or clarify concepts, tasks, assignments, instructions, or activities more clearly. If using the learners’ L1 enables a teacher to describe these necessities better, L1 should not be avoided. This is particularly true because “… it is more important for students to understand a concept than it is for that concept to be explained exclusively in English” (Schweers, 1999, p. 9). EFL or ESL learners can surely perform more effectively in the classroom if they clearly understand what their teachers instruct them to do. In this regard, Yough (2010) states that:

… L1 use is appropriate in making explanations of assignments and activities clear. A student who is using all of her or his available cognitive resources to understand the method of the assignment may not have the capacity to also address the purpose of the assignment. In other words, a student who fully comprehends the expectations is free to focus on the task at hand (p. 30).

In a similar vein Cook (2001) (as cited in Al Sharaeai, 2012, p. 9), L1 can be an alternative for teachers in dealing with such scenarios as “explaining and checking meaning; explaining and teaching grammar; class management; explaining class activities and tasks; and maintaining contact with the students”. Further, Cook (2001) also adds that a teacher should resort to learners’ L1 “to provide a short-cut for giving instructions and explanations where the cost of the L2 is too great” (as cited in Mart, 2013, p. 11) in order to make sure that they completely comprehend directions and lessons. Similarly, Atkinson (1987) and Mitchell (1988) (as cited in Miles, 2004) agreed that there are several classroom situations in which L1 is preferable. These circumstances include the talk about classroom discipline, stimulation of schemata, comprehension check.

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I LOVE TEACHING: The reflective stories of English teachers at achieving schools in Banda Aceh

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ABSTRACT
The study explored the teachers teaching strategies in six high achieving schools in Banda Aceh. One main purpose of the study was to explore particular strategies teachers use in conducting teaching effectively. The study was approached using the qualitative classroom research. The settings of the study were six high achieving secondary schools in Banda Aceh. The data of the study were collected through in-depth semi-structured Interview, observation and also focus group discussion. The data which was analysed using coding techniques reveals that most teachers interviewed suggested that they feel teaching at schools was at ease, and this due to mostly their extensive teaching experiences, trainings and Students’ learning passion.

Keywords: Learners-centred instructions; teaching strategies; achieving schools.

INTRODUCTION
Effective teaching is the first and the foremost prerequisite for ‘good’ learning to take place. Teachers as one of the main actors for effective learning to occur are required to have many types of education-related competent. In fact, the Indonesian Teacher and Lecturer Law mandates that teachers should acquire personal, professional, pedagogical and also social competent. Having gained these
competences, teachers are believed to have been well prepared to engage in effective teaching. These competences therefore are important for effective teaching to occur.

In regard with pedagogical competent, teachers should acquire general content knowledge and also pedagogical content knowledge. The content knowledge is also known as subject matter knowledge. This refers to teachers’ ability to gain sufficient knowledge on subject they are teaching. For instance, an EFL teacher should acquire knowledge of English before he/she could actually engage in language instruction. While pedagogical content knowledge refers to teachers’ ability in transferring knowledge to students. As qualified teachers are important for successful leaning, educational institutions should guarantee that their teachers should be qualified enough to teach effectively and efficiently.

There are many factors leading to effective teaching; it could be personal, social, cultural and also economic aspects. Teachers’ qualification, such as their level of academic status, in-service training, students’ readiness to learn, and school culture are some of important factors that help produce quality teaching. These factors are interrelated with each other, and are seen to vital for educational development.

Improving academic qualification is a must academic journey that all teachers should pursue. This is because the higher academic qualification is the better teachers’ professional competent will be. For example, teachers who hold the B, Ed are encouraged to pursue their M. Ed. In addition, in-service training available to teachers gives opportunities to teachers to improve their professional, pedagogical, social and also personal competence. Apart from these two important factor leading to effective teaching, social environment and social capital shape teachers’ ways of classroom practices; students’ willingness to learn and the nature of classroom they are in influence their teaching instructional process (Louws, Meirink, van Veen, & van Driel (2017)

All countries and societies bring with them certain cultural values and those values are also brought into school settings. For instance, cultural values exercised in Indonesian mainstream societies outside school building are for sure exercised
within the Indonesian school buildings. Having brought into school building, these values also influence instructional process.

THE INDONESIAN SCHOOL CULTURES

The Indonesian school cultures seem to have been influenced by the culture of the Indonesian society. Research by Hofstede (2014) suggests that the Indonesian cultural values are seen as big power distance. It means that the elders are still respected as such, in which youger people choose to listen and abide by their elders’ comments (Zulfikar, 2013). This in turns, shape certain ways of instructional process in Indonesian schools. Some scholars argue that teacher-centred classroom instruction is deeply embedded in the Indonesian school settings; this type of instruction is in fact, seen as an important part in the Indonesian school culture (Azra, 2002; Bjork, 2005; Buchori, 2001). There is a consensus that such an instruction method provides little room for students to be creative and expressive (Kohl, 1994; Shor, 1992; Wolk, 1998). Teacher-centred classroom instruction is considered to be lessdemocratic because it fails to take into account students’ learning dynamics and ignores students’ contributions in the classroom (Wolk, 1998). This creates classroom passiveness, in which some students choose not to learn, or as Kohl’s term ‘the not want learning’. In addition to teacher-centred instruction, rote learning is still common in Indonesian schools (Bjork, 2005). There is no suggestion that rote learning should be totally avoided in the Indonesian context because this type of instruction has some advantages for students as well; for example, rote learning of historical dates is in fact necessary as a part of learning. However, excessive use of rote learning means there is less emphasis on more student-centred aspects of learning, such as the critical analysis of history itself. Rote learning plays a large part in Indonesian schools because it is believed to be able to transfer knowledge to students through memorisation. With rote learning, students are judged to be successful when they are able to memorise lessons or topics within their subjects. Even though education practitioners in Indonesia criticise the use of excessive rote learning and attempt to eliminate it (Azra, 2002), such a method prevails.
However, the Indonesian education practitioners argue that there are ways to improve teaching qualities in the Indonesian schools, one of which is through deconstructing the teacher-centered instruction to learner-centred. The latter recognises and appreciates students’ presence in the classroom. In learner-centred teaching environments, students come to recognise their own potential talents. Teachers adopting a learner-centred teaching style not only understand their subject matter but also position themselves as learners so they can be more understanding of students’ social background (McCombs & Miller, 2007). The most important of all is that, according to Shor (1992), learner-centred classes allow the emergence of democratic dialogue. Such a dialogue is significant in the attempt to create a healthy learning environment because it gives students the space to voice their understanding or point of view on issues. Shared authority in the classroom will allow critical dialogue to emerge.

We share understanding of good learning with prominent figures in the field of education, such as John Dewey, Ira Shor, Paulo Freire and other important figures in the field who believe that effective learning occurs through learner-centred instruction. We refer to Zulfikar’s (2009) article in which he argues that Indonesian teachers are not willing to share classroom authority, while the willingness to share authority is a prerequisite for learner-centered instruction. Furthermore, in Zulfikar (2013), we understand that it is difficult to instill progressive ideas to students who hold the doctrine that challenging elders are not appropriate. In his recent article ‘Indonesian Education: its efforts for progressive learning environment’, Zulfikar (2014), argues that teachers and parents should shift their outlook on education. He emphasizes in the article that teachers should understand principles of learner-centered approach for its effective implementation.

It has been understood from the theoretical framework that there are challenges and also complexities in the implementation of learner-centered instruction in Aceh, Indonesia. However, Finn (1999) argues that different schools cultures shape different ways of instruction. As discussed in Finn (1999), Jean Anyon conducted research in five different public schools in the USA; an Elite school, an affluent professional school, a middle class school, and two working class schools.
Anyon’s findings suggest that teachers’ ways of teaching and students’ ways of learning are different in schools mentioned above. For example, in the elite and the affluent professional schools, students are actively engaging in the learning process, and most of the time, teachers play facilitator roles where they facilitate learning through posing some issues to be discussed by students, while in the middle and working class schools, students tend to be passive and teachers are trapped into implementing teacher-centred instruction.

In referring to these findings, we tend to believe that instructional process in high and low achieving schools are different, and that leads us to explore how high achieving schools in Aceh, especially in the city of Banda Aceh approach classroom instruction; do teachers implement learner-centred instruction? If they do, are there any particular strategies these teachers apply in the implementation of the learner-centred instruction?

This prospective research will learn successful stories of effective secondary school teachers in their implementation of learner-centered instruction. Our main concern in this research is to understand how teachers in high achieving schools in Aceh effectively implement learner-centered instruction. It is also our intellectual curiosity to explore challenges that these teachers face in encouraging learning participations of their students, and how they solve these challenges. This research also explores high achieving schools’ ways of inviting student parents and communities to engage in improving schools. To uncover all these issues, we use qualitative classroom research. As we also explore communities’ perceptions on their roles in schools within their localities, we also use a small scale ethnographic research, in which I community leaders are interviewed and engage in their active participation at schools.

UNDERSTANDING CLASSROOM PRACTICES

This study is conducted through a qualitative classroom research. In this context, classroom is defined as wide ranges of learning contexts, in which teachers-learners and learners-learners interact in the context of learning. Classroom is then referred to classes where instruction takes place, ‘multi-media lab, distance learning
situations, one-to-one tutoring’ (Brown & Rodgers, 2002, p. 79) and other places within a particular school building where learning process is feasible.

**Participants and Research Settings**

The study is conducted at 6 high achieving schools in Banda Aceh: MA_M; SM_FH; SM_MB; SM_T; SM_LS; and SM_FB (all pseudonym). These schools are seen as high achieving secondary schools in Banda Aceh. In each school three teachers were invited to become participants; a total of 12 teachers were interviewed and also observed during their classroom practices. In addition, a coordinator of curriculum from each school is also invited to take part in the study. The selected participants are expected to represent gender, in which male and female teachers are recruited. This is important because different gender produces different perceptions and experience. In fact, the selection was simply purposive at targeted schools of research. However, it was highly estimated that samples are able to enlighten important information on research issues. The participants will be initialised as P1_M; P2_M, which refer to teachers from MA-M, while P1_FH and P2_FH refer to SM_FH, other participants follow this similar categorization.

**Observation**

Most of the data for this research were obtained at high achieving secondary schools, and most of the time, fieldwork was conducted in classrooms during instruction, especially for observation data. We basically observed teachers’ classroom practices; mainly by looking at their ways of distributing the wealth in the classroom-providing equal opportunities to students to engage in learning activities. We also observed teachers’ ways of asking students’ responses as well as responding to students’ inquiries. Basically, we are looking at democratic instructional process in the classroom.

The observations were carried out in participative way in order to maintain the accuracy and richness of data. Having participative observations also brought qualified understanding of the topics problems of the study. Furthermore, we observed classrooms during the teaching process as the purposes of understanding teachers’ teaching methods, strategies, interaction, and students performances. By
this, it would be able to perceive and portrait the relation between teachers and students.

**In-Depth interview**

In addition to observation, we also used in-depth interviews to generate in-depth data from teachers in those six schools and curriculum coordinators respectively. In addition, we were accustomed to school environment through an ethnographic study, in which we participate in the community and interviews with some community leaders, our observation of teaching practices, and interviews of the teachers. The main purpose of the step was to explore and understand perspectives of teachers on their challenges, experiences and lessons learned during their duty at schools. By offering questions on their teaching performance, we expect to learn how hard or easy the teaching reflects. It is important to sit and interact through the one on one interviews.

**REFLECTIVE STORIES OF EFL TEACHERS**

Our fieldwork generated important findings on teaching classroom of EFL teachers in high achieving school in Banda Aceh. Most of them showed joyful and are passionate enough of teaching career. During the observation and interview, we at consistently observed that they were happy and satisfied for their assignment to become teachers in those prominent schools in Banda Aceh. As one of them suggest:

I feel blessed to be assigned in this prominent school. I can carry out my teaching well, since the majority of my students are very passionate in their learning. These students are very much active and participative during instruction, and I believe being active learning is the first and prerequisite for effective learning (P1_M)

The majority of participants expressed how thankful they are being teachers in those outstanding school although they see that it is more challenging being part of achieving schools.
It is indeed a good to be at these good school, but I need to work harder and it is more challenging I believe compared to if I teach in low achieving schools (P2_T).

These teachers argue that being in outstanding school demands lots of professionalism, totality, focus, and extra works. However, these teachers seem to enjoy and in fact thankful being part of high achieving schools.

**Effective classroom instruction**

The research found that most teachers have been well-qualified to teach. They are experienced and as well as expert teachers. This allows them to have high level of pedagogical content knowledge. The finding reveals that these participants have gained extensive teaching experience; they have been teaching over 10 years. In addition, we found that a large number of our participants had been tenured in various kinds of schools, low and high achieving school alike prior to their appointment at current schools. P2_MB for example stated:

I was well selected and assigned to teach at several achieving schools under the authorisation of Provincial Education Department. Before I actually take this position, I have been experiencing teaching in many different school, and being in many different schools allow me to grasp extensive knowledge both on subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge.

This suggests that experience shape one’s teaching attitudes. Element was considered important to picture their deployment at schools. Teachers elaborated that. The Department supervises the high schools across the Aceh Province, and the teachers admit that this is beneficial in achieving schools’ learning programs. Teachers added that “achieving schools achieve priorities and focuses of the department” (P1_LB). Therefore, there are a number of positive impacts enjoyed by teachers at high achieving schools.

**On the spotlight of the authority**

The interview also reveals that being at these prominent schools benefit them in some respects. These schools will attract the Department of Education in the provincial level. For that reason alone, the teachers are more exposed toward professional development related programs. These teachers for example come across many opportunities for professional development. In fact, because of the
I LOVE TEACHING: The reflective stories of English teachers at achieving schools in Banda Aceh

school status, the teachers oftentimes join national program representing the Province of Aceh. One of these teachers stated:

I find it advantageous to be in one of those high achieving schools in Banda Aceh. For example, I am exposed to many enrichment programs conducted by the Department of Education at the provincial level or in the national level. My participation in professional development-related programs for sure will benefit me a lot (P1_FB).

Most teachers have been trained and are skilled due to their experience before being assigned at achieving schools. Training highly influenced teachers’ successes in maintaining their teaching achievement at the schools. Teachers admitted that they were fully trained, so it was important for them to appear professional at schools. In spite of this benefit, some of them also argue that being in these high achieving schools is also a burden for them. They should always meet the expectation of the government. They are always under the spotlight of the authority as they should set an example to teachers in different schools. One of them said that “having fully and strict supervision from the authority sometime creates a feeling of discomfort; the authority seems to shadow my performance” (P2_T). This assertion shows that in spite of some benefit gained being at those good schools, some discomforts are also revealed.

Students’ readiness to learn

Our interview and observation show important findings. As we observed, we found that these schools are full of smart students. As smart students by nature, they are active and participative students. These students are good at learning independently, in which they are creative in their learning. These qualities give so much benefit for schools that they are capable of making their own learning. P2_FH stated, “one of the advantages being in the public school is students’ quality, who are considered as best or excellent”.

The fact that students would learn best eases teachers in many respects, such as in preparing and delivering instructional activities. It has been a common knowledge that admission to these high achieving schools is not easy. Student should follow certain strict procedure. In fact, some private high achieving schools
are very strict in their admission requirement. As the result, they are able to give admission to some smartest students in Aceh. One teacher, for example stated: “the students’ recruitment was strict; they find the the best candidates, and they almost always accept highly qualified students” (P2_MB). As a result of high qualified students, teachers find very helpful in their attempt to design teaching materials and also strategies. It is believed that students’ quality shapes teachers’ strategies in instructional process seems very true. Some teachers explain that “we do not find any serious problems during teaching, students may adopt well and easy in teaching activities” (P2_T).

**Healthy instructional atmosphere**

Another important finding of this research was the fact that teachers are able to create healthy interaction between students and teachers and also students and students. Our observation shows a high level of interaction taking place during the instructional process within classroom in these high achieving schools.

In our interviews with teachers, they elaborated that one of the important factors for this healthy interaction is the nature of students’ ability to learn well. One participant for example stated that “students are mostly gifted, therefore, teachers find it easy in building mutual teaching relationship” (P2_MB). Furthermore, other participant also stated that “the advance of students openness and in attitudes open spaces for cooperative and interactive ways of teaching learning at schools” (P1_T). It was revealed that some teachers deliberately explained how their students respect teachers and other classmates in any exchanges or interactions.

**CONCLUSION**

Referring back to the objective, the research attempted to understand how teachers in high achieving schools in Banda Aceh effectively implement learner-centered instruction. The study found that teachers experience, strategies and relationship in learning activities are important facts found in these high achieving school.
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