

A Learning Model Design Integrating ESP Course and Service Learning Program to Promote Relevance and Meaningfulness

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Abstract

Relevance and meaningfulness of the content courses need to be established to make learners realize that the knowledge acquired in the classroom can be utilized to give contributions to society. This research is aimed at designing a learning model integrating ESP course and Service Learning Program. ESP is a subject designed to enable students to design ESP programs. The integration of ESP and SLP allows students to exercise their skills in designing an ESP program, which is eventually implemented as one of their SLP programs. The current research is targeted to describe what the learning model design integrating ESP Course and Service Learning Program looks like.

Keywords: Learning Model, English for Specific Purposes, Service Learning Program (KKN), Relevance, Meaningfulness

Introduction

In the era of progressivism in education and curriculum development, the focus of education is on the relevance, meaningfulness, self-actualization and emancipation. Relevant and meaningful learning is a process which roots into the reality in the learners' lives. In progressive education programs, the goal is self-fulfillment of the learners. To achieve the goal, education programs are focused on the process-based learning to develop learners' awareness, responsibility and autonomy for life-long learning (Richards and Renandya, 2002)

In order that learning can be meaningful and relevant, the process must enable the learners to connect the classroom activities and the real life that they face. There must be a relation between theories that the learners learn in class and how the

theories can be applied in their life. Furthermore, learners should be able to experience how useful the theories are in solving social problems in their community. Thus, learning is said to be relevant and meaningful when the acquired knowledge can be put into practice for serving others.

In an attempt to create meaning and relevant learning, the teachers often need to make some innovations and breakthroughs. This would not be easy for teachers who do not want to get out of routines. In classroom practice, the common activities include discussion, sharing, simulation, lectures, doing exercises in order to facilitate learners to master the materials. Such activities still focus on theories and they cannot provide students with hands-on experience about how the knowledge is applied in real context in the society.

Among the courses offered in the curriculum of the English Language Education Study Program are English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course and Service Learning Program (*Kuliah Kerja Nyata*). English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an elective course whose goal is to enable students to design their own ESP programs. The course requires students to understand concepts of ESP and utilize their knowledge in the process of designing their programs. Although in practice, the students are required to design an ESP program, their design is not based on actual need analysis and they are not required to implement their designed program. In the process of designing their ESP program, the students follow the steps in developing the components of the design, including setting the goal, teaching learning procedure, material and assessment designs. However, the design cannot be implemented since it is not based on actual needs of the clients. The product is submitted only for the sake of their ESP Course grade. The current practice in ESP course, which is still felt to be theoretical, needs to be reviewed and revitalized in order to make the course more meaningful and relevant to the learners.

Meanwhile, Service Learning Program (SLP) is a compulsory course whose objective is to train students to develop their potentials by means of doing community service. The course provides students with opportunities to exercise their hard skill and soft skill to solve problems they find in their community. They are required to conduct observations and needs

survey in order to identify problems that occur in society. Based on their observations and needs analysis, the students, as educated young generation, are to perform as agents of change in the community by offering community service program. Through SLP, students have an opportunity to experience being members of a community who are responsible to exercise their hard skill and soft skill to serve others. As the nature of SLP course is to start from the needs of society, the programs that the students prepare should address the real and contextual needs of the society.

To make ESP more meaningful, some effort has been made. For example, Shu-Chiao Tsai conducted research on "Integrating English for specific purposes courseware into task-based learning in a context of preparing for international trade fairs" (2013). The research tried to integrate ESP and Task-based Learning. The finding showed that the students found the integration is beneficial and that they learned better through the tasks which involved problem solving and higher order thinking. In this research, we attempted to do similar thing by integrating real and meaningful tasks in ESP course, which proved to be effective in promoting a meaningful and relevant learning. However, our focus was on the integration of ESP and SLP. This paper elaborates our attempt to provide a learning model which integrates SLP in ESP course so as to make the students aware that what they learn in class is something meaningful to them and that they can utilize their knowledge to solve

problems in society. The learning model will provide opportunities for the learners to apply their knowledge of ESP during the process of SLP.

In developing the proposed learning model, the research adapted the steps of Educational Research and Development methodology as presented by Dick, Carey, and Carey (2003). The research subjects were students of ESP class who were taking SLP in the same semester. Besides, the research also involved experts in ESP and SLP to evaluate the proposed design.

Discussion

Most research and development projects in ESP are aimed at developing classroom materials. This research, however, aims at developing learning model to integrate SLP in ESP course. The discussion will be divided into four sections, namely ESP and its development, meaningful and relevant learning in the paradigm of progressivism, and the description of the learning model.

ESP and Its Development

ESP emerges from the reality that English learning develops in different parts of the world to serve different needs of the learners, such as for business and trade, technology, education, and various industry (Hutchinson and Waters, 1994).

Thomas Orr (2002) specifically explains that ESP refers to three aspects. First, ESP is designed for specific needs of English learning. Second, ESP is a branch of ELT whose aim is to help learners master English for specific purposes. Three, ESP is seen as a movement to expand the role of English in different professions.

The idea is also supported by Ann M. Johns and Donna Prince-Machado (as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001: 43) who suggest that language learning should be based on the need of the learners, their learning styles and their socio-cultural context where the language is used. ESP has been developed for a wide range of purposes, such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Professional Purposes or English for Occupational Purposes (Hutchinson and Waters, 1994).

Steps in Developing ESP Programs

The steps in developing an ESP program are basically similar to the steps in developing other learning programs. However, some experts propose their own models for developing ESP programs. One of the procedures of ESP development is Skill-centered Approach, which is designed by Hutchinson and Waters (1994: 69-71). The proposed procedure is presented in Figure 1.

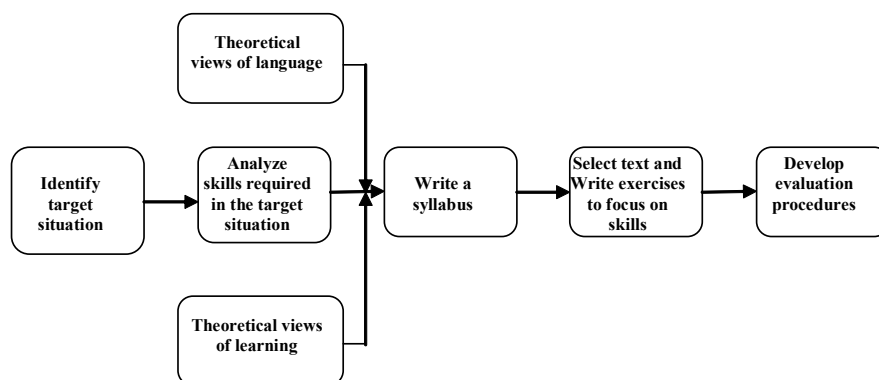


Figure 1: Steps in developing ESP program by Hutchinson and Waters (1994)

The first step is analyzing the target situations, which refers to the context where the language is used. From the results of the analysis, then, the course designer can identify the language skills required for the particular context. Only after the the language skills have been identified, s/he can proceed to the development of syllabus. The next step is selecting or developing suitable learning materials, which focuses on the required skills. The last step is developing the evaluation and assessment to measure the the achievement of the learning objectives and the effectiveness of the program.

Relevant and Meaningful Learning in Progressivism Philosophy of Education

In the paradigm of Progressivism, the emphasis of education and curriculum development are on the relevance, meaningfulness, self-actualization and emancipation. According to John Dewey (1897, p. 1), education is a process that should enable the learners to behave as active beings to participate “in the social consciousness of the race.” In the

higher education, learners are expected to be able to develop their knowledge and partake in society. In Dewey’s belief, learners learn through actions and being involved in the process. This would require learners to work in hands-on project so as to ensure that learning would take place, rather than demanding them to do memorization. Thus, within this philosophy, in order to create a relevant and meaningful learning, classroom activities should be tailored to facilitate the learners development by providing relevant and meaningful tasks.

As the goal of education is self-fulfillment of the learners, education is not oriented toward measurable objectives as in the Objectivist-reconstructionism paradigm but rather on the process of learning (process-based learning). The process is designed to develop learners’ understanding and awareness on their own learning process as part of life-long education (Richards and Renandya, 2002). To achieve the goal, there needs to be a link and match between the process in the classroom and the reality that the learners face outside classroom.

The link and match needs to be established in order to ensure that the concepts and theories that they learn during class will not remain abstract in the learners' mind but will be useful for solving problems in society. Learning takes place when the learners are aware that what they learn in class benefits them in their real life because they can give contributions to society.

A Learning Model of Integration of SLP in ESP Course

The proposed learning model is not to merge the two courses, since they remain separated in the curriculum, but it is meant to establish relevance and meaningfulness to the learners. The end product of the research is a learning model which integrates SLP in ESP course. The model consists of five major components, namely the Goal of the Project, Learning Outcomes and Indicators, Classroom Implementation, Learning Contents, and Assessment and Evaluation. The following is the elaboration of the model.

Goal of the Project

The goal of the project is to design a learning model which integrates SLP in ESP Course. There are two rationales for this. They are:

- 1) The integration of SLP in ESP course will provide opportunities for learners to realize the relevance between the theory and the practice of ESP in society.
- 2) The integration allows learners to develop their own ESP programs which are ready for implementation

Learning Outcomes, Competence and Indicators

Learning Outcomes, Competence and Indicators are components of the Learning Semester Plan. In this project, the learning outcomes, competence and indicators are formulated as follows.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes in this model cover the three aspects of Competence, Conscience and Compassion. They are set according to the Ignation Pedagogy, as in the following:

Competence (Kompetensi):

Understanding the nature, basic concept and theories in ESP, designing concrete ESP programs to suit the need of the real clients in society, implementing the design.

Conscience (Suara Hati)

Honesty in joining the course, hard work in executing the given tasks.

Compassion (Bela Rasa)

Responsibility in doing the assigned tasks with the groups and in implementing the programs, assiduousness in identifying and solving problems, care for others, good communication ability with friends and others in society, synergy in planning, developing and implementing the program.

Competence and Indicators

The competence and indicators are separated into two aspects, namely Hard Skills and Soft Skills. The hard skills represent the cognitive competence and the soft skills represent the conscience and compassions.

Hard Skills	Soft Skills
ESP 1. Explain the goal and outcome of the course 2. Explain the concepts and elements of ESP 3. Elaborate the steps in developing ESP programs 4. Choose potential clients 5. Conduct need survey 6. Interpret target situation based on the survey result 7. Develop the syllabus, material and assesment SLP 1. Explain the vision and mission of SLP 2. Explain the procedure of SLP 3. Explain concept and practice of SLP 4. Elaborate the metod of program development 5. Conduct observation and collect data 6. Analyse data and develop plans of progams, one of which is ESP program	ESP 1. Show interest in ESP 2. Show independence and trustworthiness in developing the program 3. Show hard work in executing the tasks 4. Communicate effectively with other members of the group 5. Cooperate with other members of the group SLP 1. Show responsibility in developing the program 2. Show honesty managing the finance 3. Show enthusiasm and care in serving others 4. Show empathy and good leadership 5. Take sides on the marginalized society 6. Adapt onself with others 7. Learn and appreciate the local wisdom

Learning Activities and Procedure

The learning activities take place in and outside classroom. They are designed based on the cycle of Ignatian Pedagogy, i.e. Context, Experience, Reflection, Action and Evaluation.

Context: Learners are guided to understand the current context of learning and the benefits of their learning.

Experience: Learners are guided to undertake authentic tasks and share their understanding through group discussion and presentation. Learners gain feedback from peers and the teacher.

Reflection: Learners are guided to write reflection on their learning process so that they realize what aspects which need improvements and what aspects are already good. Learners reflect on the values they have learned throughout the process.

Action: Learners plan and take action based on their reflection in order to better their learning outcome.

Evaluation: Learners are evaluated based on their performance, participation and test results on individual and group bases.

Learning Contents

The learning contents are organized in the following order: Introduction to ESP, Kinds of ESP, ESP Program Design, Need Analysis, Progress Test, ESP Syllabus Development, Learning Activities Design, Material Evaluation and Material Design, Assessment Design, Final Project.

Assessment and Evaluation

The assessment of ESP course covers the three aspects of Competence, Conscience and Compassion. In terms of Competence, learners are assessed based on the quizzes, tests, assignments, and the designed ESP program. In the aspects of Conscience, their evaluation is based on their self-reflection. Compassion

aspect is evaluated based on their reflection and peer evaluation.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, it can be seen that the learning model which integrates SLP in ESP course can be a solution to establish more relevant and meaningful learning to the students. The integration provides students with at least three benefits. First, it allows them to experience how theories are put into practice by designing an ESP program of their

own. In this case, they exercise their cognitive competence. Second, they are encouraged to conduct needs analysis based on the community they would serve, in which they develop their compassion. Third, the group dynamic gives them a chance to exercise their conscience and compassion. As they develop their cognitive competence, conscience and compassion, learners will hopefully feel self-fulfilled. Thus, they realize that the learning process is relevant and meaningful to them.

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