

IMPROVING STUDENTS LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY THROUGH ACTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES ACROSS LEARNING STYLE

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INFO ARTIKEL

Riwayat Artikel:

Diterima: 07-08-2019
Disetujui: 30-09-2019

Keyword:

Active Learning Strategies;
Language proficiency;
Learning Styles.

Kata Kunci:

Active Learning Strategies;
Kemampuan Berbahasa;
Gaya Belajar.

ABSTRAK

Abstract: This study aims to investigate that active learning strategies can improve the students language proficiency in the second year of SMAN 1 Kediri, West Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. the subjects of this study were consisted of 31 students. The method used in this study was Classroom Action Research, the design applied in this study was a collaborative action research. This research carried in two cycles, each cycle consisted of two meetings, the data were gathered through interview, field notes, questionnaire and test. The result of this study showed that there was improvement of students language proficiency. Most of students gained good scores gradually at the end of each cycle. The score of Minimum Mastery Criterion of English lesson was 70. The students mean score in preliminary study was 55.85. the mean score in the first cycle was 66.13. the mean score in the second cycle was 73.19. in addition, there was a positive response from the English teacher about implementing the action and changes of students learning styles. In conclusion, using active learning strategies could improve students language proficiency across their learning styles.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh penerapan active learning strategies dapat meningkatkan kemampuan berbahasa inggris bagi siswa SMAN 1 Kediri, Lombok Barat, Nusa Tenggara Barat. Populasi penelitian sebanyak 31 siswa. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah Penelitian Tindakan Kelas dengan rancangan kolaboratif. Penelitian tindakan kelas ini terdiri atas dua siklus, setiap siklus terdiri atas dua kali pertemuan, data dikumpulkan melalui interview, catatan lapangan, kuisioner dan test. Hasil dari penelitian tindakan kelas ini menunjukkan bahwa terjadi peningkatan pada kemampuan berbahasa siswa serta perubahan terhadap gaya belajar siswa. Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM) pada pelajaran bahasa inggris adalah 70. Nilai siswa pada tahap awal sebesar 55.85, nilai rata – rata yang diperoleh siswa pada siklus pertama sebesar 66.13, dan 73.19 pada siklus kedua. Terdapat respon positif dari guru bahasa inggris terkait penerapan dan pelaksanaan penelitian ini serta pada perubahan gaya belajar siswa. Dengan kata lain dapat dikatakan bahwa penerapan active learning strategies dapat meningkatkan kemampuan berbahasa siswa serta perubahan signifikan pada gaya belajar siswa.

A. INTRODUCTION

Education acts an important tool in the effort of preparing human resources to boost the growth and development of a country. The government has been taken several strategies in its efforts to improve the quality of our education system (Abdulai & Siwar, 2011). Language is a system of sound symbol use by humans to communicate, the system of communication in English used by people of a particular area. It means that language is so important in human life because it is impossible for human to communicate without language (Lavanya

& Mohan, 2014). English used in many aspects of life such as economy, science, technology, education and many others (Bodorik, 2018). Therefore, many countries put English into the list of subjects in their education program in public and private education. It is a way to improve their citizen ability of English. In Indonesia, English has been given since kindergarden up to university level. By having more knowledge about language skills, we have much better chance of understanding and being understood and getting what we want and need from these around us.

The education system plays an important role in society, education should preparing students to enter the modern life of twenty first century (Mehta & Kasnia, 2011). The development of students enable them to contribute, building the community and enhancing the qualitative efficiency of educational staff to enable them comprehend the objective of modern educational curriculum. Among the strategies are to continuously revise the curriculum to ensure that it is in line with the needs of the country and the changes that are taking place in the education system around the world. Many schools believe that active learning has a positive influence on students learning outcomes. Improving the quality of education deals a lot with better teaching learning process, well planned curriculum and effective implementation of the curriculum (Mohamed & Orafi, 2013), (Nevenglosky, Cale, & Aguilar, 2019). Based on K-13, curriculum aims to prepare the Indonesian have the ability to live as individual who has productive, creative, innovative, affective, personality and able to contribute fully in their society, nation, state, and world civilization. Therefore, the teachers must have the flexibility of time to develop a process oriented learning into active learning. Active students learning process takes longer than the delivery of the learning process because students need information to perform exercises, observe, associate, ask and communicate (Baker, 2016).

The active learning is a way of students teaching allowing them to effectively participate in the activities that takes place inside the classroom (Lin, Mausam, & Weld, 2016). This participation takes them beyond the role of the passive listeners individual who basically writes the notes, to a person who makes the initiative in the different activities with his peers through the learning teaching process inside the classroom (Ahrari, Othman, Hassan, Samah, & D`Silva, 2014). The teacher role here in lecturing is less and directs the students to discover the educational materials that leads to more understanding in the scholastic curriculum, since active learning activities include a set of different teaching methods and techniques such as the use of small group discussion, role playing, and making different research projects. The importance of active learning emerges in its ability to create the students previous knowledge through active learning when learning new knowledge, this agrees with the perception that including the knowledge is the necessary condition for learning. Students through the active learning reach meaningful solutions to the problems because they link new knowledge or solution (Kale & Liu, 2013).

The researcher found some problems in learning English at the second year students of SMAN 1 Kediri, the first one is that the school does not have enough facilities for teaching learning process. Those facilities are the media of learning process such as internet access, infocus, dictionary, etc. These media are needed in the teaching learning process in this 21st century, particularly the implementation of K-13 curriculum. The second one is that the teacher does not have sufficient strategies to teach the students. The last one is the lack of vocabulary, it made the students difficult to speak and write in English. Teaching is a process of transferring knowledge from someone to another person, the teacher have to master the materials that they want to teach. Learning English is not easy for the students because that the new thing for them. The problem that commonly faced by teachers that the students still passive, they only get knowledge from the teachers.

Active learning strategies shift the focus of instruction from what teachers should do to students, move to what teachers want students to be able to do with course material. Similarly, students must enter class prepared to use assigned readings and reviewed material from past classes. Not only are students expected to be up to date on course material, but to have assimilated the material so they can use and build on it. When students recognize that the course involves active learning strategies, they will also recognize that they must be active if they are succeed in the course. Active learning stimulates the students to be accustomed to use English expression at their language proficiency in appropriate context (Lumpkin, Achen, & Dodd, 2015). Active learning is when the students take a participating method through discussion, presentation, simulation and practice (Barter, 2013). Active learning promotes problem solving, critical thinking analysis, and synthesizes the information". This opinion means that to make the students more active, teachers also make the students active in teaching learning process. Everything that the students do in the classroom in this strategy do not only merely passive but also more active.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR). Action Research is any systematic inquiry conducted by teachers, researchers, principals, school counsellors or other stakeholders in the teaching learning environment to gather information about how their particular school operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn. It means that CAR aimed to overcome problems in teaching learning process in order to

improve educational practice. According to MacIntyre who stated that CAR has several major characteristics such as (a) action research concerned with social practice which involves direct interaction of teacher and group of students; (b) action research aimed towards improvement; (c) action research is a cyclical process which involves some phases of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting; (d) action research is pursued by systematic inquiry; (e) action research is participative (MacIntyre, 2012). Classroom Action Research is a problem based research which aims to solve the problems that arise in the class and to make an improvement in teaching learning activity through cyclical process which involves some phase of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. In addition, action research is portrayed as a cyclical process involving many steps (Moreton & Fisher, 2018).

The Classroom Action Research using Lewin's design consists of four phases: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting within one cycle. If the first cycle finished but still found any problem, it is necessary to continue to the second cycle with the same concept. Those are planning, acting, observing and reflecting. In addition, before entering the cycle of classroom action research, the researcher conducts the preliminary study. According to Miller preliminary information gathering is taking time to reflect on your own beliefs and to understand the nature and context of general idea. It is aimed to gain the data about problem faced by teacher and students in the class (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). Beside that, the researcher conducted interview to the English teacher in terms of the techniques and activities employed in teaching English and giving questionnaire to the students in terms of learning English.



Figure 1. Action Research, Kurt Lewin (Adaptation)

The research design of Classroom Action Research in this study is a collaborative classroom action research. It means that the researcher collaborates with the English teacher of SMAN 1 Kediri – West Lombok. In carried out the study, the researcher's role is as an English teacher who teach

English through active learning strategies to the students. While the real English teacher's role is as an observer, who observe teaching learning activities during learning process. The real English teacher not only as an observer but also as an collaborator who help the researcher designing lesson plan, giving instructions and assessment and analyzed data. After preliminary study was conducted, the researcher begins the research covering some phases : planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

1. Planning, the researcher and the collaborator make some planning based on the finding of preliminary study. The following activities in this action planning are designing lesson plan, preparing materials and media and determining criteria of success. The organized planning will be formed into lesson planning based on the current used syllabus. Lesson plan provide the teacher with the guideline of teaching and learning activities. It mention the following items, specific instructional objectives, the instructional materials and media, procedures of presentation and procedure assessment. Then preparing active learning strategies and the next step is materials preparation. Based on the result of teacher interviewed before classroom action research and the current used syllabus, the researcher used text and speech. The last step is the researcher and the teacher discussed to determine the criteria of action success. The criteria of success are emphasized on the process and the product of teaching learning activities.
2. Acting, the researcher carried out acting phase based on lesson plan prepared in planning. The researcher acts as the English teacher who taught using active learning strategies and collaborator as the observer. The implementation of the action involved two meetings in each cycle.
3. Observing, the researcher observed all of the activities that happened in the classroom. The aspects in observation are sources of data, the instrument used in collecting data and the technique for data collection. This phase about the process of recording and gathering all relevant field notes or unstructured observation sheet.
4. Reflecting, the researcher made evaluation to hold next cycle needs to be accomplished. This phase carried out collaboratively with teacher to discuss some problems in the classroom that occurred during action.

Data collection procedures consist of 4 parts such as (1) Interview, the interview carried out after classroom action research to know the teachers response toward the application of active learning

strategies in teaching learning process; (2) Field Notes, the researcher and the observer used field notes to record activities during the teaching learning process, including classroom atmosphere, teachers creativity, students learning styles and students attitude; (3) Questionnaire, the researcher applied 5 questions in order to get the data about student interest for learning English; (4) Test, test used divide into pre-test and post-test. Pre-test done before applied active learning strategies and post-test after applied it.

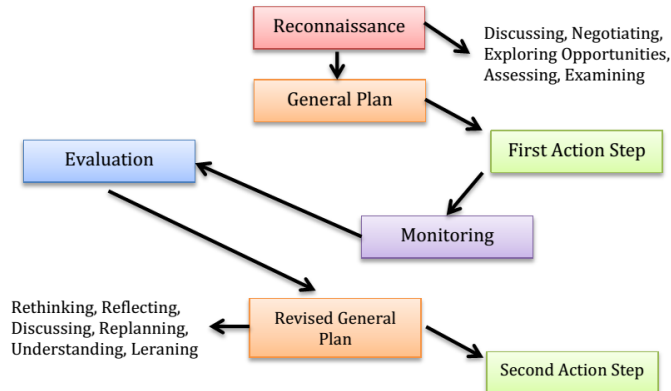


Figure 2. Lewin Action Research (Management Model)

C. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Finding

a. The Result of Pre-interview

The researcher used unstructured interview in conducting preliminary study. The researcher asked the teacher some questions which divided into three categories such as general condition in English class, the difficulty faced by the students and the strategy used by the teacher to solve students difficulties. For the first category, the teacher said that every student has a different attitude and learning style when learning English. Most of students who did not like English because they gained low competence and still faced obstacle in following the lesson. Moreover, the teacher stated that most of them were hardly to pass the Minimum Mastery Criterion. Second category, discussed about the students difficulties in English class. The teacher said that English is the most difficult lesson faced by students. Consequently, they are lazy to do the tasks and lack of their score in passing the Minimum Mastery Criterion. The last category, related to the teacher strategy in teaching English. It was found that the teacher cannot choose appropriate strategy for the students.

b. The Result of Pre-Questionnaire

The pre-questionnaire was conducted to know about the students response about English lesson. The questionnaire was given to the

students about (a) the students response toward English, the result showed 56.25 % of the students like English, 25.00 % felt fair and 18.75 % did not like it; (b) the students response toward the difficulty faced, the result showed that 31.25 % felt can be overcome the difficulty, 25.00 % felt fair and 43.75 % was not overcome the difficulties; (c) the students response toward English Skills, it showed that 31.25 % like English skills, 46.87% felt fair and 21.88 % did not like; (d) the most difficult lesson, 65.63 % assumed that English was the most difficult, 6.25% consider was not difficult; (e) the teachers style when teaching, the result was 28.13% students felt interest, 40.63% felt fair and 31.25 % was not interest.

1) Findings of The First Cycle

a) Planning

The researcher and the teacher made a planning for the action based on the problems faced by students toward language proficiency. In this case, the researcher determined the selected material and exercises into a lesson plan using active learning strategies. The researcher also prepared the field notes to observe the students and teacher activities in teaching learning process whether it was in line with the lesson plan had made before or not, and the researcher also prepared the post-test to collect the data, to know whether there are some students improvement scores from pre-test to post-test.

b) Acting

Action of the first cycle implemented in teaching learning process based on the lesson plan had been made. In the first meeting, the teacher started to convey materials that would like to be learnt by the students and applied active learning strategies. The researcher taught the students through active learning strategies.

c) Observing

The observer observed the teaching learning process through field notes, it might be about classroom management, students response and teachers performance. Related to students response, some of students did not pay attention on teacher explanation, they chatted with their classmates when teacher explained and gave tasks. The teacher had taught in line with the lesson plan had been made but she didn't give clear explanation of

the material using active learning strategies then teacher did not explain the material clearly, it could be seen the situation in the classroom was very noisy. At the second action of the first cycle, the students seemed more focus and motivated to learn English then the teacher could intensive guide to students in active learning strategies application. The data showed that the mean score of pre-test was 55.85% . there were 5 students who passed the Minimum Mastery Criterion 70.

d) Reflecting

The researcher and the teacher discussed about the conclusion of implementing the action. Then tried to modify the action in order students language proficiency, 75% students in the class could passed the Minimum Mastery Criterion because in the result of post-test only 38.7 % students passed it. Meanwhile, field notes showed that teaching learning activity has done well although there were some problem that should solved. From the reflecting phase, there must be more efforts to improve students language proficiency through active learning strategies.

2) Finding The Second Cycle

a) Planning

Planning at the second cycle was implemented into a lesson plan. The researcher modified lesson plan based on the result of reflecting phase in the first cycle. Beside that, the researcher also prepared field notes and post-test for classroom activities.

b) Acting

The researcher applied some suitable techniques to make students become more active in teaching learning process. There were small group discussion, game and drama. One of the example was small group discussion, the researcher explained the materials and gave some of the examples relating to the topic. Then, the researcher instructed them to make small group discussion or pair. Next, the teacher asked the students to practice and play their conversation in the classroom. After giving treatment, the researcher gave post test to find out whether the strategy was effective or not. The researcher gave the same test as in

the pre-test. In the post test the students fluency and comprehensibility have increased. The number of the students who could not comprehend speaking decreased from 58% to 19 %.

c) Observing

In the second cycle, generally the class condition in learning process was better than the previous cycle. It could be seen from the result of field notes that the students who were able to focus and pay attention on the teacher explanation and when they followed the writing lesson, they enjoyed doing exercises. Then, most of them were enthusiastic to choose their favourite food and drink ,and used active learning strategies based on topic given. Automatically, it led a good feedback from students response in conveying their ideas and students were helped by the teacher to comprehend the text. Next, students did not give up when they found unfamiliar words because they could look up in their dictionary as suggested. Based on the result of post-test 2, the mean score of the class in English test gained 73.19% which there were 27 students who passed the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) 70.

d) Reflecting

The researcher felt satisfied as much their efforts to improve the students language proficiency had been realized. The result of the post-test 2 showed that 87.1% of the students got the score above the Minimum Mastery Criterion, so it has met criterion of success that 75 % of the students must get the score above the Minimum Mastery Criterion. Therefore, the researcher decided to stop the cycles because it had already succeeded. According to the result of the evaluation between the researcher and the teacher, it could assumed that the implementing of classroom action research in improving students language proficiency through active learning strategies was appropriate with the planning that had been discussed by the researcher and teacher previously.

2. Discussion

In the preliminary study, the mean score of students is 55.85. it is the students English score before using active learning strategies. Meanwhile, the class percentages which passed the Minimum

Mastery Criterion are 9.7 %, it means that there are only three students who are able to pass the Minimum Mastery Criterion 70. Furthermore, the mean score in the post test of first cycle is 66.13, it means that there is some students score improvement from the previous test that is 18.4 %. Meanwhile the class percentages which pass the Minimum Mastery Criterion in first post test are 38.7 %, it shows that there are 12 students who passed the Minimum Mastery Criterion. However, it still needed more improvement because it could not achieve the criterion of success, that is 75 % from the class percentage. That's why the researcher continue to the second cycle.

The mean score in the post test of the second cycle is 73.19 % it shows that the students improvement score 7.06 from the first post test 66.13 or 31.05 % students improvement in the score percentage from the preliminary study. Meanwhile, the class percentages which pass the Minimum Mastery Criterion are 87.1 %. It means there are 27 students whose score passed the Minimum Mastery Criterion. This class percentage shows improvement 87.1 5 from the preliminary study (9.7%) or first post test (38.7 %) in the class percentage. The post test of second cycle has fulfilled the target of Classroom Action Research success, above 75 % of the students could pass the Minimum Mastery Criterion.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The implementation of active learning strategies in the second year students of SMAN 1 Kediri, West Lombok, can be concluded that active learning strategies can improve students language proficiency across learning styles. It can be proved from the following fact. First, the improvement could be seen from the increase of students mean score from 55.85 or 9.7 % of the class can passed the Minimum Mastery Criterion in the preliminary study and 66.13 or 38.7 % of the class percentages which pass the Minimum Mastery Criterion in the first cycle, to 73.19 or 87.1 % of the class percentages of the second cycle. From the result of field notes, it showed that the class condition during teaching learning process creates the positive atmosphere in the classroom and also makes students creative in finding the ideas. Moreover, active learning strategies would be alternative way to improve students language proficiency across learning styles.

Teachers should create enjoyable, fun and interesting ways as a teaching strategy. The enjoyment ought to be foremost aim which hopefully will have positive effects on education because they learn what they care about and remember what they understand. In another word,

the teachers should make enjoyable learning because they want study hard if they enjoy the subject. The subject will interesting if the teacher uses suitable teaching strategy. The most important thing is the students understand about what they have learn if they do it by themselves. It means learning by doing. Then active learning strategies not only used for teaching English but also can be applied to teach other subject.

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