

DEVELOPING TEACHING INSTRUCTIONS THROUGH THE PRACTICE OF LESSON STUDY IN TEACHING PASSIVE VOICE

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ABSTRACT

Conducting a study to find the best practices in teaching a topic through lesson study procedures provided insight about what to do in planning a lesson and how students learn in a set context. The present study offered strategies in teaching passive voice and explanations about how to deal with some problems in teaching this problematic topic. This study was conducted by following the steps of lesson study and obtained the data from pretest, the notes taken in planning, doing and reflecting. The participants were 40 English Education students at Universitas Papua. The results showed that the possible strategy in teaching passive voice was using text to discuss grammar. Before deciding to use a text, teachers should check the knowledge of students in grammar and students' prior knowledge of topic in text. In teaching process, drawing students' attention to the grammatical constructions, the agent or the recipient of the action should be done after discussing the main idea and information in text in order to understand and use grammar in context.

Keywords: Teaching Instructions, Lesson Study, Passive Voice

INTRODUCTION

Teaching instruction is one of elements that can affect students in their learning process. Good instructions can lead students to learn effectively. Students who find easy to follow the instructions can work diligently either in all classroom activities or tasks provided. In other cases, students cannot study well because the teaching instructions do not meet their learning needs. Therefore, one of the most important tasks for teachers is planning effective teaching instructions by considering some factors that may affect students in learning process such as subjects, teaching materials, students characteristics, teacher preferences and environment (Mallipa & Murianty, 2019)

English grammar is notoriously difficult to learn for EFL students especially for those whose first language has different rules. The pattern of English sentence requires the presence of a finite or verb that indicates the tense. The finite or verb must in agreement with the tenses and with the subject of sentence. The students (Indonesian students) whose native language does not apply such rule may find it difficulty to apply the rules. Consequently, they most likely fail to include the finite in their sentences when they express an idea that no lexical verb is required. In learning passive sentences, students often find difficulty to learn the patterns regarding the 'verb' element (Agustien, 2016). Even though students might understand the rules, they sometimes cannot apply those rules in formulating sentences.

Very often English teachers present the concept of passive voice to students by comparing the concept in terms of lexical action, the subject as an agent or recipient of an action and comparing the patterns of sentences. The students may understand the concepts and patterns and apply them in changing active to passive but they get confused when they come to text (writing or reading) that contains both passive and active voice. Before teaching passive sentences in this study, the students were given pre-test to see their prior knowledge. The results showed that some students were able to recognize the passive sentences in sentence level but failed to recognize and to use the passive verbs in reading and writing text.

This study intended to cope the problems by planning instructions through lesson study where teachers planed lesson together as a team. It is supposed that following the principles of lesson study can lead teachers to work collaboratively in developing teaching instructions, give teachers opportunity to carefully study materials for teaching, design a lesson focused on a problematic topic and address a broader research theme related to teaching and learning, teach a lesson based on the lesson plan, observe the teaching and learning process and conduct a post-lesson discussion (Takahashi & McDougal, 2016). Studies have shown that applying the core tasks within lesson study cycle can improve the teaching of a particular topic (Lewis et al., 2011a).

One of the most contentious issues in English language teaching is grammar teaching. Many methods, techniques or strategies have been proposed, used and investigated such as inductive vs. deductive methods, explicit vs implicit teaching of grammatical patterns, form-focused instruction vs. forms-focused instruction, proactive vs. reactive focus on form, in separate (isolated) activities or within the context of communicative activities (integrated). The results implied that all strategies can be beneficial, depending on the language feature to be learned, as well as characteristics of the learner, the learning conditions and perception (Agustien, 2016; Bakshiri & Mohammadi, 2014; Marzban &

Mokhberi, 2012; Sik, 2015; Spada & Lightbown, 2008). The present study offered strategies in teaching passive voice and explanations about how to deal with some possible problems in teaching this problematic topic.

LITERATUR REVIEW

Teaching Instruction

Instruction in teaching and learning process refers to directions used including how to begin a lesson, present new material, support students in learning process, and check student understanding (Rosenshine, 2012). Teachers can begin a lesson by reviewing previous materials and present new materials in lecture, demonstration, questioning, and working examples. Some instructions often used are asking good questions, summarizing the main points, supervising while students practicing new steps in a skill to guide students practice and to check student understanding.

The effectiveness of teaching instruction could be affected by factors such as the prior knowledge of students (Armand, 2001) and the characteristics of teaching materials (Cho et al., 2019). The strategies and teaching material will be different for students who have a high level of prior knowledge from students who have low level of prior knowledge. The learning process might be ineffective when the teachers do not consider the factors in planning process.

Instruction in teaching English grammar refers to models used in presenting the pattern of English sentence to students. There are two common views using in developing grammar instruction: traditional view of English grammar and modern view. In traditional model, instructions are designed to teach students a simple framework for understanding and creating English sentences by using pattern practice drills, diagramming sentences, memorization, test student's mastery of grammar rules while in modern model, the instruction is used not only to support students' learning at the sentence level, but at text level by teaching grammar in the context such as reading text or writing a specific kinds of text such as stories.

The knowledge of grammatical patterns cannot help students in real communication. Knowing the rules is only considered as the first step. Without using it in communication, it is useless. Students will find hard to transfer their understanding from the given example to live text (Myhill, 2000). Therefore, presenting grammar in its form, meaning and use is suggested. It is suggested to change grammar instruction by shifting the focus from grammar-for-explaining to grammar-for-use (Tajino, 2019) or to use grammar in context. The context of use is always text (Bolstad et al., 2010). Teachers can use text to discuss the grammar concept.

Passive Sentences

There are two types of voice that are commonly used and learnt, active and passive voice. Both types of sentence have subject and predicate. Subject could be noun; noun phrase or noun clause and predicate contains verb with or without object. Active and passive sentences are different in the grammatical level: the clause and the verb phrase. However, the subject in active is the doer or the executor of the action while the subject in passive is the receiver of the action. The verb (phrase) in active voice could be simple form, simple past, past participle modified by be and have, has and had accompanied by past participle depending on tenses. In passive voice, the verb phrase must consist of be and past participle.

Usually the passive is used when the writer or speaker does not know who perform an action (Azar & Hagen, 2009). Sometimes, even it is known who performs an action, the speaker prefers to use the passive with agent in order to focus attention on the subject of sentence. In the sentence "*Paper, the main writing material today, was invented by the Chinese*", the focus of attention is on 'paper'. The speaker draws listener's attention to "paper" as the point or topic of the discussion.

Passive could be classified into two categories, passive with agent (agentive passive) and passive without agent (non-agentive passive). In the non-agentive passive, the agent does not appear. "their loving mother" that follows by in sentence "*They (the children) are protected by their loving mother*" is called the "agent". The sentences can be categorized into agentive passive. The sentence "*Papyrus was used in Egypt, Greece, and other Mediterranean lands*" does not stated any agent. The sentence is called the non-agentive passive".

Lesson Study

Lesson study is emerged in Japan in the 1990s for professional development of teachers. It is firstly developed in teaching Mathematics then it is widely accepted as a method of professional development for teachers in Japan, America, South-East Asian countries, Africa, Australia, and China and throughout the world in many subjects (Coşkun, 2017; Doig & Groves, 2011a; Sarkar Arani et al., 2010). Lesson study becomes popular because of Japan's success in their professional development model. Based on the studies by United States educators, the high scores of Japanese in mathematics might be the result of the model of their professional development.

Lesson study is interesting for teacher to be studied and used because it provides opportunities for them to study the process of learning and teaching through planning, doing, observation and reflection in actual classroom. Involving in these processes can help teachers figure out what works and what does not in

real teaching situation as well as encourage teachers to always change their instructional teaching and work collaboratively with other teachers.

Lesson study is inspired by the ideas of inquiry based approach (Johnson, 2009) to maximize classroom teaching (Owens et al., 2018) and student learning by doing collaboration among teachers as a joint professional development (Hargreaves, 2012) in planning and doing teaching and learning and making reflection. Professional developments is needed to improve the quality of teaching in schools (Kourieos, 2012) and lesson study provides a model for large-scale, sustainable professional development (Doig & Groves, 2011b).

Jointly planning, observing and discussing the lessons called study lesson (research lessons) are the core of the larger process known as lesson study (Lewis, 2000). Lesson study is started by formulating long-term goals for students learning and development. To bring the long-term goals to life, teachers design and develop a research lesson (lesson plan), implement it in classroom while carefully observe students learning, engagement, and behavior during the lesson then discuss and revise the lesson based on these observations.

The idea of lesson study is simple, but developing effective lesson study can be a complex process (Lewis, 2000; Takahashi & Yoshida, 2004). Teachers must experience it by participating in all steps of lesson study in order to have a common understanding of how the lesson should be restricted to help students learn subject or topic well.

The focus of lesson study is on students learning and understanding. How students are learning is crucial in planning teaching. Thus, the ability to understand student learning can give teachers an idea to develop their teaching concepts and practices. Teachers should know their students learning needs and plan lesson based on the needs (Lewis et al., 2011).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was conducted by following the steps of lesson study and obtained the data from pretest, the notes taken in each step: planning (lesson plan, notes taken by moderator), doing/observing (observation notes, students' worksheets) and reflecting/discussing the lesson (notes taken by moderator), and posttest. There were five members of lesson study team initiated by a lecturer that has taught grammar for five years in English education department at a university in Papua and had experience in doing lesson study. The five members were the fourth-year students in English Education department. The students were in preparation to write their undergraduate thesis and had experience in teaching English during conducting their teaching practice in schools.

Step 1. Planning

All members of lesson study group discussed the topic to be taught and planned a lesson. The discussion was started by the presentation of problems in learning English grammar for students in the second semester. The teacher or lecturer explained that students found difficulties in learning grammar when the teacher focused on forms in teaching process. The problem occurred was that the students failed to apply the structure or patterns of English sentences in real communication and tended to simply translate word by word when they were reading, speaking, listening and writing. In previous semesters, the leacturers taught active and passive sentences to the students by presenting the patterns of sentences and using them in sentences level. The results were not satisfied the lecturers. Therefore, the method of teaching should be changed. By considering the problems, the theories of effectively learning English and the principles of teaching English mandated by the curriculum of Indonesia, we formulated lesson goal (objective of learning) and developed lesson plan. We had three meetings to discuss the lesson plan. In the first meeting, we discussed the goals, materials, and methods. In the second meeting, we discussed steps and activities in teaching and learning process. In the third meeting, reading text, exercises, and items in test were validated.

Step 2. Doing/observing

The lesson plans were implemented in classroom. The initiator of lesson study also as the supervisor was playing a role as a teacher while the other five members (observers) were observing students' engagement and behavior during the lesson. There were two meetings with two classes for implementing the lesson plans. While the students were learning, the observers documented or recorded student learning process. Two observers stood in the right side, two others stood in the left and the teacher roamed around the class to monitor students and control students in their learning activities. Observers wrote what students did during learning process and the teacher helped students to understand materials.

Step 3. Reflection/discussion

After conducting teaching, the team discussed the teaching and learning process to find out how students were learning through the research lesson. In the discussion, all team members reported their observation during learning process, gave some comments on the way students learning and teacher teaching, and discussed whether the scenario of learning should be changed. The reflection was conducted after each meeting.

At the end of the process, the data from all the process were analyzed and summarized. The interview sessions were also conducted when there were some problems from data to be clarified.

FINDINGS

Finding of Planning a Lesson

In planning step, observers (student teachers) confirmed that one of the most difficult topics in teaching English grammar was passive voice; understanding the concept of passive voice itself is a problem let alone applying the concept into comprehending/when reading a text and creating their own text. Students have learnt the structure of passive voice but when they were given pretest to see whether they still remembered the rules or patterns. The result of the pretest showed that only few of students could identify the passive verbs of sentences in given reading text and almost all of them failed to give correct response to the provided questions related to the information in text. Learning the concept of passive voice should help learners in real life, therefore, the students should learn the concept through reading text.

Furthermore, we discussed the relevant text to be used and designed learning stages to be followed. We decided that the text used should contain passive sentences, simple sentences (not complex sentences), familiar words and interesting information to students. The sentences should use simple present tense. The stages in learning could follow the text-based instruction. The first stage was building the context through asking and answering questions about basic information in text. The next stage was discussing the generic schematic structure and linguistic features of text. The last stage was joint construction of text.

In the process of our discussion, we made some changes in the stages. In the first stage as the beginning of lesson, we tried to attract students' attention by using picture that described the information in text. Above the pictures, we gave two sentences taken from the text to be read loudly and to be discussed. The students learnt patterns of sentences by drawing their attention to the using of passive verbs and teachers checked students' understanding by asking questions related to the information in two sentences. In the second stage, students were divided into small groups to read the given text, answer the questions that asked information in text and learnt the structure of all passive sentences in text by underlining passive verb of each sentence. In the last stage, students practiced to use passive verbs through chain writing activities.

Finding of the First Lesson Study

During learning process following the steps in lesson plan, students were enthusiastically engaged in learning activities. They actively gave response when

teacher asked questions required answer in passive sentences while showing picture, tried to answer question, read the given text “*Run and Play*”, asked some questions about the information in text, discussed with their friends in group, asked some questions regarding the kind of verbs in the text and participated in chain writing activities.

Most students learned to understand the using of passive by reading passive sentence in text describing the activities of Lisa as mother, Ben and Amy as Lisa’s children. Students also write down all passive sentences and the passive verbs that they got from the text and had an engaging discussion in completing the chain writing task. However, there were two of them who could not focus at beginning of lessons. The reasons were different from one to another. There was a personal factor such as feeling sleepy and getting a phone call. In group activities, there were 6 students who did not participate actively.

Dealing with the students who got problems in learning process, the teacher came to their group and tried to give additional explanation about how to recognize passive sentences and gave some more easy exercises where they practiced using the pattern of passive sentences. The teacher also suggested them to learn from their friends in groups.

The teaching instructions applied based on lesson plan were successfully attracted students during the learning process. In ‘reflection’ step, all observers reported that most students took part in all learning activities. Only few students seemed uninterested in group activities and in chain writing activities. six (6) out of 40 students were passive in small group discussion. They thought that the topic or material was difficult.

Few students who were passive in small group discussion felt that the given text was difficult for them even most of students did not find any difficulty in understanding the text. Therefore, in our discussion in “reflection” step, we decided to choose the more difficult level of text for the second lesson than the first but changed the instruction and activities at beginning of lesson to make some students who were passive in learning process to be engaged in all following learning activities.

Instruction at beginning of lesson 1

*Teacher : Look at this picture and read the sentences
(containing passive verbs).*

*Teacher : Answer these questions (use passive sentence
pattern).*

The observers suggested to change the instructions in the lesson 1. The activities in this stage should provide background knowledge of information in text and discussed difficult word related to the topic. Teachers needed to ask students some questions, discuss the answer, activate background knowledge by

asking questions and providing basic information about topic and develop students' curiosity about the topic in order to prepare all students to participate actively in the next stage activities.

Instruction in the second stage

Teacher : work in group to understand the reading text, underline passive verbs and discuss how to answer the questions using passive sentences

In the second stage, students were grouped into 4 or 5 students. In this stage, students were practiced using passive verbs in text through answered questions and underlined passive verb in every sentence. There was no need to change the instruction in this stage when the reasons of the six students who did not show an act of learning could be anticipated in the first stage.

Instruction in the third stage

Teacher : write a text (group writing of text/chain writing activities)

Students were given challenge to write a text containing passive verbs in all its sentences. The topic was decided by discussing with all members in group. The teacher did not specify the topic to give a freedom for students to express their idea. It was expected that by deciding their own topic, all members of group could have idea to be written down. When they had been ready, a piece of paper was given to each group. A group leader wrote the first sentence, he/she folded the paper to hide the answer /so that his/her answer could not be seen, then he/she passed it to the next member on his/her right. The members were asked not to read the previous member had been written to make the result was amusing. After all groups had completed the task, they were told to open the folded paper and gave opportunity to read their text.

All students were seemingly interested in chain writing activities but there were still some students who did not use "to be" (missing finite). Some others used passive verbs but got confused in using the form of 'to be' and did not use past participle. There were also who did not place the correct 'noun' as subject of their sentences. It seemed that students still needed time to practice using passive pattern in text. Thus, we planned lesson study 2.

Based on the findings in lesson study 1, we made some changes in lesson study 2. We changed the activities in the first stage (at the beginning of instruction) and we also changed the materials. The materials of lesson study focused on the using of narrative text (story) written in present time using the structure of passive voice. The finding showed that the students had gotten the knowledge of rules in construction sentences in present passive voice through text-based instructions. In lesson study 2, we decided to use text contained past

passive voice. The structure still used simple sentences but the text would be informational report.

Finding of the Second Lesson Study

The instructions at beginning of lesson 2 seemed effective to engage most students in learning activities as it was expected. Some questions were given to check what students had known about the topic and to develop their curiosity. The instructions used both English and Indonesian languages. The instructions led students to think about the topic and new words in text. The students actively expressed their opinion about the invention that was important. They had different perceptions about the most important invention of all time. When teacher gave a list of difficult words that they were going to find in text, they showed their interest in finding and understanding the meaning of words through discussion.

In the second stage of lesson 2, all students who participated actively in the first stage did not find any difficulty in understanding the given text. They had interesting discussion in their group. Only students who came late and those who did not come in previous meeting got confused during learning process. Based on the note from observers, those students were busy in checking their social media. They were passive in group discussion and did not answer the question. In chain writing activities, they did not use passive verbs in their sentences.

The observers in 'reflection' step gave suggestion to exclude the students who were late from the class; they did not understand the material and only disturbed their friends. Not to mention, the students did not understand the material. During the group discussion, two of them asked their friends to explain, another looked confused and were silent, and the other played game, took a picture of the material and took pictures of herself while their friends were discussing. The teacher should give attention to the students who did something else while they had to involve in learning activities.

In the third stage, all students participate actively in writing sentences to complete their text. The students were successfully use correct passive verbs in sentences and place the right agent as subject of their sentences. In interview session, some students stated that they enjoyed the activities in this step. Some other students stated that they could not choose their own topic because they should have had agreement with their friends in group. They did not find any challenge when working on this task.

DISCUSSION

Understanding the concepts of passive voice and using the concepts in understanding text and writing a text is the learning objectives in this lesson study. Teaching instructions were designed to engage all students with different levels of

knowledge in learning activities by considering some factors. In planning, we predicted how students would learn the concept of English passive voice using the concept of second language acquisition (L2 acquisition). It is stated that L2 acquisition involves different kinds of learning such as item learning and system learning. Students internalize chunks of language structure; on the other hand, they acquire rules. Students must engage in both item learning and system learning (Ellis, 2010).

We thought students would understand the rules of English passive voice through reading a text that its sentences used the structure of passive voice. Understanding the given text through small group discussion would help students acquire the language structure. Through learning activities that we provided, we expected students to learn that passive sentences must have the finite 'to be' and the verb must be in past participle. Students might figure out that the finite 'To be' could be changed based on tense and subject of sentence then used the concept in writing a text (chain writing activities).

The result from the observations during learning process revealed that teaching instructions and materials that were carefully planned could increase student participation in learning activities. In planning instruction, student teachers had anticipated students response and students' difficulties in learning specific part of topic by asking and answering some questions such as how students would automatically acquire the rules of passive voice through reading a text and giving response to provided questions, how students would conceptualize the function of subject in passive sentences or whether the students could figure out the using of finite and past participle verb in passive sentences, and how to deal with slow learners and fast learners.

The students who were categorized slow learners in this study were those who were passive in learning process, did not give response to questions, did not participate actively in small group discussion, and still failed in applying the concept of passive voice in their writing. Factors that hinder students in acquiring and applying knowledge of passive voice structure were identified. Lack of vocabulary, grammar knowledge, language awareness, and background knowledge of topics might impede the acquisition of language structure. The instructions should be designed by considering those factors without disregarding the fast learners.

In planning, teachers chose relevant texts. The text should be interesting to learners and have significance for fulfillment the objectives of learning the topic. The text was predicted to be able to stimulate discussion in which the teacher and students made sense with texts. The provided instructions should allow teacher to enact lesson plan in order to lead students reacted to texts for purposes of understanding passive voice rules and applied the rules in writing process. In

“doing step”, teachers drew students’ attention to the form or structure of every sentence in text through underlining passive verbs and circling nouns as subject and showed students how grammar and vocabulary function together in texts and how to use passive structures in familiar ways to them by using the context of text. We used text to discuss the grammar concept as suggested by Bolstad et al., 2010.

Instructions at beginning of lesson (stage 1) in lesson study 1 were changed in planning lesson study 2. In lesson study 1, the instructions were provided to attract student’s attention to the form of passive verbs. The text (story) used was quite easy. It contained picture, familiar words and simple sentences (present tense). On the other hand, the instructions at beginning of lesson study 2 were designed to understand the patterns of passive voice (past tense) through reading more difficult text. Providing background knowledge of information in text through asking and answering questions and discussing difficult words related to the topic were should be done. Instructions should lead students to have curiosity about the topic in order to prepare all students to participate actively in the next stage of instructions. In this case, we considered the difficulty of text based on students’ background knowledge in order to develop effective instructions (Armand, 2001; Cho et al., 2019).

In the second stage, small group discussion was used to engage all students in learning the concepts. In this activity, students were given opportunity to discover the rules through reading text and to apply the rules in their conversations. We provided questions that asked information in text and contained passive rules, and required students to answer using the pattern of passive voice. All students seemed to have interesting discussion in their group. Most of them took opportunities to speak in front of their friends and got feedback. Previous study showed that students who actively participate in learning small group discussion can increase their learning achievement (Kalaian & Kasim, 2014).

Small group discussion was effective only for students who found the activities we offered were engaging. Students who thought that reading the provided text was not interesting activity because the text was difficult to understand were passively watching their friends discussing. In interview session, they stated that they got difficulty in understanding the text. Through deep discussion with them, it was concluded that the main problems were the level of their language knowledge, English language structure and vocabulary. They lack knowledge of the classification of English words such as noun or noun phrase as subject and form of verbs in past participle. In sentence levels, they found difficulty in distinguishing passive and active sentences. They got confused when we asked them to classify the sentences into active and passive ones. When we asked them to identify the verb in sentences, they failed.

Utilizing the concept of passive voice through chain writing activities could encourage almost all of students actively participate in learning process but without proper and thorough guidelines, not all students could be facilitated in their learning process to achieve their personal goals. The students who were in high level was not successful showing their ability. Yet, students in low level had opportunity to learn through practice. The teachers might consider to regroup students in this step.

CONCLUSION

Although there is no a permanent set of instructions to be used to engage all students in a learning process that we set for them, there should be attempts to regularly develop and facilitate consistent plans in anticipation and in response to how a topic should be learnt and how students might learn the topic. Teachers should make plans and predictions by reading theories, concepts, and practices underlining how a topic is learnt and what factors contribute to students' success in learning the topic, study what works and does not work in their classroom, put into practices a set of principles of teaching and learning to be assessed, continually observe how their students response to the principles, and study and discuss students' behavior with others.

Some students may not response to our instructions as we plan for them not because they do not have willingness to involve in learning process. There are always reasons behind their behavior. Teachers must do investigation to figure out the reasons and plan the lesson based on the results. Following the steps and applying the concepts of lesson study can help teachers to do their tasks.

In teaching passive voice, one possible strategy to teach is using text to discuss the concepts of passive voice. Before deciding to use a text, teachers should check the knowledge of students in grammar and students' prior knowledge of topic in text. In teaching process, drawing students' attention to the grammatical constructions, the agent or the recipient of the action should be done after discussing the main idea and information in text in order to understand and use the grammar in context.

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