

MAXIMAZING TEACHER ROLES IN SHAPING SELF-DIRECTED LEARNERS

Indah Windra Dwie Agustiani

Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang
indahwindra@yahoo.com

Abstract

This paper attempts to offer some efforts that can be applied or employed by teachers in teaching learning activities to shape self-directed learners. It encompasses some theories about roles of teachers, roles of learners, the definition and characteristics of self-directed learners, the advantages of self-directed learning, and some possible tips of shaping self-directed learners. Some roles of teachers are discussed in this paper to highlight that teachers do not only teach and give some materials to be learned by their learners but have great tasks, like to be a monitor of students learning, motivator, organizer, and controller of pupil behaviour, provider of accurate language models, counselor and friend, needs analyst, material developer, and evaluator (Richard :1990:4). Hence, a teacher must encourage learners to take on greater degree of responsibility for their own successful learning (Hedge, 2000:34) and a teacher must motivate and help the learners to gain and develop the executive control of their learning strategies especially metacognitive strategies to teach them how to learn (Joyce, et al: 2009:16). Thus, some roles of learners become important to be included in this paper to assert that the burden of learning cannot be merely poured on the teacher but the learners have some roles need to be contemplated for the success of teaching and learning. Therefore, the integration of teacher - learner awareness toward their roles in teaching learning process can be effectively shaped to generate self-directed learners.

Keywords: teacher, role, self-directed-learners

©Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP UM Palembang

Introduction

Educators are people who do not merely do teaching and sharing all information they have. This statement might be upheld by this following sentences “He teaches ill, who teaches all” whereby being one of the proverbs existed in this world dealing with education. In response to such proverb, it denotes one way how a teacher should do and evolve teaching and learning activities and how a learner should learn either. National Research Council (2005:14) reports that in case a teacher considers students’ background, cultural values and their abilities in classroom environment, it will lead teaching and learning process to be learner-centered classroom. Therefore, a good teacher is not one who gives all she or he has but a teacher should be able to dig deeper about what the students might have, what knowledge should be developed, and what students need in classroom.

Learners do not enter class empty handed. They bring their experiences from this world. The more exposure they got, the better they cooperate with the material being discussed. In other words, Harmer (2007: 84) notes that one of the characteristics of adult learners is “...they have a whole range of live experiences to draw on”.

By realizing those things, a teacher needs an ability to activate prior knowledge of his learner. Having some insights of teaching models, realizing the teaching and learning principles, and knowing the learning strategies of learner are some ways to lead an effective teaching. Those might give some contribution to a teacher how to interact to his learners and how to help the learner how to learn, then result in shaping self-directed learners. Therefore, this paper attempts to offer some efforts or tips that can be applied or employed by a teacher to shape self-directed

learners since there are many advantages of self-directed learning by considering the roles of teacher in pedagogy.

PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER

This paper tries to assert how important to motivate and elevate their learners to be self-directed learners. It also gives some possible tips to teachers who teach adult learners to shape self-directed learners by considering the roles of teacher in pedagogy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Three Knowledge of Learning

1. Input

Every information given out or shared by teacher or derived from other sources does not necessarily become knowledge of student. Input, then, needs to be comprehended and understood to result in some knowledge. The process can take both long or short time according to students' persistence, motivation, strategies, need.

2. Knowledge

Information processed and comprehended by learner is knowledge.

3. Output

Output can be defined as the implication of knowledge gotten and comprehended getting through some processes. Every information shared and comprehended is description of one's knowledge.

ROLES OF A TEACHER

There are many roles need to be considered when we decide to be a teacher. It is many because a teacher does not merely teach. Richard (1990:4) lists that there are kinds of roles a teacher ponders

1. Monitor of students learning
2. Motivator
3. Organizer and controller of pupil behaviour
4. Provider of accurate language models
5. Counselor and friend
6. Needs analyst
7. Material developer
8. Evaluator

A teacher can be said as one of the major factors affecting learners to learn. From the various roles listed above, it can be concluded that teachers must be able to positionnate themselves when facing to the students both inside and outside the class.

ROLES OF THE LEARNERS

A learner is not only one who receives information from his/her teacher nowadays because knowledge can be derived from many sources, not only from a teacher. A learner can broaden their knowledge through browsing on the internet, asking one who knows, etc. Learners must be active learners. Following are some roles of learner summarised from some sources:

1. Learners contribute to the design of language learning activities (Clarke 1986b)
2. Learners have to manage their own learning by adopting learning strategies for themselves. (Harmer, 2007).

THREE MAJOR FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNERS IN LEARNING

Izzo (1981) cited in Ghazali (2010:127) claimed that there are three major factors affecting learners in

learning, especially learning a language are

- a. learner characteristics,
- b. situational factor, and
- c. linguistic factors itself

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNER

According to Hedge (2000:76), “a self-directed learner is one who is self-motivated, one who takes the initiative, one who has a clear idea of what he wants to learn, and one who has his own plan for pursuing and achieving his goal.”

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNERS

Hedge (2000:76) claims that self directed learners

1. Know their needs and work productively with the teacher towards the achievement of their objectives
2. Learn both inside and outside the classroom
3. Can take classroom-based material and can build on it
4. Know how to use resources independently
5. Learn with active thinking
6. Adjust their learning strategies when necessary to improve learning
7. Manage and divide the time in learning properly
8. Don't think the teacher is a god who can give them ability to master the language

Self-directed Learning

There are many concepts of Self-directed Learning. Following are some of them:

Suchinda & Muongmee (2007:38) wrote that “self-directed learning means learners taking responsibility for initiating and guiding their own learning which is an essential ingredient of lifelong learning and could takeplace in many settings.”

The Advantages of Self-Directed Learning

1. It encourages attention to learners’ preconceptions. (National Council Research (2005:13).
2. It encourages a culture of questioning, respect, and risk taking.
3. The learners are able to learn more things and learn better (Knowless,1975) in Hedge (2000:83).
4. The learners can be more responsible for their own learning (Hedge,2000:83).

From those advantages above, it can be interpreted that learners who are able to motivate themselves will lead themselves to be long-life learners who are very needed in facing the global Era, get some information unlimitedly whenever and wherever they are as long as they want to be willing to read or access the information from some sources, such as internet or using facilities provided by their institution, such as library.

Some Possible Tips of Shaping Self-Directed Learners

1. A teacher must know the principles of learning and firmly assert his students that a teacher can be their model in which a teacher never stops learning. To exemplify, a teacher

can motivate them by explaining the three knowledge that student should know (INPUT,KNOWLEDGE,OUTPUT). By doing this , a teacher can be considered as a motivator.

2. A teacher tries to use interactive model in designing course. This tip is proposed because it is accordance with Spear's (1988) cited in Park and Confessore (2007) , He asserted that

“ ...opportunities for students and instructors to share in the process of shaping the learning experiences in a course will produce better outcomes than can be had when instructors act to design courses without appropriate interactions with their students.Finally, in the interactive model, instructors and students have opportunities throughout the period of instruction to conduct joint reviews of course activities to determine whether their agreed-upon goals are being met.”

It is also strengthened by National Council Research (2005:13) that note a teacher must begin instruction with what student think and know. It also becomes important because Drisscoll (1994) in Smith & Ragan (1999:2) claims that an instruction is the deliberate arrangement of learning condition to promote the attainment of some intended goal. is supported by Rosenshine & Furst (1973) in Williams & Burden (1997:47) who note that one of nine key factors contributing to effective teaching is acknowledgement and stimulation of student ideas. A teacher must pay close attention to individual students' starting point and to their progress on learning tasks. A teacher must provide syllabus so that the student can seek the information that will be discussed for every meeting then

he can provide himself with abundant of knowledge when entering the classroom.It is because “a syllabus is a means of connecting teachers and students” (Sharon Rubin) cited in Milles (1989:235) By using this model , teachers can be said as counselor and friend, needs analyst and material developer.

3. A teacher suggests to assign the student to write a self-directed learning journal. Hedge (2009:10) said that “a teacher must encourage learners to take on greater degree of responsibility for their own successful learning (Hedge, 2000:34).In other words, Joyce,et al (2009:10) said that

“A teacher must motivate and help the learners to gain and develop the executive control of their learning strategies especially metacognitive strategies to teach them how to learn”.

It can be done by trying to know what they learn outside school by getting them to complete this following sentences as proposed by Harmer (2007: 397) in their journal.

Example:

The question(s) i would like to ask about what we have done is/are.....

The thing(s) that I enjoyed most in last week's lesson was/were.....

The thing(s) I learnt last week that i did not know before was/were.....

The thing(s) I am going to do to help me remember what I learnt last week is/are.....

The thing(s) I found most difficult in last week's work was/were.....

In addition, by using these tips the teacher can be said to fulfill their role as monitor, motivator, evaluator, organizer and controller of pupil behaviour, especially in teaching learning activities. Also, it can shape a routine for the learners how to learn and it helps the learners to control their learning. In other words, learners will be able to manage their own learning by adopting this technique as one of their learning strategies.

DISCUSSIONS & CONCLUSIONS

A success of learner is however, uncontested goes hand in hand with the role of teacher as a facilitator in pedagogy, but merely burdening learners' success on teacher means a wrong insight. It is strengthened by statement made by Research National Council (2005) that said "Burden of learning does not fall on the teacher alone". It implies that learners also have to know what they should do inside or outside classroom. Such statements are also advocated by Izzo (1981) cited in Ghazali (2010:127) who claimed that there are three major factors affecting learners in learning, especially learning a language are learner characteristics, situational factor, and linguistic factors itself. By designing a good deal of materials relevant to the learners' needs and knowing about the various teaching models to get the learners involved or adapted in learning, a teacher can be said facilitating their learners' learning. On

the other hand, learner as one of the members of pedagogy field should realize if she/he may not rely too much on his or her teacher. He or she should optimize his or her understanding by proceeding the information and seeking for additional information out of class through reading a lot or browsing some sources on the internet to make her/him expand the information and have a concept of thinking. In short, teacher and learner awareness should be balanced in teaching and learning application for a successful final result. In other words, Joyce, et al (2009:15) claims that the positive instructions designed by the teacher can help the learners to develop their skill. Therefore, a teacher who is able to design some appropriate instructions in teaching and learning process and try to maximize his roles as a teacher can lead the learners become self-directed. For the last words, we can assume that pedagogical objectives to generate self-directed learner might be successful when there is the integration of role awareness both the teacher and the learner.

References

- Ghazali, H.S.A. (2010). *Pembelajaran keterampilan bahasa dengan pendekatan komunikatif-interaktif*. Malang, Indonesia: Refika Aditama.
- Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English language teaching*. Edinburgh, England: Pearson Education limited.
- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- Joyce, et al. (2009). *Models of teaching*. New Jersey, USA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Long, H.B. Skill for Self-Directed Learning Retrieved from

www.ode.state.or.us/opportunities/.../32skills-for-directed-learning.pdf. on September 1st,2013.

Millis, B. J (1989). Helping to Make Connections: Emphasizing the Role of the Syllabus. *To Improve the Academy*. Paper 175. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/podimproveacad/175>. Accessed on October 13th,2013.

National Research Council. (2005). *How students learn; history in the classroom*. Washington, DC: National Academic Press.

Richard, J.C. (1990). *The language teaching matrix*. Cambridge, England :Cambridge, University Press.

Smith, P.L., & Ragan, T.J. (1999). *Instructional design*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Suchinda., & Muogmee. (2007). *The role of lifelong learning and self-directed learning in educational reform IN Thailand*. *Educational Journal of Thailand*. Vol.1, No. 1

Williams, M., & Burden, R.L. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers: a social constructivist approach*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press Company Publisher.