

English Teachers' Roles in Promoting Learners' Learning Autonomy in EFL Class of Public Senior High Schools of ENDE Regency in Academic Year 2016 / 2017

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Abstract

This research investigated the English teachers' roles in promoting the learners' learning autonomy in EFL class of public Senior High Schools. The aims of this research are: to describe the teachers' roles in promoting the learners' learning autonomy in EFL class, identify the frequency of the teachers' role in promoting the learners' learning autonomy and describe the students' responses toward the roles played by the EFL teachers in their class.. This research has been conducted in four public senior high schools in Ende Regency with thirteen English teachers as informants. The researcher used qualitative approach which involves in a case study type. In collecting the data, the researcher used three kinds of instruments namely, class observation, field note and unstructured interview. The researcher used three steps to analyze the data namely, data reduction, data display and conclusion. The research found that, there are six roles played by the English teachers in their class. The roles are facilitator manager, assessor, resources, participant, and counselor. However, the EFL teachers played in different frequency one another. Each role has its certain respond from the learners. There are eleven kinds of learners' responses namely; attentive, taking note, execution order, probing, asking question, curiosity, submissive, feeling happy, energetic, getting bored and open minded. All the English teachers' role has little contribution to promote the learners learning autonomy.

Keywords: English Teachers' Roles, Promoting, Learners' Learning Autonomy, EFL class.

Introduction

Based on the Ministry of National Education Decree Number 21 Year 2016, about Content Standard, the main objectives of learning English in Indonesia is, the students are expected to use English in interpersonal and transactional communication. It implies that, the opportunities should be given to students to learn English in an adequate way, started from basic to the advanced level. The fact prove that, there are few students or graduates who learnt English at school have good competence in English communication (Bire, 2016: 7). The other fact also showed that, there were not of EFL teachers in East Nusa Tenggara Province showed good English language proficiency, although they are experienced teachers for more than five years (Semiu, 2014; 11). This case indicates that, the teaching and learning process has not reached yet the target as stated in the main objective of the National Curriculum.

In line with the development of science and technology, many educational experts developed new theories dealing with teaching and learning foreign /second language. Many English teachers have tried to implement various kinds of teaching approaches, methods, models, strategies, techniques, as well as teaching and learning media regarded as the best for their classes in order to guarantee the success of English learning. Despite the use of those popular methods, the result of English learning is still not satisfactory as shown in the score of the national examination (UN) of Public high school across of East Nusa Tenggara province from year to year.

The important factors in learning English do not only depend on how good the teacher uses the appropriate approaches, methodologies, strategies, and techniques in teaching, but also from three other aspects as mentioned by Harmer, (2001: 156) such as language environment, language system, and learner him/herself. From the three factors, the most important one is the learner. What happens to the learner and what they do when they are learning the foreign language? The theories about second language acquisition are required in foreign language learning. Why does one success in learning second or foreign language and other not. The language teachers should understand these basic principles of language acquisition, so that they will be able to give appropriate learning experience for their students.

Dealing with the learning style, Rubin in Brown (2007: 132) defines a good learner is one who sets his or her own direction and takes responsibility for his or her own learning. Based on some research studies in Japan (Usuki; 2001) and in China (Chan, 2001), some students realize that they could take better advantage of resources by being more independent. The independent learning must be encouraged by giving learners a good reason for moving in that direction.

The findings above are contrary to Rukim (in Yuliany 2015: 1) who stated: “Some teachers in Indonesia still implement teacher-centered activity in which the teachers dominate the process of teaching and learning. It is the traditional approach of teaching a lesson in front of a classroom”. In this approach the teacher has to state the objectives, determine the materials relevant to the objectives, implement certain learning experience to achieve the objectives and administer the instrument and procedure of assessment in order to know whether the objectives have been achieved or not. In fact, the task of teacher becomes so abundant and dominating, that the students become receptive and less active. Similar condition mostly occurs in every school in Indonesia, including those in Ende Regency. In this case, lecturing and lengthy explanation about a language concept are common techniques in English classes. Although, this type of teacher-centre class appears to be common phenomena in public high school in Ende Regency, there are evidences showing intentional attempts to promote active learning, in class as well as dependent learning outside class.

Theoretical Framework

Teaching cannot be defined apart from learning. Teaching means to show somebody how to do something, so that they will be able to do it themselves or to give somebody information about a particular subject or to help somebody learn something. (Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary (1995: 1225). Learning is acquiring or getting knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience or instruction. Teaching has been always measured by the students’ learning outcome. Based on this idea, the teacher then briefly examine the implications for teaching. However the teacher should focus on a few key ideas; that teaching is intellectual work; that teachers have a range of roles, including information deliverer and team coach; that effective teachers strategically distribute or share the work with students; and that teacher’s focus on challenging content. Teaching is complex because it reaches into time both before and after face to face interaction with students. It requires preparation, and it requires reflection and revision. As a result, many teachers feel like their work is never finished (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2006).

Many linguists and scholars have made many researches on teachers’ roles. Ehrman (in Yan, 2012: 558) describes teacher’s role as “If the classroom is a stage in a theater, and students are actors, what is teacher? The teacher is many people in theater: director, prompter, coach, scriptwriter and audience.” This opinion is most similar to Wright, (1991:51). He classifies the term such as “manager, resource, provider, guide, evaluator, organizer and introductory into two major roles of teachers in the classroom: They are: 1). to create the conditions under which learning can take place: as the social side of teaching and 2) to impact, by a variety of means, knowledge to their learners: as the task-oriented side of teaching.”

Deals with the teachers’ roles in promoting learners’ learning autonomy, there is a different opinion about the teacher roles. According to Xu (in Han, 2004: 25), There are eight roles, namely: 1) Manager. It implies that, the teacher should manage the teaching and learning strategies, effective ways of learning English autonomously, developing learners’ skills in listening and speaking as well as communicative competence..2), Facilitator. This role is played when the teacher offers necessary enlightenment and assistance; help learner to make English learning plans and objectives.3) Organizer. This role is played when the teacher is organizing some communicative activities to get learners to have more chances to practice English. 4) Cooperator or learning partner. This role played when the teacher is making friends with learner, able to offer correction, suggestions;

willing to communicate with learners about their learning problems. 5) Inspirational. This role is played when the teacher stimulates the learners' interest and enthusiasm in English learning, encourage them to use English as daily communication and motivate learners to participate in communicative activities. 6) Monitor and evaluator. This role is played, when the teacher provides students with feedback of their performance and guidance in the process of English learning. 7) Resource. This role is played when, the teacher transfers knowledge; provide some references and materials for English learning; introduce some interest resources. 8) Atmosphere creator. This role is played when the teacher creates harmonious and active class atmosphere, facilitate learners' English learning..

Autonomous learners are those who understand why they are learning, accept responsibility for their learning, take the initiative in planning and executing learning activities and are willing to assess their own learning Little (in Turloiu, 2011: 10). Learners' active participate in and responsible for their own learning process are essential in the field of foreign language learning. The learner needs to be more independent in learning and able to collaborate with others. Learners become autonomous by assuming responsibility for their own learning. This includes being involved in all aspects of the learning process: planning, implementation (monitoring) and assessment. Their autonomy grows as they become conscious of the process of learning (Little, Ridley, & Ushioda in Turloiu, 2011: 11).

Research Methodology

This research is used qualitative approach in type of this research is case study. The research data are gained from thirteen the English teachers who are teaching English in Public Senior High Schools. According to Catherine and Gretchen in Sugiyono (2008; 309), the fundamental methods relied on qualitative researchers for gathering data and information is participation in the setting, so in this research the researcher used three instruments namely: observation, field note and unstructured interview. In analyzing the data, the researcher applied Miles and Huberman model. This model applied three steps to analyze the data. They are data reduction, data displaying and conclusion (Sugiono, 2014:336).

Findings and Discussions

Based on data collection, the EFL teachers played six common roles in their English class. The roles are described below:

Manager

Basically, the role as manager consists of three sub roles namely; planning, organizing and controlling. Based on the research findings, there are five kinds of learning activities in this role. First sub role is planning. It can be described through first activity, which the teacher introduce the basic competence, topic, learning objectives, attainment indicators and learning activities. Second sub role is organizing. This sub role can be seen, when the teacher gave explanation or instruction to students to do something such as; read a text, observe a series of pictures, discuss a topic or do an exercise, and correct the students' task. It is also described through the using of learning media in teaching and learning process such as series of pictures, laptop, LCD and speaker or other media to support the learning process. Third sub role is controlling. It can be recorded, when the teacher control students when they were discussing or doing exercise in the classroom. In playing this role, the teacher sometime plays also the other roles along together such as resources, counselor, participant, counselor or assessor. Every teacher has his/her own style in applying those roles. It implies that, every teacher has different style with other teachers and sometime a role is applied more dominate than other roles. In this case, the teacher is still dominating in the class. Almost the learning activities were designed by the teachers themselves before the class. Meanwhile the students did not have opportunity to determine what and how do they should learn a topic. Because of this condition, the students didn't have initiative and creative to learn by their own.

Facilitator

Based on the research finding, the role as facilitator covers three kinds of learning activities namely; first, the teacher provided chance to students to propose questions dealing with a topic, Second, the teacher facilitates students to do exercise deals with the language skills based on the topic, delivering the material used Bahasa Indonesia, English or mix both of them, Third, the teacher gave individual or group task after learning a topic and informed another topic to prepare before the next meeting. Basically, the role as facilitator is main key of

promoting the learners' learning autonomy. The teacher should not play as the first and main agent of learning. They suppose to facilitate students to learn, provide scaffolding, and teach students how to learn. In fact, there were many researched teachers played this role in limited broad, since the class activities was designed by their own. The class activities were conducted based on the teachers' own preparation. The learning activities such as questioning, discussing, do the task based on the worksheet are the kinds of learning activities that stated in syllabus or in teachers' planning. In this case, the students didn't have right and freedom to determine their own learning, so they would have less learning experience. This role as facilitator has less significance contribution in promoting the learners' learning autonomy.

On the other hand, the researcher found that there were only four English teachers who played more as good facilitator in their class. Those teachers are teacher D and E from SMA Negeri 1 Ende and teacher F and H from SMA Negeri 2 Ende. They used English as medium of class interaction. The English class was very active. They provided all the learning activities that encourage and challenge student to learn independent. The writer also got information from their principal that, those teacher got 80 in teacher competence test in 2015. It implies that, those English teachers have good competence, especially in pedagogic and professional competence, which is portrayed in their teaching performances.. In other words, those teachers who played more the role as facilitator actually have good knowledge about pedagogical and professional aspects as the main competence

Counselor

Based on the findings data, the role as counselor covers only two kinds of activities during the class namely; first, the teacher gave appreciation or reward to students after answering or doing something and second the teacher advised students who didn't accomplish the homework and those students who have lack participation in the class. These activities as the counselor role are important in learning process. Giving appreciation to students will have positive affect for students, such as to raise self-confidence, motivate them to learn more and encourage them to have fairly competed among the classmates and advising students who didn't accomplish the task is a kind of warning that, they will have bad effect of their learning. Deals with the effort of promoting the learners' learning autonomy, the counselor role is also important, since the students at secondary school need guidance from the teacher.

Resources

Based on the research findings, the role as resources covers three kinds of activities during the class namely; first, the teacher delivered the material by using English, Bahasa Indonesia or mixes both of them Second, the teacher corrected the students' mistakes in orally (mispronunciation and intonation) or in written (ungrammatical sentences or misspelling) and gave feedback to all students. Most of students felt happy because of that and intended to learn more from their mistakes. Third, the teacher gave feedback and enrichment to all students after explaining or doing exercises. The students enjoyed and received all things the teacher given to, The teacher supposes to well, when they are as the resources.. However each student had different need about the sources of learning. In autonomy learning, it is a way to empower the students to search and explore more the knowledge through literacy habit.

Participant

Based on findings, the role as participant covers two kinds of activities namely; first the teacher took part in student learning activities like in group discussion or in accomplishing an exercise, second, the teacher involved students in correcting homework or other task. In doing this activity, the students enjoy the moment, because they would like to know directly the result of the work. The facts showed that, this role sometime occurred spontaneously, whenever the students were doing an activity and the teacher engaged them to correct together. This role contributed to promote the learners' learning autonomy, which the teacher became the learning partner for students. In this case the students learn as much as possible from the teacher and the teacher also can learn from students. So, there will be formed good communication and harmony relationship among teacher and students.

Assessor

Based on the findings, the role as assessor covers only two kinds of learning activities during the class namely; first, the teacher corrected the students' mistakes in pronouncing words or, in ungrammatical sentences and misspelling, gave feedback to students after doing something and second, evaluated orally or written to know how far the students' learning progress after learning a topic. Assessing the students before or after the learning process would give information to the teacher to know how far does the students' learning progress or the mastery level and enabled to decide whether the students may continue to the next topic or not. The reality in the class shows that, the researched teachers have implemented in limited broad such as grading and scoring. They don't cover all aspects of learning achievement and the continually effect for students to learn more or to be the autonomous learners. Actually, there are some kinds of assessment in autonomy learning. They are; self-assessment or peer assessment, challenging homework, project, language portfolio and journal, but the researched teachers only used the usual homework that taken from the textbook.

The Frequency of Teacher Roles in Promoting Learners' Learning Autonomy

There are thirteen EFL teachers as informants in this research. The researcher classified them into teacher A–M based on the four public senior high schools in Ende Regency. The researcher had already observed in their class during three until four times for each teacher. It was because the researcher considered about the teacher's performance in the class that related to the research data. If the researcher had gained the saturate data from the class observation, field note and unstructured interview, he considered stopping or even if not yet, he decided to continue the observation. Based on the findings, the frequency of the EFL teachers' roles can be summarized as presented on the following table:

Table Frequency of EFL Teachers' Role

No	Teachers Role	Schools				Total
		1	2	3	4	
1	Facilitator	48	39	56	26	169
2	Manager	26	9	16	6	57
3	Assessor	20	5	13	5	43
4	Resources	13	4	9	10	36
5	Participant	11	5	9	8	33
6	Counselor	12	7	6	3	28

Table above shows that, the highest frequency of the teachers' role is facilitator. There are 169 times in all teacher activities in the class. It implies that, the teachers have played the facilitator as the most dominant role, although the role was played more based on the teacher-center. The teachers don't have good perspective about his/her role as facilitator, who facilitates the students to learn or to be good learner in the class as well as outside the class. However, the researcher also found that, there are 30, 73 % or less than a half of researched teachers have implemented this role well. It was portrayed in all learning activities in the class. The teachers and their students didn't use English as the target language in the class. The class activities were not designed to stimulate the students to learn more. Shortly, the teachers' role as facilitator hasn't yet significance contribution to promote learners' learning autonomy in EFL class.

The second role is the teacher as manger. There are 57 times for all researched teachers. The role as manager can be seen when the teacher engage students in planning and organizing the class. In fact, the role as manger indicates that, the teachers still have perspective that they are the first and main agent of learning in the class. Thus, in practically the teachers manage the class according to their own point of views. The role as manger covers three sub roles; planning, organizing and controlling. These roles are played to help students to make learning plan, monitor and control the learning process by giving students to responsible and manage their own learning. In fact, many researched teachers were very dominated in teaching and learning process. The third role is assessor. There are 43 time of EFL researched teacher. The role as assessor shows that, the teacher should grade and give score to students. By grading and scoring, the teacher knows, how far the students' learning progress through the mastery level of knowledge, skills and attitude. The reality in the English class indicates that the assessing process has done well. However, the teachers are necessary to learn more about how the grade and score should be.

The fourth is resources. There are 35 times of EFL researched teachers. The role as resources shows that, the teacher is the first model of learner. Through his/her learning experience, the teacher is hoped to share the learning experience to other learners (his/her students) about the knowledge, skills and also the attitude. In fact, the role as resources were limited on give explanation, correct the student's mistake/errors, give feedback and enrichment to students. In this case, the role as the resources hasn't optimal yet in promoting the learners' learning autonomy.

The fifth is participant. There are 33 times of EFL researched teacher. The role as the participant implies that the teacher should become the learning partner or be friends with students. Besides, they can share about learning materials; there will be have harmonious relationship in learning community. In fact the role as participant were limited, such as took part in students group discussion and involve students in correcting the homework or class assignment. The teachers are necessary to know when and how does he/she participate in students' learning. In summary, the role as participant hasn't optimally yet in promoting the learners' learning autonomy. The sixth is counselor. There are 28 times of the EFL researched teacher in. The role as counselor implies that, the teacher should be a guide of students to learn. Beside as the motivator, the teachers should also advisor during the learning process. The reality in the class indicates that, the role as the counselor was limited on give appreciation when the students were able to do something and advise the students when they don't accomplish the task or homework. Both of those activities were not maximal in promoting the learners' learning autonomy.

Based on the data about the frequency of the teacher's role, it can be said that, there are differences total of roles for each teacher. It indicates that, the teacher also has different ability in teaching and managing class. The differences in playing roles in conducting the English class are caused by the mastery level about the general teaching skill, language proficiency, and personal theory of teaching. They are also close related to the pedagogical and professional competence. The teacher who has good competence of pedagogic and professional .They might also have good performance in teaching or play well the roles in the English class. Whereas, those teachers who have not good performances in teaching or play well the role in the class, might be have less competence in pedagogic and professional competence.

Students' Responses toward the Teachers' Roles

Based on the finding, the researcher found that, there were many kinds of students' respond toward the teachers' roles during the English teaching and learning process in the class. However, the students have different responses toward the class activities, the writer classify all of them into eleven namely; first attentive. It occurs when the teacher gives an explanation or instruction about a particular topic and the students show the serious attention. Second note taking. It occurs when the students note down the important points deals with the teacher explanation about a certain topic. Third, execution order. It occurs when the teacher ask students to do a certain exercise dealing with the language skills. Fourth, probing. It occurs when the students explore more about a topic after the teacher give an explanation or ask them to do, fifth felling happy. It occurs when the student join the class activities happily. Sixth asking questions. It occurs when the students creative to propose question to the teacher after delivering the materials. Seventh, curiosity. It occurs when the student want to know more about something after the teacher give them explanation or by their own creative. Eight, submissive. It occurs when the students obey to whatever the teacher said or the teacher wants them to do. Ninth, energetic. It occurs when the students have good spirit to do all the class activities. Tenth, getting bored. It occurs when the students show their unpleasant attitude to what they do or being joined and last open minded. This respond occur when the student get some input from the teacher deals with their learning achievement. Every student has different way to respond to the teacher's role. It is depend on their learning habit. Each respond has the certain meaning for student and also teacher. It has positive tendencies to the learning effect.

Based on the three major points of findings, the writer matched them with the concept of autonomy learning, there are five basic aspects of autonomy learning. They are; first the learners supposes to take responsibility for their own learning activities, second, the learners supposes to set their goals of learning, third, the learners supposes to select the learning materials, fourth, the learners supposes to monitor and assess their own learning through his/her learning journals and self-assessment form. Fifth, the learners suppose to evaluate the effects and effectiveness of their learning.

Dealing with the six teachers' roles to promote the learners learning autonomy, the writer also classifies all findings into two parts. They are positive findings and negative finding. The positive findings are those learning activities that related to promote the learners' learning autonomy. The activities are 1). Give instruction to students to do something like read a text, observes pictures, discuss a topic or do an exercise, 2). Control students when they are discussing or doing exercise, 3). Use learning media to support the learning process, 4). Provide chance to students to propose questions deals with a topic, 5). Facilitate students to do exercise related to the language skills, 6). Give students individual or group task, 7). Inform about the next topic or learning activities to prepare before next meeting, 8). Give appreciation or reward to students after answering or doing something, 9). Advice students to be diligent in doing tasks and also those students who have lack participation in the class, 10). Explain the material by using English, 11). Correct the students' mistakes and give feedback and enrichment, 12). Takes part in student' learning activities 13). Did evaluation orally or written. However, all the learning activities are classified as the positive findings, but they are kinds of teacher-center approach practical. Therefore, all the roles have not yet toward the implementation of promoting the learners learning autonomy.

The Negative findings are those kinds of learning activities that don't have related to promote the learners' learning autonomy such as 1). Begin the class by introducing basic competence, topic, learning objectives, and attainment indicators, 2). Check or correct the students' homework, 3). Explain the material by using Bahasa Indonesia and 4). Engage students in correcting the homework or class assignment. All those of learning activities don't have contribution to promote the learners' learning autonomy at all.

Conclusions

Based on the finding and discussions of this study, the writer presents some conclusion that related to the research problems. First, the EFL teachers in Ende Regency have played the basic roles deals with the effort to promote the learners' learning autonomy in their class. The roles are facilitator, manager, assessor, resources, participant and counselor. However, the roles have not directed yet to promote the learner learning autonomy. It was affected by the teachers' play more dominate in teaching and learning process. It can be seen on what they have performed in the class.. The teaching and learning activities were designed by the teachers themselves, without any consideration about the learners' background, skill and the learning ability, so they do not have adequate opportunity to learn by their own. On the other hand, many teachers didn't use English as the target language in class interaction; so many students have had similar opinion that the English class was not interesting.

Second, the most roles which played by the teacher were facilitator and then followed by manger, assessor, resources participant, and counselor. Thus, every English teacher has different frequencies in organizing their class.. On the other hand, in autonomy learning class, the teacher supposes to play more as facilitator, which the teacher should facilitate the students to learn, either in the class or outside the class. The teacher also supposes to play other roles in right time and place; depends on the condition.

Third, there were less than a half of the researched teachers who often used English in their class. They are teacher D and E from SMA Negeri 1 Ende and teacher F and H from SMA Negeri 2 Ende. For those teachers, the teaching and learning process were designed and organized to stimulate the learners to learn English and the classroom really like the English learners community. Meanwhile, there was more than a half of researched teachers used more Bahasa Indonesia as medium of teaching English. It indicates that, the level of English language proficiency is low. Whereas Those teachers who use more English as medium of teaching proved that they have better English language proficiency.

Fourth, deals with the effort to promote the learners' learning autonomy, many teachers gave homework and informed the other topic for the next meeting before ending his/her class, but the homework didn't stimulate the students' learning to enrich the knowledge and the next topic didn't give positive effect to prepare him/her self. Beside, the teacher also didn't do the assessment as it should be in learning autonomy such as self and peer assessment, challenging homework, project, portfolio and learning journal.

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