THE ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' LESSON PLAN IN IMPLEMENTING THEME-BASED INSTRUCTION FOR TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS

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Abstract: Lesson plan is an important part of instruction which consists of some aspects (Goals, Objectives, Activities, Media, and Assessments). This paper reports the investigation of the aspects taken in the lesson plan in implementing Theme-Based instruction. As many as 15 lesson plans, written by two English teachers in primary school, were analyzed using qualitative method and descriptive case study as its framework. The data were obtained from document analysis. Theories from Cameron (2001), Moon (2000), Brown (2001), and Richards (2001) were adapted in analyzing the documents. The results showed that the lesson plans contained the necessary aspects, and the activities resembled Theme-Based instruction. However, improvements are needed in composing Behavioral Objectives, encouraging students' responsibility, and producing learning outcomes.

Keywords: lesson plan, theme-based, young learners

Introduction

Indonesian schools are gradually shifting their education system from Curriculum 2006 to Curriculum 2013. One of differences between Curriculum 2013 with the previous one is the reduction of subjects taught in the classroom from ten to six. This happens because some subjects will be integrated to another which implies that Curriculum 2013 puts skill integration as its ultimate goal.

To accommodate the demands of Curriculum 2013, Theme-Based teaching is assumed to be an appropriate approach to teach English to students in primary levels.

Theme-Based teaching is a model of teaching in which the instruction conducted by teacher is put under one particular topic. When Theme-Based teaching is applied, it is believed that it will give meaningful contribution for young learners because during a certain period their live will revolve around one topic. The Theme-Based teaching itself has been practiced in UK primary classroom since 1960s (Cameron, 2001). Furthermore, Theme-based teaching aims to get learners using English 'in a purposeful way to find out things and do things which have meaning

and interest for them and to communicate the results to others' (Moon, 2000:119).

Whether or not the approach of Theme-Based teaching will succeed, its implementation lies on some factors. According to *Dokumen Kurikulum* 2013, one of the factors that can lead to the success of curriculum implementation is the compatibility of human resources in this case the teachers. The latter is in line with Dermody (2004) who states that the success of Theme-Based teaching relies on the role of teachers and their knowledge as well as competencies. In order to provide an effective lesson that is based on Theme-based teaching, every activity in classroom has to be arranged in a purposeful way. This makes lesson planning a fundamental stage in teaching-learning cycle. Combining good lesson planning and Theme-based teaching can initiate effective instruction. Yet, considering that Theme-Based is a new term for English teachers in Indonesia, problems are likely to be encountered during the process of designing the lesson plans.

Based on the fact that the success of Curriculum 2013 implementation for the sustainability of English teaching-learning process, the research explores the process of how the Indonesian primary school teachers preparing a lesson plan that can meet the demands of theme-based teaching and Curriculum 2013.

Literature Review

- **Definition of Lesson Planning**

Teachers are occupied with a set of written steps about what they are going to do in the classroom called lesson plan. Brown (2001:149) describes lesson plan as "a set of activities which "represent 'steps' along a curriculum before which and after which you have a hiatus (a day or more) in which to evaluate and prepare for the next lesson". Additionally, Woodward (2001) states that lesson planning is not only in a written form, it can be defined as everything a teacher does when s/he is thinking of the next lesson such as visualizing, reading resources, or even staring at the ceiling.

Harmer (2007) highlights two important points of why to plan a lesson. Firstly, lesson plan is guide for teachers to refer to. Creative changes may be done to adapt with what actually happens in the classroom but in the end lesson plan is still a guide for teachers to fall back on. Secondly, it relates to teacher's relationship with students. Teacher who has done planning beforehand suggests their commitment toward teaching and will get positive respond from students.

- **Aspects of Lesson Plan**

There are no standard formats of what a lesson plan should contain. But it is agreed that there are several essential elements that should be included in lesson plan (Brown, 2001).

1. Goals

Goal is a general change that is hoped to be achieved by learners within completing a course or program and are derived from needs analysis done to gather information needed related to the learners (Richards, 2001). Goals composed for primary schools should exemplify children's characteristics, and more importantly they should be achievable for young learners.

2. Objectives

Objectives contain what teacher wants the students to accomplish at the end of the lesson (Brown, 2001). In some cases, objectives are often overlapping with goals. But Richards (2001) has made clear distinctions of objectives compared to goals. The way of expressing objectives is known as Behavioral Objectives which "… take the idea of describing learning outcomes … by further operationalizing the definition of behavior" (Richards, 2001:13). Operationalizing the learning objectives can be done by including the aspects of "ABCD" as proposed by Mager, Findlay and Nathan (Richards, 2001). "A"

stands for "Audience" and refers to the students as the subject. "B" stands for "Behavior" that defines performance to be learned stated by action verbs. "C" stands for "Condition" under which the demonstration of students' performance is to occur. "D" stands for "Degree" which describes how well the students must be able to demonstrate the performance.

3. Activities

In accordance with the implementation of Theme-Based teaching, there are some distinct characteristics to be exemplified in learning activities. They are as follow and as suggested by Cameron (2001): responsibility on the students, introduction of new vocabulary items, Theme-Based learning outcomes, teachers' regular monitoring, and oral production.

Moon (2000) also emphasizes some other essential principles that should be considered before designing learning activities. Learning activities made for young learners need to follow these principles: concrete to abstract, receptive to productive skills, personal to impersonal, and controlled to less controlled.

4. Media

Wright (1989) states several principles to guide and ease teachers in selecting media. He states that media should be easily prepared or obtained, be easily used and operated in classroom

situation, attract children's attention, be meaningful and authentic, and improve children's language skills. Based on Wright's statement above, the use of media should fulfill three principles; practicality, appropriateness, and effectiveness.

5. Assessments

In analyzing the aspect of assessment used in the lesson plan, principles of assessments proposed by Cameron (2001) were employed. Firstly, the assessment should be able to measure what is formulated in the objectives regarding what and how well students should demonstrate certain action verbs. Secondly, the assessment should be congruent with activities and using familiar activities from their classroom experience. Finally, assessment for young learners should be seen from learning-centered perspective which focuses on social interaction. So, the assessment should be focused more to be done in group work or through oral assessment.

Methodology

This study employed qualitative research and applied descriptive study as its framework. Qualitative research was employed to its nature which provides actual settings as the direct source of data (Bogdan and Biklen, 2006). They also state that descriptive study views that everything is potential to provide a clue that reveals more comprehensive understanding.

There were two teachers from a private elementary school in Bandung chosen as respondents of this study. T1 taught third graders and T2 taught fifth graders. Each teacher contributed two learning cycles. There are 15 lesson plans gathered from T1 and T2. T1 contributed eight lesson plans, four in each learning cycle. T2 contributed seven lesson plans, four in Cycle 1 and three lesson plans in Cycle 2.

The contents of the Theme-Based lesson plans were justapoxed with theories proposed by Cameron (2001), Moon (2000), Brown (2001), and Richards (2001) to analyze the lesson plan. The rubric used to analyze the data is presented in the table below.

Table 1
The rubric to analyze the lesson plan

Aspects of Lesson Plan	
Aspects	**Characteristics**
Goals	Achievable for young learners
Objectives	Congruent with goals
	Containing "ABCD" aspects
	Containing 3 learning domains
Activities	In line with Objectives
	Theme Based Characteristics • Encouraging students responsibility • Exposing vocabulary items • Producing learning outcome(s) • Showing teacher's regular monitoring • Maximizing oral production (repetitive pattern, rhyme, rhythm, and song)
	Concrete to Abstract
	Receptive to Productive skill
	Personal to Impersonal
	Controlled to Less-controlled
Media	Practicality
	Appropriateness
	Effectiveness
Assessment	Congruent with Objectives and Activities
	Using familiar activities
	Retaining the perspective of social-interaction

**Data Presentation and Discussion**

All 15 lesson plans in this study were analyzed based on the theories proposed by Brown (2001), Cameron (2001) and Moon (2000). There are five aspects that were analyzed; goals, objectives, learning activities, media, and assessment. Furthermore, those aspects were analyzed to find out to what extent the aspects have reflected the proper implementation of theme based teaching and have been able to optimize students' learning achievement.

• **Goals**

The findings of this study showed that the instructional goals were achievable for young learners. It is reflected by the measurable verbs used in the instructional goals which were taken from Bloom's taxonomy. The verbs used in the lesson plans are presented in Chart 1 below.

Chart 1
The operational verbs used in instructional goals
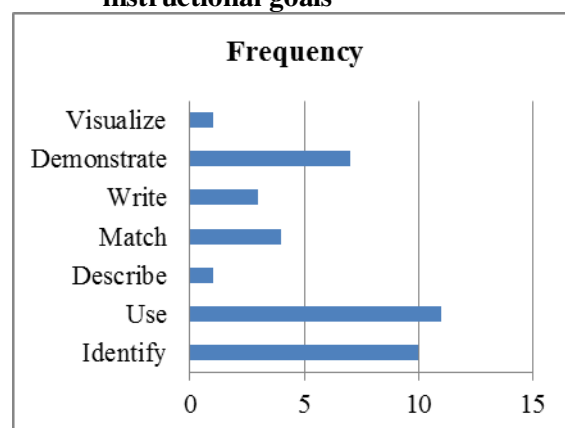
The chart shows the operational verbs used in 15 lesson plans and the frequency of their occurrence. There are seven verbs used in the lesson plans. Six of them are measurable. The immeasurable verb is "Visualize" since it is considered difficult to assess how students visualize any particular thing. The could be changed into "Illustrate" which is measurable.

- **Objectives**

In this study, three aspects of learning objectives were analyzed: congruence with goals, existence of "ABCD" as a representation of Behavioral Objective theory ("A" [Audience], "B" [Behavior], "C" [Condition], and "D" [Degree]), and existence of three learning domains (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor).

The first aspect, the congruence between each objective with its respective goal, is represented in the table below.

Table 2
Congruence of Goals and Objectives

Goals	Objectives
- Identify	*- Identify* five names of occupation …
- Visualize	*- Draw* one preferred occupation …
- Use	*- Express* one preferred occupation …
- Describe	*- Describe* a job of each occupation …
- Write	*- Write* seven names of public places …
- Match	*- Match* picture with its proper name …
- Demonstrate	*- Demonstrate* simple dialogue …

It can be noticed that both goals and objectives used similar action verbs. The congruence between objectives and goals shown in the table implies that both teachers have satisfactorily put full concern on how to design objectives which are congruent with goals by using equivalent action verb in every corresponding goal and objective.

The next aspect is the existence of "ABCD" features in the objectives. The example of complete and incomplete "ABCD" features in objectives is shown in the following table.

Table 3
The summary of "ABCD" aspects in the Objectives

Objectives with complete "ABCD" aspects	1. In the end of the lesson, students [A] are able to identify five names of occupation [B] after being shown pictures [C] using correct pronunciation [D]. 2. In the end of the lesson, students [A] are able to write nine kinds of occupation [B] based on provided pictures [C] correctly [D].
Objectives without complete "ABCD" aspects	1. In the end of the lesson, students [A] are able to identify four kinds of occupation [B] correctly [D]. 2. In the end of the lesson, students [A] are able to describe the job of an occupation [B] correctly [D].

There were 24 objectives designed within 15 lesson plans yet only eight objectives represented the Behavioral Objective theory. The other 16 objectives were missing "C" feature. Contrary with the previous aspect, teachers' comprehension is still lacking on creating objectives which consist of complete "ABCD". They often overlooked to put Condition in their objectives to specify certain circumstance in which the students should be able to perform certain skill.

The last aspect is the existence of three learning domains. From Table 3 it can be seen that the objectives emphasized only on cognitive domain. Affective domain appeared at some point when students were encouraged to be cooperative and independent. Psychomotor domain was sustained at some point through drawing activity and games. However, compared to cognitive domain, still affective and psychomotor domain appeared less frequent.

Table 4
The summary of activities that reflected Theme-Based characteristics

Theme-Based Characteristics	Activities
Encouraging students responsibility	- Teacher asked the students to mention their preferences of certain foods and drinks.
Exposing vocabulary items	- In every meeting, T1 always reviewed recycled vocabulary and introduced new ones.
Producing learning outcome(s)	- T1 did not design any activities which produced learning outcomes.
Showing the existence of oral production	- Students were asked to act out simple dialogue
Showing the existence of teacher's regular monitoring	- In confirmation stage, T1 gave positive feedback, motivates low achievers, helps to solve problems, and open question-answer session.

• **Activities**

How the activities were designed which exemplified Theme-Based characteristics is presented in general in the table above. The activities designed by both teachers reflected most of the characteristics of Theme-Based teaching. Those activities emphasized on giving exposure of vocabulary items, and putting the students in the urge to construct oral production. Both teachers demonstrated their role in monitoring students' progress by giving feedback, support, and motivation. The characteristics which were present less frequently are students' responsibility in completing the tasks and the production of learning outcomes in form of something to be displayed.

Learning activities should also fulfill the principles of sequencing activities. The table below presents how the activities designed by the teachers met the principles.

Table 5
The summary of activities that reflected the principles of sequencing activities

Principles of sequencing Activities	Activities
Concrete to Abstract	- T2 showed flashcards first before asking the students to do the tasks.
Receptive to Productive Skills	- T2 built students' knowledge first by drilling the expressions before asking them to perform simple dialogue
Personal to Impersonal	- Teacher designed personalized activities for the students since they were asked their favorite food or drink.
Controlled to Less controlled	- Teacher gave a clear guide of how the students should complete the task (controlled).

Regarding the principles of sequencing activities, well-sequenced activities were successfully created in accommodating young learners' characteristics.

• **Media**

The table below shows what learning media are used in all 15 lesson plans. What is shown in the table suggests preparing media was considred important to support young learners' characteristics, yet easy to obtain and practical to use in classroom. The media were also used in a way to support the improvement of students' language skill. More varied kinds of media were to be used in the following instructional activity to accommodate not only students with visual intelligence but also those with other intelligences.

Table 6
The instructional media used by both teachers

Type of Media	How It Is Used	Practicality Appropriateness Effectiveness
The teacher herself	Done by T1 pointing at herself to indi-cate "teacher" profession.	V
Flash-cards	Shown to provide visual support.	V
Flipchart	Given to the students on which they had to complete group work.	V
"Bring Me Game"	Used to introduce plural form.	V
The weather outside	Explored by the students to identify the weather that day.	V
Story	Told to drill vocabularies	V
White-board and Marker	Used when students were asked to draw on the board	V
"What's Missing Game"	Applied to check students' skill in memorizing.	V
"Match Making Game"	Applied to help students with repetition and oral practice.	V
Puppet	Shown to support the delivery of storytelling	V
"Snatch Game"	Applied to test students' listening skills.	V

• **Assessments**

The table 7 presents how each form of assessment derived from its respective activity and objective. It is found that the assessments were designed to measure what were stated in the objectives. The assessments designed also utilized the activity which were experienced previously by the students so the implementation of the assessment was familiar for them. In relation to the learning-centered perspective which employed social interaction and helpful others, most of the assessments made use role play to accommodate social interaction. On the other hand, there were still several assessments in which students did the task individually so that they did not reflect the learning-centered perspective which suggested the children do the task in group with helpful others.

Table 7
The assessments designed by both teachers

Objectives	: Identify
Activities	: Listening
Assessments	: Mention four kinds of occupation
Objectives	: Draw
Activities	: Writing
Assessments	: Draw an illustration of self-preferred occupation
Objectives	: Express
Activities	: Speaking
Assessments	: Expressing self-preferred occupation using the expression "I want to be ..."
Objectives	: Describe
Activities	: Speaking
Assessments	: Describe a job of an occupation using the expression "She is a nurse. She takes care of patient."
Objectives	: Use
Activities	: Speaking
Assessments	: Express particular weather using "It is … / It is not …"
Objectives	: Match
Activities	: Reading
Assessments	: Match pictures with correct proper names
Objectives	: Demonstrate
Activities	: Speaking
Assessments	: Role-play about the expression of asking and giving something

Conclusions

From the discussions presented earlier, it can be concluded that both teachers were aware of the importance of designing English lessons in which all five aspects (goals, objectives, activities, media, and assessment) were all intertwined. Teachers were able to make goals which were measurable, objectives which were corresponding with the respective goals, activities which were sequentially well-arranged, media which were practical, effective, and appropriate, and assessments which accommodated learning-centered perspective for children. However, some inconsistencies occurred when the teachers were not successful in creating learning objectives with complete "ABCD" (Audience, Behavior, Condition, Degree) features. Almost all of the objectives also neglected the psychomotor and affective learning domains.

Regarding the Theme-Based teaching itself, it is found that both teachers have been able to implement the characteristics which are 'exposing vocabulary items', 'exposing oral production', and 'showing teacher's regular monitoring'. However, there are two characteristics which were frequently neglected; they are 'encouraging students' responsibility' and 'producing learning outcomes'.

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