

Project Based Learning in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Course for Pre-Service Teacher

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Abstract. *This paper attempts to explore the benefits and how Project Based Learning (PBL) is actually applied in ESP course. It also aims to investigate the problems arising in ESP course for pre-service teachers in English Education in IAIN Raden Intan Lampung. Teaching ESP course should cover both theoretically and practically. Pre-service teachers in IAIN Raden Intan Lampung tend to understand the theory but have no idea in applying it in real situation. PBL can be an alternative in teaching ESP course in which students are not only learning the theory but also making the project to implement the theory they have gotten. Besides presenting theories, the students of ESP course were asked to design course books for certain field of study. The books were designed based on the target need analysis that they have done by interviewing and observing the target situation. Assigning the book project enabled to raise the students' creativity in designing an ESP course book both content focus and language focus. It can also stimulate the students' ability in creating book design and template all at once. However, the lecturers' guidance is necessary since some students are confused in determining and arranging exercises on the book.*

Key words: *ESP course, Project Based Learning, pre-services teacher*

A. INTRODUCTION

According to Hutchinson & Waters (1987), English for Specific Purposes is just one branch of English as a Second Language/ English as a Foreign Language, which are themselves the main branches of English Language Teaching in

General. In other words, ESP is an approach in teaching English for specific learners.

ESP has been regarded as a necessary subject taught for English pre-service teacher. This subject aims to give general description about how to design an English course with specific purposes and specific learners. The goal of ESP course for English pre-service teachers is to guide the students in designing English course in order to meet the specific learner's need.

Pre-service teachers of English Education Study Program of IAIN Raden Intan Lampung are expected to have comprehensive competences, such as pedagogic and professional competence. ESP course given to the English pre-service teachers is an effort to gain students' competence in designing English course, from defining language items until evaluation. It is considered as an important competence that should be possessed by students in English Education since they will be prepared to be an English teacher who will design their own course.

The materials covered in this subject are divided into two big parts, those are ESP Course Design and Application of ESP. ESP course design includes ways of describing language, model of learning, need analysis, and approaches to course design. Meanwhile, application of ESP includes designing syllabus, evaluating materials, designing materials, defining methodology, and evaluation. The outline of the learning centered of ESP course proposed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) can be seen in Figure 1.

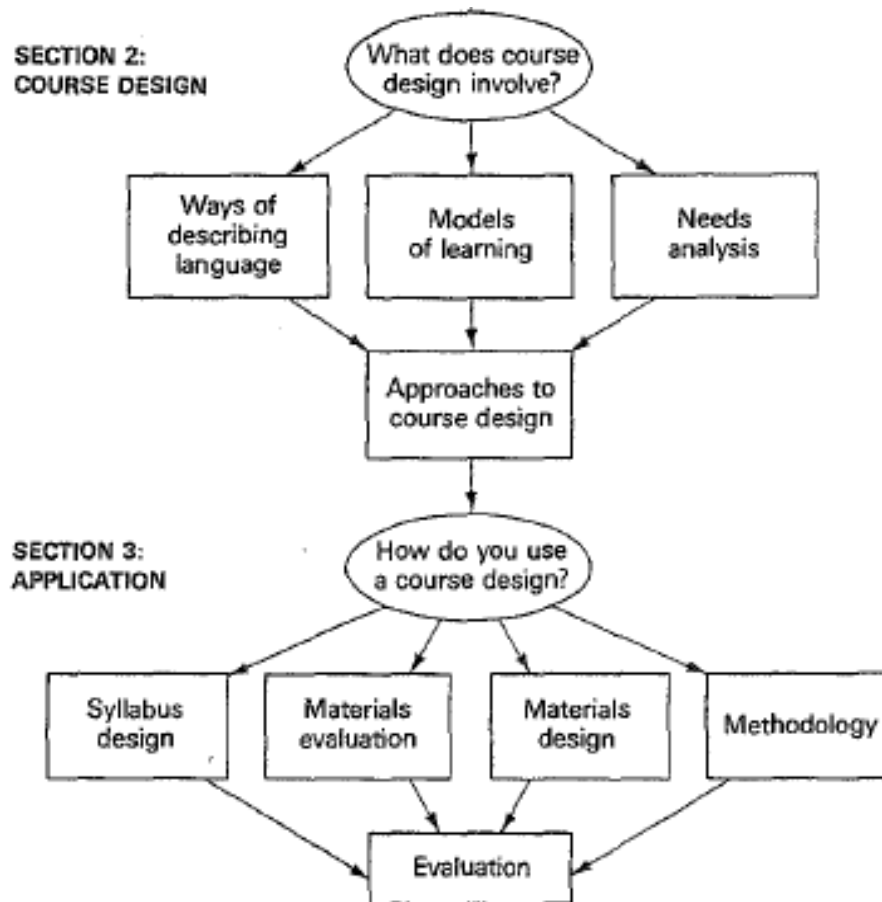


Figure 1: Outline of learning centered approach to ESP Course.

However, teaching ESP for English pre-service teacher is not that easy since the students got difficulties in relating the theories into practice. Teaching materials in ESP should cover both theoretical and practical so that the students can achieve better in understanding the materials.

One alternative can be applied in ESP course is project-based learning (PBL). This method of teaching can be beneficial for the students in comprehending both theory and practice of ESP materials.

Thomas (2000) said that project-based learning (PBL) is a model that organizes learning around projects. The projects are complex tasks based on challenging

questions or problems that involve students in design, problem-solving, decision-making, and/or investigative activities, that give students opportunities to work relatively autonomously over extended periods of time, and culminate in realistic products or presentations (Jones, Rasmussen, & Moffitt, 1997; Thomas, Mergendoller, & Michaelson, 1999 in Thomas, 2000).

Moreover, Patton (2012) states that Project-based learning refers to students designing, planning, and carrying out an extended project that produces a publicly-exhibited output such as a product, publication, or presentation.

Meanwhile, Stoller (2006) proposed the definition of PBL as: (1) having both a process and product; (2) giving students (partial) ownership of the project; (3) extended over a period of time (several days, weeks, or months); (4) integrating skills; (5) developing student understanding of a topic through the integration of language and content; (6) students both collaborating with others and working on their own; (7) holding students responsible for their own learning through the gathering, processing, and reporting of information gathered from target-language resources; (8) assigning new roles and responsibilities to both students and teacher; (9) providing a tangible final product; and (10) reflecting on both the process and the product.

From the definition above, it can be concluded that in PBL, the students are given a project based on questions or problems to be solved, by designing, making decision, and/or investigating over a period of time.

In PBL, the project is the central teaching strategy, students encounter and learn the central concepts of the discipline via the project (Thomas, 2000). By teaching ESP course for English pre-service teacher by using PBL, the students are given some systematic tasks related to the materials on ESP, then in the end of the

semester the students will result on some products which can be used by themselves or others.

There are set of criteria of PBL according to Thomas, such as:

1. PBL projects are central, not peripheral to the curriculum.
2. PBL projects are focused on questions or problems that “drive” students to encounter (and struggle with) the central concepts and principles of a discipline.
3. Projects involve students in a constructive investigation.
4. Projects are student-driven to some significant degree.
5. Projects are realistic, not school-like.

From the theory above, teacher should give the project which still have close relationship to the materials of the course. The project should also be a tool which can help students in comprehending the central concepts and principles of a discipline. The activities covered in the project should be realistic, based on the existing problem/reality.

Patton (2012) provides some basic steps in applying PBL in teaching learning proces, such as:

1. Get an idea

The final outcome of a project might be a product (such as a machine or an artwork), a performance (such as a theatre piece or a debate), or a service (such as giving a lesson to younger students) that the outcome be something that students (as well as other people) value.

Other important point in getting the idea is the projects will be able to help students to master the content that they are required to learn and the students can learn something meaningful from the projects.

2. Design the project

Backwards planning is a very simple way of working. To begin, the teachers write down everything that they expect their students to learn from doing this project. This could include all kinds of things: knowledge of course-specific content, generic skills like working in teams and critiquing drafts, specialist skills (which could range from statistical analysis to carving wood), and personal attributes such as self-confidence.

It is important to prepare project plan template for the students to ensure that they don't forget about anything important.

3. Tune the project

This means presenting the plans to a group of colleagues, who will give constructive feedback, come up with ideas that haven't thought of, and warn the potential problems that may not have anticipated.

4. Do the project

There are many ways to begin a project: one is to start by giving the students space to talk about what they are concerned about and interested in, and then talking about how the project can speak to these concerns and interests.

This is a good opportunity to show the students a model of the type of product they will be creating. During the process of doing the project, the teacher should monitor the students' works and give feedbacks. When project-based learning is working, teachers' roles are transformed. Once they cease to be the sole assessor of their students' work, they become less like referees at a sporting event, and more like coaches, every bit as invested in their success as the players are (and every bit as uncertain about the outcome).

5. Exhibit the project

This steps allows the students to promote their project go public. There are lots of possible venues for exhibitions: museums, galleries, parks, cafes, community centres, etc.

Application of Project Based Learning

Naturally Patton's model was applied in this study with several modification. The application can be seen as follows:

1. Get an Idea

In getting the idea, the writer related the theories of ESP with the reality. It came from the reality that there are still few coursebooks of ESP in particular fields such as, English for Math, English for Biology, English for Physics, English for Primary Teacher, English for Kindergarten Teacher, and so on. Meanwhile, English Subject becomes general subject which is taught in several study programs in IAIN Raden Intan Lampung. From this problem, the writer set the idea to use project based learning in ESP course for English pre-service teacher in which the project is to design coursebook of ESP for particular fields. The materials designed by some proper steps from analyzing the needs of learners, designing the syllabus, designing the materials, until designing the book appearance.

2. Design and Tune the Project

In this phase, the writer collaborated with other ESP lecturer in English Education Study Program of IAIN Raden Intan Lampung. The writer set the project goal, decided the book content for each class, created the format of coursebooks, prepared the project timeline, prepared the assessment and monitoring checklist. The distribution of the tasks and the detail of projects can be seen in Table 1 and Table 2.

3. Do the Project

In this phase, the writer first introduced the projects to the students in the beginning of the class. The writer explained the details of the project from the very beginning steps until final result. The project of one class was to make a coursebook for particular field. The fields of study were distributed randomly to 5 classes which became the sample of the research. Each class was divided into 9 (nine) groups. Every group consisted of 3 until 4 students. The task of every group was to design materials in one unit of ESP coursebook which should reveal language focus and content focus. In the end of the project, every group in one class should compile all the unit from unit 1 until 9 into a complete ESP coursebook.

In the process of doing the project, the writer assessed the students' progress, the students' attitude towards the projects, and also the students' comprehension about the basic concepts and the principals of ESP course.

4. Exhibit the Project

The writer did not ask the students to do such kind of exhibition of project result, but their projects were collected in the library of English Education Study Program, so that all students of English Education and the lecturers can use the coursebooks. The projects should be in the form of hardfile and softfile.

Table 1. The Distribution of the Tasks

Class	Task Distribution	Number of Unit
4A	Coursebook of English for Biology	9 units
4B	Coursebook of English for Business	9 units
4C	Coursebook of English for Basic Mathematics	9 units
4D	Coursebook of English for Primary Teacher	9 units
4E	Coursebook of English for Tourism	9 units

Table 2. Detail Projects of ESP Course

Time	Task	Detail
month 1	Doing need analysis.	<p>The students were asked to interview/ observe/give questionnaire to other students in other study program like biology, mathematics, etc., in order to get the information of students' need towards English.</p> <p>The result of the interview/observation/questionnaire were analyzed to know the need of the students.</p>
month 2	Designing Syllabus	The syllabus were designed based on the results of need analysis. The syllabus was made in a simple form, which consist of language focus and content focus. Every class produced one syllabus with 9 submaterials which would be developed further into teaching materials.
month 3	Designing Course book	The syllabus was developed into materials of ESP. The course books should cover language skills, vocabularies, and grammatical features. The materials of one field of study are divided into 9 units, in which every unit was designed by each group.
month 4	Final Process	The students designs the book cover, table of content, acknowledgement, reference, and the book template of compiled unit from units from unit 1 until 9. In the final process, the students will result on one coursebook of ESP for particular field, in the form of hard and soft copy.

B. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed qualitative case study methodology in which this methodology produced descriptive data. This type of case study was used to describe a phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred (Yin, 2003).

Descriptive analysis was used to describe the focus of the study. In this study, the focus was to describe the teaching learning proces of ESP course by using PBL, the benefits, and the problems. It had three research questions, such as: (1) how is teaching ESP course by using PBL?; (2) what are the benefits of using PBL in ESP course?; and (3) what are the problems faced by English pre-service teacher in ESP class?. The research was conducted on March – September 2016 in English Education Study Program of IAIN Raden Intan Lampung.

Participants

The participants of this research were the fourth semester students of English Education Study Program of IAIN Raden Intan Lampung in the Academic Year of 2015/2016. The English students in the fourth semester were 7 classes. The writer determined 5 classes to be the participants of the study, those were 4A class until 4E class

Research Instrument

Data collection techniques used in case study mostly were observation, and interview. The data had been collected by observing the ESP course in the classroom to find appropriate information needed for obtaining the objectives of the study. While teaching, the writer observed the students' attitude towards the lesson, their comprehension of ESP course both theoretically and practically, their efforts while doing the project. The writer also observed the students' project in the end of the semester.

Interview was used to gather data from people about opinions, beliefs, and feelings about situations in their own words (Ary, 2010). A personal interview was used to gather the additional information from students on the problems they have faced during the ESP class.

C. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This study attempts to explore the application of project based learning in ESP course for English pre-service teacher in English Education Study Program in IAIN Raden Intan Lampung. The main objectives of this study was to investigate whether PBL was effective enough for English pre-service teacher in comprehending ESP materials.

The result of the observation shows that the students were getting confused in the beginning of doing the projects. The first project was doing need analysis to the target situations. To did this, the students were asked to arrange questionnaire and set the interview to the targets in order to gain basic information from the target situation. Most of the students got difficulties in organizing the questionnaires and questions for interviewing the target. By guiding from the lecturer, the students designed the outline of questionnaires and the interview. The instrument should reveal the students need in English in particular field of study. The students could get the basic information of the target situations by analyzing the result of interviews and observation The basic information the students got in need analysis were devided into two parts. The first was about the students personal information and their attitude towards English, like their motivation, their proficiency according to themselves. The second part was the students need in English, the students lack of English, and the students want in English, include the topics that they want to learn in English.

In designing the syllabus, the students felt difficult in determining the language focus in a unit and relating it with content focus, especially for class 4C which did the project about mathematics fields. The focus overlaped in some groups. To overcome this problem, the writer asked every group to communicate each other so that there were no similar topic in a coursebook. Each group should submit the outline of their unit which consist of language focus and content focus. They

should also determined the title of the unit. The students could use relevant syllabus for references.

Once they got certain topic in every group, the students could design the outline about what they would write in the whole unit. In making the outline, some groups still have problems about how to relate one and others, start from the brainstorming until the end of the unit in order to make the systematic writing in a unit of coursebook.

In the phase of the designing the materials, the students found some relevant materials from the internet, books, and other resources. They arranged the exercises based on the four language skills, and also provided vocabulary enrichment and gramatical exercises. In constructing the exercises, there were still grammar mistakes and error typing. In the final checking, the writer asked the students to do proofreading before banding the book. However, in developing the materials, the students could create the beneficial coursebook which can be used as an additional materials in teaching and learning process of certain ESP class. Somehow, there still need to have continuous revision of the coursebook in order to get better teaching materials.

Based on the result of observation and interview, it can be summarized that there were some benefits in teaching and learning ESP course by using PBL, as follows:

1. PBL can stimulate the students in designing the English materials for particular learner and particular fields of study.
2. PBL can promote the students in making decision in the process of finishing the project.
3. By using PBL, the students can result in a meaningful product which still have close relation with the course materials, and the products can be used by themselves or others.
4. This project can stimulate the students in creating the designs of coursebook.

Meanwhile, there were still some problems faced by the students in the process of doing the projects, such as:

1. The students got difficulties in relating the language focus and content focus when they design the outline of the units.
2. The students still need much guidance in determining and arranging the exercises on the coursebook.

To solve those problems, the writer did some guidance for each group in determining and arranging the exercises. The writer also gave some examples of ESP coursebook so that the students can get ideas about the organization of the units.

In the end of doing project, the writer measured the students' understanding about the theories and the implementation of theory into practice by using a test, such as how to conduct need analysis of particular learners, how to design the syllabus, how to evaluate the teaching materials, and how to design materials.

The result of the test showed that most of the students understood how to implement the theories into practices. The students can elaborate the steps in designing English course including the materials design. The students can find relevant and appropriate materials when designing the ESP coursebook. However, there were still some exercises which need to be developed, and there were some parts of the units which need to be organized more systematically. But overall, the students can achieve meaningful projects which are valuable for themselves and others.

To sum up, Project Based Learning had been proven to be an effective way for pre service teacher in English Education Study Program to stimulate their competence in designing the materials in the form of coursebook, by doing proper steps from

analysing the learner's need, designing the syllabus, until designing the appropriate materials.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion and finding, it can be concluded that Project Based Learning can be one of effective ways in teaching ESP course. In learning the basic concept of ESP, the students not only learn theoretically but they did by designing the projects. During the project making, the students would face some problems related to ESP course which should be overcome together with the groups, and those problems would be discussed in the class. These were called as learning by doing. The students would be more comprehend the concept of ESP because they learnt in two ways, theoretically and practically.

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