
Enhancing Teachers' Professionalism and Students' Learning Outcomes through Lesson Study

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Abstract

In this study, the writer as a teacher model, tried to explore: (1) the advantages and disadvantages of lesson study applied in a theoretical subject class; and (2) the effectiveness of it for students' learning outcomes. It was conducted in a class called *Introduction to Linguistics* with 30 students. There were four cycles and four colleagues who took part as the observers. In each cycle, she did PLAN, DO, and SEE. Then, descriptive analysis was used to elaborate teachers' professionalism and students' learning outcomes through observation sheets, discussion, and test. The result shows that there are some benefits, i.e. (1) the teacher can prepare her lesson plans and teaching media more carefully; (2) she can conduct her class more confidently and professionally; (3) she can get evaluation about her teaching process after her class ends; (4) the students can be more active and study more seriously; and (5) they can achieve better scores compared to other classes which don't use lesson study. However, there are also some disadvantages, e.g. (1) the teacher needs more time to prepare her lesson plans and teaching media; and (2) some students may feel depressed because of the observers' attendance.

Keywords: *lesson study, teacher professionalism, students' learning outcomes*

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Introduction

Teaching English in Indonesia is considered to be teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) because Indonesia is a country where English is not the native language (Paul, 2003). EFL teachers often find difficulties in making their students use the target language, i.e. English, in their classes. This happens as their students not only have little exposure to English in their daily lives, but their native languages also have different structure and writing systems. As a consequence, students

often feel afraid, shy, and not confident in expressing what they want to say in the target language. They prefer to use their native languages in most of their time in their English classes in order to avoid making mistakes. Considering those phenomena, EFL teachers need to spend more time and be more creative in designing their lesson activities so that their students will indirectly be able to produce the target language as they expected.

The quality of teaching and learning should be improved from time to time. It

needs several supporting factors to consider such as methods, techniques, and strategies used in teaching and learning process, learning materials, and learning assessment. Those factors are also influenced by the participants in the teaching and learning process, i.e. the teachers/lecturers and the students. For university level, lecturers have an important role in making academic atmosphere. To achieve this, they need to be professional in improving the quality of their teaching and learning process. In addition, to be professional lecturers, they need to explore their teaching knowledge and experiences.

One of the factors that should be considered by lecturers is the teaching strategies they used in class. Because they often lack of time, they only explain the materials by using power point in their teaching process. They do not care much whether all of the students have already understood about the materials they have explained. Analyses and observations of students' reflection show that most of the students actually do not understand about the materials if their lecturers use teacher-centered strategy. Considering this, applying Lesson Study to improve lecturers' competence and professionalism needs to be done.

Taken from <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/lessonstudy/lessonstudy.html>, "Lesson Study is a professional development process that Japanese teachers engage in to systematically examine their practice, with the goal of becoming more effective. To provide focus and direction to this work, the teachers select an overarching goal and related research question that they want to explore. This research question then serves to guide their work on all the study lessons." In addition, <http://www.ets.org/flicc/pdf/Nov4LessonStudyPacketOne.pdf> stated that

"Lesson Study requires teachers and other educators to work collaboratively to strengthen a given lesson until it has been refined as much as possible and then teach it to get powerful data about how well the lesson works." In a Lesson Study, a lecturer does not work alone. S/he will work with some of his/her colleagues in teaching a class. The lecturer will be a teacher model and his/her colleagues will be the observers. Hopefully by applying Lesson Study can improve the professionalism of lecturer and the students' motivation in joining the lesson so that they can get better scores.

Based on the background of the study, there are two research questions as follows.

- 1) What are the advantages and disadvantages of applying Lesson Study?
- 2) Is Lesson Study effective to improve the students' learning outcomes?

To answer both questions, the first thing to do is to prepare the Lesson Study instruments. Basically, according to Lewis (2002), as cited by Sukirman (2013), Lesson Study has a simple idea, i.e. if a teacher wants to improve his/her teaching professionalism, one of the ways is by asking other teachers to collaborate in designing, observing, and evaluating his/her teaching and learning process. Consequently, Lesson Study is appropriate to be applied if the teacher/lecturer wants to design an innovative and systematic strategy to improve students' understanding and competence of the given material.

In a cycle of Lesson Study, there are three steps to do. They are PLAN, DO, and SEE. In step of PLAN, the lecturer as a teacher model has to share his/her lesson plan to some of his/her colleagues who have a role as his/her observers. Next, these observers

will give some feedback of the lesson plan. The teacher model can then revise his/her lesson plan before doing teaching. In the second step, DO, the teacher model will conduct the teaching by using the revised lesson plan, while the observers will also join the class to observe the students behavior and performance. Finally, after the class ends, the

teacher model and the observers will do the third step, i.e. SEE. In this step, the observers will give some more feedback of the teacher model's teaching process and students' behavior and performance. The cycle of Lesson Study can simply be seen in the figure below.

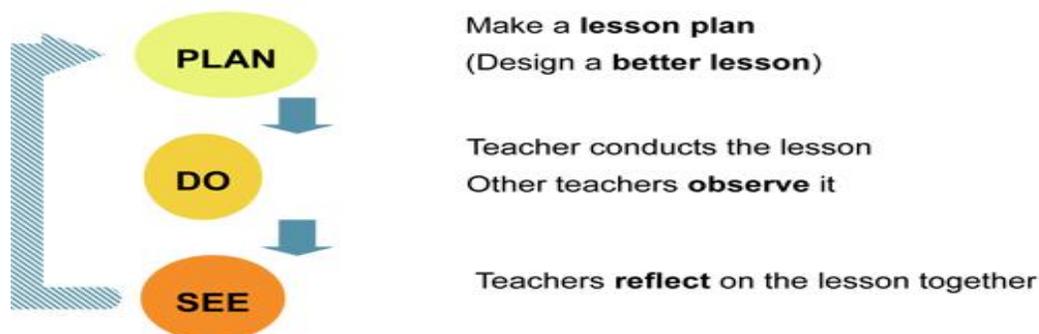


Figure 1 Cycle of Lesson Study

In this study, I will describe my experience when I became a teacher model of my Department. I am a lecturer at English Department, Language and Art Faculty, State University of Semarang, Indonesia. There are two study programs in English Department: Education Study Program and Literature Study Program. Usually there are nine classes for one academic year; six parallel classes for Education Study Program and three parallel classes for Literature Study Program. In English department, there are more or less 40 lecturers who teach in both study programs. In the curriculum, the subjects are divided into skill subjects and theoretical subjects. The skill subjects such as reading, listening, speaking, writing, and grammar can be taught by lecturers from both study programs whereas the examples of theoretical subjects are Introduction to Linguistics, Introduction

to Literary Studies, Theories and Principle in TESOL, and Literary Criticism.

Before starting the cycle, I decided to choose a class of *Introduction to Linguistics* to conduct my Lesson Study. This is a compulsory subject for 4th semester students, both from Education Study Program and Literature Study Program. I had four parallel classes of *Introduction to Linguistics*, but I was instructed to conduct the Lesson Study only in one of those classes. There were 30 students in my class. I chose this class because it is considered to be a difficult subject for most of the students. They often get difficulties in understanding the theories of linguistics. The description of this subject is “This subject focuses on basic theory and field of linguistics. The subject covers different schools, branches, approaches on the scientific study of languages. It includes the study of form and function of language from

the era of Saussure up to the current schools of linguistics.”This subject is a pre requisite subject for students before they take linguistics subjects such as Morphology, Syntax, or Semantics; therefore, they must pass this subject so that they are able to take the subjects of the upper level.

After proposing a class to conduct my Lesson Study, I had to propose the schedule

of the Lesson Study to the Head of the Department and the Secretary of the Department who were the facilitators of this program. They chose four colleagues to be my observers. I had to choose a class in which my four observers did not have any classes because they had to join my class. The schedule can be seen on the next page.

Table1 Schedule of the Lesson Study

Subject: Introduction to Linguistics

Code/Credit: B2004026 / 2

Teacher Model: Galuh Kirana Dwi Areni, S.S., M.Pd.

Moderator: Dr. Rudi Hartono, S.S., M.Pd.

Secretary: Fatma Hetami, S.S., M.Hum.

Observers: 1. Drs. Alim Sukrisno, M.A.; Bambang P., S.S., M.Hum.; Frimadhona S., S.S., M.Hum.; Fatma Hetami, S.S., M.Hum.

Cycle	Learning Material	Schedule (Day, Date, Room, dan Time)		
		PLAN	DO	SEE
1	Morphology	Tuesday, 29 April 2014; B8 102; 13.00-14.00	Wednesday, 30 April 2014; B3 220B; 13.00-14.40	Wednesday, 30 April'14; B8 102; 14.40-15.40
2	Morphology	Tuesday, 6 May 2014; B8 102; 13.00-14.00	Wednesday, 7 May 2014; B3 220B; 13.00-14.40	Wednesday, 7 May 2014; B8 102; 14.40-15.40
3	Syntax	Tuesday, 13 May 2014; B8 102; 13.00-14.00	Wednesday, 14 May 2014; B3 220B; 13.00-14.40	Wednesday, 14 May 2014; B8 102; 14.40-15.40
4	Syntax	Tuesday, 20 May 2014; B8 102; 13.00-14.00	Wednesday, 21 May 2014; B3 220B; 13.00-14.40	Wednesday, 21 May 2014; B8 102; 14.40-15.40

From the table above, it can be seen that the teacher model conducted four cycles of Lesson Study. The moderator and the

observers of this Lesson Study are lecturers of English Department of FBS, UNNES. The

moderator functions to lead the discussions in PLAN and SEE steps.

Methodology

In this study, I used descriptive analysis to elaborate teachers' professionalism and students' learning outcomes. As stated in http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/stat_desc.php, "Descriptive statistics are used to describe the basic features of the data in a study. With descriptive statistics you are simply describing what is or what the data shows." Therefore, in this study, I will only describe the data that I got from observation sheets, discussion, and test to obtain the data of my analysis.

a) Observation sheet

The observation sheets that I used for data analysis were the observation sheets made by myself and the observers. The observation sheets were mainly made to observe the students behavior and performance in class.

b) Discussion

The discussions happened in the PLAN and SEE parts. The observers and I as the teacher model made discussion of what I was going to do in my class (in PLAN), and what I had to do next after the observers observed my class (in SEE).

c) Test

According to Brown (2004), "a test is, in simple terms, is a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain. A test is first a method. It is a set of techniques, procedures, or items that requires performance on the part of test taker." The test was conducted to assess the students' competence after

the teacher model finished the four cycles of Lesson Study.

Findings and Discussion

I will elaborate the findings in each cycle so that there will be clear description of it. Then, in the discussion, I will give the whole analysis of the findings.

Cycle 1

In each cycle of Lesson Study, there are three steps: PLAN, DO, and SEE. I took a role as the teacher model. There were four of my colleagues who took part as my observers; those were Pak Alim, Pak Bambang, Bu Dhona, and Bu Fatma. Pak Rudi, the secretary of the department, was the coordinator of the Lesson Study. There was also an administration staff to help in making documentation of the Lesson Study. After the schedule of my Lesson Study was approved, I had to prepare the teaching instruments such as syllabus, lesson plan, teaching material (handout), teaching media, and student worksheet. Besides those, I had to prepare the observation sheets, both of my own observation sheet and the observers' observation sheets. I also needed to prepare the design of class sitting management and students' numbers to be pinned on students' shirts or blouses. Questioners for students were also prepared to be given after class. In each step, I also had to make some notes of any activities done in the Lesson Study.

I have mentioned before that in the Lesson Study, I used a class of *Introduction to Linguistics*. There were 30 students. The PLAN was held on Tuesday, 29 April 2014, in room B8 102, at 1-2 p.m. First, I presented the students' need analysis to the observers. I did the analysis by doing interview to some students. I explained that in the previous

semesters, students felt that the *Introduction to Linguistics* subject was a difficult subject as the book is too thick and too difficult to understand. The students' low motivation in reading the material was also one of the reasons why I chose this class to be used in the Lesson Study. Then, I presented my teaching strategy to the observers. I explained that I would use a cooperative learning technique, i.e. Jigsaw Reading technique, for my first cycle. There was no feedback from the observers about my teaching strategy.

However, in PLAN cycle 1, I got feedback from Pak Rudi that the cycle of Lesson Study is different from the cycle of an action research, so I had to revise my lesson plan for this. In discussing the schedule of DO, there were three observers who could not attend the class if I chose my 1 p.m. class; therefore, I changed the subject to my 3 p.m. class. I also got some feedback to change the items in the students' questioner because they did not match with what the observers would do in the classroom. I had to change 12 items of students' activities in class to be only 10 items. The PLAN ended at 2.30 p.m. and was closed by Pak Rudi, the coordinator of the Lesson Study.

The DO was held on Wednesday, 30 April 2014, at room B3 317B; it started at 3 p.m. All of the observers came to the class and it was recorded by an administration staff. The process of teaching and learning ran well. The students were given numbers on their chests and their backs so that the observers could easily make notes about the students on their observation sheets. Ten minutes before the class ended, I gave the questioners to the students to fill. The class was over at 4:30 p.m.

The SEE was held on the same day and in the same room at 4:45 p.m. One of the observers, Pak Alim, started the SEE by

giving some feedback that some of the students were not active in the discussion because it was dominated by superior students only; consequently, the teacher needed to ask some questions to assess the students understanding after the discussion. Ibu Dhona agreed with Pak Alim's feedback and gave some feedback that the questions for the students could be given by using NHT (Numbered Head Together) technique as by using this technique the teacher would have to choose the students randomly. She also asked me to choose a "recorder" in the discussion to make notes of the active students and a "timer" to make sure that the discussion would take place only in the allocated time. Pak Bambang gave some feedback that the students also could be asked to make a little presentation to assess their understanding about the material. Ibu Fatma gave some advice that the students should learn to use English in the discussion as she found that most of the students used Bahasa Indonesia in doing the discussion. The SEE ended at 5:15 p.m. and was closed by Pak Alim.

Cycle 2

The PLAN was held on Tuesday, 6 May 2014, at room B3 116. It started at 1:30 p.m. and was opened by Pak Rudi, the coordinator. It was only attended by two observers, Pak Alim and Pak Bambang. The same as the PLAN in cycle 1, I had to prepare the teaching instruments such as syllabus, lesson plan, teaching material (handout), teaching media, and student worksheet. Besides those, I had to prepare the observation sheets, both of my own observation sheet and the observers' observation sheets. I also needed to prepare the design of class sitting management and students' numbers to be pinned on students' shirts or blouses. Questioners for students were also prepared to

be given after class. In each step, I also had to make some notes of any activities done in the Lesson Study. In PLAN cycle 2, I explained that the DO would be the continuation of the previous meeting. I would ask the students to make presentations of what they had read and discussed in the previous meeting, then after that there would be some time for questions and answers session. I planned to use “run for the answer” technique to check students' understanding before the class ended, but both of the observers asked me to use NHT instead to activate the passive students. I also got some feedback to change the items in the students' questioner because they still did not match with what the observers would do in the classroom. As a result, I made some changes on the students' questioner without changing the number. The PLAN ended at 2 p.m. and was closed by Pak Alim.

The DO was held on Wednesday, 7 May 2014, at room B3 317B; it started at 3 p.m. There were only three observers came to the class and it was recorded by an administration staff. The process of teaching and learning ran well. The students were given numbers on their chests and their backs so that the observers could easily make notes about the students on their observation sheets. Ten minutes before the class ended, I gave the questioners to the students to fill. The class was over at 4:30 p.m.

The SEE was held on the same day and in the same room at 4:45 p.m. One of the observers, Ibu Dhona, started the SEE by giving some feedback that the teacher should have given some questions to the students by using NHT (Numbered Head Together) technique as this technique would force the students to listen to their friends' presentation. Pak Bambang gave some feedback that the students could sit in their groups while they

were listening to the presentation so that they could discuss in their groups if they had difficulties in understanding the presentation. Ibu Fatma agreed with Pak Bambang and Ibu Dhona, and she did not give any different feedback. The SEE ended at 5:15 p.m. and was closed by Pak Bambang.

Cycle 3

The PLAN was held on Tuesday, 13 May 2014, at room B3 116. It started at 1 p.m. and was opened by Pak Rudi, the coordinator. It was attended by three observers, Pak Alim, Pak Bambang, and Ibu Dhona. The same as the PLAN in cycle 1 and cycle 2, I had to prepare the teaching instruments such as syllabus, lesson plan, teaching material (handout), teaching media, and student worksheet. Besides those, I had to prepare the observation sheets, both of my own observation sheet and the observers' observation sheets. I also needed to prepare the design of class sitting management and students' numbers to be pinned on students' shirts or blouses. Questioners for students were also prepared to be given after class. In each step, I also had to make some notes of any activities done in the Lesson Study. In PLAN cycle 3, I explained that the DO would be almost the same as DO in cycle 1 because I would use the same technique, i.e. “jigsaw reading”. However, based on some feedback given by the observers, I would also conduct NHT after the discussion ended to assess the students' understanding of the material. There was not any feedback from the observers, so then the PLAN was closed at 1:30 p.m. by Pak Rudi.

The DO was held on Wednesday, 14 May 2014, at room B3 317B; it started at 3 p.m. There were three observers, Pak Alim, Pak Bambang, and Ibu Dhona; meanwhile,

Ibu Fatma could not attend the DO because she was still sick. The process of teaching and learning ran well. The students were given numbers on their chests and their backs so that the observers could easily make notes about the students on their observation sheets. Ten minutes before the class ended, I gave the questioners to the students to fill. The class was over at 4:30 p.m.

The SEE was held on the same day and in the same room at 4:45 p.m. One of the observers, Pak Alim, started the SEE by giving some feedback that some of the students, e.g. students no 16 and 21 were not active in the discussion; consequently, the teacher needed to ask them to prepare some questions to ask in the next meeting. Ibu Dhona agreed with Pak Alim's feedback because she also found that students no 10 and 14 did not master the materials and tended to be passive in the discussion. She also gave feedback that students had to make a summary of the material and submit it to the teacher before the class started. Pak Bambang found that students no 1, 8, 16, and 29 were not active in the discussion; they even talked different topics in the discussion. Related to this, he gave feedback that the teacher had to move around the class to monitor the discussion. The SEE ended at 5:15 p.m. and was closed by Pak Alim.

Cycle 4

The PLAN was held on Tuesday, 20 May 2014, at room B3 116. It started at 3 p.m. and was opened by Pak Rudi, the coordinator. It was attended by three observers, Pak Alim, Ibu Dhona, and Pak Bambang. The same as the PLAN in previous cycles, I had to prepare the teaching instruments such as syllabus, lesson plan, teaching material (handout), teaching media, and student worksheet. Besides those, I had to prepare the

observation sheets, both of my own observation sheet and the observers' observation sheets. I also needed to prepare the design of class sitting management and students' numbers to be pinned on students' shirts or blouses. Questioners for students were also prepared to be given after class. In each step, I also had to make some notes of any activities done in the Lesson Study. In PLAN cycle 4, I explained that the DO would be almost the same with DO in cycle 2. I would ask the students to make presentations of what they had read and discussed in the previous meeting, then after that there would be some time for questions and answers session. I planned to use NHT technique to check students' understanding before the class ended to activate the passive students. Ibu Dhona advised me to give some explanation first before the presentation that there would be NHT so that all of the students paid attention carefully to their friends' presentation. The PLAN ended at 3:30 p.m. and was closed by Pak Rudi.

The DO was held on Wednesday, 21 May 2014, at room B3 317B; it started at 3 p.m. There were only three observers came to the class and it was recorded by an administration staff. The process of teaching and learning ran well. The students were given numbers on their chests and their backs so that the observers could easily make notes about the students on their observation sheets. Ten minutes before the class ended, I gave the questioners to the students to fill. The class was over at 4:30 p.m.

The SEE was held on the same day and in the same room at 4:45 p.m. One of the observers, Pak Alim, started the SEE by giving some feedback that the teacher should have given some questions to the students by using NHT (Numbered Head Together) technique as this technique would force the

students to listen to their friends' presentation and to make the students active. It was proven by students no 16 who at first was passive in listening the presentation, but she became active in NHT. Pak Bambang and Ibu Dhona found that some students did not listen to their friends' presentation carefully because the presentation was not interested and the presenters seemed not master the material. Related to this, they gave some feedback that the students had to prepare their presentations well as this would also be one factor to assess students' understanding. The SEE ended at 5:15 p.m. and was closed by Pak Alim.

Discussion

After having four cycles of the Lesson Study, I as the teacher model found out that Lesson Study is a very useful technique not only for the class teacher but also for the students. For the teacher, the first advantage is that I got a lot of feedback from the observers before (PLAN), during (DO), and after (SEE) the process of my teaching about appropriate strategies that I should use in my teaching process. As a result, I could prepare my lesson plan better and teach more confidently and professionally although I needed more extra time to do this. Second, I also got a lot of feedback about my students' attitude during the class. It is hard for me as a class teacher to observe my students while I am teaching in front of the class; therefore, the observers gave a huge help in doing this kind of observation.

For the students, Lesson Study is very effective to be applied as the students studied better and more seriously because of the existence of the observers. From the

questioners that I gave, they felt that they were also encouraged to be active in the discussion, to read the book that they were asked to read, and to have better scores in their test. However, there were also some students who got depressed because there were some of their lecturers observed them in the back of the class.

Conclusions and Suggestions

To conclude this study, there are some advantages and disadvantages of the implication of Lesson Study as follows.

- 1) For the teacher model, s/he can have a lot of feedback from the observers about his/her strategies in teaching and learning process. This may increase his/her professionalism and confidence in teaching. On the other hand, s/he must have more time to prepare the instruments used in the Lesson Study.
- 2) For the observers, they also can learn from the teacher model what kind of appropriate strategies to be used in their own classes. However, the observers also need to spare their time to attend the steps of the Lesson Study, i.e. PLAN, DO, SEE, which have been arranged by the teacher model.
- 3) For the students, Lesson Study is an effective strategy to pursue their achievement in class as they can study better and more seriously.

Hopefully, this study can be a reference for teachers from different levels who are interested in having Lesson Study in their classes. It can also be used by other researchers who have the same interest in the same field.

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