

AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN OPENING THE LESSON IN THE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

This research analyzed the strategies used by English teachers in opening learning at SMA N in Bengkulu Selatan. This study aims to find out the most prevalent strategy for opening lessons used by English teachers and why the English teachers choose those strategies in opening learning. The approach used in this research is qualitative with a descriptive research type. The subjects in this study were thirteen English teachers from five SMA N in Bengkulu Selatan. The instruments used in this research were observation checklists, interviews, and documentation. The data were analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions. The results showed that the most dominant strategies used by English teachers in opening learning at SMAN N Bengkulu Selatan were focusing attention and arousing students' interest, and generating student motivation. Teachers used those strategies to attract the students' attention and encourage students to be more involved in the learning process. This strategy is believed to be able to create a good relationship between teachers and students.

Keywords: Strategy, opening the lesson, descriptive study

INTRODUCTION

Teaching arrangements are arranged sequentially. The sequence of activities used serves to achieve the lesson's objectives (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). To achieve a learning goal, the teacher must do three structured stages in the classroom and be arranged into a sequence of activities called organization by Hughes (1981, p.60). First, the opening activity is the entry of the lesson, which generally occupies the first five to fifteen minutes and usually consists of procedures used by the teacher to focus students' attention on the lesson's learning objectives.

According to Chatib (2011), the lesson opening stage is the key to the success of all teaching and learning activities. At this stage, it was also found that lesson warm-up activities

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work as attention injectors for students, thus assisting students in promoting themselves in the involvement of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Warm-up exercises that only take place in teaching opening activities, according to Akther (2014), can help in the following aspects of teaching and learning activities: to build good relationships between students and teachers and set up a positive learning environment, 2) to motivate students, 3) attract students' attention at the beginning of the lesson, 4) recall background knowledge and 5) to discuss and set clear objectives of the lesson. Usually, this activity will consist of one to six short activities lasting three to fifteen minutes at the beginning of the teaching-learning process (McGrath, Davies & Mulpin, 1992).

Moreover, the first minute of learning is the most important time for the next hour in the learning process. In the first minutes, the apperception is done. Apperception carried out at the beginning of the learning process makes students' brains ready to learn. This activity is a stepping stone for teachers to enter students' world to follow what the teacher instructs them to do (Herbart (1841). Apperception theory or Herbartism Theory said human apperception is learning. Human nature is to regulate itself and respond or react to instructions from the environment or certain stimulus.

Interestingly, this stimulus activity can take place with the right abilities and strategies. Open teaching also allows students to think calmly and listen to lessons with focus, even in a transitional period controlled by the environment. According to Brown (2000, p.7), teaching cannot be defined apart from learning and teaching as guiding and facilitating the learning process, enabling learners to learn, setting conduction for education, as well as showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, instructing, guiding. In learning something, imparting knowledge, causing to know or understand. In the stages of the teaching-learning process, each plays a role in achieving learning objectives (Pollard, 2008, p.8).

There are several findings from previous research regarding the strategies used by teachers in opening lessons. First, Yanti (2012) reported that the teacher's in opening lessons were asking questions, checking homework, singing English songs, giving games, discussing simple cases, giving examples, and providing pictures. To focus attention and arouse student interest. According to Lindsay (2006), in the lesson, the teacher must explain to students the lesson's purpose, how the lesson class is related to the previous lesson, associated with the last, and what activities they will do in learning activities. The same thing was also found in Putri's study (2016), where teachers of SMKN Bengkulu City applied eight teacher strategies in opening lessons, including greetings, checking attendance, handling delays, displaying pictures or videos, discussing previous lessons, introducing lesson objectives, giving directions, and giving anglers questions beforehand.

From the previous findings, it is possible to open learning activities to become an important activity in the success of learning activities by paying attention to and using various strategies applied in each process and its sub-activities. Seeing the importance and magnitude of the influence of this opening stage encourages the researchers to conduct similar research and examine what strategies teachers usually use in opening lessons by high school teachers, especially in the Bengkulu Selatan Regency area. Based on the statement above, the researchers conducted the research entitled "An analysis of English teachers' strategies in opening the lesson in the classroom at Senior High Schools in Bengkulu Selatan Regency".

The stages of teaching and learning activities will be related to the time allocated for each sub-activity. The movement of opening or entering the lesson generally refers to the first few minutes of the lesson. The beginning of the lesson is "the procedure the teacher uses to prepare students for the lesson at that time", Todd (1997, pp. 20-23). Opening the lesson is the first major activity, as part of the lesson when the teacher and students begin to interact.

This can consist of anything from one to six short activities lasting at least three to fifteen minutes at the start of the teaching-learning process. To open learning activities well, a teacher must carry out several strategies or use their abilities in assembling teaching and learning activities, organizing student subject matter, be it materials, equipment, and good time used for the learning process, because according to Helmiati (2013) everything Teacher planning and preparation before teaching will be in vain and meaningless if the teacher cannot attract students' attention and concentration in the early stages of the lesson.

Strategy is a mental ability and process that a person uses to do something (Hayati, Afriani, & Akbarjono, 2021). Each teacher usually has a different strategy in opening lessons, because they have additional knowledge, experience, and teaching styles. The differences of strategies and abilities of teachers in managing the classroom depend on the type of the teacher, the topic of the material, and the instrument that the teacher uses, Mulyadi and Puspita (2009, p. 10). This means that their strategies must match their teaching and skills. This discussion is also relevant and in line with the finding that no teacher went directly to the main lesson, Aung and Tepsuriwong (2017, p.252) in Thailand).

The skill of managing the activity of opening this lesson emphasizes the teacher providing an introduction or guideline to students about the material to be taught so that students are ready and interested in joining the teaching and learning process itself by Allen and Ryan (1969) in Asril (2010, p.70). Interestingly, all of this is similar to the guidelines for the preparation of the lesson plan in curriculum 2013 initiated by the Minister of Education

and Culture. The fourteen strategies are divided into four main strategies with their respective sub-strategies, including:

Teachers must generate interest in learning so that students can focus their attention on the lesson. It is necessary to highlight the dominant role of the student (Zhao, 2014, pp. 309). Teachers need to relate the material presented to the interests and needs of students. Here are some ways teachers can focus and arouse students' interest when the teacher opens the lesson. First, relate the material to the latest news, the latest that is being discussed. Second, tell stories that are relevant to the material. Third, using visual/media tools, fourth varying the teaching style, fifth alluding to the tasks performed by students, sixth, imagining problems or questions to encourage student involvement in opinion.

In motivation, teachers are led to be able to create and maintain optimal learning conditions. Cheng and Dornyei (2007) make students feel warm, enthusiastic, passionate about learning, and self-disciplined. According to Ziyuan (2004), there are three sub-strategies in motivating students. First, provide warmth and show enthusiasm. Teachers must be friendly, enthusiastic, friendly, warm, and full of intimacy. Then the second is to cultivate curiosity, and the last is to come up with conflicting ideas. Teachers can express contradictory ideas by presenting different problems or conditions in everyday reality. Giving references is defined as an effort to say specifically and briefly a series of alternatives that allow students to get a clear picture of the things that will be studied and how to learn the subject matter.

For this reason, the efforts that the teacher can make include, first, explaining the learning objectives. Second, convey the outline of learning. Third, define the steps of learning activities. The lesson in the previous meeting should be repeated briefly to enjoy the new lesson. Things that are already known, students' experiences, interests and needs, are called related by asking questions about the previous material and comparing ancient knowledge with what will be conveyed. This is done when the new material is closely associated with the mastered material. If a teacher has thirty-five minutes to teach, use the first five minutes to establish connection points.

METHOD

The approach used in this research was qualitative with a descriptive research type. The subjects in this study were thirteen English teachers from five high schools in Bengkulu Selatan. Qualitative research is a research method to explore and understand the meaning that some individuals or groups come from social or humanitarian problems (Creswell, 2013).

Instruments of the Research

The instruments were observations checklist and interviews. In the study, the data were analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and concluding.

Observations Checklist

The first research instrument is an observation checklist containing four main parts of teacher skills in opening teaching and fourteen with fourteen sub-components adopted from the 2013 Curriculum teaching guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia.

Interview

The second instrument is an interview using a list of questions. The researchers used two interview guidelines, namely structured interview guidelines and unstructured interview guidelines. Structured interview guidelines are a data collection technique where the researchers know exactly what information they want to obtain, so the researchers have prepared written questions and even have prepared alternative answers (Arikunto, 2010, p.270). The interview questions were adapted from Aung and Tepsuriwong (2017) research conducted in a similar study in Thailand. Furthermore, the researchers also used unstructured interview guidelines, where the researchers did not use interview guidelines. They became independent questioners to deepen their findings but remained structured systematically and completely for data collection.

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out from February 1, 2021, to March 17, 2021. It was carried out on thirteen English teachers from five SMA N in Bengkulu Selatan for the 2020/2021 school year. Using an observation checklist in Indonesian and English to avoid misinterpretation of statements or questions in the observation checklists and interviews.

Data analysis

In this study, the researchers used qualitative methods. For analyzing the data, five steps must be done. Gay, Mills and Airasian recommend them (2000; 2012), managing, reading and memoing; description; classification; and interpretation. In the observation process, the researcher also highlights important sentences and notes important parts of the data that require further explanation in field notes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The researchers took audio recordings of the thirteen teachers in carrying out teaching and learning activities for two meetings focused on the 5 - 10 minute process the teacher opened the lesson. Based on the video, the research obtained results from an observation checklist which mainly includes four strategies according to the literature review, among others, the first to focus students' attention and interest, then the second, to generate motivation, the third to provide references and the last to connect the lessons learned with the new topic. The research results, in general, can be seen in the table below:

Table 1. The Result of Observation Checklist

Strategies in opening the lesson		T 1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	Totally
1. Focusing attention and arousing student interest	1		√						√	√	√				4
	2	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	13
	3	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	13
	4	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	13
	5	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	12
	6		√	√		√	√	√	√	√		√		√	9
2. Generating motivation	7	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	13
	8	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	13
	9		√	√					√					√	4
3. Giving reference	10	√				√				√	√	√			5
	11														0
	12														0
4. Relating lessons learned to new topics	13	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√		√	√	11
	14												√		1
Totally			8	10	9	7	8	8	8	10	10	9	7	8	9

Note:

T : Teacher (T1-T13)

1 : Relate material to the latest news

2 : Telling stories

3 : Using the tool visual/media

4 : Vary teaching styles

5 : Alluding to tasks that do student

6 : Imagine a problem

7 : Providing warmth and shows the attitude of enthusiasm

8 : Arouse curiosity

9 : Bringing up conflicting idea

10 : Explain learning objectives

11 : Delivering learning outline

12 : Explaining the steps of learning activities

13 : Ask a question about the previous material

14 : Comparing old knowledge and what will be presented

From the table above, it is known that the thirteen English teachers (T1-T13) used the most dominant strategy in opening learning from four main strategies, namely, the first strategy focused attention and aroused student interest 64 times. Then proceed with the second strategy, which is to generate motivation 35 times. Then the fourth strategy is to link Lessons Learned to New Topics, which is used 12 times. The last is the third strategy, providing a reference, which is only used five times.

In the first strategy, which is to focus attention and arouse students' interest, three components are the most dominant use of the six existing components. The strategy

component includes the 2nd component, namely storytelling, the 3rd component, using visual/media tools, and the 4th, Vary teaching styles. Then proceed with the second strategy, namely generating motivation. There are three strategic components but only the 7th component, namely providing warmth and showing enthusiasm. The 8th component, arousing curiosity, was used by thirteen teachers in learning observed by the researchers.

As additional information, based on the research table above, it can also be seen that the strategy that teachers use in conducting learning opening activities is the third strategy, namely giving references, where there are three elements of the opening strategy. The learning process and two of them are not used by the teacher when carrying out activities to open learning in the classroom. This is contained in the 11th component, which explains the steps of learning activities, and the 12th component asks questions about the previous material.

The results of the interviews are discussed in three main parts. The first part consists of specific questions that ask why the teacher decides to carry out the opening learning strategy. The second part focuses on the background of the teacher choosing the strategy. Then, is there a relationship between the strategy selected by the teacher and the material, media or conditions. When teaching, the final focus is on the dominant strategy the teacher chooses to apply. The researchers used two interview guidelines, namely structured interview guidelines and unstructured interview guidelines.

Discussion

The most dominant strategy used by teachers in opening activities was the first strategy that focused and aroused students' interest, which was 64 times. Then proceed with the second strategy, which is to produce 35 times. In the first strategy, which focuses on attention and arouses students' interest, three components are most often used of the six components. The strategy components include component 2, namely storytelling, component 3, using visual/media tools, and component 4, Vary teaching styles. Then proceed with the second strategy, namely generating motivation in which there are three strategic components. Still, only the 7th component, namely providing warmth and showing enthusiasm and the 8th component, which is to arouse curiosity, were used by thirteen teachers in learning observed by the researchers.

In the first strategy, which is to focus and arouse students' interest, the three components most dominant components used by teachers: the 2nd component, namely storytelling; the 3rd component, using visual/media tools; and the 4th component, Vary teaching styles. In the 2nd component, the teacher starts the learning activity by greeting and

asking how the students are doing. This activity will start a conversation that will eventually build a story that will arouse students' interest in interacting in the activity. According to Hughes (1981), the greeting is a form of teacher attention to students.

Furthermore, the third component element is using visual/media tools. Learning tools are divided into three, namely visual tools or media: writing media on the blackboard, pictures on the classroom wall, photos, slide films, charts, graphs, posters, and so on. Auditive tools or media, for example, radio, tape recorder, sound slides, various types of sound, and the like. Touching tools or media, for example, models, imitation objects, artificial objects, multiple demonstrations, and the like (Sitohang, 2020).

Then the 4th component element is a varied teaching style. Variations in learning activities are intended as a process of learning change, which can be grouped into three groups or components: variations in teacher teaching methods, variations in media and learning tools, and variations in student interaction patterns and activities (Akther, 2014). The skill component of doing variations can also be in teacher explanations using various learning methods such as one-way learning methods (teacher to student), two-way learning methods (teacher to student, student to teacher), multi-way.

In this strategy, two components are most dominantly used by the teacher in opening learning: the 7th component, giving warmth and showing enthusiasm, and the 8th component, which is to arouse curiosity. To show confidence, the teacher can use reinforcement. According to Allen and Ryan (1969) in Asril (2010), reinforcement in the classroom can achieve or have a positive influence on the student's learning process and aims to foster self-confidence, increase motivation, interest, and attention of students towards learning, generate and maintain behavior, and maintain a conducive learning climate so that students can learn optimally. In the 7th component, reinforcement skills consist of several parts that need to be understood and mastered, including verbal reinforcement and nonverbal reinforcement. Arousing curiosity in the 8th component element can be stimulated by showing pictures, demonstrating something, and telling an event relevant to the material. Then the teacher asks questions related to images, events or stories. The answer lies in the material to be studied.

The results of interviews about the strategic techniques used by the thirteen English teachers at five schools in Bengkulu Selatan, based on thinking and generating student interest, are the most dominant strategies of interest and use in opening learning activities. The researchers proposed ten in the first three parts. The first part consists of specific questions that ask why the teacher chooses to do the opening learning strategy. The second part focuses on the teacher's background teachers background selecting the strategy. Then, is there a relationship between the teacher's chosen strategy and the material, media or conditions based on the fourteen components provided in the table above.

The opinion of the thirteen English teachers, when asked how to attract students' attention, the thirteen English teachers answered by telling students what they would learn that day and the objectives to be carried out that day. Teacher 2 responds that by saying hello, you can also sing a song related to the topic being studied; of course, students can enjoy it to focus on the lesson that day. Teacher 3 answered, namely by apperception first, then watching the media according to the material.

Based on the interview results of the English teacher, when asked about the use of teaching aids, teacher 4 answered that so that students get attention with learning, teachers can use teaching aids. Teacher 5 answered that teaching aids are very useful; the media can be most important to attract the student's attention. Teacher 6 answered by sticking it on the blackboard and then observing the children. Based on interviews about techniques that generate motivation, it was obtained that the teacher already knew well about opening lessons; it was said to be good because the answers of the thirteen teachers followed expert opinion.

When asked how to give warmth and enthusiasm to students, teacher 7, answered by greeting the students with full intimacy and motivation to participate in learning well. Encourage students before being invited to tell stories or sing together. Teacher 8 answered at the beginning of the lesson greeting the students, saying hello, asking how they were, could also sing a song so that students learn to learn. Almost all teachers carry out story-building activities by greeting students and asking how they are doing. But from all that, there are still teachers who have difficulty allocating time to open learning activities so that the activities carried out are not efficient, and this is evidenced by the existence of two strategic components that are not used in learning, all by thirteen teachers, namely, the third strategy, providing a strategy reference, precisely on the 11th component elements delivering education and the 12th component elements explaining the steps of learning activities.

CONCLUSION

From the research above, it is known that the most dominant strategy used by the thirteen English teachers at SMA N Bengkulu Selatan in opening learning from the four main strategies based on the 2013 curriculum is to focus attention and arouse students' interest, including storytelling, using visual/media tools, and varied teaching styles. Then proceed with the second strategy, which stimulates students' motivation, which includes component elements, providing warmth and showing enthusiasm, and arousing students' curiosity. The teacher chooses this strategy because it is considered capable of covering all activities at the beginning of learning. However, some teachers have difficulty using learning aids due to

teachers' lack of understanding in using learning aids/media. Not only that, of the fourteen component elements, teachers also find it difficult to relate learning materials due to lack of understanding and the difficulty of controlling time according to the lesson plans that have been designed considering that the opening of learning activities is only in five to ten minutes of opening.

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