A Need Analysis for a Grammar Learning Model: The Teacher Current Practices and Expectations

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Abstract:

Developing a learning model for a course is normally preceded by a need analysis and is done thoroughly by investigating the teachers' and students' needs, and the current situation related to the course to be developed. Revealing the the teachers' current practices and expectations will lead to the real and current situation of the needs. This study was a qualitative study involving two English grammar teachers and aimed at revealing the teachers' current practices and expectations of a grammar learning model at Universitas Bengkulu, Indonesia. Taken by using an observation checklist & field notes, and an interview guide, the data were analyzed qualitatively. The findings show that the teachers did not state the aims of learning, did not give a syllabus to the students, used the deductive approach and presentation technique, and a commercial book as the sole souce for teaching the English grammar. They expect to have a grammar learning model that puts the priority on English tenses and parts of speech, covers the attitude and participation assessments, and variety of tests for grammar learning. In conclusion, they need a learning model that can facilitate a better grammar learning at a university.

1 INTRODUCTION

Needs analysis is an activity to seek information on how a course is conducted involving the elements of a language learning such as the teachers, the students, the materials and the evaluation (Richards, 2001). In a well-managed course, teachers teaching a language is preceded by doing the need analysis to meet the aims of the teaching and learning process to be carried out. One of the aspects to be analyzed in need analysis process is the learning situation (Nation and Macalister, 2010) or the place where the learning is conducted and the situation of the teaching and learning process.

Needs analysis is carried out in many activities such as in research, business, and education. In education, it is applied at the beginning of developing a curriculum or a learning model including a model for learning languages. This is in line with Tzotzou (2014) who argues that need analysis is a required step conducted in developing a curriculum or a course to gather information on the current and future needs of the students taking the course. In learning a new language course, the

learners are required to learn the grammar, the vocabulary and language skills.

Grammar as a part of language knowledge is an important part of a language that should be taught by orienting to communication. It may not merely be taught for learning the form but also the forms. Learning the form means learning the language syntactic structure while learning the forms means learning the grammar form and the meaning at the same time. Nowadays, grammar is learnt by orienting to communication in a meaningful context and this is called form focused instruction (Spada in Lyster, 2015). This means that the process of learning grammar should aims at developing the students' communicative competence (grammatical, discourse, strategic and sosiolinguistics competence). This is in line to Canale and Swain in Dorji (2017:2) who states that 'communicative competence refers the knowledge and skills necessary for communication. It comprises of four components; competence, sociolinguistic grammatical competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence'. It can be seen that grammar competence is the first competence among the four.

In achieving the grammatical competence, the learners should master and be able to use the rules in spoken and written. The rules are many and some rules tend to be inconsistent. The refore the language learners should learn it thoroughly. To ease the learners to learn the grammar, a learning model which oriented to build the learners' communicative competence should be developed. A model for learning grammar that is developed by conducting needs analysis as the starting point of the developing process (Nation and Macalister, 2010).

This needs analysis will involve the students, the teachers and the environment. A former study on a needs analysis for grammar learning was conducted by Yunita (2018) who discuss the needs analysis from the students' perspectives. She found that the students need a complete grammar learning model that is based not only on stories but also in line with the current trends in teaching grammar of the English language. The study also uncovered that the students need a learning model with a comprehensive support system incorporating the combination of inductive and deductive approaches to teaching grammar and has a joyful learning situation.

In addition, regarding the needs analysis for grammar learning, another study was conducted by Fitrawati (2016) who studied the students' problems and needs in grammar I course and points out that:

"There is a gap between the objective of Grammar 1 course and the students' achievement in the class, students get the problems in understanding Grammar 1 due to inappropriate teaching materials used in the teaching and learning process, and the students need a multimedia-based teaching materials to improve their understanding and achievement in Grammar 1 course (p.302). "The two studies above have specifically sought for the needs of the students for learning grammar from the students' perspectives. The current paper will continue to uncover the needs analysis on grammar learning model from the teachers' perspectives and the situation where the teaching and learning process takes places. The question on how the English grammar courses were practiced in a university context in Indonesia and what the teacher's expectation for a grammar learning model were, will be discussed in further detail in this paper.

2 METHOD

This study is a descriptive qualitative study aimed at revealing the teachers' current practices and needs or

expectations in grammar classrooms at an Indonesian university. The data were taken by using interview and observation. Two English grammar teachers were interviewed and observed while they were doing the teaching and learning process in the classrooms. The interview guideline covered the goals of learning (Dick, Carey and Carey, 2009) grammar, students' mastery of English grammar, the approach, material, and assessment of the learning process. Those aspects are also arranged by referring to the components of a learning model proposed by Joyce, Weil and Calhoun (2009) consisted of 'the syntax, social system, principle of reaction and support system'. Meanwhile, the observation checklist covered the factors of need analysis for a learning model proposed by Nation and Macalister (2010) consisted of the students, teachers, and situation. There were 24 questions for this observation checklist with two alternative answers (yes and no) and spaces for field notes. For the teacher's factor, there are 11 questions provided covering the goals of learning, the syllabus, material, the approach, classroom management, and assessment of learning. Besides the students' factor, there are 6 questions provided covering the interest and enthusiasm for learning, classroom interaction, and accomplishment of the learning goals. Then, there were 7 questions for the factor of situation covering the facility and learning resources. All of the instruments had been validated by three experts in language teaching. The data taken from the instruments were analyzed by using Miles and Huberman (1992) consisted of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing.

3 RESULT

The data for the result of this study derived from the observation checklist to reveal the current practice in teaching English grammar, and interview guideline to describe the teacher's expectations for a grammar learning model. The result of the study based on the observations conducted in two classes will be explained first, then followed by the result of the interview for the teacher's expectation on a grammar learning model.

3.1 The Teachers' Current Practices

The teachers' current practice was taken from the question on the observation checklist and consisted

of the goals of learning, syllabus, material, approach, classroom management, and learning assessment. The result shows that the two teachers did not state the aims of learning grammar and did not give any syllabus to the students at the first meeting of the class. The teacher did not give the materials on parts of speech but following the materials in the commercial sourcebook for learning grammar and the tenses first. The parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, articles, and preposition) are given as the final assignment. Also, the teachers used the deductive approach in teaching the English grammar in which the teacher was the center of the learning process. The teacher explained the rules of the English grammar, asked the students to do the exercises in the commercial coursebook and then discuss the answers of the exercises with the students in the class. The teacher dominated the learning process by explaining the grammar rules. No activity involving grouping and no use of media for learning such as texts, video, LCD projector, laptop or laptop speaker. The teacher only relied on the grammar book written by Betty S. Azar, whiteboard, and board marker.



Figure 1: The teacher explained the grammar rules to the students.

Meanwhile, in the other class, the teacher used the presentation technique and made students worked in the group consisted of three students. They have to prepare a topic of the material for learning and explain it to the other students in every meeting. In this class, the teacher did not give any syllabus or source materials such as books or modules; he just gave topics for the learning at the first meeting and formed students' groups. The teacher functioned as the observer and gave comments on teaching material presented by the students if it was needed. The following picture showed how the teacher ran the class with the presentation technique for learning English grammar.



Figure 2: A group of students presented the learning materials for other students

Furthermore, the syllabus has not yet used the learning media in the form of texts or English videos that has local stories or Indonesian culture. The learning materials being used during the teaching and learning process were the commercial English grammar book, Fundamental English Grammar, written by Betty S. Azar. The book is the only source material used by the lecturer in teaching the grammar. The learning materials were given based on the content of the book and there is no material selection process based on the students' needs. In another class, it was found that the teacher has not yet determined any book for the learning process. The students tended to be given a range of topic on English grammar and asked to find out the material independently. The teaching and learning process was conducted by dividing students into groups consisted of three students. The group was given the responsibility to work on one topic and present it to their friends respectively every week. The groups were also asked to provide exercises to be done by the other students. In this class, the teacher tended to be the facilitator and given additional explanations if it were needed.

In further, the teachers did not assess the students' attitude, activeness and participation during the teaching and learning process. In B class, the teacher focused on the students' presentation. There is no specific form provided for the assessment of this aspect. Meanwhile, for the assignment, one teacher gave an assignment for the students in the form of doing the exercises in the sourcebook and gave feedback for the assignment, the other one did not assign any task to be done at home.

After explaining the teachers' aspect, the next aspect to be discussed is the **students' aspect** covering the students' enthusiasm and interaction in the classroom. The students paid attention to the teachers' explanation of the learning materials, did the exercises in the grammar book or exercises provided by the group who did the presentation, and

discussed the material with their classmates. Next, the students did not practice the materials that have been learned with their classmates nor asked their teachers if they have difficulties in understanding the materials. Last, the time allocation for the learning process was adequate to achieve the goals of learning English grammar.

Finally, the third aspect was the situation covering the classroom for learning and the sources of learning. The classroom for learning has all the facilities needed for learning. The arrangement of tables and chairs, the whiteboard, the lighting are in good and perfect condition for learning. Regarding the reference books for learning, one class has the reference book while the other one was not. Both teachers did not design the books/modules or any reference for learning by themselves and did not prepare any handout or additional text for facilitating the learning process. Meanwhile for the facilities such as LCD projector, laptop, recorder, video player and internet resources were available and provided by the faculties, but unfortunately, the teacher in A class did not use them for the learning process. In contrast, the teacher in the B class utilized the facilities by asking the presentation group students to delivered materials for other students in the classroom teaching and learning English grammar.

3.2 The Teachers' Expectation.

The data on the teachers' expectations were gathered by using interviews with the two teachers regarding the learning goals. The students' current mastery of English tenses, the approach being used for teaching, the material, the media, the assessment and the test for learning. For the learning goal, the results from the interview revealed that the teacher expected the students to master the English tenses and the parts of speech. It was stated by Teacher 1 (T1) as in the following excerpt:

"Saya yang paling saya tekankan, anak ini dasarnya harus menguasai tenses bu. Tenses itu termasuk tenses dalam bentuk aktif maupun dalam bentuk pasif. Semua tenses bu... nah itulah yang saya tekankan pada hmm.. dari awal saya masuk sampai mid-semester. Tenses dalam bentuk aktif dan pasif... Saya pikir itu sangat mendasar sekali. Setelah itu baru yang lainnya." [Ar]

Meanwhile, for the description on the students' current mastery of English tenses, it was stated the students' mastery were fair and they need to

improve it to be better due to the fact there were still some students who got a very low score in the previous learning process of the same course. The teacher's statement can be seen in the following excerpt:

"[Penguasaan tata bahasa Inggris mahasiswa] Sebagian sih udah ...udah ini...udah separo...kalo untuk yang ini mid belum saya koreksi. Tapi kalau dari yang kemaren-kemaren separo bisa...penguasaan tata bahasa mereka masih lebih di atas anak D-III. rendah Ada beberapa yang sekali.....karena memang mungkin kurang [pemahaman] dasarnya." [Zr]

Next, related to the approach being used in the process of teaching and learning, both teachers used the deductive approach and presentation technique which also resembled the deductive approach in learning the language. The two teachers admitted that they did not use any texts or stories in teaching English grammar. T1 admitted that it was her fault because they enjoy teaching the grammar by using the deductive approach. It was easier to conduct, not a time-consuming approach as it is in the inductive approach, and she got used to it. This was stated by one of the teachers as follow:

"Ini memang kesalahan saya sendiri sih... Karena lebih enak aja gitu ya...hmm...Dulu waktu kuliah [diajar] kayak gitu mungkin yaa, waktu kursus juga begitu diajarkan. Diturunkan. Pertama sudah terbiasa. Kedua itu kalo itu... kalo yang induktif itu banyak miss-nya, time consuming juga, mahasiswa juga banyak bengongnya juga"

In addition, related to the material for learning grammar that has been given to the students. Both teachers agree that the materials covering the parts of speech by putting priorities to teaching English tenses. For the parts of speech, they expected the material to be taught first were the nouns and pronouns. Likewise, Teacher 2 (T2) mentioned that a topic of asking questions is also needed because it can influence the students' speaking skills.

Moreover, related to the media for learning, both teachers agree that LCD projector and laptop were needed in a teaching and learning process but videos and the players were not needed in learning English grammar. They also considered that the use of social media such as facebook or youtube was not needed in teaching English grammar. The needed media are only grammar books such as Betty S. Azar's Books. The two teachers did not use the learning resources

such as a module or compilation of materials made by the teachers themselves.

In further, related to the assessment for learning, the teachers stated that assessment on the students' attitude, honesty and participation in the learning process, was needed. T1 did the attitude assessment by taking photographs of the students while they were doing the grammar test. T1 also mentioned that the assessment should cover the mid-test, final test, final assignment and presentation task. For the informal learning, it could be done by giving correction on the students' sentences during the lesson and by giving correction and suggestion for students' presentation.

Finally, in relation to the test forms to be used in the learning process, the teacher agreed if there were a discrete point test (a test that evaluate the specific parts of the English grammar by using multiplechoice items), error analysis test, closed-ended test (a multiple-choice test, filling in the gap, rewriting sentences, and correcting sentences), and open-ended test (sentence completion and writing sentences). Meanwhile for the oral or written elicitation test and translation test according to T1 was not necessary. The teachers often used were the elicitation, error analysis, closed-ended open-ended test.

4 DISCUSSION

The result from the current practice of the teachers showed that the teacher did not state the aim of learning English grammar, did not give a syllabus to the students, did not give materials based on the learning goals but following the materials in the commercial sourcebook for learning grammar. A good classroom teaching and learning should have clear goals on what to learn and it was written on the syllabus given to the students at the first meeting of the course. This is contrary to the theories mentioned by Ellis (2014) stating that the aims of learning a language grammar is to make the students using the language features accurately and fluently in a communication process. In addition, the teacher used a limited source of learning, the commercial book only. This is considered as an inadequate source since it has not yet designed based on the students' needs and the course' aim of learning. The commercial materials written by the author from the western world could not always be appropriate for the students in the Indonesian context. The good materials should be closed to the students' daily life. This is in line to Rusman (2012) who states that the

process of learning needs to based on the learning theories, learning aims should be known and needs to have the learning components such as the material, approach, and curriculum. If a course has an unclear aims, the target of the learning will vague. Meanwhile, the aims are more likely will determine the material and the approach for learning to be use in the classroom.

Furthermore, regarding the approach being used for the teaching and learning process, the teacher in A class used the deductive approach in teaching. On the other hand, the other B class used the presentation technique with group works for teaching and learning in the classroom. The use of the deductive approach for learning grammar is quite common in this context even though nowadays such an approach can no longer be fully accepted since the grammar learning should also aim at developing the students' communicative competence. It means that the main reason of people learning a language is for communication and in this term grammar plays the role as the rules keeping the communication run as it should be (Newmeyer, 2017). Therefore, grammar teaching cannot be separated from the language skills. This is supported by Sekelj dan Rigo (2017) who mentioned that the language skills should be taught along with the grammar. The grammar teacher should deliver the material based on how the language is being used in the natural context, and the teacher needs to provide the space for learners to practice the language in a communicative and fluency-oriented activities.

The observation result also shows that the teacher in Class A did not use learning media, for instance, videos or stories of the students' culture. The teacher in Class B used the media for learning such as the LCD projector and laptop but also has not yet used the students' culture content in the form of videos or stories for the teaching and learning process. This means that the teaching and learning process has not yet considered the needs of the intercultural competence, the one's ability to appreciate their own culture and other's culture that are different from theirs (Byram, 2013; Kramsch, 2013).

Finally, regarding the assessment, the teacher did not yet fully use the assessment on the students' attitude, activeness and participation during the teaching and learning process. The teachers didn't do this assessment directly in the classroom but they usually observe and record the attitude and the students' activeness and participation during the classroom activities. The teacher might be used their observation and record on the students' attitude

during the learning process, besides the students' test result, for the whole semester to determine the students' final score.

The other aspect of the current practice was the students, covering their enthusiasm and interest, interaction in the classroom and the accomplishment of their learning goals. In terms of this aspect, in the process of teaching and learning classroom the students have had good enthusiasm seen from their attention on the teacher's explanation of the learning materials and the willingness to do the exercises in the grammar book or exercises provided by the group who did the presentation, and discussed the material with their classmates. However, the students did not yet practice the materials that have been learned with their classmates nor asked their teachers if they have difficulties in understanding the learning materials. These phenomena could be occurred due to the view of learning the language usually focus more on the language form. In fact in learning English grammar, the students should focus on the form and the meaning at the same time. This is in line to the argument pointed out by Bandar and Gorjian (2017) that learners provided with learning instruction that focuses on form and meaning continuously resulting in students achievement on English grammar. In addition, the reluctance in using the language or asking questions to teachers about the language grammar could be caused by the boredom of learning the grammar and the view that language grammar is not important to learn from their point of view at the time of learning. It is a misleading thought in interpreting the communicative approach with its communicative competence which in fact putting grammatical competence as the first one of the four competence. It can be said that grammar knowledge is the prime element of a language learning process since itexisted in every language skill.

Finally, regarding the situation aspect of the current practice of English grammar learning, all facilities needed for the teaching and learning process has been fulfilled. The classroom has had a good tables' and chairs' arrangement, lightning and whiteboard, and LCD projector. This condition has fulfilled a good environment for language learning and has provided technology for the learning language. Larsen-Freeman dan Anderson (2011) state that technology not only supports the learning process but also gives a contribution to easing learners accessing any source for learning the new language.

The result of the interview on the teachers' expectation on the grammar learning model showed

that in term of the aims of learning, the students' mastery of English grammar, the approach, the material, media and assessment of learning, the teachers' expectation are realistic since a good teaching and learning process involving all of those elements. The teachers expect to have a grammar learning course that aims to teach the students the basic knowledge of English grammar, the parts of speech, the tenses and the knowledge on how to ask questions in English. The students are also expected to master that knowledge as well for the grammar course. This expectation could be caused by the view on the importance of this basic knowledge for learning English. The parts of speech consisted of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, articles, and prepositions are there in English sentences. For the approach, both teachers expect to have an approach that combines both the deductive and inductive ways of learning English grammar. The approach could be the one called Story-based approach with its four phases; 'presentation, attention, co-construction and extension' (Adair-Hauck and Donato, 2010). In other words, they expect to have grammar learning that focuses on forms and meaning or oriented to communication. However, the teachers also note that they still prefer the deductive approach as it was the one approach they have familiar with, the one they were taught or trained in during their study time

Next, for the material. Both teachers prefer to use the commercial and did not too fond of the material designed by the teachers themselves or the compilation materials. One teacher agreed to use the materials from the websites that discuss the grammar materials as it can be used as the additional material, the other teacher still preferred to used the commercial textbook. This finding shows that the teacher did not like to develop the material themselves, and tend to rely on the commercial book. This could be due to the ease in finding the book and use it in the teaching and learning process without much effort on designing ones that met the students'needs. In fact, a teacher should design the course which has clear goals of learning and materials. Relying on the textbook only will limit the students' input on grammar knowledge.

Then for the media, the teachers expect to have an LCD projector and laptop but they consider using social media such as youtube and facebook unnecessary. The preferences to rely on textbook only and do not open the ways of learning to match new developments in language teaching will limit the students' absorbing knowledge process. The teacher should allow the students to find out other

sources of learning grammar. Materials on English grammar, videos or texts, are available abundantly in internet websites. Using technology in the teaching and learning process is a part of the current practice in language teaching. The use of technology in teaching and learning process will give wider chances for students to learn a new language (Naqvi and Al Mahrooqi, 2016). The students can learn a new language maximally by making used of the technology for learning which enabled them accessing much information on the new language. Finally, in term of the assessment, the teachers expect to do the assessments for the mid-test, final test, and assignments and have all types of test for grammar learning, for instance the open-ended and closed-ended. discrete point, error analysis. elicitation and translation (Nunan, 2005). In contrast, the other teacher thought that elicitation and translation were not necessary for a grammar test and preferred to use error analysis, closed-ended, and open-ended test. All those types of English grammar tests are good to be used in assessing the students' grammar learning achievement. However, the ones that the teacher commonly used are the closed-ended and error analysis.

5 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study has shown that the current practice in English grammar teaching seems to still be in the traditional approach paradigm of grammar teaching. The teachers have not yet provided students with clear aims of learning which is usually written in the course syllabus given to students at the first meeting of the course. The use of the deductive approach was in practice, learning materials rely solely on commercial books and have not yet designed based on the students' needs. The use of the text such as stories, dialog and the source culture content (legends) have not yet in practice. This is in contrast to the current trends in language teaching in Indonesia using text-based or genre-based approach and has not yet considered the importance of intercultural competence in learning a language. Future studies on designing the grammar learning model that incorporates the teaching of grammar oriented to the reaching of students' communicative competence and intercultural competence are suggested, especially a future study that based on a needs analysis and in line with the current trends in learning a language grammarr in particularly.

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