

A DESCRIPTIVE AND CRITICAL EVALUATION OF TEACHING APPROACH AND TECHNIQUES ON TEACHING LEXICAL PHRASES IN A VIDEO LESSON

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Abstract This paper presents and evaluates all the aspects of a video lesson on teaching lexical phrases. This is a story lesson which is taught by Tony as an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher amongst twenty ESL upper-intermediate learners. The video lesson is taken from the book called "The Practice of English Language Teaching". The purpose of the lesson is to describe feeling and speaking skills through lexical phrases. Another purpose of the lesson is to show the significance of "Rapport" as an important relationship between the teacher and learners in the lesson sequence. Additionally, this paper aims at assessing the approach, techniques, teaching aids, classroom activities descriptively and critically. The outcome of this paper is to show an excellent model lesson story and its aspects to ESL and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers

Keywords Communicative Language Teaching, CLT, lexical phrases, teaching techniques, critics on CLT, learning lexical phrases, theories of CLT

INTRODUCTION

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is known as a functional approach, and students are the main concern to enrich their overall ability to communicate with the target language (Longhurst 2013). Schmitt 2000, P. 14 argued that CLT deals with meaning, where students can put on stress on the target language to get a meaningful language with a focus on the "message and fluency rather than grammatical accuracy". Santos 2020 illustrated that communicative language teaching tends to progress some related qualifications within students; like understanding vocabularies and applying them in sentences. Practicing the target language may not have a direct focus on grammar and accuracy, but it increases their understanding and information on language use and communication ability.

Moreover, teaching vocabulary is a topic, which recently attracted much interest. The lexical approach has also been debated concerning language incorporating lexical phrases, which are called fixed or idiomatic expressions (Willis 1990 and Lewis 1993; 1997 cited in Harmer 2007, 74. This aims at evaluating and analyzing the approach, techniques that are employed by Tony who teaches a group of lexical phrases in an upper-intermediate classroom.

The value of this paper is for those teachers who want to use CLT in their classes especially in explaining such a complicated topic like that, to use the same method and technique that Tony has used. Recently, most of the EFL/ESL teachers are interested in using the CLT method in their classes due to its significance in using the language communicatively. Though this approach concentrates on fluency more than accuracy, it is still desirable because it is more student-centered learning and based on learners' needs and interests. What is more, there are many definitions of CLT, the most obvious one is Littlewood 1981, 1 explains that "one of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view."

All in all, if the teacher wants to go beyond teaching grammar rules of the target language, it is better to use CLT because learners will develop communicative competence by using the target language in a meaningful way. Additionally, this approach makes the language more relevant to the world rather than the classroom. So, learners can acquire the desired skills rapidly and agreeably.

Teaching and Learning Lexical Phrases

Language teaching is a coherent set of procedures, which connect beliefs and the actions of teaching Anderson and Larsen-Freeman 2011, p.1. Teaching and learning lexical chunks are part of language teaching as well. Pollio (1977, 202) claims that figurative language has a seminal role in teaching, learning art, and reading. However, metaphorical language might not be easy for all levels of learners to understand. In addition, Lazar (1993, 104) argues that teaching metaphors assist students to understand the metaphorical language. This view is consistent with the idea of comprehending poems and literature. Moreover, DeCarrico and Nattinger (1992, 106) state that learning lexical phrases helps students to progress in learning language creatively, especially in conversation style. This route was observed in Tony's lesson in the communicative approach which was used; this encourages learners to participate in various activities in the classroom. To analyze the approach of teaching lexical phrases by Tony, communicative language teaching (CLT) should be carefully evaluated.

Theories about CLT

The approach employed in Tony's lesson to teach lexical phrases was done communicatively. CLT begins from the idea of using language as a tool for communication (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 159). This theory is possibly relevant to most learners' intention to use English as a foreign or second language today. Additionally, CLT creates an atmosphere for learners to be involved in

learning the target language communicatively (Spada and Lightbown 1999, 92). Nevertheless, some learners might not be able to converse in the target language because of some negative factors in CLT in different educational contexts. Correspondingly, several studies have been conducted on CLT because it has affected English language teaching and learning globally, particularly in Asian countries (DordiNejad et al. 2011). This research has shown negative and positive aspects of CLT according to different educational contexts. Moreover, problems encountered by learners and teachers have been the focus of discussion in much empirical research about communicative exercises (Bark-huizen 1998; Li 1998; LoCastro 1996; Shamim 1996 cited in Chen 2002, 260). Teachers and learners should seriously consider each approach. Finally, this approach can be critically applied and analyzed based on this lesson and various educational backgrounds.

Critics of CLT

Nevertheless, CLT currently seems to be an active method of teaching English as a foreign and second language. It might be criticized in some aspects of teaching applications. First of all, (Liao 2004; Swan 1985; Bax 2003; Rao 2002 and Hu 2005) claim that this approach was not successfully conducted in the system of education in some countries because of several reasons. For instance, Liao (2004, 270-272) argues that Chinese education has difficulties with this approach because some teachers do not have enough information to use this approach appropriately. Additionally, the plans of ministries of education in some countries might not be able to obtain the aims of CLT in many Eastern countries (Kuo 1995 cited in Liao 2004, 270. It is believed that the main problem is the number of learners in the Kurdish classroom. This point contrasts with the number of students in Tony's classroom and therefore Tony appears to be active in performing activities communicatively.

METHOD

Application of CLT to this lesson

It can be argued that the main approach observed in this lesson is CLT due to several reasons. For example, information gap and guided role-play are two major techniques of communicative teaching (Cook 2008, 248). Nonetheless, these two techniques are used in other methods such as the Direct Method. Other similarities can be addressed from this lesson. Firstly, the lesson at all stages seems to be communicative. Brumfit (1983) states that one of the most effective teaching steps in a lesson is that the teacher has taught lexical phrases through indirect teaching. This feature was presented in Tony's lesson since Tony has taught lexical phrases indirectly. In addition, Larsen-Freeman and Marti (2011) state that one of the characteristics of communicative language teaching is to employ techniques that enhance learners taking part in a natural classroom atmosphere. This can be seen as a feature in Tony's lesson because of the naturally occurring conversation in the lesson. Nevertheless, this method cannot be applied to all levels of learners because they have different abilities and skills. Moreover, another reason for creating communication is the level of the students which allows them to converse freely. Furthermore, the relationship between the teacher and students enables the learners to feel free to participate in the whole setting, and particularly the rapport between the teacher and students enhances the learners' ability to be active. This view correlates with one principle of CLT which is 'building a relationship with and among students is very important (Anderson and Larsen-Freeman 2011, 91).

Another important feature of the lesson is that the teacher only uses the target language during the lesson. Buttner (n.d, 30) claims that it is good for teachers to use the target language spontaneously in the classroom since this atmosphere assists the students to converse in it. The level of students might be helpful for teachers in using the target language. However, it is difficult for learners to understand a foreign language if the language is not a part of their life (Coleman 1996, 213). In contrast, Tony's learners appear to comprehend the target language because they are upper intermediate level. Furthermore, the topic of the lesson is helpful for learners to share their ideas and emotions throughout the discussion sessions in the classroom. This is in agreement with Harmer's view (2007, 37) who confirms that metaphor creates a chance to interpret emotions about different situations such as explaining poems. This factor might enable Tony's students to find keywords and understand the meaning of complex phrases. Namely, according to Fielding and Lee (1998 cited in Collins, Onwuegbuzie and Jiao 2010, 260) keywords are advantageous to break down contexts. Above all, the most obvious principles and observations that have been done in Tony's lesson are the following:

Tabel 1. Describing observations and principles

Observation	Principles
1.The teacher uses gestures and asks questions in the beginning of the lesson to build rapport.	The answers are elicited from the students in a communicative approach.
2.The teacher puts the students into two groups of adjectives.	Brainstorming is useful to obtain various ideas.
3.The teacher gives the learners instructions for the first exercise in the target language.	The target language is a tool for communication during the whole lesson.
4.The teacher distributes strips of paper.	Students need to work together with the language to separate negative and positive adjectives. Using communication.
5.The teacher asks the students about the level of easiness or difficulty of the activity.	Students have the opportunity to express their views on the activity. The focus is on real language use rather than language forms.
6.Students work with their partners to predict key words and guess the	Keywords and meaning discussion enhance students' ability to progress

meaning of the idioms	communicative interaction.
7. The teachers remind the students about intonation in the mini-reading dialogue	Learners need to use language forms appropriately.
8.The teacher gives the students a mini-dialogue.	The students can practise their language through reading and speaking skills (pair and group work).
9.The teacher gives positive feedback.	The teacher does activities to facilitate communication.
10.The teacher asks the students to create role- plays and use idioms	Students practise their communication throughout the exercises and understand the meaning of the idioms
11.The teacher asks the students to narrate more personal stories about sad and happy events.	This activity enables the students to use idioms in authentic communication.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Critique of the lesson

McBeth and Hirsch (2004) argue that students should take part in the evaluation as part of completing teaching materials and teaching approaches. However, teachers are also a major part of teaching and learning. Three main aspects should be considered in the classroom such as teachers, students, and teaching methods. The purpose of this paper is to assess these aspects in Tony's classroom. While this lesson has a good communicative side, some weak points should be taken into account. First of all, one criticism is that Peaty (1983, 1) details that 'idiomatic English presents many difficulties for the learner. Rules governing usage and range of application can be obscure or non-existent. It might be possible to claim that some of Tony's learners faced ambiguity since they are all second language users of English. Previous studies have also identified that second language users might not be able to comprehend the language of metaphor, particularly those phrases which have no equivalent in their first language (Danesi 1992; Irujo 1986; 1993 cited in Nehaniv 1999, 168). On the contrary, some other learners might have the ability to comprehend lexical chunks in Tony's classroom since metaphor is being taught throughout the conversation. Another point is that professional teaching aids have not been used in the

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Publish By

The Association of Community Service Lecturers of Indonesia (ADPI)

Jl. Komp. Unand Padang Besi Kec. Lubuk Kilangan, Kota Padang. Sumatera Barat

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lesson such as the interactive whiteboard and pictures to explain lexical phrases that would enable learners to visualize the meaning of lexical phrases. The advantages of visual aids are great and effective. However, there are some disadvantages according to their use in classrooms (Dempsey 2009, 226).

Research Material

One of the recorded lesson stories was taken from the book called “The Practice of English Language Teaching”. The lesson was taught by Tony who taught lexical phrases to describe feeling happy and sad. The level of the lesson was upper intermediate. There were twenty learners in the classes. The teacher divided the learners into small groups to brainstorm positive and negative words. The teacher whose lesson is included on the DVD introduced himself and discussed issues arising out of his filmed lesson. The teacher was interviewed by Jeremy Harmer (Harmer 2007, 438-439)

Teaching techniques

Van (1999, 11) argues that the most crucial question which teachers should ask while taking into account a specific technique of teaching is why this technique should be used. Each technique has its importance. Chau (2008, 90) claims that several teaching procedures assist classrooms to be organized such as enhancing comprehension and the comfort of learners. Tony uses some techniques that can be discussed based on their advantages and disadvantages.

Rapport

Goss and Bernstein (2005, 118) argue that rapport enables the process of formulating comfortable feelings between teachers and students. One of the major discussions between Tony and Harmer (2011, video section) is about the importance of rapport in the classroom as well. As can be observed at the beginning of the lesson, Tony demonstrates a good relationship with the students because the teacher has known them for a long time. Moreover, Murry (1997 cited in Hammer and Mashek 2011) claims that the student-teacher rapport correlates with student learning. In other words, teachers may have a positive or negative relationship with the students in the learning environment. A positive relationship is reflected in a good rapport between teacher and student. As a consequence, the students will enjoy the course (Altman 1990 cited in Hammer and Mashek 2011). It can be concluded that rapport seems to be an important factor during the whole of Tony's lesson.

Role-play

This technique can be defined as an exercise in which learners are required to imagine themselves in a setting and are presented representations in that setting (Harmer

(2011, 282)). This technique helps Tony's learners to think about classroom activities continually. For example, the teacher shows his behavior to be both sad and happy. As a result, students tend to be enhanced in various activities. Similarly, role play has several benefits for students such as the following:

A-Empowers learners to demonstrate concealed emotions

B-Helps students to debate various issues in the classroom

C-Allows students to make sense of motivations

Van (1999, 13)

It can be noted that these points are presented in Tony's lesson, which helps learners to be involved in classroom activities appropriately.

On the contrary, role-play might have some disadvantages for the learners. A drawback is that it is not easy for both teacher and learner to formulate real and meaningful situations in a role play. Hinkel (1999, 159). This might be related to the learner's ability or teacher's performance in creating role-plays. Above all, Tony was able to create a worthwhile role-play environment because of applying CLT actively.

Brainstorming

This concept can be defined as an unorganized team procedure that is normally employed for problem-solving and inventing views (Jonassen, Tessmer and Hannum 1999, 263). This definition can be applied to brainstorming in Tony's classroom. In the first activity, it can be noted that brainstorming was conducted to write down positive and negative adjectives. This step is in keeping with Ricci and Wahlgren's (1998 cited in Buehl 2009, 57) view when they stated that brainstorming is productive for those learners who have a wide range of backgrounds erudition This is associated with Tony's learners since they come from different nations. Furthermore, another benefit of brainstorming is that teachers can gather various ideas from the learners about the topic of the lesson, as it happens in Tony's lesson Baddock (2002, 186). Songs as the tools to brainstorm is engaging in primary school (Wijirahayu, 2017). This statement is connected with Leigh's view (1996) that delineates brainstorming benefits because of its seminal aspects such as assisting the learners to think creatively. The last point is observed in Tony's classroom when answering different exercises.

Gestures

Recent studies assist learners and educators to test the methods in which teachers handle the different activities in the classroom, such as gestures to teach their lessons meaningfully at the beginning of the lesson (Bourne & Jewitt 2003 cited in Cummins 2007, 209). In addition, (Leaver; Ehrman; Shekhtman 2005, xiii and 186) state that gestures are like types of communication that appear without spoken communication and they also classified the kinds of gestures based on cultural behavior concerning hand, finger, and leg

movements. Hand and leg movements can be noticed in Tony's lesson to convey the meaning of lexical phrases regardless of the linguistic forms. Tony's gestures and mimes assisted learners to understand the lesson confidently. Additionally, it is thought that gestures indicate the main ideas of the lesson since learners are likely to apprehend Tony's movements step by step.

On the other hand, gestures might not help learners to understand the meaning of the topic or the main purpose of the lesson. Watkins and Jarvis (2007, 18) claim that learners could misapprehend a few of the gestures since they express various intentions from one culture to another. Yet, for certain purposes in Total Physical Respond approach motion during learning and teaching activity could attract young learners attention and to overcome the anxiety and arouse their interest to acquire more new words (Wijirahayu & Septiani, 2017).

Elicitation

Harmer (2007, 203 & 229) argues this technique is a vital procedure, particularly for upper-intermediate students because of their capacity to elicit vocabularies. Tony tries to elicit the topic of the lesson from the students, especially adjectives which are directly related to the content of the lesson. Tony was also able to elicit answers from the students through gestures and asking questions on various activities. For instance, the question 'How am I feeling' is answered by elicitation. Moreover, one of the uses of elicitation is to support teachers to assess the language of learners (Mair 1989 cited in Nesselhauf 2004, 280). However, some teachers might not be able to use elicitation as a technique to obtaining information from students because of their lack of experience in teaching or any abnormal situation in the classroom. Elicitation is thought to be the most crucial technique among Tony's students since their elicitation seems to be powerful for the topic of the lesson. In contrast, some teachers might find it difficult if learners cannot answer on time. As a consequence, learners might not have the desire to reply to any elicitations from the teacher. Various techniques in evaluation are suggested to be applied by the teachers in online learning (Wijirahayu & Rokhmani, 2021)

Cue-response drills

Cue is performed in different tasks in the lesson. This technique is used to stimulate the learners to express their answers. For instance, Tony asks the students 'how am I feeling?' This question stimulates students to provide the answers quickly. Harmer's view (2011, 272) is tied up with 'when a teacher gives a cue (or stimulus) such as 'question....where....' nominates a student, and the nominated student offers a response such as 'where's the station?'. However, Harmer's explanation for this kind of technique is perfect. Learners might not be able to answer all cues from the teacher.

Teaching aids

Through observation of the class, it could be seen that few teaching aids were utilized in the lesson. Teaching aids are those things that teachers bring to the lesson occasionally to expedite learning and perform classroom activities creatively (Mukalel 1998, 137). Two kinds of teaching materials are mainly used by Tony. Nevertheless, there are peradventure visual aids to use in teaching effectively. Audio-visual aids exceed the learning process and make it more effective due to using two senses learners can easily recall what they have learned before (Barnett and McCormick 2003). During online learning the teaching aids that suited to the current situation of pandemic Covid-19 could facilitate the learners to acquire English word as well as increase the awareness about public health (Wijirahayu, 2022).

Worksheets

Tony brought some strips of paper and worksheets to the classroom. These teaching materials aid students to answer classroom tasks on time. Namely, worksheets are very helpful for the teachers in arranging verbal exercises in pair work and small groups (Doff 1988, 244). Tony was able to organize two activities such as a gap-filling activity which enabled students to practice reading and speaking actively. Another activity consisted of strips of paper that allowed students to interact with the meaning of idioms.

Whiteboard

The whiteboard is often a useful device that can be used in the classroom. Tony used the whiteboard to separate adjectives into two groups. Mitcheal (2008, 116) identified some advantages to this. Firstly, whiteboards are convenient for writing unplanned explanations, quick notes, and student activities. Secondly, they can easily be cleaned and reconstituted. Thirdly, a wide range of colorful markers can be used on them. Finally, it is more convenient than blackboards. However, while Mitcheal (2008) points out these positive points about using a whiteboard, it is thought that an interactive whiteboard would be more pertinent for this lesson because for several reasons. For example, visual aids can be displayed and it is also connected to online pages which are essential for current learners (Harmer 2007, 187).

It is believed that these teaching aids are not enough for understanding the language of metaphors. Tony should have brought other visual aids to teach this topic more appropriately.

Classroom Activities

The following activities have been observed in Tony's lesson.

Pairs work activity

Pair work activity aims to develop speaking and listening skills employing and sharing ideas and beliefs (Huang and Lin 2011, 301). This is associated with the S-S activity that helps Tony's learners to work together actively, especially on separating negative and positive idioms on the strips of paper and exchanging their opinions at the same time. In pair work activity, students separated into pairs or small groups that could sort out tasks concurrently (Doff 1988, 137). On the other hand, group or pair work might not be applicable for primary school pupils or a large number of students due to too much noise occurring in the class. It is stated that Tony could manage this activity on account of the small number of students.

Group Work Activity

This kind of activity appears to create communicative circumstances in Tony's lesson throughout the whole lesson because T-S and S-S were all engaged eagerly like one family. Group work activity has a vital role in brainstorming ideas about negative and positive adjectives in Tony's lesson. Gap filling activity was answered through group activities. Besides, Tony checked the correct answers from students' feedback on each other. Tony also remembered intonation through reading the mini dialogue. In addition, According to Jacobs and Hall (2002) working in pairs or groups encourages mutual helpfulness among the students and involves them to participate actively in the lesson. Collaboration also have a potential in developing values in reading activity (Wijirahayu & Armiati, 2020).

Storytelling activity

At the end of the lesson, Tony lets the students narrate happy and sad stories as a role-play. This activity aids the students to use idioms and practice their speaking skills. This activity can be regarded as a revision for the whole of the lesson. Moreover, some particular advantages are supplied by using storytelling to link views among students communicatively (Teehan 2006, 8). On the other hand, storytelling could not be applied in all classes since all learners may not have the chance to tell his or her stories.

CONCLUSION

It can be summarized that this assignment has discussed the approach, techniques of teaching, and teaching aids that were employed in Tony's lesson. CLT has been debated in detail based on this lesson and some other educational contexts. However, there is some criticism of CLT. Most countries try to establish it in their educational backgrounds. Additionally, this debate finds that CLT is active with active teachers and good techniques of teaching. Nevertheless, the number of learners and inexperience of teachers appear to be the main obstacles to using CLT in classrooms.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER STUDY

It can be recommended that CLT is a worthwhile approach if it deals with primary and secondary school contexts in Kurdistan in the future.

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