

Revitalizing Teaching English as a Foreign Language Course for 21st Century Learning

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Abstract

It is a national issue that English literacy levels of Indonesian students are still low if compared with students from other countries. It is a serious challenge for the lecturers of Education Departments in universities on how to produce teachers who are capable of conducting 21st century learning at school and improving their students' literacy. This study aimed at evaluating the Course of English teaching as a Foreign Language, analyzing its suitability to the current issues of 21st century learning. The study implemented mixed method design and was conducted at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha Singaraja in 2017/2018. The course was analyzed in terms of Context, Input, Process and Product following Stufflebeam's theory. The data were collected using several instruments, analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The results of the study revealed that the course holistically needs to be adapted. The content must be added with topics of 21st century education framework and provided with a model of English Literacy Program. The process of teaching needs to be adapted to student-centered and blended learning, and the product needs to be adapted. This result of evaluation study is expected to be able to produce teacher candidates with pedagogical skills relevant to the current era of 21st century learning.

Keywords: 21st century learning, TEFL courses

Introduction

In the digital era nowadays, literacy skill in English is an obligation, and highly demanded. Basic literacy skill is defined as the ability of read and write (Bainbridge & Macy, 2008; Haryanti, 2014). Being able to read and write in English is basic knowledge /skills required not only in work places but also in dealing with life in general in the era of 21st century. In order to prepare students for the new global world, the students must have 21st century skills.

In dealing with the 21st century skill, Fadel (2008) stated that there are three types of skills needed in the 21st century. The skills involve life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, and information, media and technology skills. The life and career skills involve flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility. The learning and innovation skills involve the skills of critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, and communication and collaboration. The information, media and technology skills include having information literacy, media literacy, ICT (Information, Communications & Technology) literacy. Basic literacy skill in the form of abilities to read and write in English is a basis of entering the skills of 21st century learning. Despite the high demand and obligation for every global citizen to have basic English literacy skill, it cannot be denied that English literacy skill of Indonesian students is still low if compared with students from other countries. The results from Program of International Students Assessments (PISA) reveal that Indonesian students were ranked and were around 20% from the bottom positions. PISA is a worldwide study intended to test 15 year-old students from all over the world in reading, mathematics and science. PISA assesses how well students

can apply what they learn in schools to real life situations (PISA, 2012). This phenomenon of low achievements as stated in PISA should be responded by education universities especially English Language Education Department on how to produce teacher candidates who are skillful and capable of teaching English literacy as needed in the 21st century.

One of the main courses which build the skill of teaching English is called Teaching English as a Foreign Language Course. This course contains knowledge and concepts about approach, method and techniques, methods and strategies of teaching English language skills either separately or in integrations, current issues in language teachings, techniques of teachings using songs and games and other related techniques of teaching English. From the content, it can be claimed that students are provided with sufficient knowledge and topics for teaching English. However, the fact that the outcome of teaching English in Indonesia is not satisfying as reported by PISA needs special attention, and the external demand of the global era demands a serious effort of evaluating and revitalizing the course for the 21st century learning.

There are several research conducted on the 21st century learning (Boholano, 2017; Faulkner & Latham, 2016; Jan, 2017), however research through evaluation study toward the course of Teaching English as a Foreign Language needed by pre-service teachers and how to revitalize it for the 21st century learning has not been much conducted. The scarcity on this type of research stimulated the present study to be conducted.

The need to conduct this research is also directed by the fact that the 21st century skills must be mastered by teachers in order to be ready and capable in teaching students in this global era of industry 4.0. For that reason, the course of Teaching English as a Foreign Language as the main course offered for the student teachers need to be seriously reviewed. The course must be evaluated in order to know whether the course meets this requirement. Stufflebeam (2003) offers a comprehensive framework of evaluation which consists of four types such as evaluation in terms of context, input, process and product. Context evaluation aims at assessing needs, problems and opportunities which are used as reference for judging a school program, or other enterprise. Input evaluation is intended to assess competing strategies, plans, budgets of approaches for implementation needed for improvement. Process evaluation monitors and assesses activities, the process of implementation, and product evaluation assesses outcomes, identify the level of successes in reaching the targeted needs, in order to make decision whether to continue or discontinue, modify or change the program.

Assessment conducted through evaluation study is very essential because it evaluates the teaching method and material used and measures improvement over time (Jabbarifar, 2009). Besides that, the significance of the present study is essentially obvious as a very useful data for taking a decision whether the course needs to be modified or changed for revitalizing its relevance to the current needs of teaching English to generation in this global era. For that reason, the purpose of the study is to evaluate the Course of Teaching English as a foreign language, and how to revitalize the course for the 21st century learning.

Method

The study was an evaluation study in the form of embedded mixed method design which basically utilized qualitative design supported with quantitative analysis. The evaluation study implemented Stufflebeam's Model (2003) which consisted of four aspects of evaluation such as evaluation from the context, input, process and product. The object of evaluation was TEFL Course as one of pedagogy courses at English Language Education Department of Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha Bali Indonesia. The TEFL Course was chosen as the object of the study because like its name, the course contains techniques of teaching English as a foreign language which become one of the main courses promoting students' skills for competent future teachers in teaching English. The course was offered at the 5th

semester before the students taking Microteaching Course. The Framework of Evaluation Study conducted towards the TEFL Course can be described in Table 1.

Table 1. Framework of Research following Stufflebeam's Model (2003) in TEFL Course Evaluation Study

Aspects of Evaluation	Objectives	Methods	Relation to decision making for improvement
Context	To identify the targeted audience of TEFL Course, assess their needs, and identify the resources for addressing the needs	Document review, interview, and literature review.	The goals for improvements.
Input	To identify the system capabilities of TEFL Course, staffing plan, schedule.	Literature review, assess available human and material resources, document review and interview.	To determine the sources of support, solution strategy, procedural design for structuring changes, and providing a basis for the chosen action and implementation.
Process	To identify and predict the deficiencies in the plan or implementation, to provide input for managing the process and to judge the work effort.	Participatory observation, interview and document review	For controlling the implementation and judging and interpreting outcome.
Product	To collect information about outcomes, and relate with the goal, input and process, and interpret the merit.	By assessing the outcome with the targeted needs, collecting judgment of outcomes from stakeholders, conducting quantitative and qualitative analysis, and drawing conclusion	For decision making: whether need to modify, change, refocus the change activity; comparing the assessed needs and outcomes.

The evaluation study was conducted in 2017/2018. Because of the limitation in terms of time, the scope of the study was limited to evaluate one course only such as the course of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL Course). To guarantee the trustworthiness or the reliability and validity of the study, triangulation was conducted in terms of time by observing the implementation of the course several times for one semester in the academic year of 2018/2018; by triangulating across several persons that the data were collected through several persons that included the lecturers and the team; and also by triangulating across several techniques that the data were collected through observations, interview and also document review. The collected data were then analyzed qualitatively and supported with simple descriptive statistical analysis when calculating the average scores of students' achievement on TEFL Course.

Result and Discussion

The evaluation study was conducted on four aspects such as evaluation in terms of context, input, process and product. The findings were summarized in the following table.

Table 2. Context Evaluation

Context
<p>Goal :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To have knowledge and skills of teaching English as a foreign language to students at schools. - To have knowledge and skills of teaching students/generations of digital era.
<p>Targeted Audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students who are going to be teachers of English as a foreign language at schools. - Students who have good proficiency in spoken and written English indicated by having passed the English language skills course.
<p>Needs :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students must master the concepts of approach, method, and techniques of teaching English as a foreign language. - Students must have knowledge of current issues in language teaching. - Students must have sufficient skills in using technology needed for their teaching and learning process.
<p>Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The goal needs to be elaborated into specific objectives on specific skills needed for teaching students in the digital era.

The result of context evaluation reveals that the competencies achieved by the students have been sufficient which include the knowledge and skills of teaching English as a foreign language and also have the skills of teaching generations in the digital era. However, there is no further detail information about kind of skills needed for teaching in the digital era.

Table 3. Input Evaluation

Input
<p>System:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taught in 4 credit-semester unit, 32 sessions including middle and final test - The assessments include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40% task, 20% attitude, 15% middle test, 25 % final test .
<p>Teaching strategies covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - student centered learning, - tasked based oriented learning, and - blended learning
<p>Staffing plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two lecturers each is responsible for 2 credit semester unit and have 16 sessions - The lecturers must have a background of at least Master Degree in English Education Degree

Table 3. Cont.

Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lecturers who have expertise on teaching English as a foreign language, and updated with current issues in language teaching.
Content of the Course:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The concepts of approach, methods, techniques; - Methods of teaching English (which include methods and teaching of listening, speaking, reading and writing; teaching English in integration), - Teaching English using songs and games; - Teaching English based on curriculum 2013, - Current issues in language teaching.
Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offered in the fifth semester before the students taking Microteaching Course - Twice a week, each of which is 45 minutes
Recommendation :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Needs to include framework of 21st century learning. - Internet based learning sources

The results of interviews confirm the findings in Table 3 that the current issues cover the topics of constructivism in English language teaching and various types of cooperative language teaching. The framework of 21st century skills is not well included yet. Besides that the students need to be assigned to search internet based learning sources in order not only to enrich their creativity to find new current ideas of teaching but also to improve their skills of using technology in learning the course.

Table 4. The Process Evaluation

Process	
Implementation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching learning process using student-centered approach. - The theory introduced through blended learning using learning management system of Schoology that 50% of the session are conducted online. - The students are demanded to do simulations to implement the theories of teaching in practices. - Pre-service teachers equally treat all students.
Predicted deficiencies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of creativity in designing strategies of teaching innovatively. - The differentiated needs of students were not obviously treated. - Lack of skills in using new technology for enhancing their learning
Input/feedback:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students must search innovative teaching learning process and choose them by adapting, adopting or creating new ones. - Use online sources /link in order to improve the skills of using technologies and also to find appropriate and relevant teaching strategies
Work effort:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students did simulations practicing their innovative teaching strategies. - Visiting and observing the process of teaching in real classroom setting especially at

-
- schools.
- Using technologies in learning and simulation for practicing their teaching strategies.
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Table 4. Cont

Recommendation:

- Differentiated instruction needs to be implemented by the teachers
 - Innovativeness needs to be improved.
 - Technology skills need to be enhanced and improved.
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The results of the process evaluation reveals that in general the implementation has been using student centered learning, using blended learning of learning management system called Schoology. All students used excellent power points. However the students need to improve their creativity about classroom managements, reward empowerments, and on handling games for language learning. The students also need to improve their use of technology not limited to using power point only.

Table 5. Product Evaluation

Product

Outcome :

- Students' skills of teaching have been sufficiently good.
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Learning skills (4 C)

- Communication : good
Students' achievement in English are good (minimum score 3.0 from the maximum score of 4.0). Students' average score is 3.4 (out of maximum score of 4).
 - Collaboration : good
Students are able to collaborate in group, showing good cooperativeness and able to work together easily.
 - Creativity : sufficient
Students' creativity needs to be improved on how to manage big classes, how to make and keep students on task, and how to teach using language games.
 - Critical thinking:
This was assessed through question and answer sessions. Most students can answer questions which had explicit answers. Students need to be improved on how to answer questions which need implied answers and need high order thinking.
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Recommendation:

- Teaching skills: needs to be improved especially on how to insert 21st century skills in the topics they teach, how to teach literacy and insert character of love-reading.
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The evaluation in term of the product evaluation reconfirmed the process evaluation that the students' creativity needs to be improved. The results of observation showed that students need to find new ideas of handling big classes and how to make students they teach on task. The games also need to be varied and adapted based on the students' ages; and the students' critical thinking needs to be improved. The implementation also showed that the student teachers lack of variations in empowering rewards during practicing language games and teaching English literacy. In relation to this, Padmadewi and Artini (2018) stated that rewards can be provided in innovative ways which are varied in the form of time administrations, shapes and types. The types of rewards used can be searched online and the student teachers should be provided the links of sources.

The result of evaluation toward the TEFL Course showed that in general the course designers have already updated the course with new development of technology because from the goal of the course it

was clearly stated that the student teachers need to be competent in using technology. However, the goal statement is too general which needs further elaborations in the forms of objectives or indicators on kinds of technology needs to be used by the student teachers.

Faulkner and Latham (2016) did research on teacher quality for 21st century. From the study, it was revealed that teachers need skills in ways to make use of information in order to solve complex problems. This skill requires the teachers to make collaborations by communicating with others and discussing new solution, creating new knowledge and can have joint decision making. This makes the role of English or other international language as a means of sharing information and producing collaborations very significantly essential. It was further stated that “the qualities essential for 21st century teachers to communicate are also the qualities the students require. The qualities include adventurous approach to living, resilience and creative problem solving”. This implied that the teachers as well as the students all need to build their collaborations and communication skills, construct new knowledge from experiences forcreating problem solving strategies.

The results of observations on the implementation of the course reveal that the points of 21st century learning have been slightly introduced in the TEFL Course. The 4 C of learning and innovation skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking has been implemented. The student-teachers’ communications and collaborations have been performed well. The student-teachers have excellent spoken English, and most of them have very good fluency in practicing the skills of teaching through simulation. The collaborations were also reflected well. They managed joint-cooperative works well, and the group work resulted in task accomplishment. In relation to this, the importance of cooperation was also supported by Fujiwara (1996) who claims the importance of group work and its influence on learners’ motivation in a co-operative learning situation. It is in line with the result of other study that 21st century learners should possess both the ability to collaborate with individuals, groups and also self-directions (Boholano, 2017). Despite their good cooperativeness, classroom management especially about how to make students on task and all engaged still needs to be improved. This is supported by other finding which mentioned that new teachers still find classroom management as a serious problem which affects student learning (Clement, 2010)

Other challenges experienced by the student-teachers are the empowerment of creativity and critical thinking skills which therefore needs to be enhanced. Creativity of the pre-service teachers need to be enriched with exposures to different kinds of innovative ideas, and their critical thinking needs to be improved through practicing asking and answering questions. The student teachers need to maximize the opportunities of the students to ask questions in order to stimulate their critical thinking skills. In relation to this, it is stated that questioning skill is one of important skills to be practiced by teachers (Saban & Çoklar, 2013; Shah & Masrur, 2011). Through questioning, the student teachers can stimulate students to develop their critical thinking (Padmadewi, Artini, & Agustini, 2017). However, the presenters/student-teachers were too teacher-centered on asking questions. In other words, the questions were dominated by the teachers not the students. The students were directed to more answer the questions rather than asking questions. Not only that, the nature of the questions asked were also still around questions seeking explicit answers which not demand students to promote their high-order thinking.

The results of the evaluation study also reveal that the career and life skills needed for the 21st century learning were not obviously reflected in the TEFL Course. The skills which involve flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility need to be manifested in the process of teaching and learning.

The career and life skills must be inserted by design in the daily activities of the students, and this needs involvements of parents. Students are at schools on limited time, and the rest is with their parents, for that reason the programs at school needs to be supported by parents especially when the students are at home. A study by Padmadewi, Artini, Nitiasih, and Suandana (2018) reveal that parents’ involvement help students build the habit of reading and make them love reading. This character education can be

blended in the process of teaching and learning and important for students in order to be able to take part and survive in the 21st century.

In order to successfully teach in this global era, the teachers themselves must also provide themselves with the needed skills. The characteristics of the 21st century teachers were indicated by several aspects, among others are able to teach in learner centered classroom and personalized instruction, able to teach based on project based learning, able to stimulate students as producers, learn new technology, collaborate, go global (Jan, 2017). The characteristics should be used as reference in the course implementation which is manifested in the actions of the teachers in the process of teaching the students. In relation to that, the nature of the 21st century learning implementation demands teachers to provide teaching materials which are suited to the students' needs. The students' differences should be accommodated in the classrooms by providing materials relevant to the needs. For that reason, the concepts of differentiated instruction need to be added to the TEFL Course on how the teachers are able to differentiate the instructions based on the needs of the students. Differentiated instruction is demanded in order the students can develop themselves to the best potentials they can achieve. The learning process can be promoted through project based learning and conducted in the learner-centered classroom. Learner centered classroom needs to be empowered on how self-direction can be promoted. In other words, the project based learning must be directed on how students act as the agents of their own learning as producers where they experience the process, and be able to reconstruct new knowledge based on the process they experience.

Other finding of the evaluation study also discovered that the use of technology has been sufficiently implemented in the TEFL Course, and this can be observed from the use of power points by the student-teachers. However, this skill of mastering new technology for enhancing their learning is still needed. In order to do that, the literacy of the students to read and write in English also needs to be improved. As a consequence, the skills of teaching literacy need to be added to the course. Nowadays, Indonesia is challenged by low English literacy level so it is demanded that the English teachers must be aware about this and the pre-service teachers must be provided with model of teaching English literacy. Padmadewi and Artini (2018) inform the importance of English literacy, and admitted that the success of literacy program is also influenced by the existence of literacy rich environment. The English pre-service teachers therefore should know how to provide literacy rich environment and techniques of introducing English literacy programs for students.

The revitalization of the course to suit the targeted needs will not be successfully established if it is not accompanied by a changed mindset from the teachers' side. Teachers are the agents of changes and therefore must be able to adapt themselves for improvement. In relation to this, Faulkner and Latham (2016) stated that "teachers required a mindset that best adapted to the significant changes in learning, teachers who develop strategies for engaging with and constructing new knowledge". Teachers must keep learning as a way of adapting themselves to the new development.

From the findings discussed, it can be implicated that 21st century skill cannot be ignored by teachers and must be accommodated in the course in order to make teachers ready and capable of teaching the generations of this global era. The TEFL Course as one of the main pedagogy courses in English Language Education, which prepares future English teachers, needs to be revitalized in order to be appropriate for 21st century learning. The recommendations resulted from this evaluation study can be used as a reference on how to modify and revitalize the course to improve its relevance for teaching students of this global era, and used as a basis on what to be trained for improving the teachers' skills in order to be ready for 21st century education.

Conclusions

The results of evaluation study reveals that the TEFL Course needs to be enriched in terms of its context and input, also updated in terms of its implementation in order the product will be able to establish the targeted needs. For that reason several recommendations are proposed to the department such as the course goal needs to be elaborated into specific objectives/indicators reflecting the specific topics needed, the material about 21st century skills and model of teaching English literacy needed to be added to the course materials, and differentiated instructions and innovative teaching strategies need to be provided in the process of teaching and learning. Model of teaching English literacy program needs to be provided, and techniques of inserting soft and career skills need to be added to the course. Besides that, teaching using technology and internet based of learning sources need to be consistently improved. As stated by Boholano (2017) 'the internet provides numerous venues for pre-service teachers to share their views, preference, lessons or experience with others as well as opportunities to teach and learn'. It is expected that with the recommendations, better products will be produced and appropriate outcome will be established. The present study reconfirmed the study by Boholano (2017) that to effectively engage and teach students of digital era, pre-service teachers will help the educational system meet the requirement of the 21st century learning. Despite the essential significance of the present study, the new revised TEFL Course has not been implemented, so its effectiveness is not known yet, for that reason further research is recommended.

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