Introductory Research-Based Learning in Linguistics Class: Students’ Perspectives

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Abstract

This article would like to analyze students’ perspectives on introductory Research-based Learning in Linguistics class. This article applied survey research with cross-sectional design. The data were collected through open-ended questionnaires which were distributed to 64 students who enrolled Linguistics for ELT 2 class. The questionnaires were distributed to the students when they submitted the final project at the end of the learning process. They were asked to write their point of view on benefits and obstacle of the implementation of Research-based Learning during learning process. The results showed that using Research-based Learning in Linguistics class facilitated the students to gain learning objective properly, strengthening students’ learning and thinking skills, and enhancing students’ characters (attitudes). However, inadequate time available to present the research results and obtain lecturer’s feedback in the classroom was the most prominent obstacle faced by the students.

Key Words: Research-based learning, inquiry-based learning, linguistics class, students’ perspective.
1. Introduction

In the global competition, higher education (HE) faces wide range of challenges associated with the arrival of new managerial and its audit culture and research intensity has become key indicator of quality of university.[2]. This demand instigates changes of paradigm in teaching and learning in HE which have put the students at the centre of the learning process and the teacher as facilitator. This condition brings about obligation of the students to grasp research skill. It means the learning process must encourage the students to acquire knowledge as researchers do. This triggers research and teaching become key pillars in HE. Therefore, the relationship between research and teaching has become increasing importance in thinking about higher education and they should be closely link.

Integrating research and teaching has become principal issue in HE curriculum and it remains contentious and highly debatable. The analysis of research and teaching relationship has been investigated from different perspectives; academics and students. Handling teaching and research required a strong and meticulous effort on the part of academics. Achieving research-teaching nexus in undergraduate teaching requires academic control over content and learning task; a potential model is involving undergraduate students in learning by doing research; and it needs fostering locally. Involving undergraduate students in pedagogic research can enhance students’ research skill thus it gives valuable contribution to the enhancement of student experience and a graving community of pedagogic practices centred on students’ voice. Definition and the conceptualization of research-teaching nexus have been defined variously and take shape in various forms which are presented in Table 1.

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9 Wilcoxson, L., Manning, M. L., Johnston, N. & Geting, K. (2011). Enhancing the research-teaching nexus: building teaching-based research from research-based teaching. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. 23(1); 1-10
Table 1: Research-teaching Nexus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of Research-teaching Nexus</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Curricula Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research-led teaching</td>
<td>emphasis is on research content &amp; students are just audience</td>
<td>ensuring that what the students learn clearly reflects current and ongoing research in their discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research-oriented teaching</td>
<td>the focus is shifted in the direction of research process and students are just audience</td>
<td>developing students' knowledge of and ability to carry out the research methodologies and methods appropriate to their discipline(s) or profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research-tutored teaching</td>
<td>the students are participants but the focus is only on research content</td>
<td>focusing on students and staff critically discussing research in the disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research-based teaching</td>
<td>the students are participants; the focus is research process</td>
<td>ensuring that as much as possible the student learns in research or inquiry mode</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reference\(^\text{15}\) emphasizes that research-based curricula have preference for two reasons: (a) universities should treat learning as not yet wholly solved problems and hence always in research mode and (b) all undergraduate students in all higher education institutions should experience learning through research and inquiry. Research-based teaching has the strongest relationship between research and teaching\(^\text{16}\). Furthermore, Inquiry-based learning (IBL) has been promoted as a student-centred approach that can strengthen the links between teaching and research\(^\text{17}\).

Research-based learning (RBL) is a process of instruction which is transferring research element into teaching and learning process\(^\text{18}\). It is learner-centered and constructivist learning that require students to be able to discover, explore and develop knowledge for solving the problems encountered, generating their own experience and verifying knowledge acquired\(^\text{19} \text{20}\). Research-based learning is multifaceted, referring to various learning methods, so that all students’ learning outcomes can come from a simple research that they do, for example...

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through experiments and field studies\textsuperscript{21}. 

RBL provides opportunities for students to formulate problems, review theories, construct hypotheses, collect data, analyse data, and conclude the results obtained\textsuperscript{22}. RBL which means involving students in scientific research has many advantages: have clear ideas how learning, teaching and research might be more meaningfully integrated\textsuperscript{23}; learning how to conduct literature searches, collecting and analyzing data, starting thinking like a specialist or scientist, achieving more sophisticated level of intellectual development, promoting the acquisition of research knowledge and skills, understanding scientific findings, analysing literature critically, speaking effectively and acting as a leader with clear career goal\textsuperscript{24}.

This present article would like to investigate students’ perspectives on the implementation of Research-based Learning (RBL) in the learning process of Linguistics Class.

2. Method

Participants

This study applied survey research with cross-sectional design. The respondents of this research were 64 students who enrolled Linguistics for ELT 2 subject at English Education Study Program registered at the sixth semester in 2016/2017 academic year.

Techniques of Data Collection

The data were collected through open-ended questions which were distributed at the end of learning process when they submitted final project. This questionnaire was used to perceive both strengths and obstacles faced by the students throughout they were studying pragmatic principles in Linguistics for ELT 2 subject. Students were asked to write their own viewpoints about their good impressions and barriers as well when RBL was introduced in the learning process.

Techniques of Data Analysis

After the questionnaires were collected, the data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively as well. Qualitatively, the data were analyzed by using


\textsuperscript{24} Al Sweleh, F.S. (2016). Integrating scientific research into undergraduate curriculum: A new direction in dental education. Journal of Health Specialist 4(1), 42-5,
technique of data analysis proposed by Miles and Hubberman which contains three phases—data reduction, data display and drawing conclusion and interpretation. Whereas, quantitatively, the data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics to count both the numbers and percentage of students for each category.

**Procedures of Implementation of RBL**

The procedures of implementation of RBL in this study was comprised into six steps, namely; orientation, conceptualization, investigation, data interpretation, conclusion and discussion as presented in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Learning Phases</th>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. | **Orientation** (Stimulating students’ motivation and curiosity toward topics to be learnt) | - showing interactive video which applied pragmatic principles  
- asking questions about pragmatic principles used in the video  
- students formulate research problem  
- lecturer explain steps of inquiry |
| 2. | **Conceptualization** (Comprehending concepts related to formulation of problem) | - preparing table/diagram of concepts/theories certain pragmatic principles  
- completing the table/diagram with concept, indicators and example based assigned references  
- stating research focus  
- jotting down research questions |
| 3. | **Investigation/ Data Collection** (Collecting the data to answer research questions) | - finding a speech event to be analyzed  
- cutting video fragments which containing pragmatic principles  
- transcribing the movie characters’ dialogues  
- reading intensively data transcription |
| 4. | **Data Interpretation** (Organizing, analyzing and deducing meaning) | - coding the data  
- classifying data based on indicators  
- discuss the finding with the theory |
| 5. | **Conclusion** (Drawing conclusion based on data analysis and interpretation) | - ensuring all research questions have been answered  
- describing research finding in power point format |
| 6. | **Discussion** (Communicating research results and doing reflection to inquiry cycles) | - presenting research finding in classroom seminar  
- receiving feedback from classroom members and lecturer  
- reflecting inquiry process to find strengths and weaknesses of learning process using RBL |

**3. Findings**

Students’ viewpoints on introductory RBL as a learning model in Linguistics class can be classified into three categories. Firstly, RBL facilitated the students to gain learning objective of teaching Pragmatic principles. The students considered that RBL was augmenting their pragmatic competence and strengthening their capability in implementing the theories pragmatic principles in the field contextually. Secondly, RBL was regarded as developing students’ learning and thinking skills. Students believed that RBL was developing their research skill, critical thinking, learning autonomy and communication skills both in spoken and written forms. Besides, it enhanced students’ skill in utilizing ICT in learning process. Thirdly, students thought that RBL was enhancing students’ attitudes and characters, like improving motivation,
discipline, responsibility, collaboration, and creativity. Whereas, the implementation of RBL remained a barrier which was related to lack of time available to present the research results and obtain feedback from the lecturer.

The students’ viewpoints on the implementation of RBL in Linguistic class can be encapsulated as in the Table 3.

Table 3: Strengths and obstacle of the introductory RBL in Linguistics for ELT 2 class viewed from students’ perspectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Facilitating students to gain learning objectives of teaching Pragmatics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>augmenting students’ pragmatic competence</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>37.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>facilitating students to comprehend theories of pragmatic principles/topics</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>32.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>implementing theory in the field contextually</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Developing Students’ Learning &amp; Thinking Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>strengthening students’ research skill</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>building students’ critical thinking</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>enhancing students’ skill in utilizing ICT</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>improving students’ learning autonomy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>improving communication skills (public speaking)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Enhancing Students’ Characters (Attitudes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>developing students’ responsibility</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>boosting students’ motivation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>building students’ discipline</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>improving students’ collaboration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>improving students’ creativity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Obstacle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>insufficient time available for presenting the research results in the classroom and obtaining feedback from lecturer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this study, three effects have been emerged as being central to the implementation of research-based learning: facilitating students to gain learning objective, developing students’ learning skills and enhancing students’ characters and attitudes. Correspondingly, for Indonesian context, reference 25 conducted their research at Department of Statistics Islamic University of Indonesia. They found that 89.41% students were satisfied and interested in RBL learning. RBL significantly improve students’ achievement, provide satisfaction and students’ interest. Reference 26 investigated the implementation of RBL of pre-service mathematic teachers learning process. They found that

References:


RBL can enhance students’ research skill and writing academic skill. Reference 27 carried out their research about RBL applied by Physic pre-service students. The results show that RBL can improve students’ critical thinking. In line with this, reference 28 conducted research at secondary school level and found that RBL improved students’ critical thinking.

Reference 29 reported that incorporating research-based learning project in learning resulted students’ experience of doing research which supplied three central themes: facilitating active and challenging learning, learning to learn through research skills and strengthening id-depth and up-to-date knowledge. Reference reported that undergraduate mathematic education students in Australia, RBL improve their experimental design and written communication 30. In addition, reference 31 found out that inquiry-based learning (IBL) developed students’ skill in communication and collaboration. In proportion to this, reference 32 ascertained that high school students in Taiwan provided evidence that the implementation of IBL influenced students’ motivation and interest.

For Thailand context, RBL improved students’ critical thinking 33 and enhanced creative thinking 34. Reference testified that RBL enhanced research skill, career development and enhancement of students’ experience 35. Reference found that open-research project best fit the scaffold of research-based learning 36. Reference incorporated field school as research-based learning strategy in anthropology class. This technique was very effectual for three reasons:

introducing students fieldwork methodology, developing an understanding of the relation of research data to development theory and engaging students’ emotional and intellectual response to the field situation as a whole new aspect to learning.

Novelty of this study concerns on the implementation of RBL in Linguistics class to strengthen the research-teaching nexus for social sciences which was very limited to be studied.

4. Conclusion

Introductory RBL in Linguistics class bestows several benefits and a barrier seen from students’ perspective. The benefits of using RBL emerged in three aspects: enhancing students learning achievement, improving students’ learning and thinking skills and enhancing students’ character and attitudes. The barrier experienced by the students are related to inadequate time available to present research results and getting feedback from the lecturer in the classroom. In short, using RBL facilitates the students to learn be a real researcher and to apply how to get knowledge as researcher do in scientific ways.

References


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[17] Spronken-Smith, Rachel; Walker, Rebecca. (2010) Can inquiry-based learning strengthen the links between teaching and...


