

# INFORMATION GAP ACTIVITIES IN LESSON STUDY FOR TEACHING ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS (TEYL) CLASS

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## **Abstract**

This study was conducted in order to know the implementation of *Information gap activities* in *Teaching English for Young Learners* class. These activities were designed through lesson study. Lesson study aimed to improve the quality of teaching learning which consists of three stages, *plan, do, see*. Through the first *plan*, *information gap activities* were chosen as the supporting activities to help students comprehend the basic principles and theory about teaching *English for Young Learners*. These activities required students to work in group and transfer the information they had after they were asked to read the materials given. The activities were conducted through four cycles of Lesson Study which required four lecturers to be involved, one as the model teacher and the rests are observers. Through the lesson study, the *information gap activities* could be monitored through *do* stage and reflected through the *see* stage which resulted in students comprehension in basic principle and theory about teaching *English for Young Learners*. Thus, the result can be effectively lead to students' ability in designing and implementing the teaching learning of *English for Young Learners*

**Keywords:** *information gap activities, lesson study, English for Young Learners.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Creating a communicative and student-centered learning opportunities for *English for Young learner (EYL)* class sometimes can be a challenge for the lecturers. This EYL class requires students to comprehend the basic theory and principles about EYL teaching, and to design and apply the teaching learning of EYL. The first indicator for achieving the goal of this class is concerning to the basic principle and theory about EYL. Regarding to the comprehension of the theory through the class activities, students need a challenging activity which can result in their ability to comprehend the theory. Some activities such as memorizing and answering

questions only help them temporarily. Students need an activity which can help them remember and understand information which they will apply once they are teachers without restudying the information they got. Students of EYL class need to comprehend kinds of theory before they design and apply the teaching and learning practice because by comprehending the theory, they can decide kinds of teaching learning they have to plan for young learners. Through the lesson study, the design of activity and the solution of the problem can be discussed. Lesson study is a system of study which conducts three stages, *plan, do, see*. This study was conducted in EYL class which required four lecturers to

work together in designing, applying and reflecting the teaching learning. One lecturer is a model teacher, and the rests are observers. This lesson study promotes students to have a collaborative learning. Students should work within group to teach and share each other. The interesting is though students work within group, they should responsible with their own task.

Four cycles of lesson study were implemented in this EYL class. Each cycle still consisted of three stages, *plan, do, see*. In the first stage of the first cycle, which is *plan* stage, the topic, material and strategy were designed. The topic was selected first, the team chose *Strategy in Teaching English for Young Learners* as the first topic. In this topic, students were expected to understand some strategies used in teaching *English for young learners* and comprehend the definition and the implementation of each strategy. Thus, students can design kinds of strategy they should use in teaching EYL according to certain topics.

Before deciding the material and strategy used in the first topic, the team brainstormed and discuss some problems encountered on the previous EYL learning. Some problems about comprehending the theory were found. Some strategies were proposed in order to solve the problem. However, the team finally came to *an information gap activity* to solve the problem. Information gap activities require students to communicate with each other to solve a problem or complete a task (Borzova, 2014). This activities promote communicative learning where students can talk effectively and teach each other about the information they have

(Liao, 2011). Information gap that tends about gapping has the authentic purpose for communication which are transferring information, or bridging the gap, from one person to another (Rosenberg, 2009). So, students are expected to work in a pair or group to collaborate and exchange information toward a certain goal. They are expected to actively involve on doing activities by transferring information rather than passively receive information. *Information gap activities* can be a communicative drill because students can provide their own information and drill the information to others (Richard, Platt, and Platt, 1992).

The *information gap activities* can make students to mingle with others in learning process. According to Robbertson and Acklam (2000), mingles can give students opportunities to have confidence and allow constant repetition and gather opinions from others. Thus, students can have information from their friends and share opinion about the information transferred. This also requires students to change partners every activity in order to discover the information or facts to close the gap (Rees, 2003). It means they do not only work with one partner to get information, but they can change partners to complete the information.

### **The Objective of the Study**

The study is concerned about a lesson study in *English for Young Learners* class. However, in implementing the lesson study, certain activities should be applied in order to succeed the lesson study. One of the activities is

*information gap*. This study is aimed to know the implementation of *information gap activities* as the supporting activities in lesson study through *English for Young Learners* (EYL) class in achieving the goal of EYL learning which students can comprehend the basic principles of teaching EYL which leads to the ability in designing and implementing the teaching EYL.

### **The Implementation of Information Gap Activities**

Seeing the definition of the information gap activity, students of EYL class could be involved in active and students-centered learning by collaborating into a group to share and transfer information they have. Thus, in the first *plan*, the material about *Strategy in Teaching English for Young Learners* was divided into two sections, the first section and the second section. The class also divided into two groups, the A group and the B group. The A group was asked to read the first section material, while the B group read the second section material. This task had been delivered before the *do* stage was conducted.

During *do* stage, at first students were grouped. Each group consisted of 3 until four students. Each group also consisted of the A group and the B group. Then the A group and the B group were given five minutes to take turns explaining about the material they have read. Here, they were doing a gap information activity which expected them to transfer information they read to other students who do not have the information. At this stage, some students still opened the book because they forgot the

information and some of them did not read the material. After explaining each other about the material, the teacher model reinforced their comprehension by giving some questions orally. Then, the first worksheet was given to each group. The worksheet consisted of some questions related to *Strategy in Teaching English for Young Learners*. After each group accomplished the first worksheet, peer feedback was conducted in order to check everyone's answers and comprehension. From this activity, most students could answer the questions but they missed some information such as the name of strategies in teaching EYL and some definitions of them.

The next activity was completing the second worksheet. It had to do with designing strategy in vocabulary lesson of the fifth grade. This activity was the reinforcing activity from the previous activity and became the effect of the information gap activities.

After completing the *plan* and *do* stage, the last stage of the cycle is *see* stage. In *see* stage, the model teacher and the three observers did a reflection of the activities conducted in *do* stage. Some points were concerned, such as having all students read the material so that the information gap activities could work well, and a strong reinforcement from the model teacher by displaying slide consists of some points of the theory. This reflection was a good reference for the next stage of lesson study.

In the cycle 2, the first plan, the topic decided was *Media in Teaching English for Young Learners*. The activities planned still demonstrated about information gap activities.

Students were asked to read three chapters (chapter 9, chapter 10, chapter 11) about *Media for teaching English for Young Learners* before attending the class. The class was divided again into three groups, The A group, The B group, and the C group. The A group was asked to read chapter 9, the B group read chapter 10, and the C group read chapter 11. The further activity planned for the second worksheet is requiring students to create a media using the provided materials and demonstrate their media in front of the class. The materials provided were paper, coloured pen, glue, and double tip.

In the implementation of the second *do* stage, the class was divided into some groups. The group was consisted of 3 students who were assigned in the A group, the B group, and the C group. Same as the first *do* stage, each students will be given five minutes to have turns explaining their own material started with the A group who read chapter 9. Each student transfered the information they have with communicative activities. This activity was ended with peer feedback. This peer feedback was conducted in order to know the result of the information gap activities.

The second worksheet which supported the result of information gap was given. Students were required to work in group to create a media for teaching English for young learners from the provided materials. The media created was vary from flashcard to puppets. The students collaborated the strategy they designed from the previous meeting with the demonstration of the media.

After the second *do* stage had been

accomplished, the second *see* was conducted. This stage showed that the learning process was better than the previous cycle. Students were more active because they have already known their responsibility to read the material before attending the class. However, some students still forgot in explaining the materials that made them open their course book while explaining.

In the third *plan*, the topic about *Assessment in Teaching English for Young Learners* was chosen. The goals of this meeting were students are able to understand kinds of assessment used in teaching EYL, to describe the characteristics of assessment and to create a test for EYL. Students were asked to read the chapter about it before the class. The material was still divided into two parts. The information gap activities was again implemented. The two worksheet were discussed. First was about discussing and answering some questions related to *Assessment in Teaching EYL* after having the information gap activities. The second was designing a test for EYL.

The third *plan* was conducted well in the third *do*. Students could involve in *information gap* activities because students have read the material and ready to transfer the information to their friends. Thus, the peer discussion of questions in the first worksheet did not take a long time, so they had more time in discussing the second worksheet about designing the appropriate test for EYL. One thing should be noted when the team conducted the *see* stage was students should have more attention to their friends when their friends were delivering the information, because some students were still

busy about themselves during *information gap activities*.

Seeing the achievement of students in comprehending the basic principles of teaching *English for Young Learners* through *information gap activities*, sending students to have observation in the school was decided in the fourth *plan*. This activity was designed in order to strengthen their understanding about the basic principles of Teaching *English for Young Learners* through *Information gap activities*. Students were grouped and should present their information they got in front of the class.

In the last *do*, the group of students were chosen randomly in doing presentation in front of the class. In this activity, they also did *information gap activities* because they transferred the information they got from their own observation.

The last *see* showed the result of the last *do* that students were already known the basic principles of assessment in EYL because they could classify the test they got from the school and explained in details the strength and weakness of each test according to the theory they had comprehended through *Information gap activities*.

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the process of comprehending theory about Teaching *English for Young Learners* can be conducted using *information gap activities*. Seeing the process of the implementation, students may have some problems at the beginning, such as did not read the book or forgot the information to deliver,

however, students can be challenged and obedient if the activities are implemented continuously. These activities can motivate them to learn more because they will responsible in transferring what they have learned to others. Moreover, these *information gap activities* result prove the statement from Liao (2011) that these activities can give opportunities to students to have a communicative class because students transfer information each other. The use of these activities allows every student to do a lot of talking in the classroom and increase the quality of communicative competence. In addition, *Information gap activities* which allow students to mingle with their friends have the potential effect to improve students' relationship in the classroom as well as outside the classroom.

This activity was also designed through a lesson study. The lesson study helps to improve the learning system of *Teaching English for Young Learners* subject because by having the team in lesson study, the class can find a good system in achieving the goal of the study because lesson study has three stages to conduct, *plan*, *do*, *see*, which require the team to design the strategy and activities used in the *plan* stage which is used in conducting *do* stage. The *see* stage is having the observers delivering the problems found during the *do* stage to discuss the solution in order to improve the quality of the teaching learning. Therefore, through this lesson study, the *information gap activities* were designed to improve students' comprehension about teaching EYL so that students are able to design and conduct the appropriate Teaching *English for Young Learners*.

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