CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACH (CTL) IN ENGLISH TEACHING: ITS ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Alfian
Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Esa Unggul, Jakarta
Jalan Arjuna Utara No 9 Kebon Jeruk Jakarta 11510
alfian@esaunggul.ac.id

Abstract
Intentionally focused on the implementation of Contextual Teaching and Learning, this present study tried to scrutinize how English teacher used seven components of CTL such as constructivism, inquiry, questioning, learning community, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment. Both its advantages and disadvantages are also taken into account. This present study is conducted at Islamic Senior High School 4 (MAN 4 Jakarta) the method used in this present study is a descriptive qualitative. The sources of data are taken from the English teachers, and students. For the instrument, the writer used triangulation technique. He did the observation, gave the questionnaire to the students, and did an in-depth interview with the English teacher. The result of this present study indicates that the implementation of seven components of CTL has generally been used by the English teacher. Despite its advantages and disadvantages, it is clearly known from the observation, questionnaire, and interview that the implementation of the CTL components have finely been implemented at MAN 4 Jakarta.

Keywords: Contextual, teaching, learning

Introduction
Robustly, English has become one of the international language used by many people, spreads out and develops either as a second or foreign language. Harmer (2001) pointed out that English has also become a lingua franca. In Indonesia context, English has been adopted and learned as a foreign language. Brown (2000) asserted that English as a foreign language is English in one’s own culture with few immediate opportunities to use the language within the environment of that culture. Kachru (1986) pointed out that English carries as the primary medium for twentieth-century science and technology and due to its significant roles, Richard (1986) asserted that English is the world’s most widely studied foreign language.

Murcia (2000) proposed that the major goal of taking a language course is to enable students to develop communicative competence since the main competence to be reached is Discourse Competence. It is because discourse elements and routines are very important tool in helping autonomous learners to become successful.

To reach a better result of English language teaching, it is surely needed good approach, method and technique that can make a good synergy among the components of education such as; policy makers, head masters, teachers, students, and so on.

Especially for the teachers and learners, Lado (1983) asserted that teachers in the new learning setting are expected to become reflective researcher who evaluate and rethink their approaches, attitudes, and methods of presenting new subject matter to the students, at every stage in the teaching / learning process. Learners are no longer passive recipients of the teaching process.
The writer takes his point of view that one of the approaches that could be used to make an easy and better understanding of English is Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL). In CTL learning occurs when students (learners) process new information or knowledge in such a way that it makes sense to them in their own frames of reference (their own inner worlds of memory, experience, and response).

MAN 4 Jakarta, a famous and reputable school, has some special characteristics as a ‘Model’. Because of its reputation as a school of “model”, it seems that all the new concept of curriculum made and developed by the government must be tested and applied firstly on this school. Talking about its success, it is affected by many factors. One of those factors is the teacher, it is how teacher applied it, whether he/she had been successful in its application and what are teacher’s efforts to do so. That is why the writer wants to know the application of the current curriculum used in that school.

Research Question

From the description above, the writer is highly interested in discussing about the implementation of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) in English teaching. Besides, its advantages and disadvantages experienced by the teachers and students will also be scrutinized.

The research questions are formulated as follows:
1. How does English teacher implement seven components of CTL in English teaching?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages resulted from the implementation of CTL in English teaching?

Theoretical Framework

The Background of CTL

Elaine B. Johnson (2002) on her book titled Contextual Teaching & Learning what it is and why it’s here to stay, proposed that the origin of CTL was a grassroots movement. It began with the vigorous call for reform that was sounded in 1983 in a Nation at Risk: The imperative for Educational Reform was followed by an 1989 summit meeting on education held in Charlottesville, Virginia, and attended by state governors and the president of the United state. Those attending the summit called for national goals to be attained by the year 2000.

In 1990, the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce echoed this insistence on excellence in America’s Choice: High Skill or low Wage. Between 1991 and 1993, the secretary of Labor’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCAN) produced four influential reports, one of which, Learning a Living: A Blueprint for High Performance, suggested reforms that educators immediately began to enact. In addition to these government reports, a number of books were published urging educators to replace business as usual with new purpose and strategic.

During the late 1980s, the Tech Prep/Associate Degree (TPAD) movement gathered momentum. The Tech Prep movement held that all students, not just those bound for 4-year college, were capable not only of learning sophisticated academic material, but also of attaining high academic standards.

Its aim is to help all high school students reach high academic standards. It holds that each students is entitled to learn not only skills, but also academic material. This Tech Prep movement rapidly gained enthusiastic supporters. Between 1990 and 1992 alone, 11 Tech Prep workshop were held throughout America. Tech Prep was reinforced by the great interest educators were paying to applied academics, also known as “learning by doing”. The SCANS message called for linking academic study with the real world. Teaching should be offered in context. Learning in order to know’ should not be separated from ‘learning in order to do’.

From this references to “context” derives the term Contextual Learning. Contextual naturally replaced “applied” academics because “applied” was simply to small to encompass the startling innovation being achieved by this grassroots reform movement. The more comprehensive Contextual-in context-implies the interrelatedness of all things. Everything is connected, including ideas and actions. Contextual also directs our thingking toward experience. When ideas are experienced, used in context, they have meaning.

Before long, schools were implementing teaching and learning in context. Academies and career path began to appear in both large and small high school around the nation. Block scheduling was introduced to give students enough time to learn by doing and to apply lesson to daily life.

Partnerships that let students apply academic lesson to the workplace; lesson that connect schoolwork to daily experience; school restructuring that permits student to learn by doing-all this activities revealed the power of CTL’s central message. This central message is like what Johnson (2002) proposed that learning by doing causes us to make connection that yield meaning, and when we see meaning, we acquire and retain knowledge and skills.

The writer concludes that Contextual Teaching and Learning is one of the educational concepts that can be applied in the term of approach,
method, even technique in English teaching and learning that has a paradigm on the student-oriented learning purposed to help student get the meaningful teaching and learning experiences that is related with the real life situation in which involved the interconnected pedagogical technique that bring an active, innovative, creative, and fun in the process of teaching and learning activity.

The heart of the Contextual Teaching and Learning is put on the meaningful of teaching and learning process, in which the students engage in the learning process. It means that Contextual Teaching and Learning bring a concept of students-oriented learning. Students are no longer become a passive in the process of teaching and learning. He/she is hoped to be self-autonomous learner.

CTL is an integration of many goods teaching techniques; therefore teachers must have a good preparation in applying CTL as one of the approaches in teaching English. In other word, in applying CTL teachers need to be creative, innovative, and flexible.

The Definition of Contextual Teaching and Learning

Kumaravadivelu (2003) proposed that Language communication is inseparable from its communicative context. Taken out of context, language communication makes little sense. Furthermore, Shrum (2000) asserted that the research has confirmed the importance role context plays in enabling language learners to process and produced a foreign or second language. Simply put the more familiar the context, the easier is to understand it and function with it.

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The Components of CTL

There are seven main components of CTL, they are: Constructivism, Inquiry, Questioning, Learning community, Modeling, reflections, and authentic assessment.

1. Constructivism

Muijs (2005) proposed that Constructivism is teaching philosophy that has made strong inroads among teachers and teacher educator in recent decades. It is based on the premise that pupils actively construct knowledge, rather than receiving it from the teacher. Learning is a search for meaning. Teachers should encourage pupils to construct meaning by structuring learning activities around big ideas and exploration, giving them enough time to explore concept thoroughly, and connecting new knowledge to what pupils' already know.

Furthermore, Tobin (1993) asserted that constructivism has been used as a referent to build a classroom that maximizes student learning. Typically, the teacher takes account of what students know, maximizes social interaction between learners such that they can negotiate meaning, and provides a variety of sensory experiences from which learning is built.

2. Inquiry

Inquiry is a complex idea that means many things to many people in many contexts. Inquiry is asking, asking something valuable that related to the topic talked. Inquiry is defined as a seeking for truth, information, or knowledge-seeking information by questioning.

Its core premises include the requirement that learning should be based around student’s questions. Pedagogy and curriculum requires students to work together to solve problem rather than receiving direct instructions on what to do from the teacher. The teacher’s job in an inquiry learning environment is therefore not to provide knowledge, but instead to help students along the process of discovering knowledge themselves. In this form of instructions, it is proposed that teachers should be viewed as facilitators of learning rather than vessels of knowledge.

The characteristics of inquiry-learning for instance; inquiry learning emphasizes constructivist ideas of learning, knowledge is built in a step-wise fashion. Learning precedes best in group situations. The teacher does not begin with a statement, but with a question. Posing questions for students to solve is a more effective method instruction in many areas. The topic, problem to be studied, and methods
used to answer this problem are determined by the students and not the teacher.

It can be concluded that Inquiry is asking something valuable that related to the topic talked in the classroom. The process of inquiring begins with gathering information and data through applying the human sense-seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling. Asking something must be valuable and make sense because effective inquiry is more than just asking question.

3. Questioning

Learning is basically asking and answering the question. Questioning can be viewed as reflection from the curiosity of each individual, whereas answering the question reflects someone’s ability in thinking. In the learning process by using CTL, teacher is not transferring information directly to the student but stimulate the student to find it. Therefore, it makes the role of questioning become important. It because through the questions, teacher could guide and direct the student to find the material that is learned. In every stage of lesson, questioning activity is almost been always used. Therefore, it is need teacher’s ability in developing question techniques.

4. Learning Community

In the learning community, result of learning can be gotten from gathering others. The result of learning can be taken from sharing with friends or other groups.

In its application, teacher divides students into several groups to discuss each other about the material or a problem given by the teacher. In other occasion, teacher could invite persons considered have competences to teach the students. Such as a Doctor who discussed about a health problems, and so on. That is learning community, in which each individual is connected, share information and experiences.

From the statements above, it can be concluded that in the learning community students are hoped to work together with the members of group to share information and knowledge. It also can reduce student’s anxiety during the lesson as he/she feels more confident to share ideas and feeling. In other word, it is hoped to reduce gap information between students so that teacher can make sure that each student has already understood.

5. Modelling

As stated before the components of learning is as the model for other, it means that in learning activities there must be a model that can be imitated by students. Basically modelling is verbalization idea, teacher demonstrates to students to study, and acting what the teacher need to be implemented by students.

6. Reflections

Reflections is the ways of thinking about what students have learned just now, and thinking about what students had done in the past. Reflection is figureout of activity and knowledge that just received.

Reflection is not an isolated activity of introspection followed brilliant insight. Indeed, reflection may be redundant and non-insightful on many occasions. This is why repeated reconsideration of thinking and learning is necessary as conditions, knowledge, and experience change the ways we interpret our mental lives. Other people can provide valuable guidance for reflection because they stimulate us to see thinking from new perspective and in new ways. This is way collaboration in a community of scholars is so vital to children’s intellectual development and teachers’ professional development.

The term of authentic assessment describes the multiple forms of assessment that reflect student learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes on instructionally-relevant classroom activity. Example of authentic assessment include: performance assessment, portfolios, and student self-assessment.

Assessment is authentic when teacher directly examine student performance on worthy intellectual tasks. Authentic assessments tend to measure whether the student can craft polished, thorough and justifiable answers, performances, or projects. Assessments should represent a history of learning, an organized progression of accomplishment, a direct and valid outgrowth of the standards and objectives set for the curriculum or learning event, and input from multiple human resources. Learners should have input into the assessment processes and some selection of assessment instrument.

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Assessment of student’s performance can come from the teacher and from the students. Assessment of performance can be explicit when we say that was really good or implicit when, during a language drill for example, we pass on the next students without making any comment or correction (there is always the danger, however, that the student may misconstrue our silence or something else)

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In the process of learning, not only the teacher that can be placed to provide accurate assessment of student’s performance, but also students can be extremely effective at monitoring and judging their own language production. They frequently have a very clear idea of how well they are doing or have done, and if we help them to develop this awareness, we can may greatly enhance learning.

Approaches for Implementing CTL

To implement CTL, a variety of teaching approaches may be used. Five teaching approaches have emerged that include context as critical components. They engage student in active learning process. These approaches are not discrete. They can be used individually or in conjunction with one or more others. They are:

1. Problem-based learning
2. Cooperative learning
3. Project-based learning
4. Service learning
5. Work-based learning

1. Problem-based learning

Baden (2004) proposed that Problem-based learning is an approach in which it is acknowledged that learners should develop metacognitive skills and thus it is expected that students use reasoning abilities to manage or solve complex problems.

Problem-based learning requires students to solve complex problems through sustained inquiry and investigation using inductive as well as deductive reasoning to come to a solution. It is designed to connect knowledge learned in academic with knowledge needed for the workplace. It gives students a space for trying out new ideas in safe environments and one of the primary goals of problem-based learning is that it intends to help students develop self-regulated learning skills.

2. Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is defined as a concept that encompasses all kinds of group work, including more teacher-led and directed form. Generally cooperative learning is seen as more teacher-directed, with the teacher setting the task and specific question and providing pupils with materials and information designed to help them to solve the problem. The teacher will typically set some form of exam or test at the end of the task (Baden, 2004)

Meanwhile, Slavin (1995) stated on his book that cooperative learning is an ideal solution to the problem of providing students of different ethnic groups with opportunities for non-superficial, cooperative interactions. In these methods, cooperation between students is emphasized by the classroom rewards and tasks by the teacher, who tries to communicate an all for one, one for all attitudes.

3. Project-based Learning

Project-based learning is a comprehensive approach to classroom learning designed to engage student investigation of authentic problems. This might include an in depth study of a topic that is valued by the learner. Project based learning typically engages students in complex, real-world activities through which they develop and apply academic skills and knowledge. Students are required to draw from many information sources and disciplines to solve problems and manage and allocate resources such as time and materials.

4. Service Learning

Service learning is a method of instruction that combines community service with a structured school-based opportunity for reflection about that service emphasizing the connections between service experiences and academic learning. Service learning is integrated into the students’ academic curriculum or provides a structured time for students to think, talk and write about the learning that takes place. Service learning enhances what is learned in school by extending students’ learning beyond the classroom and into the community while helping to foster a sense of caring for others.

5. Work-based Learning

Work-based learning is an educational approach that uses work place to structure learning experiences that contribute to the intellectual, social, academic, and career development of students. It also supplements these activities with school experiences that apply, reinforce, refine, or extend the learning that occurs at a work site. By so doing, students develop attitudes, knowledge, skills, insight, habits, and association from both work and school experiences and are able to connect learning with real life work activities.

Research Methodology

The research method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative. In its implementation, he did an observation by attending the process of teaching and learning English at the second grade that is conducted by the English teacher who uses Contextual Teaching and Learning. He observed the students and the teacher during teaching and
learning process. He used form of observation to see how the application of Contextual Teaching and Learning concerned with the application of each component. He did also an interview session to the English teacher, and gave the questionnaire to the students.

Technique of Data Collecting

In this study, the writer used triangulation technique by using observation, interview, and questionnaire as its basic design. Observation is one of the techniques used in collecting data through direct or indirect observation on the field. Marshal as stated in Sugiyono (2008) stated that through observation, the researcher learns about behavior and the meaning attached to those behaviors. Stainback, as stated in Sugiyono (2008) stated that interviewing provide the researcher a means to gain a deeper understanding of how the participant interpret a situation or phenomenon than can be gained through observation.

The Analysis of Data

The writer tried to analyze data concerned with the advantages and problem faced by the English teacher in applying the seventh CTL components.

1. Constructivism

The English teacher at MAN 4 Jakarta has applied the constructivism well. It can be seen from the observation, questionnaire, and interview results that are supporting each other that in the beginning of lesson he gave the leading question to the student. The advantages resulted from the use of constructivism for instance; it gives the students enough time to explore and discover the concept thoroughly. It maximizes social interaction between learners and it also makes the students easy to understand the material because he/she engage in discovering the concept. However, it still leaves a problem like; sometimes the students get confused when the teacher asked about the new material.

2. Inquiry

The inquiry component has been generally applied by the teacher. It can be seen on the teacher answer saying that the children is divided to several group in order to make the student sharing the ideas and solving the problem in a group work. The advantages on the use of inquiry for instance; the students feel engage in the learning process. He or she can practice to solve the problem, and this skill is really needed in the real life world. Nevertheless it still leaves a problem like; it is hard to encourage the students to think critically.

3. Questioning

The questioning component has also been applied well by the teacher. The situation of the class is more alive because the teacher encourages the student both to ask and answers of the problem arise during the lesson. The advantages on the use of inquiry for instance; it is reflect student’s curiosity and through the questioning, teacher could guide and direct the student to find the material that is learned. Nevertheless, it still leaves a problem like; to make a good questioning activity, it needs teacher’s ability in developing question techniques.

4. Learning Community

In general, the learning community component has also been applied well by the teacher. The teacher often divides the students into several groups. The advantages on the use of learning community component for instance; the learning community can reduce student’s anxiety. It also encourages the student learning to work together. The most important thing is it can eliminate gap information among the students. But it still leaves a problem like; groups work discussion make the classroom noisy.

5. Modeling

Basically, the modeling component has been applied well by the teacher. The teacher uses laptop, LCD, and other equipment to support learning activity. He also gives an easy example so that the students could understand the lesson well. The advantages on the use of modeling component for instance; students can understand the concept better, it because the modeling reflect the example that related with the real life situation, and by using the modeling the student can connected the lesson with his/her experiences. But it still leaves a problem like; not all of the concepts or materials can be shown as the modeling.

6. Reflection

The reflection component has also been applied well by the teacher. In the end of the lesson the teacher often gives the review of the material given, he also identifies student’s problem and difficulty in understanding the lesson. The advantages on the use of reflection component for instance; by using reflection component, it can reduce misconception of the material. It gives student more chance to ask something that makes him/her confused. And its problem is the teacher did not have more time to overcome all of the student’s problem and difficulty in understanding the lesson.

7. Authentic Assessment

The English teacher at MAN 4 Jakarta has also applied the authentic assessment. The teacher uses both the performance assessment and the student’s project. However, he did not ask the students to make the portfolio. The advantages that the writer got when he applied authentic assessment for instance; the authentic assessment can be used to monitor student progress. It also can be used to
assess both student attitude and personality. Nevertheless, it still leaves a problem like; student tried to be more active in the classroom just because he/she knew that his/her performance was being assessed by the teacher, but their motivation and performance will decreased if the students know that the teacher did not take the assessment on them.

The Interpretation of Data

1. Constructivism

The English teacher at MAN 4 Jakarta has generally applied constructivism component. It can be seen from the questionnaire interpretation that is indicates the result 66.92%. It means that its application is good enough. Moreover, it is appropriate with the theory that is stated by Muijs (2005) that pupils need to be actively constructed knowledge, rather than receiving it from the teacher. Teacher should encourage the pupils to construct meaning, because learning is a search for meaning.

It can be seen from the teacher’s answer stated that in the beginning of lesson he gave the leading question to the students in order to construct student’s knowledge of the material given. It also supported by the data resulted from observation and questionnaire that is indicated that the English teacher has applied the constructivism components in the teaching and learning process.

2. Inquiry

The inquiry component has been generally used by the English teacher. And it also appropriate with the theory that is mention that inquiry is asking, asking something valuable that related to the topic talked. The teacher’s job in an inquiry learning environment is therefore not to provide knowledge, but instead to help students along the process of discovering knowledge themselves (Sanjaya, 2008)

During the writer did the observation, he found that the English teacher gave a lot of opportunity to the students to ask about the material given, beside stimulate the students to analyze and make the conclusion. Moreover, the questionnaire interpretation indicates the result 65.32%. So it means that its application is good enough.

3. Questioning

The use of questioning component is good. It is indicated from the observation and interview that show only one of three indicators that has not been shown by the teacher. In its application, it also appropriate with the theory that is mentioned that in every stage of lesson, questioning activity is almost been always used. Therefore, it is needed teacher’s ability in developing questioning techniques. (Brown, 1987) In addition, the questionnaire interpretation indicates the result 73.33%. It means that its application is good enough.

4. Learning Community

Generally, the English teacher has used the learning community components. During the writer did the observation, he found that the English teacher is often to divide the student become several groups. It is appropriate with the theory stating that the anxiety caused by the educational context is lessened by mean of the supportive community classroom. Moreover, the questionnaire interpretation indicates the result 69.33%. It means that its application is good enough.

5. Modeling

The modeling component has been generally used by the English teacher. During the writer did the observation, he found that the English teacher has shown the modeling component. For instance, the use of picture to show the children parts of the car. And the teacher also asked the students to give the example. This activity is appropriate with the theory that is stated that modeling means the learning process by giving the model as an example that can be imitate by the children. In addition, the questionnaire interpretation indicates the result 64.48% and it means that its application is good enough.

6. Reflection

Generally, the English teacher has used the reflection component. In its application the English teacher did the evaluation in the end of the lesson to indentify student’s difficulty during the lesson. It is appropriate with the theory that is stated that “reflection is the figuration of activity and knowledge that just received.Furthermore, based on the questionnaire interpretation, it indicates the result 68.48% so it means that its application is good enough.

7. Authentic Assessment

Based on the theory, the term of authentic assessment describes the multiple forms of assessment that reflect student learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes on instructionally-relevant classroom activity. Example of authentic assessment include: performance assessment, portfolios, and student self-assessment. In its application, the authentic assessment has been generally shown by the English teacher during the lesson. The teacher assessed student’s performance, activity, and assignment during the lesson. It makes the student be more motivated. Moreover, the questionnaire interpretation indicates the result 71.04% so it means that its application is good enough.

From the questionnaire interpretation can also be seen the average of the use of seventh CTL components. That is 68.41%. Thus, it can be conclude that the application of seventh CTL components at MAN 4 Jakarta is good enough.
Conclusions and Suggestions
The ways and techniques used by the English teacher in applying CTL have been based on the CTL components that is highly focused on the student oriented learning. The teacher put himself as a facilitator, and the students are no longer became passive recipients.

The use of Contextual Teaching and Learning at MAN 4 Jakarta has been applied well. It can be seen from its application in which the English teacher has generally applied the seventh CTL components those are; constructivism, inquiry, questioning, learning community, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment in the learning process. It can be seen from the questionnaire interpretation that is indicating the average that is 68.41%. Moreover, the most important thing is its application is appropriated with the theory of CTL.

The application of Contextual Teaching and learning at MAN 4 Jakarta also gives both the advantages and problems in English teaching learning activities. Some of the advantages that can be reached from the application of Contextual Teaching and learning are; the student is more likely to engage in the learning process and it makes the student could understand well. CTL encouraged the student work in group to solve the problem together, and it is a life skill that really needed by the student in the real life situation. In addition, the most important thing that can be reached in applying CTL is attainment of the meaningful in learning activities.

However, there are some problems faced by the English teacher at MAN 4 Jakarta in applying CTL; it is hard to reach the goal of English curriculum. Students are not getting used to speaking in English, and it makes them often be misunderstanding of what the teacher said. It also makes the class be noisy when the students divided into several groups.

Based on the conclusion above, the writer tried to give his suggestion to overcome the shortage of the application of CTL in the English teaching. Even though the seventh components of CTL have been applied generally, the teacher needs to consider both its portion and frequency. Example for this issue is in majority the students respond that the learning activity has never been done outside of the class.

In the reflection components, the English teacher needs to give a moral and social value to the students concerned with the material given. Students respond that the use of media is hardly ever. Hence, in the modeling component, the English teacher needs to add the frequency in using the media. To reduce a misunderstanding between the teacher and students, besides giving the vocabulary building, the teacher also needs to stimulate the students to speak in English more often during the English lesson. In other word, he needs to exposure the target language in order to make the students getting used to speaking in English. To reduce the noise in the classroom, the teacher needs to give a clear instruction to the students. It also can be reduced by giving the task for each student, so that he/she has same responsibility in that group.

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