

BECOMING THE EFFECTIVE ENGLISH TEACHERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY: WHAT SHOULD KNOW AND WHAT SHOULD DO?

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Abstract

“Think outside the classroom box” (Hampson et.al) shows that a traditional classroom where teachers as the only source of knowledge no longer fulfills the 21st century students’ needs. In the 21st century students should be taught the 21st century skills preparing them for successful learning, life, and work. Based on this phenomenon, teachers are demanded to be ready and be responsive in facing the educational challenges in 21st century. They should grasp that education develops and changes affected by a drastic technological revolution that conceives students as “digital native” and the teachers as “digital immigrant”. Then, the teachers should adapt this change by engaging with some information dealing with the 21st century education. Particularly, English teachers have vital roles since they teach English subject which is really relevant to the 21st century learning. It is because the 21st century requires many skills to get high standard use of English language (Suherdi, 2012b). This study focuses on proposing that becoming the effective teachers is what English teachers should do to answer the needs of 21st century. It is supported by Belasco and James’ (1991) statement (as cited in Ansari, 2013) that effective teachers have a repertoire of effective teaching practices. Based on the analysis, it is really critical to shedding more light on the findings of this research about what matters English teachers should know; they are the 21st century skills and learning, the characteristics and skills of effective English teachers, the roles of effective English teachers, and several endeavors to actualize effective English teachers.

Keywords: the 21st century education, the effective English teachers, critical reflection, ICT literate, alternative assessment

Introduction

Traditional classroom, characterized as transmission model where teachers become the dispenser of knowledge and become the only source of the knowledge for students, does not lead students to achieve 21st century students’ outcomes. By the virtue of sophisticated technology, students are surrounded by information. Thus, spoon-feeding teaching method becomes the barrier of the development 21st century skills. Generally speaking, the 21st century skills cover content knowledge and 21st century themes, learning and innovation skills, life and career skills. Whereas 21st century students need to be taught 21st century skills which prepare them for successful 21st century learning outcomes. Based on the result of Round Table discussion by 72 Ontario District School Boards, learning outcomes are clarified into

some conclusions; 21st century learning is about changing the types of problems students solve (real-life and authentic), 21st century learning and technology, students are driving the learning and taking it deeper (asking questions, finding answers, thinking critically and being creative), and classroom-based social media use is increasing student collaboration. These outcomes further construct the successful of students in leaning, life and work. Dealing with English subject, English teachers are faced with the great demands to deliver students achieving high competences in English. It is because the importance of English is in accordance to the 21st century which requires many skills to get high standard use of English language (Suherdi, 2012b).

The overviews above encourage teachers to reformulate their concept of how

they see themselves to be effective English teachers. Belasco and James' (1991) statement (as cited in Ansari, 2013) indicates that effective teachers have a repertoire of effective teaching practices. Literally, it further should lead them to accomplish reflection or "critical reflection" meaning to an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose (Richard). This kind of way is a response to the educational challenges in 21st century. Furthermore, as the result of reflection of the strengths and weakness in teaching, teacher should have innovative bases to engage with some information dealing with 21st century education. Having this concept imprinted in their mind, the effective English teachers should also execute some efforts to adapt the 21st century education. As the resource of becoming Effective English teachers in 21st century education, this research investigates what the effective English teacher should know dealing with 21st century education and what should effective English teacher should endeavor to be effective English teacher. This research is really important to give English teacher insights in achieving the ideal image of effective English teachers in 21st century education.

Methodology

By conducting analytical literature through some related theories, the worthy reviews collect primary points of this research namely effective English teachers should know about 21st century skills and learning, the characteristics and skills of effective English teacher in 21st century, and the roles of effective English teacher in 21st century. After that, they should do critical reflection, develop their competences, be literate in ICT, attend some educational trainings and workshops, and promote alternative assessment rather than traditional assessment.

Findings and Discussion

1. What Effective English Teachers Should Know

a. 21st Century Skills and Learning

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills, a leading advocacy organization that promotes infusion of 21st century skills into education (Larson, 2011), developed a framework for 21st century learning as described in the following figure:

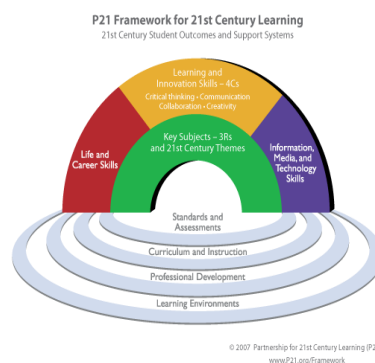


Figure 1. 21st Students' skills and Support Systems (Taken from <http://www.p21.org/our-work/p21-framework>)

The "21st century student outcomes" (represented by the rainbow) are the skills that students should possess in the 21st century. While the below part of rainbow presents the support systems to achieve the outcomes. The first, skills are content knowledge and 21st century themes covering global awareness, financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy, civic literacy, health literacy, environmental literacy. The second, learning and innovation skills include creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration. The third, information, media and technology skills involve information literacy, media literacy, and ICT literacy. The last, life and career skills consist of flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility.

The 21st century outcomes above should be correspondent with 21st century teaching. Saavedra (2012) elaborates the nine lessons about how students learn 21st century skills and how teaching can meet

their needs. They are; make the curriculum relevant to students' lives, teach through the disciplines, develop thinking skills of students, encourage learning transfer from one discipline to another and from school to other areas of lives, teach students how to learn on their own, address misunderstandings directly to avoid misconceptions, treat teamwork like an outcome to teach collaborative skill, exploit technology to support learning to provide students engaging with technology tools, and foster creativity as the cognitive ability to produce valuable ideas of students.

Moreover, the 21st century learning should promote democratic classroom where students involve in decision-making and meaningful learning viewing themselves as individuals with particular interest and needs. Thus, students are active learner in students' center learning and teachers as practitioner have to produce higher level of thinking of students. To actualize the 21st century learning which accommodate 21st century skill, English teachers should take their duty to be prepared as effective English teachers in 21st century which meets 21st characteristics of 21st century learning.

b. The Characteristics and Skills of Effective English Teacher in 21st Century

Based on Partnership framework for 21st century learning, teachers are involved as one of support systems namely in professional development to embody excellent 21st century students' outcomes. Then, empowering the realization of effective English teachers is the powerful way to give Indonesian students opportunities beneficially to learn and to support their potential to engage with English to be implemented in real life. As the result the students' outcome can be successfully attained.

The embodiment of effective English teachers should be begun with the understanding that English teachers should have certain characteristics as effective English teachers in 21st century. Some

characteristics which expectedly meet the students' needs to create high-quality learning derives from Churches (2009) and also Aren, 1998 (as cited in Antasari, 2013). According to Churches (2009) the characteristic of 21st century teachers are:

- i) *The Adaptor*; teachers can adapt the curriculum, and dynamic teaching experience (covering different learning styles). They grasp the concept that 21st century education is not one-size-fits-all. Teacher adapt model of teaching depended on the needs and interests of students.
- ii) *The Visionary*; teachers must see the potential of the use of tools and web technologies in their class, looks across the disciplines and curricula, relates other fields to reinforce their own teaching and the learning.
- iii) *The Collaborator*; teachers collaborate with technology tools and with students or fellow teachers in terms of sharing, contributing, adapting and inventing. Brown (2001) highlights teacher collaboration in which teacher learns from each other to develop his / her professional expertise.
- iv) *The Risk taker*; teachers take risks and sometimes surrender to the students' knowledge.
- v) *The Learner*; teachers become the best of life-long learners; be ready to change and learn as the education changes.
- vi) *The Communicator*; teachers are fluent in tools and technologies that enable communication and collaboration with students, colleagues, and parents.
- vii) *The Model*; teacher should be the model to teach moral value to students such as having tolerance, acceptance, global awareness and reflection
- viii) *The Leader*; 21st century teachers are leaders since they are a champion of ICT integration process. Then, they set clear goal and objectives to successful learning.

Furthermore, Aren, 1986 (as cited in Antasari, 2013) conveys higher level

attributes of an effective teacher; personal qualities of effective teacher can differentiate them with others, they have charismatic personality to attract the students to pay attention to them, and they have interpersonal skills to build a rapport to the students. The, English teachers should be aware to have the characteristics explained above.

Additionally, Suherdi (2012a) proposes soft skill namely personal character as a backbone of education. The soft skill is religiosity giving merits in education. Religiosity in teaching postulated by Suherdi (2012b) is a problem solving of destruction in education. Literally, English teacher education or training program should incorporate Islamic-Teaching-based set principles; ARTS (Amanah, Rahmah, Taaddubah, and Sillah). In English teacher Indonesian context, Amanah covers responsibility, accountability, and trustworthiness. Rahmah covers compassion and care. Taaddubah includes discipline and rule-governed behavior establishment. Sillah involves commulative meaning of networking and collaboration. Suherdi (2012b) points two main benefits of ARTS incorporation into Indonesian English teacher education curricula; to guarantee the success of students' learning and to teach teachers how to make the students feel helped, respected, loved, and cared. As the result, in some provinces in Indonesia, teachers began to respond positively and willingly to implement this concept in their classroom.

c. The roles of effective English teacher in 21st century

Donaldson et al. (2013) states that the roles of the teacher and trainers are important in many thematic areas those need to be highlighted in the process of defining the goals of the education system. Interestingly, the roles of teachers now are influenced by the development in 21st century. Bedford (2013) states that technology changes the roles of teachers in the classroom. One of the changes is that teacher is not again the

only accessible source of knowledge. There are some researches convey the changes of 21st teacher as facilitators helping students to discover knowledge on their own. Harmer (2007) states that facilitator is a particular teachers, who are democratic rather than autocratic, and who foster learners autonomy by acting as more of a resource than transmitter of knowledge. In relation to technology, Odora (2015) finds that the changing role of teacher includes IT specialist, network administrator, designer of learning experiences, learning facilitator and co-learner (learn from students). Afterwards, based on the findings of the research constructed by Chineze et al (2016), it reveals that the types of occupational roles of teachers in the 21st century are facilitators, life-long learner, collaborator, and assessor. Thus, to be effective English teachers in 21st century, they should reformulate and play multiple roles in teaching English.

2. What English Teachers Should Do

a. Being reflective English Teacher

Becoming reflected English teachers must be aware to their professional growth. It can be achieved through building critical reflection. Beyond their reflections, English teachers construct their beliefs as theory of teaching and learning. It is in accordance to Crookes' conception (2009) that reflective teaching results a theory of practice, a theory of teaching, or a philosophy of teaching. In this case, the awareness of teachers regarding their teaching practice should reach highest level of reflection as stated by Richards (1998), where the teaching is guided by the teacher's personal theory and philosophy of teaching, and is constantly renewed by critical reflection and self-assessment.

The focus of critical reflection is to capture what every student is doing in the classroom in critical way and in reflection on activities, methods, techniques, materials used, and anything happened during the learning process. In brief, it is usually the teacher's own teaching, self-reflection,

critical reflection developing changes in attitudes and awareness which they believe can benefit their professional growth as teachers, as well as improve the kind of supports they provide their students. It emphasizes self-assessment which functions to analyze their strength, weakness and development critically in the process of reflecting towards their better future performances.

Suherdi (2013) also voices that it will be wise if teachers do reflection of what they have did in the classroom. By this, teachers have already developed their awareness to their professionalism in fulfillment of their duties. Finally, this reflection forms a focus of teacher education and teacher personal development.

Richard suggest many different applicable approaches to become a critically reflective teacher, some of them are observation of oneself and others, team teaching, and exploring one's view of teaching through reflective journal writing. Doing observation gives sufficient experiences and information through their own and partner teaching. While reflective journal writing provides a record of the crucial significant learning experiences and engages with the self-development process.

b. Developing Teacher's Competences

Competence is primary key to reach professionalism of teacher. Then, fostering teacher's competence is essential to be powerful effort attaining effective English teacher. Brown (2001) characterized a good language teachers should own four aspects in terms of their competences. First, having technical knowledge means teachers have fluent competences in all language skills and they understand the language systems of language, and so on. Next, some examples of pedagogical skills, they are competent in utilizing appropriate approach and techniques in teaching and principle of classroom management as well. Afterwards, interpersonal skills cover their competence to be connected with students in positive rapport and to cooperate with fellow teacher

harmoniously. Last, in establishing personal quality, teachers maintain high ethical and moral standards by actualizing well organized, dependable and flexible characteristics.

In addition, Suherdi (2013) highlights that the quality of language used by English teachers in conducting teaching will bring his/her wisdom on students' critical thinking, good conduct, class organization, and spirit of life. Thereby, high quality of communicative competence must be reached by English teachers. Furthermore, pedagogic language used by English teachers must be excellent.

In Indonesia context, it is highly appreciated that Government regulation *No. 19 of 2005 on the national standard of education* appears to standardize the compulsory competences that must be possessed by teacher. They are *pedagogic competence (comprehensive concept to implement successful learning)*, *personality competence (excellent characters)*, *social competence (productive relationship)*, and *professional competence (mastery of subject knowledge)*. Through this Government Regulation, hopefully teachers are motivated to develop their compulsory competences to be professional teachers.

c. Beingliterate in ICT

According to Kennedy (2016) digital literate in the 21st century means that a relatively stable set of basic competences that must be mastered dealing with everyday emergence of new digital tools. It includes the appropriate use of digital tools to identify, integrate, manage, access, assess, and analyze digital resources in a functional way.

ICT literacy can accelerate optimum achievement in learning. It will help English teachers develop excellent English communicative competences. In 21st century education, teachers are not the only source of knowledge. They cope with digital era and see the students as digital native who can search some resources from internet. The graphic below shows that the internet

users in Indonesia increases from 1998 to 2015 and 80% of them are students who are 15-19 years old.

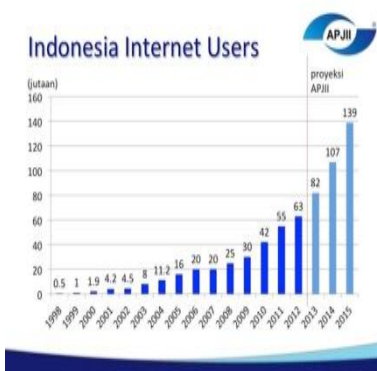


Figure 2. Indonesia Internet users (taken from: <http://harianti.com/kini-pengguna-internet-di-indonesia-tembus-82-juta-pengguna/>)

The development of internet above leads new effects for the development of English teaching. Thus, there is an important for the English teacher to be literate in ICT and to utilize ICT-based resources and facilities, and include them into in English teacher curricula. Particularly, in teaching in classroom TV, videos (for example from <http://www.bbc.com/news>), YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/>), and LMSs (Learning Management Systems) can also be utilized. There are several top LMSs in the internet as online English Learning Websites. They are Ello, Lang-8, Livemocha website, BBC English learning website, and exam English. The homepage of one of them (Ello) is shown in the following figure:



Figure 2.4 Homepage of Ello

The helps of these resources may reach high standards of Excellent English

communicative competence and global competitiveness. Then, as 21st century English teachers should have competences to help students to develop strong wisdom in making use of English and technology.

Furthermore, Sarica (2009) whose study to review technology in English learning activities and internet communication tools looks at Web-based English language learning tools make educational environment more enjoyable. Her study includes the latest trends in e-learning which are mobile learning (iPod, cell phones, iPhone) blogs, e-mails, online quizzes and tests, instant messenger, and internet telephone Skype.

d. Promoting Alternative Assessment Rather than Traditional Assessment

Alternative assessment has become a prominent interest of some researchers because of its effectiveness. The existence of alternative assessment is expected to present more benefits rather than traditional assessment such as standardized test which does not cultivate high order thinking skill and learners' autonomy, and then it is also not stress free during implementation of the test. Traditional assessment seems to focus on mastering discrete, isolated bits of information. These bits of information basically represent lower-level thinking skills (Engel, 1994; Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters, 1992 in Charvade et al, 2012). Next, in traditional assessment, the "empty vessel" metaphor is often described the learners. This view conveys that students are viewed as if they do not possess prior knowledge about the lesson. Thus, it has impact to realization of "spoon-feeding" teaching. It is in accordance to what Freire (1990 in Charvade et al 2012) conveys about traditional assessment that the instructor's role is to fill the students by making deposits of information which the instructor considers to constitute true knowledge. Then, in traditional assessment, generally the instructor alone has the power to make decisions about what is learned and how it is assessed (Heron, 1988; Sessions,

1995 in Charvade, et al., 2012). It can be inferred that traditional assessment indicates passive process involving students to memorize the knowledge given by the textbook or teachers.

In the other side, the alternative assessment has some merits to be implemented. Heron (in Charvade et al, 2012) conveys that alternative assessment embraces a democratic decision-making process. Thus, it promotes collaborative leaning too in which teacher and student are cooperative to express and evaluate their ideas each other. Students are also active to do self-assessment to know their strength, weakness and progress. Subsequently, Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters (1992 in Charvade et al., 2012) reveal that the focus of alternative assessment is on developing real-world problem-solving skills that will lead people to observe, think, question, and test their ideas. Impressively, it fulfills 21st century skills of students particularly learning and innovation skills- 4Cs including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity as proposed by Partnership postulated previously. Specifically, this can make students be accustomed to answer high level of questions which need deeper understanding even analysis of the problem solving as reflected in PISA test. Hopefully, the improvement of Indonesia PISA result in 2105, released on the 6th of December 2016, can be maintained through the implementation of alternative assessment. It is known that PISA result in 2012 has placed Indonesia in the 64th rank among 65 countries and PISA result in 2015 shows the improvement that Indonesia is in the 69th rank among 76 countries in the world (Coughlan, 2016). Nevertheless, the achievement of Indonesia in PISA 2015 is still below the average of OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries. Thus, it still needs to be improved. One of example of alternative assessment that can generate the advantages of it is portfolio which is applicable to be an assessment tool on all

language skills. Understanding the benefits of this alternative assessment hopefully can foster English teachers to execute alternative assessment in the classroom.

e. Attending some Educational Trainings and Workshops

Brown (2001) suggests as one of good characteristic of English teacher, technical knowledge as keep up with the field through regular reading and conference/workshop attendance. There are some conferences and workshops, English teacher can attend to enhance the insights information related to their teaching. Donaldson et al. (2013) explains programs for initial teacher training must take into account: professionalism, competence in using educational technology, primarily ICT, pedagogical competence, organizational competences and team work abilities, openness and flexibility. In Indonesia, English teacher can follow some personal development programs such as PLPG, KKG/MGMP, and teacher training after UKG. The last, as long-learner, English teacher can continue their education into higher level. Fortunately, teachers who want to get scholarship can apply some scholarships in Indonesia provided by government such as LPDP scholarship and DIKTI scholarship. They also should keep in touch and update with reading some education journals to capture the development of education.

Conclusion

Being effective English teachers in 21st century is the demand to prepare students for betterment and successful achievement in learning, life, and work. To embody these ideals of effective English teachers, they should comprehend the theoretical foundations dealing with the 21st century. They are 21st century skills and learning, the characteristic, skill and roles of effective English teacher in 21st century. Having those knowledge establishes the next steps as actualization of what effective English teacher should do in 21st century namely being reflective English teachers,

developing the competences, being literate in ICT, and attending some Educational trainings and workshops. Understanding what to know and what to do as effective English teachers hopefully can fulfill the 21st century needs in education.

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