English Speaking Development Based on Constructivism Theory for Students Grade 3 of Ban Non Phu Thong School, Ta-changkhlong Village, Phakhaw District, Loei Province

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Abstract

This applied research had three objectives. The first was to observe and study the pattern of English teaching as usual. The second was a developing of teaching pattern on speaking skills for the grade 3 students, based on Constructivism Theory. The third was to evaluate satisfaction on teaching pattern based on Constructivism Theory of teachers and students. The 12 primary school students, grade 3 of Ban Non Phu Thong School, Ta-changkhlong Village, Phakhaw District, Loei Province.

The results were as the followings.

1. Teaching process before the research was teacher-center. The students were passive learners.

2. The students' active reaction in class were shown during the Constructivism-teaching based was applied in class.

3. Both teachers and students were satisfied with new teaching process. The Teacher-guide book was introduced for applying in class to the primary teachers and other English teachers of other levels.

Keywords: English for Primary School Student Grade 3, English and Constructivism,Teaching Speaking English
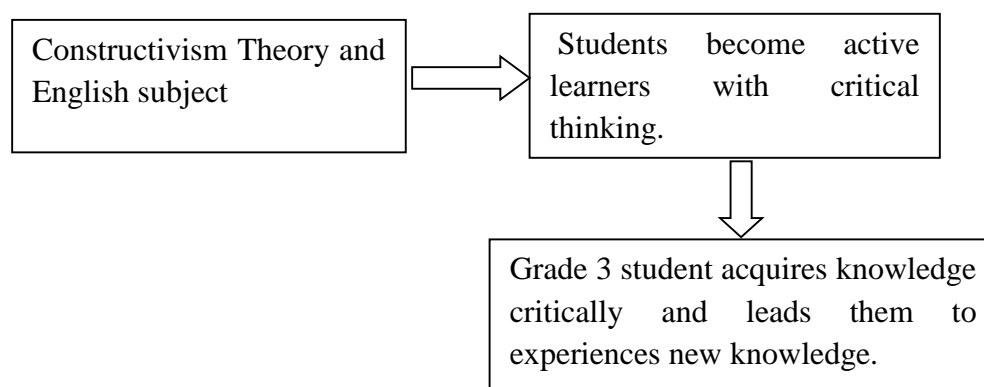
1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale

English proficiency and competency for international communication is one of the important education-goals in Thailand. The English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Thailand, has been tempted to reduce and replace by the English as a second language (ESL) policy. The later has been promoted continually. Consequently, various theories, teaching processes, materials and new technology for teaching English are being introduced to formal instructions widely. The educational movement on English proficiency has been conducted from fundamental level to higher educations. Some schools with high-standard qualities may reach the goals successfully while many disadvantages schools are left behind. It seems to be unbalanced scales. In Loei Province, some small-sized schools have computer-monitors to show the visiting of the Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessment that the schools are developed and using new technology in classes. As a researcher and a visitor, I have noticed the improper using of new technology in small-sized and disadvantage schools. Some schools just show parts of the electronic-instruments for being evidence of modernization. Teachers at primary levels are pitiful. Most of medium to small-sized schools have limited numbers of teachers. Frequently, a teacher of these schools has to look after two to three classes at a time. Advisory teachers of these disadvantage schools, grade 1 to grade 3, have to teach all subjects including English although their bachelor degree may not related to English majors. English is a specific subject. The content in the text sometimes are difficult to understand. Some textbooks are produced by using Western context. Some of these teachers have to try to understand the content plus the culture, pronunciation and the grammar. This applied research aimed at producing teaching guide based on Constructivism theory for the target teachers could use or apply in class as much as they can. It put the emphasis on fundamental English, simple study materials and how to integrate various purposes by using a few and simple materials.

1.2 Framework

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┌─────────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Constructivism Theory and   │  ═══>  │ Students  become    active  │
│ English subject             │        │ learners     with   critical │
│                             │        │ thinking.                    │
└─────────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────────┘
                                                       ║
                                                       ▼
                                        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                                        │ Grade 3 student acquires     │
                                        │ knowledge critically and     │
                                        │ leads them to experiences    │
                                        │ new knowledge.               │
                                        └─────────────────────────────┘
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1.3 Literature Review

1.3.1 Theory

This applied research was mostly based on Constructivism theory invented by Jean Piaget. The Cooperative Learning Approach invented by David W Johnson and Roger T Johnson was also included. It means that the students could learn and gain knowledge by their own experiences while they were studying and doing activities together with their classmates. Each

student was encouraged to link his background knowledge to the new one and supported by his teacher as a scaffold.

1.3.2 Researches

Fangfang Wang (2018) conducted the research titled Constructivism-Based Mobile Application for EFL Vocabulary Learning. The 90 second year students of Suranaree Technology University. The experiment took 12 weeks. The instrument was mobile phones. The findings were positive, that is, increasing of vocabulary, more understanding of how to use and more retention.

Worapong Saengprasert, et al. (2017) conducted the research titled The Development of a Learning Management Process Based on Active Learning Concept in Promoting Upper Secondary School Students' Critical English Speaking Ability. The management process was divided into 5 steps: 1) motivation, 2) thinking skill practice, 3) encouragement, 4) finding the answers and 5) conclusion and reflection. Although the research did not mention to Constructivism Theory as the main idea, the management process was very similar the Constructivism Theory in terms of the students' roles which were changed to be active learners.

Amomwan Kotewongsa (2016) applied the Constructivism Theory for increasing the memory and understanding of the 24 grade-6- students. The activities had work sheets for reviewing the background knowledge before the students were allowed to go to their new knowledge.

Supapon Thongtip (2016) did the Thesis (M.A.) on using multi-media for gaining more vocabulary words. The target vocabulary words were things around the students in school. It was found that the students could increase and understand the meanings about local vocabulary words at higher level than the before.

Ratchanee Dogpong (2012) conducted the research on Mathematic activities based on Constructivism Theory. The grade 6 students were encouraged to study and do the activities together. The instrument was a record of the observation by the teacher. It was found that after the activities, the results were better and higher than the before.

Khomson Aia-karnna (2011) applied the Constructivism Theory for the students grade 5 about environment management. It was found that the students performed more critical thinking.

It could say that Constructivism Theory mainly put the emphasis on the active activities and activating learners to gain knowledge by their own experiences while the teachers play the roles as the scaffolds.

1.5 Objectives

1) To observe and study the pattern of English teaching as usual.

2) To develop teaching pattern of speaking skills for the 12 students of grade 3, based on Constructivist Theory

3) To evaluate satisfaction on teaching pattern based on Constructivist Theory of teachers and students.

1.6 Scope of the Study

1) The emphasis put on speaking development of the 12 students of grade 3.

2) The utterances included words, phrases, and sentences levels.

2. Method

2.1 Target participant

The 12 students of grade 3, Ban Non Phu Thong School, Ta-changkhlong Village, Phakhaw district, Loei province.

2.2 Research Instruments were:

1) activities based on Constructivism Theory

2) observation record form
3) topics for in-depth interview
4) rubric scores
5) camera

2.3 Process of research activities

2.3.1 Supervisors

Firstly was a communication for understanding by contacting the school director in order to inform the research purposes and all details involved the benefit of the teacher and students. Secondly, an invitation was made for the supervisor of Secondary Educational Service Area Office 19 who was a supervisor of Primary Educational Office Area 2. This supervisor was asked to supervise the research activities because of her experiences as a supervisor at the target area. Thirdly, the senior English teacher of a primary school, who was ex-English Major student of Loei Rajabhat University as another research supervisor.

2.3.2 Activities

First action was a tryout of teaching process based on Constructivism Theory. It was done with student grade 3, at another primary school to check the expected-process. At this step, 6 English major students accompanied voluntarily to do the activities in class. After that the research team discussed about the tryout results and made a plan to do at target school. It started by the visiting of the research team. We went to the target school where the target students and teacher were waiting together with another 4 neighbor schools including students and teachers. These unexpected-participants informed the research team in advanced because they would like to learn and allow their students to experiences the activities outside their own schools. The team put the focus on the target student knowledge's background were observed as well as another students of 4 schools. The 6 English major students also came as the research team and did the activities with all the students. The important points of the research were to encourage the students to utter more than one word and more than one sentence. During the teaching activities by the 6 research assistants, all the teachers and the research team observed the big class at the rear.

When the teaching finished, the target teacher and another 4 teachers were asked to share their opinions towards the big class. At this step, the notes were made. The teachers and the research team discussed and shared their feelings.

Two weeks later, all the teachers from the target school and the visitors were invited to share their English-teaching process.

The research team including the supervisors, researcher and 6 students made a group discussion in order to find the best solution.

2.3.3 Innovation: Teacher Guide titled "More than one sentence"

The research teams agreed that: we should increase the teachers 'English knowledge based on the text used in schools. The teacher-guide was made on the ground that the main point of Constructivist theory is process; how to manage learning activities. The most important strategy was how to encourage student to speak more than one sentence. Another point was a teacher-guide could be applicable in various situations. It also could generate new knowledge from the learner's background. It was also expected that a teacher guide could be applied for any class level and any situation because it is a kind of process not a specific knowledge. The important hints got from teachers' interview were important. The research team found that most of the teachers were aged and might be uneasy to acquire new ideas, games and study materials. The team decided to create an English teacher guide which included basic knowledge of English and how to find simple study materials; based on the qualification of target participant.

2.3.4 Evaluation of a teacher guide:

The research team would like to check whether the guide-book was applicable or not . So the team decided to tryout the English teacher guide at another primary school in order to see if the teacher guide book was practical. It was found that the teachers at primary levels at that schools agreed that this book was practical and could be used to other tasks if they wanted.

2.3.5 Teacher-guide with the target group

After the team found the satisfied results, the team prepared to use the book at the target School. I, the researcher, taught English to grade 3 students by myself. It was not the former group because they moved to grade 4. The activities were still made for grade 3. The process was done after the book-guide. The results by observing showed more active reactions of the students. They could build up new words although it might quite slow. I showed a green-pen sharpener which was shaped as a little car. The student said "car….green". Then I said slowly "Yes, it is a green car." This activity went on the rules of slow- repeat- emphasis-review. I found that the student could say blue car, red pencil later. The students showed their happiness when they know how to name thing correctly. The satisfaction was evaluated as shown in the rubric scores below.

Pre-lesson (5 minutes)

Number of the target students	Could not give proper answer	Responded at word levels and were not right	Responded in group with some were right or wrong	Responded individually with right or wrong answers	Individually with right responding
12	4	3	3	2	-

Post-lesson (5 minutes)

Number of the target students	Could not give proper answer	Responded at word levels and were not right	Responded in group with some were right or wrong	Responded individually with right or wrong answers	Individually with right responding
12	-	2	6	3	1

Students' satisfaction on teaching process while- teaching (Counting by team assistant)

Number of the target students	Sit at the rear	Move to the middle of class	Move to the front row	Move to the front row and try to respond	Move to the front row of the class and eager to respond
12	1	2	4	3	2

The students voluntarily to do activities.

2.3.6 The English Teacher Guide for teachers.

After the book was approved from all English teachers with non-English background at the primary schools: including the target school and another 4 schools. The English-teacher guide were given to the English teachers who join the research activities. They were also asked to give some recommends. Most of the teachers felt satisfied with the content and format of the book One suggested to apply the pattern to other levels and other subjects.

2.4 Data Collection

The Data were collected by researcher's observation and put in the record form. Some open-end questionnaire completed by the teachers. Finally, free recommendation made by the teachers were welcome. They involved activities, study material materials and the teacher guide.

2.5 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed by descriptive method: observation and evaluation. A rubric Score was used for analysis.

3. Results

3.1 To observe and study the before-pattern of English teaching

It found that the teaching process of the target English teacher was followed the text used in class. All activities were copy from the text and teaching kids. The grade 3 students were passive learners.

3.2 To develop teaching pattern of speaking skills for the grade 3 students, based on Constructivism Theory

It was found that the grade 3 students responded to the teaching process actively.

3.3 To evaluate satisfaction on teaching pattern based on Constructivism Theory.

It was found that the teacher and students were satisfied to English-teaching process. After the researching process, the teacher guide was made as an innovation after the research. The content was provided to help English teachers about games, near-by study materials, and how to help student increasing English proficiency with simple processes.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

4.1. Discussion:

4.1.1 English -Text

Firstly, Most of small-sized and medium schools require English Teachers. Teachers have to exposure to difficult content and cultural situations. Some teachers of junior primary schools have to use provided English text as the main source of teaching. It was found that most of the text related to Western culture and accompanied with some unfamiliar activities for practicing. The interview made by the researcher, it was found that even the teacher had tried to understand the content. The big problems were the teachers' English backgrounds which blocked him to understand the content: English vocabulary words and meanings, Western culture which come along with the vocabulary words as well.

Secondly was game and study materials. The teacher said the big problem was how to create games and materials which were attractive for the students. His fundamental English knowledge could not help him to find or set up creative activities.

Another problem was time management. With limited of time of each subject in a day, the teacher felt confused how to handle the text content to the class. Not only English, the advisory teacher of junior primary has to teach all subjects to his students. This duty made him feel exhausted and has tried to do the duty as much as he can. Not only teaching, the teach has to do others duty such as clerical duty in school. Another unpredicted events were social activities. The teacher sometimes has to leave the class to participate in community activities for good relationship between school and community. It was noticed that sex and age, that is, male teacher with aged may feel tired to teach language actively, which was the same as aged-female teachers.

The practical innovation by helping the teachers as a guide based on teacher knowledge, teacher's potentials, schooling-support, and increase teacher's confidence to build up new thing which suit the situation easily.

4.2 Conclusion:

This applied research completed the objectives as the following details.

1) To observe and study the before-pattern of English teaching

Teaching before introducing the Constructivism theory was a passive class, that is, a teacher-center.

2) To develop teaching pattern of speaking skills for the grade 3 students, based on Constructivism Theory

It was found that the grade 3 students responded to the teaching process actively. Observing in s short time might not be grantee the follow- teaching process. At least, it was a trigger for English teacher to create some new changes with confidently.

3) To evaluate satisfaction on teaching pattern based on Constructivism Theory.

It was found that the teacher and students were satisfied to English-teaching process. After the researching process, the teacher guide was made as an innovation after the research. The content was provided to help English teachers about games, near-by study materials, and how to help student increasing English proficiency with simple processes.

Finally, it could specify that the knowledge of specific subjects shout be taken in account of the government policy and with thoroughly management as much as it could be. The instruments or teaching process which could be use and apply to any other subject or anywhere should receive more attention seriously from the concerned people.

5. Suggestion

5.1. According to the research, disadvantage schools should be surveyed and conduct the beneficial trainings for teachers. The purposes should be put on quality more than quantity.

5.2 Psychology should be applied for educational staff. The teachers needs the higher offices to put the attention on these schools seriously.

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Appendix

Materials:

Some study materials were introduced to be used in class. It could be useful for teaching about number, color and shapes.

Teachers' comment about the book Guide