

Web 2.0 Technology Integrated Personalized Learning in CLT for EAP to at least CEFR Level B2

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Abstract

Low international EAP test scores of technology lecturers of an IT institute in a remote area of Indonesia has become long the problem. This study explored EAP learning methods enabling 39.58% of the lecturers to reach international EAP test score to at least CEFR level B2 using the methods. An open questionnaire and semi structured interviews were used to collect the data. The data were analyzed using content analysis. The main finding shows Personalized Learning in a Communication Teaching Language (CLT) way integrated with Web 2.0. technology based on Heutagogy approach has been proven to be the appropriate learning framework for the lecturers whose EAP test scores have been lower than CEFR level B2. This study may contribute to the production of a future way of learning EAP, helping EFL learners in general to increase their EAP test score to at least CEFR level B2.

Keywords: CEFR, EAP, methods, Personalized Learning.

1. Introduction

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is a must for one's success in academic study (Yasuda, 2015: 103-104)^[17]. International EAP assessment for English for Foreign Language (EFL) learners like university lecturers is TOEFL ITP/TOEFL iBT from the USA or IELTS from England (Saudelli, 2015 : 161)^[16]. The EAP test scores should be made equivalent to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) as the most influential descriptions of language proficiency level (CEFR; Council of Europe, 2009, p7-16)^[3]. Carlsen and Deygers (2014)^[2] note B2 level is the most common requirement for admissions into English instruction-employing universities. For the reason, technology lecturers from an IT institute in a remote area of Indonesia planning to continue their study to postgraduate program in English instruction-based universities must reach international EAP test score to at least CEFR level B2. Otherwise, their application will be rejected, and if they fail to continue their study to the Ph.D program, their career will be short. Regulation of MenPan and RB No. 17 in 2013 on Function Level of Lecturers^[12] rules the non-Doctorate's educated lecturers reach the III D rank only and they cannot be promoted as Head of Lector not to mention the Professor. The Law of RI No.12 in 2012 section 5c^[6] having lecturers produce scientific publication in international reputable journals has made EAP ability at least CEFR level B2 more essential for the lecturers.

Marsaulina's study in 2017 showed 60.41 % of 48 lecturers mentioned in paragraph 1 had TOEFL ITP score in range of 383-547 and IELTS in range of 4-6, equivalent to CEFR level A2-B1 only, though 39.58% already reached at least CEFR level B2. In the study, she also attempted to identify the learning methods for those whose EAP test scores were still at CEFR level A2-B1 (Marsaulina, 2017, 63-64)^[8]. The next study found their barriers for level B2 was not low motivation and negative perspective on English but rare collaborative study partners and availability of competent instructors as well as high work load resulting in limited time for intensive EAP studying (Marsaulina, 2018 : 170)^[9]. However, she had no time back then to elaborate the learning framework really helping them counter the barriers for reaching at least CEFR level B2. Meanwhile, Moritoshi (2001:12)^[10] discussed about various potentials obstructing academic English learning process and recommended a learning plan to negate them. However, his study only fairly described the learning methods actually needed. Likewise, Public Broadcasting Service (2015)^[14] reported various English learning methods increasing the learner's skills, but it reported no personalized learning methods.

In order to fill in the gap in those previous studies, this study attempts to explore blended learning methods for target EAP score to at least CEFR level B2 that could be adopted by lecturers whose EAP test scores are below CEFR level B2 due to the barriers. Thus, this study contributes to provide the most effective integrated EAP learning methods as the future way of learning EAP for not only technology lecturers but also adult learners to help increase their EAP score to at least CEFR level B2.



2. Methodology

The study was conducted in an IT institute in remote area of North Sumatera, Indonesia from March-August 2017 with 48 technology lecturers as the respondents. They were invited to respond to an open questionnaire and semi-structured interview questions. The questionnaire mainly asked the respondents about their latest EAP test score and learning methods they practiced before sitting the test. In semi-structured interviews, they were asked the most effective learning methods from their perspectives to reach international EAP test scores at least CEFR level B2 despite the learning barriers they struggled with. Then, the articles on the learning methods for the skills commonly assessed in international EAP tests were collected to be cited as the secondary data. Finally, the respondents' answers were grouped according to characteristics of learning methods used for the skills assessed in international EAP tests, resulted from content analysis of journals published from 1993 -2018, among them were Mahapatra's (2014)^[7], Panadero's (2017)^[11], and Howton's (2018)^[5].

Content analysis method was used to analyze the data. The reason for the method was based on the statements from Guthrie et al (2004, 282-293)^[4], Perry and Bodkin (2000, 87-97)^[13] that stated content analysis was common to analyze open questionnaire and documents' citation.

The kinds of learning methods applied by 19 respondents whose CEFR were at least level B2 and by 29 respondents whose EAP scores were below CEFR B2 were tabulated. A literature study was conducted for an effective learning framework combining learning methods applied by lecturers whose CEFR were at least level B2 to help others meet the target CEFR.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. EAP Learning Methods Applied by Lecturers at CEFR Level B2-C1

Table 1. EAP Learning Methods Applied By Lecturers With CEFR Level B2-C1

Method	Σlecturers
Web 2.0 technology integrated personalized learning	16
Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)	12
Video instruction based learning	9
Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)	9
Intensive guided training	8

Table 1 shows that 33.33% of the total 48 lecturers (84,42 % of 19 lecturers whose international EAP test score were on CEFR level of range B2-C1) applied personalized learning also known as self-regulated integrated with Web 2.0 technology. The blended methods refer to Heutagogy approach. Blaschke and von Ossietzky (2016)^[1] elaborate Heutagogy as the study of self-determined learning rapidly gaining interest within the field of education as a response to market demand for creative and competent employees who can adapt quickly to continuously changing, complex workplace environments. Heutagogy, when combined with today's technology, offers a learner-centered approach to teaching and learning supporting development of self-determined, autonomous learners. The approach is close to self-regulated learning trait emphasized on learning instruction design diminishing the impacts of the burden for engrossing cognitive ability, enabling the learners to monitor their own learning stages by self-evaluation (Panadero, 2017, 23-24)^[11].

3.2. EAP Learning Framework for Lecturers Below CEFR level B2

The perspectives from lecturers whose international EAP test score at least resembled CEFR level B2 combined with the proof of their high EAP test score despite their coping with the barriers in learning process have raised the formulation of a learning framework namely Web 2.0 integrated personalized learning in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) environment. This framework can help learners like their colleagues, other 29 lecturers whose CEFR were below B2 to improve their weak skills in CLT with Web 2.0 technology for teaching instruction and materials in a flexible way.

CLT is an active and participatory student-centered language knowledge and skills acquisition in which the instructors focus on identifying how to boost the learners' motivation and involvement, so they meet the learning objectives in a syllabus at will. Meanwhile, personalized learning covers

activities delivered using computer applications and internet network at different levels from the beginning-to-the advanced, depending on the learners' needs (Howton, 2017)^[4]. The learners themselves must submit a report-based feedback to the instructor on their level of understanding the materials after completing the study by self-sitting exercises and quizzes submitted by the instructor. The benefit is the learners have more room for doing experiments with the most effective learning techniques, strategies and models to help them meet the predetermined learning objectives in the syllabus (Rubenstein, 2010)^[15]. It will increase the learners' motivation as they are entitled to flexibility to complete many exercises by deadline mutually agreed between the instructors and them.

Web 2.0 is also integrated in the CLT, so the platform is interactive like blogs, wiki, social media, emails, chat rooms and discussion boards and the materials' sources are videos on linguistic, cultures and countries whose language is being learned authentically. The users could be a recipient or a consumer, editor and collaborator.

The learning platform integrated with network technology offers more options for enabling simpler learning. The use of Web 2.0 technology will help EAP instructors develop and disseminate knowledge for learners. The Web 2.0 technology eases them in their roles as the facilitator, guide, helper, coordinator, and supporter simulating any situations for the learners to use the target language authentically. They will have more time to give feedback on the learners' accomplishment, while monitoring their progress from the distance (Mahapatra, 2014: 70)^[7].

4. Conclusions

Lecturers should be competent for using EAP in an international environment. The problem is many non-English speaking lecturers lack academic English competence compared to general expectation. Such problem was also faced by technology lecturers in a remote area of North Sumatera, Indonesia. A study was conducted to yield a learning framework based on the experience of lecturers whose CEFR level was at least level B2 to be adopted by other technology lecturers.

It reveals the lecturers whose CEFR were at least level B2 have applied Heutagogy approach-based learning framework. Thus, the one adopted by other lecturers should be a Web 2.0 technology integrated personalized learning in CLT using Heutagogy approach. The study results in an effective learning framework for learners facing barriers in their learning to meet the minimum internationally recognized EAP test scores indicating one's international English competence. However, an experimental class and a control class comprising learners whose CEFR are below level B2 should be conducted to confirm the validity and reliability of the framework.

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