

Improving Teacher Professionalism through Lesson Study

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Abstract

Being professional teacher is a process of acting and reflecting continuously developed by the teachers collaboratively. Lesson Study facilitates teacher to experience learning through collaborative work among them. This enables teachers to establish professional development and create a community for learning. This paper aims at elaborating the experience of senior high school at Yogyakarta in implementing Lesson study as a break-through to enhance the teachers' professional development incorporating with three mechanisms of Lesson Study. This school has conducted Lesson Study for about 5 years. The study resulted that 80 percent of teachers achieve their competence in planning, doing and reflecting the lesson through observing other teachers performance and being observed interchangeably.

Key Words: Lesson Study, Teacher, professionalism, Learning

Introduction

Education is an effort to help students improving their potency. Based on "Undang-Undang No. 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional", education is a systematic effort to create an effective teaching and learning process so that the students are able to improve their potency and achieve the power of spiritual, self control, good personality, character, and skill. To cover those students' improvements, teacher should also improve their competencies to gain an effective teaching learning process.

Moreover, teacher should understand the way they teach and the way the students learn. The starting point in understanding the teachers' way on teaching is about what teaching is. Teaching is the arrangement of information (method, media, and equipment) and environment to facilitate learning. This arrangement is the responsibility of instructor (Heinich, et al, 1996: 8). Based on the statement above, teacher becomes the main factor in achieving the goal of education. Consequently, teachers competency becomes the absolute factor and basic requirement in achieving those goals.

Lesson study is one of the efforts to improve education system quality focusing on teacher aspect. Lesson study give many chances for teachers to develop their competencies and provide the opportunity to discuss the content that they are going to teach and refine their understanding of the content. Lesson study also give chances for teacher to learn a great deal about how students learn and think new things.

2007, SMP Negeri 1 Srandakan was established as one of the pilot schools of "Lesson Study Berbasis Sekolah" (LSBS) by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). SMPN 1 Srandakan has applied Lesson Study on every subject, in all level, and for all teachers.

Based on the elaboration above, this reasearch is carried out. Problem should be solved through this research is whether lesson study can improve teachers' competencies of SMPN 1 Srandakan in arraging the materials, method and media to facilitate their students to learn.

Theoretical Study

According to Heinich, teacher's competency involves the ability to manage the information and environment so that the students can learn effectively. Information means all material that the teachers are going to present in the class and environment means method, media and equipment. In lesson study, teachers are encouraged to be creative so that they can conduct meaningful lesson for the students. Teachers cooperatively plan the lesson. They discuss about new ideas of material, method, media and class management. After having a good lesson plan, they choose one of them to be a model to apply the plan. In lesson study, teachers are also required to create new learning experience.

Philosophically, Lesson Study consists of the study or examination of teaching practice. In Lesson Study, teachers examine and evaluate their teaching by inviting other teachers to observe their class during the teaching process.

Another definition is taken from the article entitled "A brief introduction to College Lesson Study" (<http://www.uwlax.edu/sot/lsp/index2.htm>).

"Lesson study is a simple idea. If you want to improve instruction, what could be more obvious than collaborating with fellow teachers to plan, observe, and reflect on lessons? While it may be a simple idea, lesson study is a complex process, supported by collaborative goal setting, careful data collection on student learning, and protocols that enable productive discussion of difficult issues."

Lesson study refers to a process in which teachers progressively attempt to improve their teaching methods by working with other teachers to examine and critique one another's teaching technique (Takuya Baba, 2007:2). Lesson Study becomes a model of teachers' training trough effective and incessant discussion based on mutual learning in order to form learning community.

In the article entitled "Institute for Lesson Study Research and Application" by Dr. Chuck Podhorsky (<http://www.lessonstudy.net/whatislessonstudy.htm>), Lesson study is defined as follows:

"Lesson study provides one way in which teachers can systematically improve instruction and decrease teacher isolation, if it can be sustained over time. Lesson study provides a process for teachers to collaborate and design lessons while examining successful teaching strategies to increase student learning."

Based on Bill Cerbin (2011: 3), Lesson Study is the way for teachers to improve the practice of those teachers who participate in it and to build knowledge that can be used by other teachers to improve their practice. In addition, Lesson Study is a system that provides opportunity for the teachers to be professional and progressive. Lesson study is a simple idea to improve instruction with teachers' collaboration in planning, observing, and reflecting the lesson.

Applying lesson study means creating an effective teaching and teacher will be different in every meeting. Consequently, students will enjoy the class and get their own experience in learning. Students will always expect the next class because they will get new experience in learning. "Lesson Study" has change teachers' performance on teaching learning process. In other hand, "lesson study" can improve teacher's competencies.

Research Methodology

This research is a case study and the subjects are teachers at SMPN 1 Srandakan Yogyakarta, consist of four English teachers, six science teachers, two social teachers and five mathematics teachers. Research activities, including planning, implementation, and evaluation, had been held since August until December 2006.

The instruments used are observation sheets, interview guide, and questionnaire.

Lesson Study at Senior High School in Bantul

On December 2007, SMP Negeri 1 Srandakan was chosen as one of the pilot schools of "Lesson Study Berbasis Sekolah" (LSBS) by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). SMPN 1 Srandakan has applied Lesson Study on every subject, in all level, and for all teachers.

SMPN1 Srandakan has 45 teachers with 12 groups of subject matters. Each group has opportunity to open class every Saturday. Firstly, each group of subject plan the lesson. Teachers discuss the material, media, technique and equipment that are required in teaching learning process in the class. In planing the lesson, teacher should answer some questions; what problem should the students work on, whatmanipulative should students be provided, how will the students be encouraged to discuss their work, and how to conclude the lesson.

In this planing session, teacher will come with different perspective, some teacher will start with the material point of view, some teachers will explore his or her experience in conducting lesson at the same class, and some will start with media that is required to support the student in learning. Those differenciation will stimulate discussion among teachers. Each teacher has difference experiences and they will maximize the performance.

After deciding the plan, teachers make a questionnaire which contain some questions. The questionnaire will be the guide for observers in observing the lesson. Then, they choose one of them to perform the plan in the class. On Saturday, they are ready to open their class. While observing the class, observers should fill out and answer some questions as follow:

1. Is there any interaction between students and teacher? And How?
2. Is there any interaction between student and student?
3. Can the student learn from the lesson, who and how?
4. Is there any student who cannot learn from the lesson? Who and why?
5. Is there any interaction between students and media? How?

The question can be vary. It depend on the teacher who is conducting the lesson.

Having the lesson, the teacher and observers will have a reflection forum. The reflection will be delivered by a moderator. First, the moderator asks the teacher to share his/her feeling during the lesson. Then moderator will invite observer to share their finding during the lesson. During exploration of the finding, a teacher is assigned to record all of the discussion in the reflection and give the record to the teacher who has open the class.

What can Teacher learn from Lesson study

Based on the result of interview, it show that Lesson Study stimulate teachers at SMPN 1 Srandakan to learn many things, namely;

1. Teachers learn to work collaboratively
2. Teachers learn to analyze something
3. Teachers learn to design lesson effectively
4. Teachers learn to discuss with other teacher
5. Teachers learn to be creative in creating meaningful lesson for student
6. Teachers learn to think critically in creating lesson plan.
7. Teachers learn to create interesting activity in teaching learning process.
8. Teachers learn to share idea
9. Teachers learn to give opinion and suggestion
10. Teachers learn to be critical

Conclusion

Applying lesson study means creating an effective teaching and teacher will be different in every meeting. Consequently, the class will always be interesting and students will always get new experience in learning. "Lesson Study" has changed teachers' perception on teaching learning process. In other hand, "lesson study" can improve teacher's competencies. Lesson study gives a chance for teacher to explore their creativities and facilitates teachers to learn.

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