

# Literature Circles: Assisting Students in Understanding Pedagogical Knowledge

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**Abstract.** This case study reports the students' perception of pedagogical knowledge during joining literature circles of paragraph writing class. The data are derived from the students' interview after joining some sessions of writing class. The data were analysed with Shulman's theory on technological pedagogical and content knowledge (2006) and Miles and Huberman's theory (1994) which consists of data reduction, data display, and drawing a conclusion. Through ten interviews that recount the students' perception in joining paragraph writing class, the paper demonstrates that by implementing literature circles, it assists the students in understanding the pedagogical knowledge. It can develop their autonomy in learning. Some steps of the literature circles can assist and inspire the students in developing and organizing their own learning.

**Keywords:** *Literature Circles, Pedagogical Knowledge, and Writing*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Literature Circle is simply defined as reading groups or clubs in which students choose their own reading materials from different genres (e.g., books, articles, poems) and text types (e.g., narratives, procedures, discussions), form a small group, and "meet regularly to share ideas, feelings, questions, connections, and judgments about books (other reading materials) they had read" [1][2]. As stated [3], in literature circles, it allows students to deepen comprehension and extend their initial understanding through talking with peers. Jacobs' research is in line with [4], the instructional practices realized by literature circles embody quality standards of education and are used by teachers "who are bringing out the best in their students day by day.

However, nowadays in Industrial Revolution era of 4.0, it is expected that teaching-learning activities in a college do not only use the lectures method and rely on textbooks, and the students do some exercises but it can also assist the students in developing their autonomy. It means students become active, creative and motivated. To fill this gap, the Literature Circle needs to be applied to the students. Literature circle is an ideal strategy for developing and practising English language skills with temporary discussion groups' of students who are grouped together in learning English. Each member has specific responsibilities related to his/her role. The lecturer's role is as a group member and an observer of the skills as well. In other words, it can be stated that through literature circle strategy applied by the lecturers in teaching-learning activities of writing class, it can facilitate the students' to be autonomous.

The abilities of the lecturers in managing the classroom in helping the students to be autonomous learners deal with the pedagogical competence of the lecturers. This competence

deals with the ability of a lecturer in managing the classroom and facilitates the students' diversity. Sometimes lecturers apply different pedagogic actions with students' perceptions so that what are they supposed well by lecturers sometimes inversely with students' intake. According to the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 16: 2007 regarding Standards of Academic Qualifications and Competencies Lecturers, there are various competencies required by lecturers, among others: pedagogical, personal, professional and social acquired through professional education. The four competencies are integrated in lecturer performance. Pedagogical competence includes understanding lecturers on learners, instructional design and implementation, evaluation of learning outcomes, and the development of learners to actualize their potential. Based on the previous statements, this study aims to describe the students' perception of pedagogical knowledge during joining literature circles of paragraph writing class.

## **2. METHOD**

In this study, the writer implemented case study to report the students' perception of pedagogical knowledge during joining literature circles of paragraph writing class. The data are derived from the students' interview after joining some sessions of writing class. Concurring with this, data collection was conducted using two types of instruments, namely; the interview, and classroom observation.

The purpose of ten interviews was to obtain information by actually talking to the participants. The classroom observations were intended to gather qualitative information about the lecturers' pedagogical practices in how they teach paragraph writing to the students of English Department of Universitas Tidar. The data were analysed with Shulman's theory on [5] [5] and Miles and Huberman's theory [6] which consists of data reduction, data display, and drawing a conclusion.

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

As undergraduate students of English Department, they joined paragraph writing as one of the subjects taught. This second-semester class had one 2-hour teaching session a week for the subject. Every week, they engaged in literature circle activities in groups. The lecturer would divide us into teams of four or five and hand out printed material with types of texts as the topics. This hand out mentioned the tasks for the current case study in detail. The handouts described the objectives, the situations, and the activities. The activities included brainstorming vocabulary in context to build knowledge in the field through mind map, the text type as the modelling of the topic or field, grouping activities in joining construction of the text model. At the end of the session, the students were asked to write their own paragraphs. All of the activities were done through literature circle strategy.

Based on the above described activities, the writer wanted to know the students' perception of lecturers' pedagogical knowledge during the students joined literature circles of paragraph writing class. Based on interviews, it can be stated that literature circles applied in paragraph writing class can develop the students' autonomy in learning. Some steps of the literature circles can assist and inspire the students in developing and organizing their own learning. The following table provides an explanation of each of these themes and a simple frequency count (percentage), showing how many comments were made for each theme for ten students with three lecturers.

**Table 1. The Results of the Students' Interview on Lecturers' Pedagogical Knowledge**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Theme description</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Lesson Planning</b>	The Lecturer's Ability in Planning the Teaching-Learning Process that corresponds to the curriculum and Lecturers' guides	60%
<b>Guiding</b>	The Lecturer's Ability in Guiding the Students	60%
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	The Lecturer's Ability in Developing the Students' Critical Thinking	70%
<b>Activities</b>	The Ability in Creating Individual and Grouping Activities	80%
<b>Learners' Autonomy</b>	The Lecturer's Ability in Developing the Learners' Autonomy.	60%
<b>Monitoring the Learning</b>	The Ability of the Lecturer and the Students' to Monitor Each Other	50%
<b>Engagement</b>	The lecturers actively engage learners' in the paragraph writing task	60%

Based on the above interview results, it can be seen that the themes relate to Lesson Planning, guiding, Critical Thinking, activities, Learners' Autonomy and Monitoring the Learning. Related to the lesson planning indicators, 60% of the students state that through literature circles in paragraph writing class, the lecturers are able to make good lesson planning in the teaching-learning process that corresponds to the curriculum and Lecturers' guides. They also state that the writing lecturers have the capability in guiding the students in the teaching-learning process. In addition to that, 70% of them state that the literature circle activities develop the students' critical thinking and 80% of them state that through this model, the lecturers can create various activities in the teaching-learning process that make the class not monotonous. Besides that, through the above model, 60% of the students state that the literature circle activities can develop the learners' autonomy. In addition, they also state that the lecturers actively engage learners' in the paragraph writing task through literature circle activities. The last indicator of lecturers' pedagogical knowledge is the ability of the lecturer and the students' to monitor each other. Since the model applied some grouping activities, 50% of the students state that the lecturer and the students can monitor each other of their progress in learning writing.

In analysing classroom observation, ticks were placed against the features in the classroom observation protocol as evidence of the behaviour that transpired in the classroom and were grouped together. The classroom observation and notes were analysed by identifying the instructional incidents as evidence of what transpired in the classroom and matched them against to the features in the classroom observation protocol. The indicators of the observation correspond to the lecturers' pedagogical knowledge as well. Below is the results of 26 students' observation of the lecturers' pedagogical knowledge.

**Table 2. The Result of Students' Observation on Lecturers' Pedagogical Knowledge**

No.	Indicators	Number of respondent			Percentage		
		Poor	Enough	Good	Poor	Enough	Good
1.	Instruction is guided by a preplanned curriculum	5	10	11	19.23	38.46	42.31
2.	Students are carefully oriented to lesson	9	6	11	34.62	23.8	42.31
3.	Instruction is clear and focused.	7	4	15	26.92	15.38	57.69
4.	Learner progress is monitored closely.	5	10	11	19.23	38.46	42.31
5.	Class time is used for learning.	2	20	4	7.69	76.92	15.38
6.	There are smooth, efficient classroom routines.	6	12	8	23.08	46.15	30.77
7.	Instructional groups formed in the classroom fit instructional needs	1	10	15	3.85	38.46	57.69

Based on the above observation results, it can be summarized that through literature circle activities, almost all of the indicators of pedagogical knowledge can be categorized good based on the students' observation. In other words, the lecturers have good pedagogical knowledge through literature circles of paragraph writing class. The indicators of the lecturers' pedagogical knowledge are instruction which is guided by a preplanned curriculum. Students are carefully oriented to lesson, instruction is clear and focused, learner progress is monitored closely, class time is used for learning. There are smooth, efficient classroom routines, and instructional groups formed in the classroom fit instructional needs.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Based on the data analysis, it can be inferred that by implementing literature circles in paragraph writing class, it assists the students in understanding the pedagogical knowledge. It can develop their autonomy in learning. Some steps of the literature circles can assist and inspire the students in developing and organizing their own learning. In addition, based on the students' observation, almost all of the indicators of pedagogical knowledge of the lecturers can be categorized well.

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