WHAT IS YOUR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PROFILE
(DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROGRAM
IN SMART EI)

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ABSTRACT

There are various ways how to improve and develop teachers’ competencies, namely self-monitoring, audiotape & video tape recordings, student’s expectation, student’s test results, & classroom observation. They can be used as tools to evaluate the teacher’s competencies. Classroom observation program is the teacher's professional development program in SMART EI, a boarding school for marginalized students of Indonesia.

Descriptive research used in this study is to describe teacher’s competencies in teaching situation in classroom, that is teacher aspects (personality, mastery of subject matter, voice, clarity of explanation, openness to student’s opinion), teaching methodology aspects (organization, contextual, provoke critical thinking, motivator, class management, questioning technique), and student aspects (attention, participation, class starts on time). Subjects of this study is 30 teachers who are teaching in SMART Ekselepsia Indonesia. The data instruments consist of the results of class observation and notes of teachers’ reflection after teaching. The quantitative and qualitative methods used to analyze the data collected from the classroom observations.

Based on the results of data analysis found a few things as follows: (1) there is a significant correlation between teaching experience and teacher aspects; (2) no significant correlation between teaching experience and teaching methodology aspects; (3) there is a significant correlation between teacher aspects and student aspects, (4) there is a significant correlation between teaching methodology aspects and student aspects, (5) the teachers in SMART EI, at average have taught for 5.4 years, and they also teaching experience the longest 10 years and the shortest 8 months.

Keywords: teacher’s professional development, teacher’s competencies, teaching experience, classroom observation program

INTRODUCTION

During October until November 2009, SMART Ekselepsia Indonesia (SMART EI) has got into the habit of classroom observation, thus carried on the tradition and developed it to the best of our potential. It is very beneficial to our professional development and improvement of our quality learning and teaching in SMART EI.

Now we would like to introduce and popularize the usefulness of classroom observation as a teacher-development procedure and to describe some of the constraints that obstruct the practice of classroom observation in SMART EI.

THE UNDERSTANDING OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Anderson (Jacob, 2002: 2) states that teacher’s competence is a combination of teacher’s knowledge, ability, and belief which is performed in the teaching contexts.

Based on the above thought, if we want to see the teachers’ competence, we can identify through observation in during the teaching-
learning process. One of the teachers’ competences that we can observe is their competence in managing the class so that the can create a very good condition to study for the students.

A narrow view of classroom management sees it primarily as discipline and management of student behavior. However, successful teaching requires more than controlling student behavior. According to Evertson and Harris (1999), “the meaning of the term classroom management has changed from describing discipline practices and behavioral interventions to serving as a more holistic descriptor of teachers’ actions in orchestrating supportive learning environments and building community”.

Knowing that class management is very important during the learning process, then strategic steps are required to assist the teachers in improving their competences to have better class management. Class observation constitutes a mean that can be used as sources of information on class management profiles.

As Wajnryb states (1992: 1), classroom observation is an invaluable learning tool that opens up a range of experiences and processes which can become part of the raw material of a teacher’s professional growth and gives the teacher the opportunity to observe processes of teaching and learning (Eken, D. K.: 240).

Observation should include elements of self-assessment, peer feedback, and supervisor feedback. It should include student feedback as well. And finally, it should include records and evidence of the teacher’s instructional effectiveness, scholarly and/or creative activity, and professional service (England, L. 1998: 21).

Regarding the big benefit of class observation, SMART EI has been running this programs as means for developing teachers’ professionalism. The class observation in SMART EI was conducted to help the teachers improve the quality of teaching mainly in running good class management.

The class observation was focused on three main things namely: teachers, teaching methodology and students. Aspects observed in class observation is as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus on Observation</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Personality</td>
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<td>Mastery of Subject Matter</td>
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<td>Voice</td>
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<td>Openness to Student’s Opinion</td>
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<td>Movement in Class</td>
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<td>Teaching Methodology</td>
<td>Organization of Subject Matter</td>
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<td>Contextual</td>
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<td>Provoke Critical Thinking</td>
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<td>Motivator for Students</td>
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<td>Student’s Participation</td>
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<td>Class Starts On Time</td>
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**METHODOLOGY**

Subjects of the research is 30 teachers who are teaching in SMART EI. And the observers are the principal of SMART EI, vice principals of curriculum and trainers of Makmal Pendidikan.

The data instruments consist of the results of class observation and notes of teachers’ reflection after teaching. Data collection was conducted from October 11 until November 30 2009.

The quantitative and qualitative methods used to analyze the data collected from the classroom observations. A variety of systems were used to encode the data, including SPSS and Microsoft Excel. Percentages and means were generated and qualitative data was summarized and included in the analysis to supplement and clarify quantitative analysis.

**PRESENTATION OF DATA AND FINDINGS OF THE CLASSROOM OBSERVATION**

In this section, the data findings are presented according to the four sections: teacher, teaching methodology, student, and reflection on teaching & learning.
Picture 1. Graph of Aspects for Teachers’ Competences viewed from Perspective of Observer & Self-Assessment

Picture 2. Graph of Aspects for Teaching Methodology viewed from Perspective of Observer & Self-Assessment
From the picture 1 above, we can see that in general the observers evaluate the teachers in five aspects better than the teachers’ self evaluation. In four aspects, however, (personality, mastery of subject matter, clarity of explanation, movement in class), there are some teachers who valued them much lower than the observers’ perception. Only two aspects (openness to student’s opinion & movement in class), the observers have perception that some teachers still have very bad competences and they must be upgraded soon.

From the picture 2 above, in the aspects of learning organization, there are some teachers who think themselves not skillful enough and not qualified. Also in aspects of they should skills, Some teachers also think that they need to brush up their critical thinking and being motivators to the students in order to have better presentation in teaching. And in the aspects of class management and questioning techniques, the observers recommend some teachers to have prompt identification towards their weaknesses in class management and to find various alternative solutions.

From the picture 3 above, aspect of students is really influenced by teachers and teaching methodology. With assumption if the teachers get good evaluation in teaching methodology ((perception of the observers & self-assessment), then the students will also show good condition. According to the observers, that students’ attention remains the most essential aspect needed to be upgraded to execute better class presentation. While according to the teachers’ perception, most of them think that they are not discipline in starting the teaching-learning and they are not creative enough in involving the students’ participation.

Reflection on Teaching & Learning
Shores & Grace (1998: 24) states, “Keeping your own teaching journal is one strategy for stimulating reflection and self-evaluation. A teaching journal can be a evaluable component of portfolio-based assessment and of tour own professional development, as it is a format for thinking about your observations each day, noting plans and preparations, and
identifying issues as they emerge in your professional practice. Because a private teaching journal can also give you valuable practice at writing about events in the lives of children, it will help prepare you for the writing tasks in the portfolio process”.

One of strategies to develop in class observation is every teacher should make self reflection after teaching, by expressing their ideas and feelings after teaching. The followings are some examples of those reflection.

Picture 4. Some examples of Reflection on Teaching & Learning
The note of reflection seems very useful to most of the teachers as means of documenting their teaching experience from day to day, process of self reflection, and as sources of information to evaluate their effectiveness of teaching. After writing their reflection, they have a discussion to explore it led by the observers and model teachers. This is purposely designed to create principles of collaborative and mutual learning. Current research tells us that effective professional development models include improving teacher knowledge, providing job-embedded opportunities to collaborate around issues that are very proximate to the classroom and investing enough time to create learning (Wei et.al., 2009. Penuel et.al., 2007).

Mostly, the teachers are enthusiastic and welcome towards the class observation as if they have partners in learning to develop their competence. The teachers in SMART EI, at average have taught for 5.4 years, and they also teaching experience the longest 10 years and the shortest 8 months.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Class observation constitutes an alternative program which is tried as a model of teachers development in SMART EI. This Program is relatively more effective than conducting trainings & workshops in the context of changing performance in real teaching—learning activities. It focused on developing partnership between peers to create a culture of long life learning, not only for enriching knowledge and skills in teaching in the classrooms. Research has shown that one-time professional development workshops are often outside of the context of the school, not typically aligned with ongoing practice, and not reliably lead to changes in classroom teaching (Loucks-Horsley, et. al., 1999).

Based on the results of class observation, there are various perceptions between the observers and the teachers in evaluating 3 aspects of observation; teacher, teaching methodology, and student. If both observers and teachers have relatively same result of evaluation, it can reflect the real competence of the teachers. This remain valid if instruments of evaluation rubrics can be improved to keep the validity and reliability of the data.

Reflection note is designed to have teachers be accustomed to evaluate their teaching competence in writing-based activity. Through this activity, the teachers are expected to document various sources of information in writing as needs of self reflection and the future self-evaluation.

Recommendations

Several matters need to be developed related to class observation are the limited observers, rubrics of aspect of evaluation, and teachers’ commitment to have continuous learning. Dealing with number of observers, there are 3 teachers who were observed by only one observer in October–November 2009. This caused a subjective evaluation. It happened due to many other kinds of duty of the observers besides conducting class observation. Ideally, at least there are 2 observers in every class observation. Therefore the selection of observers should refer to the competence and working commitment.

Rubrics of aspect evaluation truly determine the quality of class observation program. It means the teachers sincerely realize their strength and weaknesses in teaching, so the school management will be easier to conduct next actions. It, of course, will arise a consequence that the evaluation rubrics should be re-revised, especially in determining indicators of teachers’ performance. The rubrics must be more definitive and operational, not only facilitate the observers to give checklist in various choices such as very poor, poor, could be improved, good, or excellent.

Finally, the teachers’ commitment to have continuous self-improvement will really determine the success of this program. So far, class observation has been conducted by notification. Therefore, the teachers had opportunity to create special preparation. In deed, it has not really reflected the real condition
of the daily teaching-learning activities done by the teachers. In the following observations, the observers must conduct in-prompt observations (without notification). This program is also able to be directed to every teacher in subject cluster to collaborate in enhancing their professionalism in order to develop the motivation and students’ achievement.

REFERENCES


