



EXAMINING PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWS UNDERLYING THE DESIGN OF ENGLISH TEACHER'S LESSON PLANS AND THE TEACHING MATERIALS

Muhammad Ilmi Safrizal *

English Education and Literature, Postgraduate School, State University of Surabaya, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia. E-mail addresses: muhammadilmi.20035@mhs.unesa.ac.id

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abstract

This study is a correlational research that attempts to examine philosophical views underlying the design of an English teacher's lesson plan and the teaching materials. Inferential content analysis is employed in this study to find the correlations between the teacher's documents and the philosophical views which influence the teacher during the process of development. A face-to-face interview with the teacher is also conducted in this study to explore why the teacher uses a certain approach for teaching English and how aware the teacher is of the philosophical views underlying the approach. This study found that there are six philosophical views, including essentialism, perennialism, progressivism, socio-reconstructionism, humanism, and idealism, which influence the design of the lesson plans and the teaching materials. However, although those six philosophical views are implied on the teacher's documents, essentialism is the most influencing philosophy which has a big impact on the teacher in deciding what activities are suitable for the students. Drilling activities, such as vocabulary enhancement, pronunciation practices, are happened in almost every meeting.

INTRODUCTION

As the policymaker, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) is really aware of the importance of philosophy as the educational foundation in Indonesia. In several published documents by Kemendikbud (eg. Kemendikbud, 2014; Kemendikbud, 2018), it is stated that philosophy is one of the important aspects to consider for developing the national curriculum. Studies related to the review of the national curriculum (eg. Aziz, 2016; Hastuti & Zuchdi, 2018) also confirm that philosophy is the crucial aspect for curriculum development. However, the national curriculum is not following one specific philosophy, but eclectically merged several philosophical views into a product of curriculum (Thohir et al., 2017; Suarga, 2017).

According to Hanif (2014), there are several philosophical thoughts, which are classified as modern and contemporary philosophy, that influenced the development of the Indonesian curriculum, those are *idealism, realism, pragmatism, and existentialism*. Those four schools of philosophy, then, become the root of the Educational philosophy, which also contributes to the development of Kurikulum 2013. Hanif (2014) also classifies, the educational philosophy, which also influences Kurikulum 2013, those are *perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, and socio-reconstructionism*. Therefore, in line with Thohir et al. (2017) and Suarga (2017), Hanif (2014) also stated that those philosophical views are then adapted by Kemendikbud as a product of a curriculum.

Unfortunately, studies related to the implementation of Kurikulum 2013 at school and also suggested approach by the curriculum for the teachers (e.g. Ridwanudin, 2015; Ayuni, 2015) showed that teacher's understanding of philosophical views underlying the teaching

and learning activity is considered low. Ridwanudin (2015) explains that this issue has an impact on teaching and learning activities at school. Studies conducted by Ridwanudin (2015) found that the teachers, when they are attending the class, they just teach without knowing the reason why they teach the certain lesson, what the purpose of the lesson is, and why they are using a certain method. Besides, a study conducted by Ayuni (2015) also clarify that the low teacher understanding of the philosophical views underlying the teaching and learning activity is caused by several factors, which two of them are lack of accessible information related to the implementation of Kurikulum 2013 and its suggested approach and lack of socialization from the stakeholders.

Regarding those issues, this paper is aimed to contribute to the literature, by conducting a study related to the philosophical views underlying the design of the teacher's documents, including the lesson plans and the teaching materials. By examining the teacher's lesson plans and material that the teacher develops. A face-to-face interview will also be conducted in this study, to confirm did the teacher was really aware of the philosophical views underlying the design of the lesson plans and also the materials. What are the constraints that the teachers have in designing lesson plans and materials will be also asked during the interview. Since the teacher is currently teaching at two different schools, this study assumes that there will be some distinctions that might be found during the study on the design of the teacher's lesson plan and the material.

ELT in Indonesian Curriculum

The implementation of English language teaching in Indonesia is focused on the development of the student's characters and 21st-century skills those are: critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation. (Bahri, 2011; Hastuti & Zuchdi, 2020). Therefore, to cover those skills, Kemendikbud (2018) suggested several approaches to be conducted at school, which one of them is the *scientific approach*. Ayuni (2015) justifies that the scientific approach which covers the process of observing, questioning, exploring, presenting, synthesizing, and producing, in the teaching and learning activities, is the appropriate approach to help the students achieving 21st-century skills.

Moreover, as the result of industrial and technological globalization, the 21st century has also changed traditional texts into multimodal and multi-semiotic texts. Hence, in accordance with the purpose of Foreign Language Teaching in Indonesia, Suherdi (2016) argues that ELT practice in Indonesia should be encouraging Indonesian students to be proud of their identity and also inspire the students to globally contribute to the development of science and technology. In accordance with that, Kurikulum 2013 also emphasizes the importance of teaching moral, religious, and also socio-cultural values in the process of teaching and learning at school (Kemendikbud, 2018).

Philosophical Views Underlying the implementation of ELT

The following are six philosophical views that underlying the implementation of English language teaching in Indonesia, according to Hanif (2014), Hastuti & Zuchdi (2018), and Bahri (2018):

Essentialism

Essentialism views that core knowledge and skills are essential to a successful society because those requisite abilities allow the individual to be an economically productive

member of society (Uys & Gwele, 2005). According to this view, a curriculum cannot be based on learners' needs and wants, but rather on what those in authority know is essential for the learners to know. The learner is seen as a passive recipient of information transmitted by disciplinary experts. The learner's role is not to reason why, but to do as told. Their interests and needs are seen as irrelevant to the educative process. In contrast, teacher knows best. Teacher is an expert with a wealth of information that he/she must transmit to the learner. According to this perspective the acquisition is best achieved through a teaching/learning process that emphasizes lectures, drills, recitation, and demonstration, provided and led by an expert in the discipline (Uys & Gwele, 2005).

Perennialism

Perennialism is an educational philosophy that is rooted in Idealism and Realism (Tan, 2006). Perennialism values knowledge that transcends time. This is a subject-centered philosophy. Perennial education aims to help students know and internalize ideas and values which are universal and lasting. The focus of education is on the perennial knowledge, or the ideas which have endured through time and space (Tan, 2006). Perennials believe that education should epitomize a prepared effort to make these ideas available to students and to guide their thought processes toward the understanding and appreciation of the great works; works of literature written by history's finest thinkers that transcend time and never become outdated. The perennials also favor a subject-matter-based curriculum where the students are incrementally taught the skills and inculcated with the disposition to appreciate the classics (Tan, 2006).

Humanism

In the context of the Philosophy of Education, Humanism is often linked with individualism and liberalism. Humanism is derived from the Latin word *humanus* which means "in accordance with human nature". According to Usman (2017), originally, humanism was a movement that emphasized the dignity and human values. Humanism has spread to all aspects of society in the forms of communism, utilitarianism, spiritualism, individualism, existentialism, liberalism, and also religions (e.g. Protestant and Islam). The implications of humanism for education initially addressed human nature itself in education, namely, that humans are multidimensional beings that have the potential for religious consciousness (human-religiousism). Humanistic education distinguishes itself in terms of the cultural-classical, the naturalistic-romantic, the existential, and the critical-radical approach. According to a humanist point of view, social change is not possible without strong, critical, autonomous people. Autonomy and social concern should be considered interlinked; that is, autonomy development should be embedded in social change processes (Usman, 2017).

Progressivism

Progressivism is originally rise to respond to the dissatisfaction of traditional education practices (teacher-centered approach) which placed emphasis on content (content or subject-centered approach) and this traditional education practice is totally disregarded the place of learner's needs and interest in education (Uys & Gwele, 2005). There are two major streams of progressive education, The European (Rousseau) and The US stream (Dewey). The European or Rousseau's Progressivism is known as child-centered education. Rousseau's progressivism sees that if children are left alone, they have the potential to grow up and become distinct and individual beings, untainted by societal influences. Rousseau believed that the best that teacher can do is do nothing. John Dewey, the father of Progressive

education from the US, sees this phenomenon through the lens of pragmatism and experimentalism. From this perspective, education should not be isolated from its social context. It is because education and experience are inextricably intertwined.

Social reconstructionism

Reconstructionism is commonly seen as a branch of progressive education. Some sources also consider these views of progressive education as the radical views, because of its conception of education as a vehicle for effecting fundamental social change, especially in the realm of the socio-political, economic, and cultural organization (Uys & Gwele, 2005). Central to reconstructionism is the conviction that societal change can be achieved through education. Reconstructionism appears as a critic of progressivism. Reconstructionists argue that progressive education is too slow or too 'soft' ever to lead to change in the existing social order. From a reconstructionist perspective, Social and Economic inequities cannot be solved through problem-solving activities alone, but require constructive deliberations and even revolutionary action (Uys & Gwele, 2005).

Idealism

Idealism is the doctrine that reality is ultimately mental rather than physical; it is an ontological position. According to Tan (2006), there are two types of idealisms, Absolute Idealism and Objective Idealism. Absolute idealism is the doctrine that this reality unfolds in an objective manner according to the nature of the concepts which characterize it. It follows that the most progressive societies and states are those which represent the evolution of reality to an advanced degree. One of the key characteristics of this evolution is a growing self-realization of the world spirit, which is instantiated in the minds of individuals. Education was important for absolute idealists because they believed it brought about a greater degree of individual self-realization. Objective idealism, the doctrine that, although the mental is the ultimate reality, it has an objective rather than a subjective existence, seems to be entailed by absolute idealism. As a philosophical position, it has enjoyed an independent existence and predating absolute idealism (Tan, 2006).

METHOD

This study employs an *inferential content analysis* to examine the data. This approach is used in this study to examine the teacher's documents, including the lesson plans and also the teaching materials. The teacher is an English teacher who has more than three years of experience in teaching English to senior high school students. Currently, the teacher is teaching English at two Islamic schools, pseudonyms as school A and school B. Therefore, selected documents from school A and school B are also examined in this study.

The analysis of this study is focused on the philosophical views underlying the design of teacher's lesson plans and the ELT materials that the teacher has developed. This study uses the content analysis research process developed by Krippendorff (2004). According to Krippendorff (2004), there are six steps of procedure in conducting a content analysis research, those are Designing, Unitizing, Sampling, Coding, Drawing Inferences, and Analysing the Data.

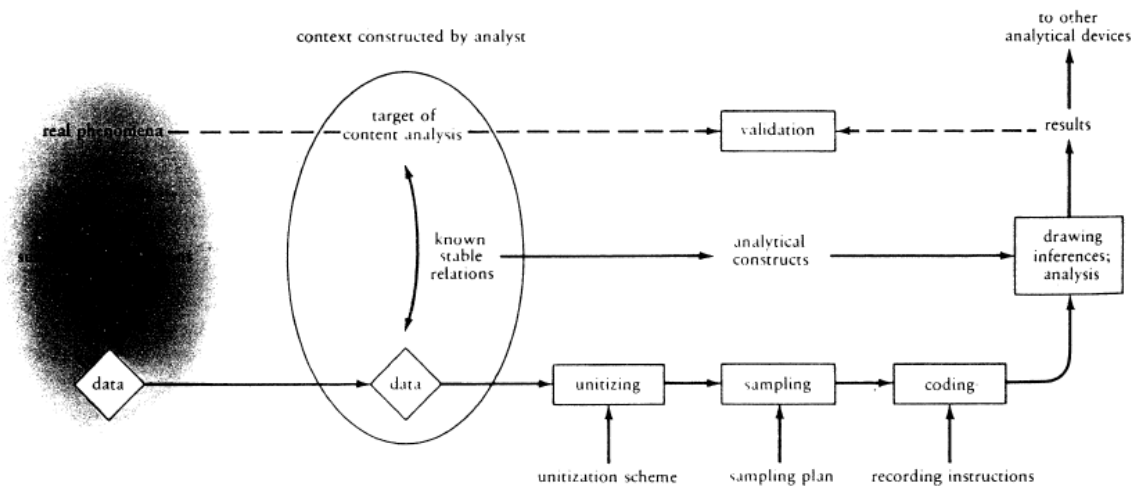


Figure 1. The content analysis research process by Krippendorff (2004)

The process of the inferential content analysis adapted from Krippendorff (2004) is described step by step as follows:

1. *Designing*: In this process, the researcher will define the context of the analysis, what does the researcher wants to know and unable to observe directly. In this stage, the researcher also explores the source of relevant data that are available. Then, the researcher will adopt an analytical construct that formalizes the knowledge available about the relationship between the data and the context.
2. *Unitizing*: In this process, the researcher will specify which units or which parts of the documents, based on the unit themes, the instructions or the learning activities;
3. *Sampling*: The samples which are used in this study are taken form the teacher's lesson plan, syllabus, and the teaching materials, including the module that the teacher develops for eleventh-grade students. Since the teacher is currently teaching English at two schools, the lesson plan and the syllabus designed for both school A and B are being examined by this study. There are three lesson plans for the tenth grade from school A and also three for the eleventh grade from school B, from the first three meetings in the first semester.
4. *Coding*: The step of describing recording units, classifying them in terms of the categories of the analytical constructs chosen.
5. *Drawing Inferences*: It applied the stable knowledge about how the variable accounts of coded data are related to the phenomena that the researcher wants to know about.
6. *Attribution Analysis*: In this stage, the researcher tabulates the adjectives used to describe a chosen concept. A single list of attributes is quite uninformative, however, unless it is compared with some other list that provides a standard against which deviations may be noted. Therefore, the list of attributes derived from the teacher's documents will be contrasted with the philosophical views underlying them. The table below is the construct analysis that is used in this study.

Table 1. Construct Analysis used in this study.

No.	Unit Topics or Themes	Instructional Activities	21 st Century Skills	Adjectives (Implied Value)	Philosophical Views Underlying
1.
2.
3.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study has examined selected teacher's documents including the first three meeting lesson plans for both school A and school B, the syllabuses, and the teaching materials including the textbook and the module that the teacher developed. All the documents that have been examined by this study are used for 2021-222 academic year. Through the inferential content analysis, which is adapted from Krippendorff (2004), this study found that there are several correlations between the chosen instructions and activities which can be found in the teacher's documents and several philosophical views, especially the philosophy of education.

This study has reviewed relevant prior literature related to the philosophical views underlying the implementation of ELT in Indonesia. Referring to the prior studies (e.g. Hastuti & Zuchdi, 2018; Bahri, 2018), there are six philosophical views that are underlying the current national curriculum of Indonesia, Kurikulum 2013. The six school of philosophies underlying Kurikulum 2013 are *essentialism*, *perennialism*, *humanism*, *progressivism*, *social reconstructionism*, and *idealism*. Thus, in line with the review of the literature, this study found that those six schools of philosophy also become the consideration of the subject teacher in designing the lesson plan and also developing the materials.

The findings of this study are also in accordance with the prior studies related to the review of curriculum development in Indonesia. As is stated by (Kemendikbud, 2018; Hastuti & Zuchdi, 2018), the philosophical aspect is one of the pilar aspects for the development of Kurikulum 2013. The philosophical aspect of Kurikulum 2013 is constructed by a number of Educational philosophies which are eclectically utilized (Thohir et al., 2017; Suarga, 2017; Hastuti & Zuchdi, 2018). According to the review of the literature, this study agreed that there are six philosophical views that underlying the philosophical aspect of Kurikulum 2013. Through the inferential content analysis, this study found that those philosophical views are implied on the teacher's documents, including the lesson plan and the teaching materials. The result of the analysis, which examines the correlation between the teacher's documents and the schools of the philosophy underlying them is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Essentialism

Essentialism believes that basic knowledge and skills are necessary for a successful society. These necessary skills enable a person to become an economically productive member of society (Uys & Gwele, 2005). According to this view, the learning objective is not based on the needs and desires of the learner, but on the fact that those in power know what is important for the learner to know. In the context of ELT, students are considered passive recipients of information sent by a disciplinary professional. The student's role is not to explain why, but to do what they are instructed to do. Their interests and needs are not related to the educational process. Rather, the teacher knows best. Teachers are experts with vast amounts of information to convey to students.

The result of this found that this philosophical view is implied in some of the learning activities written in the teacher's lesson plan. For example, at the beginning of the class, the teacher usually begins the class with a vocabulary drilling activity. Based on the interview, the teacher believes that vocabulary drilling is one of the essential approaches to enhance the student's communication skills. The teacher gives the students a set of vocabulary related to the topic referring to the basic competence of Kurikulum 2013. Students are asked to repeat how the teacher pronounces the words and they are also required to memorize the vocabulary. The objective of this activity is for the students to know the meaning of the vocabulary, how to pronounce them and memorize them. Students are expected to follow this activity, whether they have acquired the vocabulary or not, whether they like the theme or not, and whether they are currently need the vocabulary or not.

Perennialism

Universal truths are very central from the point of view of perennialism. The perennial thinker sees that the purpose of education is to civilize human beings under the framework of universal values which transcend space and time. The goal of perennialism in education is to teach students to think rationally and develop minds that can think critically. Perennialists are primarily concerned with the importance of mastery of the content and the development of reasoning skills. A perennial classroom aims to be a closely organized and well-disciplined environment, which develops in students a lifelong quest for the universal truth.

In the teacher's documents, learning activities and materials which are under the influence of perennialism are also discovered by this study. This study found that the philosophy of perennialism is implied on Unit 8, the eighth basic competence of the teacher's syllabus and lesson plan. The lesson topic is about the narrative text, including folklores and fantasy fiction. The philosophy perennialism is explicated on one of the social functions of the text, which is to introduce the students to the moral values conveyed by the text.

Humanism

In the context of educational philosophy, humanism is often associated with individualism or liberalism, which emphasized on dignity and humanistic values. The implications of humanism for education initially addressed human nature itself in education, namely, that humans are multidimensional beings that have the potential for religious consciousness (human-religiousism). Autonomy and social concern should be considered interlinked; that is, autonomy development should be embedded in social change processes.

This view of progressivism is can be found in the teacher's lesson plans and also the syllabus. It is implied on the process of teaching and learning at school, for example, in Unit 1: Self-introduction for tenth-grade students in school A, there is a group discussion session which encourages the students to deliver their opinions and share their perception of how people from different culture introduce themselves. Moreover, the teacher also gave them a chance to present the results of the discussion in front of the class.

Progressivism

Progressivism is originally emerged to address dissatisfaction with traditional educational practices (teacher-centric approaches and content-centric or subject-centric approaches), which completely ignores the needs and interests of the learners. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a Genevan progressive thinker, whose works are very influential for the progressive movement in the eighteenth century, argues that the best thing a teacher could do

was do nothing. If the students are left alone, they have the potential to grow up and become distinct and individual beings, untainted by societal influences.

This study also found that the view of progressivism is implied of the teacher's decision to use the *scientific approach* which employs *student-centered* and *discovery learning* models. During the teaching and learning practices, the role of the teacher is as a facilitator, motivator, and counselor for the students. For example, a homework assignment from Unit 4 required the students to find by an example of exposition text from the internet or other sources except for the English textbook. The students were also required to try to identify by themselves, the elements of an exposition text. Then, at school, as a facilitator and moderator, the teacher provides an opportunity for the students to present the assignment in a sharing and discussion session.

Social reconstructionism

Social reconstructionism is commonly seen as a branch of progressive education. Some sources also consider these views of progressive education as the radical views, because of its conception of education as a vehicle for effecting fundamental social change, especially in the realm of socio-political, economic and cultural organization. Central to reconstructionism is the conviction that societal change can be achieved through education. From a reconstructionist perspective, Social and Economic inequities cannot be solved through problem-solving activities alone, but require constructive deliberations and even revolutionary action. Therefore, from the perspective of a socio-reconstructionist, problem-based activity is very popular among them.

The philosophy of social reconstructionism is also can be found in the teacher's documents. For the fourth basic competence for eleventh grade, the teacher employs a problem-bases approach and discovery learning model for the lesson plan. The topic of Unit 4 is about analytical exposition text. The final objective for the students is to write an expository text which conveys their opinion about the social phenomena and issues around the students (e.g. at school or around the neighborhood).

Idealism

Education was important for absolute idealists because they believed it brought about a greater degree of individual self-realization. Objective idealism, the doctrine that, although the mental is the ultimate reality, it has an objective rather than a subjective existence, seems to be entailed by absolute idealism. As a philosophical position, it has enjoyed an independent existence and predating absolute idealism. Kurikulum 2013 is really aware of this philosophical view which valorizes the individual self-realization. Thus, this philosophical view is also implied in the teaching activities at school. Moreover, based on the interview, the teacher always emphasizes, in every meeting, the importance of the first core competence (spiritual competence) and also the second (social competence) which are influenced by the philosophy of idealism.

CONCLUSION

As a teacher or educator, being aware of what are philosophical views underlying the implementation of teaching and learning activity, is a crucial thing that can't be neglected. This study has examined what are philosophical thoughts or believes underlying the design of English teacher lesson plans and the material. By employing an inferential content analysis and also an interview with the English teacher, this study found that educational philosophy,

including perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, and socio-reconstructionism, are implied in the teacher's lesson plans and the materials. Moreover, the root of those educational philosophies, idealism, and humanism, which are classified as contemporary philosophy, are also can be found on the teacher's documents.

This study also found that, although those six philosophical views are implied on the teacher's documents, essentialism is the most influencing philosophy which has a big impact on the teacher in deciding what activities are suitable for the students. Drilling activities, such as vocabulary enhancement, pronunciation practices, are happened in almost every meeting. To drill the students to enhance their vocabulary, the teacher also develops a module that contains vocabulary enhancement activities in every unit. Not only that, the activities on the module also cover four language skills, reading, listening, writing, and speaking. However, the results of the inferential content analysis and the interview also justify that the teacher is really aware of philosophical views underlying the development of the module.

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