Creative and Innovative Language Teaching

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Abstrak

Kreativitas dan inovasi dalam pembelajaran bahasa merupakan dua hal yang sangat penting dan saling mendukung tercapainya tujuan pembelajaran bahasa. Kesuksesan pembelajaran bahasa ditentukan oleh materi/konten yang disampaikan dan teknik penyajian/penyampaian materi dari guru kepada peserta didik. Dalam hal ini, materi yang disiapkan sesuai dengan ketentuan yang telah diatur dalam kurikulum dengan memperhatikan konten/isian yang sesuai dengan konteks dalam rangka mencapai target pembelajaran. Kreativitas penyusunan materi dan konten pembelajaran sangatlah dibutuhkan agar mempermudah peserta didik mengikuti setiap tahapan pembelajaran. Selain kreativitas dalam penyusunan materi, kreativitas dan inovasi dalam penyampaian materi pun menjadi bagian yang harus ada. Kreativitas dan inovasi guru dalam penyampaian dapat dilakukan dengan berbagai kegiatan pembelajaran yang berusaha menimbulkan minat belajar, daya kreasi, dan daya inovasi siswa. Dari hal tersebut, rencana pembelajaran yang mengarah kepada keaktifan, kreativitas, dan inovasi siswa menjadi bagian penting yang harus disiapkan oleh guru sebelum memulai kegiatan pembelajaran di kelas. Artikel ini menyajikan beberapa cara yang perlu dipahami agar pembelajaran bahasa menjadi kreatif dan inovatif.

Kata kunci: kreativitas, inovasi, materi, teknik, pengajaran bahasa
Abstract

Creativity and innovation in language teaching are two significance elements which mutually support the achievement of language teaching goals. The success of language teaching depends on both the material presented and the presentation technique done by the teachers to their learners. In this case, the material is prepared in accordance with the provisions set out in the curriculum by paying attention to the content that is appropriate to the context in order to achieve the teaching target. Creativity in the preparation of teaching materials and contents is needed to make it easier for students to follow each stage of teaching. In addition to the creativity in the preparation of materials, creativity and innovation in delivering the materials are also obligatory parts. The creativity and innovation of teachers in delivering can be done by various teaching activities that seek to generate students’ interest in teaching, creative power, and students’ innovation power. From this, teaching plans that lead to students’ activities, creativity, and innovations become crucial charts that must be prepared by teachers before starting teaching activities in the classroom. Thus, this article presents some ways to create a creative and innovative language teaching.

Keywords: creativity, innovation, materials, techniques, language teaching

A. Introduction

Creativity and innovation are the common things to be discussed today. Creativity has even become one of the 21st century’s skills to be possessed by the students. Creative and innovative language teaching is needed to make the students have such a skill.

Otherwise, in real teaching practices, the teacher-centered activity is still the main issue. The teachers are busier in the classroom activity than of their students. It looks like the students are watching a movie. They just keep silent listening to their teacher’s explanation. It makes them rarely use the target language in the classroom communication. This condition is counter wise with the goal of language teaching. That is teaching a language to communicate with others.
A creative and innovative teacher is needed to make creative and also innovative language teaching. Being a creative and innovative teacher means the teacher should always make a reflection on what he or she has done in the classroom, the teacher should not be quickly satisfied with their achievements, the teacher should have enormous sources about the material, the teacher should be brave in creating something new in their class, teachers should make a good preparation before acts in the classroom, sometimes a creative teacher does something different in the classroom.

As also said by Richards in Suwartono (2016), creative teachers possess the following qualities: (1) creative teachers are knowledgeable; (2) creativity teachers require their possessing confidence; (3) creative teachers are committed to helping their learners succeed; (4) creative teachers are non-conformists; (5) creative teachers are familiar with a variety of strategies and techniques; (6) creative teachers are risk-takers; (7) creative teachers seek to achieve learner-centered lessons; (8) creative teachers are reflective.

What will creative and innovative language teaching look like? According to Suwartono (2016), the character of creative teaching is that the teacher uses the various methodology, media, resources material, classroom activities or in some combination of these. The students will experience a various media, resources and also activities in the classroom. They will not only sit behind the table and listen to their teacher but also participate actively in the teaching process. A creative teacher will try to create the most suitable breakthrough to stimulate students in understanding the lesson easily. As also stated by Ling (2007), the power of stimulating such a sense lies predominantly in the hands of the teacher.

On the student's side, creative-innovative teaching leads to a teaching process that is able to empower students, is student-centric, and in demand. This aspect of creativity and innovation must be considered. In addition,
educators’ need to enhance and encourage complex-reasoning skills while assisting students’ in developing a sense of reflective self and a personal and professional ethos that eventually translates into increased confidence (Benner, et al., 2009; Elledge, et al., 2018; Chadha, 2017; Peisachovich, 2016; Peisachovich, et al., 2016).

In this digital era, the use of technology in language teaching isn’t a new issue. There are many reasons for the use of technology in language teaching; internet access is becoming increasingly available to learners, younger learners are growing up with technology, and it is a natural and integrated part of their lives, using a range of ICT tools can give learners exposure to and practice in all of the four main language skills, technology offers new ways for practicing language and assessing performance, and technology is being increasingly mobile (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007, p. 8).

In line with the above statement, educators are required to develop strategies that engage the students’ participation and create a sense of community. It can lead to collaborative teaching and developing relationships and boost educator feedback while preparing for independent networking and self-direct proactive teaching (Garrison & Anderson, 2003; Hammond & Wiriyapinit, 2005; Kanuka & Garrison, 2004; Mann, 2014; Melrose & Bergeron, 2007; Munich, 2014; Plante & Asselin, 2014; Rogo & Portillo, 2015).

Creativity is a crucial skill needed in conducting innovative teaching and learning effectively. As mentioned by Whattananarong (2011) in a world of rapid change in information and communication technology, innovation in education needs to keep updated and get prepared for this changing world in order to solve educational problems effectively.

According to Songkhram (2013) innovation is products, techniques, new procedures, new knowledge that has been never happened or existed products, techniques, procedures but revised or developed and good result.
Therefore, creating an innovative product need to be integrated in teaching activities that help students create innovation themselves.

B. Discussion

The word innovation is always associated with technology. Innovation in the world of education is often said to be a technological change in teaching and education. Innovation in education is a technical skill in creating a teaching activity that attracts students' interest, fosters student teaching motivation, hones students' ability to think critically and innovatively in a systematic way and a pleasant atmosphere. Innovation and teaching are two things that are closely related and influence each other. Innovative teaching is an important foundation in building creative learners. This innovative teaching will help students to develop thinking power, and skills. Innovation in teaching is one of the steps taken by teachers to create a comfortable and appropriate atmosphere for students in teaching activities so that they are able to create creative power.

What is innovative teaching? Innovative teaching means a situation where teachers could create systematically teaching activities that support the students to learn and to explore the knowledge. It can be done by giving the students an attractive teaching method and giving them the opportunity to do self-reflection and understand when they made mistakes. The students will like being treated as adults since they are given the responsibility.

Giving direct feedback will also be an innovative teaching method. By doing this to students’ work, it means that teachers give their students a second opportunity to find another alternative answer rather than only hoping for the score. Another innovative teaching is inviting students to find the solution for certain problems. This method is called problem-finding. In this method, students are required to have an imaginative vision to investigate the missing part or even an extra layer to improve their teaching skills. Some preparations should be done to create innovative teaching.
Songkhram (2014) identified four crucial components which influence creating innovative teaching: lecturers/teachers, learners, environments, and technology.

What is creative teaching? Being creative in teaching sometimes becomes something complicated to be done. There must be some steps and extra preparation before applying creative teaching. Beghetto (2017) states that creative teaching, such as others forms of teaching is a complex and multi-form activity. According to him, there are three forms of creative teaching. The first is teaching about creativity, the second is teaching for creativity and the third is teaching with creativity. They are distinguished on different pedagogical purposes and a piece of specific knowledge. Beghetto (2017) created a theory of disciplined improvisation. In this theory according to him, there are some requirements to gain the skill of creative teaching. Those requirements are knowledge about creativity, referring it to subject taught, the ability in using different activities depending on the type of a group such as students’ various age, combining them with an ongoing observation of the group and a flexible approach to the course of the lesson. Therefore, Beghetto (2017) mentions that sensitive and dynamic methods for measuring teaching for creativity are significant to support students’ creative thinking and action.

**The role of the creative teacher**

Teachers play a significant role in conducting weather the teaching and teaching run well and reach their goal. According to Ja (2017) there are six roles of the creative teacher; manager, facilitator, counselor, resource, participant and assessor. As a manager, a teacher should make a planning about what he/she will do in the classroom, the material, and also the method. The teacher also has to organize and also control his/her classroom. As a facilitator, the teacher should facilitate the teaching
process so the goal of the teaching process can be realized. As stated by Ja (2017), the facilitation dealing with facilitating students to learn, providing scaffolding, and teaching students how to learn.

As a resource, the teacher has to deliver the material to the students in the target language (Indonesian/Javanese/English). The teacher does not only correct the students’ performance of task but also give a motivational feedback to them. Being a counselor, Ja (2017) mentions that the teacher should give appreciation or reward to the students after answering or doing something and advise them who did not accomplish the homework and those students who have lack participation in the class.

The teacher also has a role as participant which means the teacher actively taking a part in the students’ activity. So, the teacher can be the student’s partner while they are doing the activity. The teacher should also involve the students in correcting their homework or task. The last role of a teacher is being an assessor. The job is to assess about the students’ development dealing with the teaching process.

Here are the examples of creative-innovative language teaching in the classroom. They are based on personal experience as a language teacher, some research result, and the author’s thought. The examples cover the area of the student’s activity, the media, and also the techniques. Hopefully, these examples can be an inspiration for the reader.

**Media**

**Understanding the intrinsic elements of the novel**

The activity is started by reading a novel, watching a movie in order to identify the intrinsic elements of the novel, or finding themes, settings, and characterizations in the novel. The teacher prepares a movie based on a novel.
The teacher should consider the duration of the movie with the teaching time schedule.

The teacher checks student’s readiness for teaching and the media. The teacher asks a student to briefly review the material from the previous meeting. Then, the teacher gives apperception by showing some photos of popular film artists. The teacher guides students to guess the material that will be studied at this meeting. The teacher distributes a worksheet containing a number of questions related to the film that will be screened as a guide. The teacher invites students to watch the film.

The teacher asks students to make groups of 3-5 people. They are given the task to discuss about the movie. Teachers monitor the student’s activity. The teacher asks 1 or 2 group representatives to present the results in front of the classroom. Teachers and the other groups pay attention and give feedback to the presenter.

The teacher asks the students' impressions of the lesson. In the end of the meeting, the teacher gives a similar task individually. The students have to make a movie report containing with the intrinsic element of it based the selection (Suwartono, 2021).

**Telling the moral value of a fable**

Finding a moral value for the students sometimes is not a piece of cake. This needs a big effort since the story comes from abroad which has a different cultural background. In this activity, the students share their ideas actively through group work.

First, the teacher prepares a card that has a different story. The type of story which is used is fable. There are four different fables used in the activity. They are: The Mice Meeting, The Travelers and the Bear, The Tortoise and the Eagle, and The Sick Lion.
Then, the students are grouped into two large groups. The teacher divides these large groups into four small groups. The teacher distributes the cards into the large group. The leader of the large group distributes the card into the small groups. Each small group has one card with one story. The students from the small group read the story and find the moral value of the story. After a few minutes, the first small group hands over the card to the second small group. The second small group will give the card to the third small group and soon. The process is over when all of the small groups have read the 4 different stories.

The students tell the moral value that they have found from the stories. Each group may have a different finding as long as it is relevant to the story. The teacher can add the moral value from the proverb (Sartika, 2017, p. 33-37)

Students’ Activities

Writing a job application letter

1. Preliminary activities
   a. The teacher leads the prayer, checks student attendance, and asks questions about their life.
   b. The teacher gives apperception by asking students' experiences in writing letters and the benefits of letters.
   c. The teacher explains the Kompetensi Dasar (basic competence) and teaching objectives as well as Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (minimum success criteria)

2. Main Activities
   a. The teacher divides the students into several groups; each group consists of 4-5 people
   b. The teacher motivates students to work and discuss well and
informs that active participation will give a credit for them.
c. The teacher distributes several examples of application letters to each group.
d. The teacher asks the students to find the elements of a letter application in their discussion.
e. The teacher asks some the student’s representative to present their work.
f. The teacher gives feedback.
g. The teacher distributes worksheets containing job advertisements and instruction, paper, markers, and sticky tape to each group.
h. The teacher gives an assignment to each group to write a letter application on the provided paper and attach it on the wall in the nearest corner.
i. The teacher gives the task of each group correcting and giving the value of the work of other groups based on the completeness of the elements, systematics, and language use.
j. The teacher provides reviews, compliment, suggestions, and corrections as necessary.
k. The teacher decides the best group.

3. Closing Activities
a. The teacher and students conclude the material for a job application letter
b. The teacher and the students make a reflection about what they have done.
c. The teacher gives individual assignments to write job applications letter based on the newspaper advertisements.
d. The teacher informs the next meeting agenda (Suwartono, 2021).
Interviewing community leaders

The teacher groups the students by paying attention to the heterogeneity of each group consisting of 5-6 people. Each group is assigned its role as group leader, interviewer, writer, video, and audio recorder. The teacher explains briefly about the material, including they will interview people who have certain expertise or community leaders according to their respective professional fields, what will be done during and after the interview is conducted. Students determine their own interview theme, resource persons, and list of questions. Interviews were assigned to be conducted outside of class hours. The teacher asks each team to make a report citing the results of the interview using power-point and/or Microsoft word.

At the next meeting, each group presented the results of the interviews using laptops and media LCD. When one group made a presentation, another group evaluated the results of the interview in terms of the suitability of the questions with the interview theme, the complexity of the questions, politeness of language, and fluency in the interview. At the end of the lesson, students reflect on the day's activities. What are their feelings on doing the activities in the classroom?

Making a live report in a role play using video

The following activities make the students actively use the target language in the classroom. They have more chances to use the target language in a communication.

a. The teacher should prepare an LCD, pictures of natural disasters, a wireless microphone, videos about natural disasters, and also a worksheet
b. The teacher shows the picture of a natural disaster. Then, the teacher also shows a live news report from YouTube and asks the students to answer the worksheet given.

c. After that, the students are divided into groups of four. They have to discuss the news report.

d. Students present their discussion in a role play for the following characters: one student as the reporter, and the three others as the victims.

e. Students from different groups give comments after one group present a live news report. Students were also asked to make a comment during the activities (Syaifurrahman, 2017, p. 66-69).

Techniques

Writing a free verse poetry using the appropriate words

In writing poetry, sometime the environment can be the source for the idea of it. The teacher can use the school environment as an alternate media in the poetry teaching-teaching process. Students can see the object to be written directly. It helps them in developing their imagination. First, the students are divided into several groups. The teacher specifies the object which the students will observe as writing materials, namely the ditches, the hills, the rice fields, the gardens, and the village road. In order to distribute the theme fairly, the teacher writes the theme in a piece of paper. The group leader takes one of the papers containing the theme. The group doing an observation based on the chosen theme.

After that, the teacher along with the students walks out of the classroom. The students go directly to the location to observe the object according to the theme chosen. Every student writes lines that correspond...
to the objects they observe. The teacher monitors each group activities. Outdoor activities last about forty minutes. After writing the poem, students are given an opportunity to read their poetry.

Then the teacher invites all students back to class. Students are asked to sit in groups. They are given about twenty minutes to put together each line they have wrote, after that each student uses the collection of many lines of the group to arrange a complete poem. Once again, the teacher monitors each group in turns and provide suggestions if it is necessary for poetry improvement. If the groups have finished their jobs then each group sends the representatives to read poetry in front of the classroom.

Students are given five minutes to reflect. Furthermore, they were asked to convey their feelings and impression during the poetry writing process. At the end of the lesson, students are given individual assignments, namely: write a poem based on the object they have observed earlier or another object around their house. The task should be submitted at the meeting next (Suwartono, 2021).

**Writing a pantun (Indonesian traditional poetry)**

Inspired by the repeated experiences of inspiring techniques in teaching reading comprehension skills, rhymes with regular construction can be taught through reconstruction techniques. The procedure taken is I-CARE (Introduction-Connection-Application-Reflection-Extension).

The first stage is introduction stage. In this stage, the teacher prepares the scrambled lines of pantun and put them in a jar. These scrambled lines of pantun will be arranged by students in groups into the complete one on a piece of paper. From the pantun verses that have been arranged, students identify the terms of the rhyme.
Teaching to write rhymes using the reconstruction technique is carried out in two times of teaching hours or 2 x 40 minutes.

The teacher's first step in introduction stage is to display a verse of the pantun that is posted on the whiteboard. Next, students are invited to sing the pantun with the rhythm of a certain suitable song, for example, Rasa Sayange (title of an Indonesian traditional song). Then, the teacher conveys the teaching objectives.

The second stage is the connection stage. Here, the students are having a brainstorming session. It discussed about their experience of hearing or using pantun in their everyday life. It can be in a traditional ceremony, a welcoming guest event, or in traditional marriage party, etc.

The third stage is the application stage. This stage takes place in three stages. First, for thirty-five minutes, students are grouped into several groups. Each group is represented by one student taking sixteen lines of pantun from the jar. The lines are arranged into four stanzas and then glued on flipchart paper. Based on the four stanzas of the pantun that have been completely composed, students in groups identify the requirement of making pantun and draw conclusions. The result of the group works are then presented and should be responded by other groups. The teacher provides reinforcement to the students' conclusions. The second is the students work on the first worksheet. This worksheet contains two stanzas of the pantun whose sampiran (the first part of pantun which is used to build rhyme) parts are missing. The gaps are filled by the students individually.

The results of each student's work are then used as material for group discussions. The results of the group work are followed up with presentation activities. The students presentation is based on the how fast they complete the job. The students who finish the task firstly will also present for the first presentation. For the second stage of application, the time required is fifteen minutes. The third stage of the application is carried
out. Each student gets a second worksheet. This second worksheet contains an illustration. Students are assigned to read and observe the illustration. Based on the illustration, students write a stanza of the rhyme. After that, students are given the opportunity to make an editing their own poetry. Students are asked to attach the pantun that have been made and edited on flipchart paper as student work will be graded based on the assessment rubric.

At the final stage of reflection and extension, the teacher gives students the opportunity to write reflections. The teacher then gave homework in the form of writing three stanzas of the rhyme. This homework will later be collected and made into a book containing the pantun by students (Suwartono, 2021).

**Teaching Descriptive Text**

To introduce Descriptive text in a more creative way, a walking gallery activity can be used. First, the teacher prepares the media; drawing papers, color markers, and copies of prepared descriptive text. Then, the students are split into group of 3-5 students.

Each group is given a copy of text, a paper, and also marker. The group has to draw a picture based on the text given. The drawing activity is limited in a certain time. The picture attach in the classroom’s wall near their chair.

Then, two or three members of each group bring a note and visit the other group. While, the rest of the group members must stand by near their picture. The students who visit the other group gather the information while the stand by students should share the information to the “guest”. Commonly, at this time there will be a debate or discussion, so the teacher should manage and settle it when it is referring to the text. Hopefully, the reading comprehension and speaking are supposed to develop well.
C. Conclusion

Creative and innovative language teaching is born from the creative and innovative teacher. Some characteristics of creative and innovative teachers are reflective, risk-taking, familiar with a variety of strategies and techniques, rich in knowledge. The creative and innovative teacher will prepare the classroom activity well. The activity is arranged in order to make the students actively engage in the classroom. The use of technology can also make the language teaching more creative. By means of technology, the teacher can access numerous and various material to be taught in the class. Technology can also be the teaching aid on the language teaching. Hopefully, by creating creative and innovative language teaching, students can empower themselves and enjoy the experience of language teaching. As the result of this, their mastery level of the target language will increase.

References


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