A REVIEW OF RECENT MANAGEMENT AT RIAU UNIVERSITY LANGUAGE CENTRE, INDONESIA

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Abstract: This case study was focused on a review of the recent management of the language Centre programme, University of Riau. The data were collected using triangulation method where some instruments were used, two sets of questionnaires for the students and staff, a semi-structured interview for the three staff, the results of students' exams, and policy documents. The findings provided the evidence that the students were more motivated to study English for their future employment (instrumental motivation), whereas the staffs were more motivated to teach English for intrinsic rewards rather than extrinsic rewards. The findings also showed that the quality of teaching was generally good but it was suggested that the number of the computer for CALL program be increased, and more importantly, among the staff and the Manager be continuously built for a strong teamwork which could positively affect the implementation of the programme.

Keywords: *Language Centre, Recent Management, Riau University, Language learning, Motivation*

INTRODUCTION

Riau province is located in the Southeast Asia region bordering with Malaysia and Singapore. More foreign investment flows to the region because Riau is commercially strategic in terms of its production of petroleum, natural gas, and other products such as pulp and paper which has given a lot of financial contribution to the national income.

The steady development in the province means opening opportunities for the local people to work for companies and industries in addition to working for the government department. Now, more job opportunities, especially in private sectors, are widely open to university graduates who are able to communicate in English besides being able to operate computers. In Batam, an administrative town which is closed to Singapore, for example, more vacancies at tourism industries and foreign companies are being offered to those who meet the skills required.

Given the quality of human resources in Riau is relatively low, better positions in industries or companies are still dominated by those from outside Riau. In fact, many graduates from Riau are still hunting for jobs (Zaenal, 2004). A great number of them are unable to compete with other graduates from other provinces within the country such as Java because they do not have qualifications that match the needs of the job market.

Even if their qualifications do match the job market, they do not have other related skills such as the ability to use both spoken and written English. This is one of the issues to be taken into consideration by the provincial government particularly by higher education institutions in Riau. The students' inability to use English is partly caused by the way they were taught when they were at secondary schools. Although they have learned English for six years before they go to university, they are still unable to use it in their daily lives. One of the causes of the problem is that most of the materials taught at secondary levels are emphasized in reading, grammar, and vocabulary. There is only very little time for conversation exercises and writing as time allocation is very limited.

With regard to the above problem, Riau University as the only public university in the province bears a heavy responsibility to ensure its graduate to be able to communicate in English in order to be able to compete in the job market. On the one hand, the university needs to open areas which suit the current development and close the ones whose graduates may find it difficult to get jobs. In this respect, Riau University Language Centre (RULC) has to play a key role in providing the students with the ability to use English so that they can compete in the job market after completing their study. For this purpose, Riau University through its RULC has anticipated this need by improving the quality of English teaching and the curriculum. Since a decade ago there has been a shift in the English teaching for non-English majors where students have to take four levels of English in succession (previously there were two levels, General English and ESP). These four levels of English are basic, intermediate, advanced, and TOEFL Preparation. These four levels of English aim to provide the students with the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). They are expected to possess four language competencies, that is, *linguistic competence, discourse competence, socio-linguistic competence* and *strategic competence.* In order to possess these competencies, the students are provided with computer-assisted language learning (CALL) programme and learning facilities at the Self Access Centre (SAC) as learning support.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is no doubt that the importance of management to the success of education has been wide and recognized. It has been marked with a global trend towards school-based management especially in terms of the management of finance and resources (Bush and Coleman, 2000). There are a large number of theories about management offered by different experts but in this paper, only those relevant to the educational context will be presented. The work of Quin *et al* (1996) provides a useful starting point both in its

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coverage of management theory and its attempt to provide an integrated model of good management practice. They define a model follows:

> In the social world, a model often represents a set of assumptions for, or a general way of thinking about or seeing, some phenomenon. It provides a particular perspective about a complex reality. Although models can help us to see some aspects of a phenomenon, they can also blind us to some other aspects.

From the above statement, it may be concluded that any adopted model both help and hinder an emergent growing phenomenon. In another sense, it is individuals in specific situations and context who judge which model to follow that suits their organisation's context. They draw on combined insights from four traditional models of management theory aimed at providing their comprehensive framework known as the *Competing Values Framework:*

The first model is called the *rational goal model.* According to this model, the success of management is dependent on effectiveness, productivity, and profit. In other words, this model not only desires the effectiveness of the programme and learning outcomes but also income generation to the organization which may be done through entrepreneurship. The second model is the *internal process model* which is concerned with effectiveness through stability and continuity. It emphasises on the need for rules, routine, hierarchy and professional bureaucracy. This model of management is still embraced by many educational managers especially in developing countries where hierarchy is still so strong. It keeps aside collegiality and is distant from links with other outside organizations. In the modern educational world, this model may no longer work if the success of management is to be achieved.

The *human relations model* is the third. This is a model where the key focus of the organization is people. Managers put concerns on staff commitment, cohesion, and morale. According to this model collegiality and motivation are vital to ensure everybody can work efficiently and effectively. This seems to be absent in the current management of RULC. The final model is the *open system model* which emphasizes the relationships between organizations and their external environment. This model expects managers to enable their organizations to compete successfully, to be adaptable and flexible, and to gain external support. In today's management, this model is useful and profitable to apply. This is one of the models being used by Riau University especially to generate income from outside organizations. Yet, all these management models have strengths and weaknesses. Some educational organisations emphasize a combination of some models and others may adopt only one model. But the fundamental issue is that the role of the manager is to bring the organisation to success through effective management by any or all means available.

Nowadays, an educational organisation needs a collegial approach to bring about change especially the improvement of teaching and learning. Within the context of RULC, a collegial approach means teamwork within relatively small groups. A team in this respect may be defined as a group of people who work together to achieve a specific goal (Hayes, 2002). Daft (2003) defines a team as a unit of two or more people who interact and coordinate their work in order to reach the desired goal. There are many other definitions of the team but they are similar in content. Although a team

consists of a group of people, it is not the same as a group. Clearly, a team is made up of individual members accountable to each other with shared leadership and responsibility, each with a role to play. A group also consists of people working together but does not have a specific purpose. In other words, a time is specifically focused but a group is not.

Teams may be classified according to their function and composition. By their function there are two types of team in educational organisations; namely, *standing teams* and *project teams.* By their composition, there are also two types of teams i.e. *homogenous* and *diverse,* but the team is being focused in this paper is the standing team especially the middle management team. To put the discussion into context, this section will first explore the importance of teamwork in educational management; then it will discuss team roles, the effectiveness of teamwork, team building, team dynamics, and human motivation through empowerment.

METHODOLOGY

This study was a case study research concerning what was going on in a particular institution; that is, Riau University Language Centre (RULC), Indonesia. It is theoretically based on what Skilbeck (1983) views as Follows:

> The case must be such that it captures the texture of reality, makes judgement possible for an audience, is not heavily theory dependent, but lends itself to a comprehensive study… the case must be seen in its individuality, not as a sample, but as a unique whole…

The study was conducted at RUCL for a period of nine months from September 2014 to June 2015. The application of the whole programme of RUCL was observed from this span of time within two semesters. The course had two sessions a week each of which one session was used for a tutorial (100 minutes) and another one for computer-assisted language learning (CALL) programme (60 minutes) In the language laboratory. There were 25 students in one class which was aimed at better learning achievement. To support students a progress, they were provided with learning facilities at the Self Acces Centre. Both in the tutorial and CALL, the students used the same materials and were taught by different lecturers. To know how far they progressed, a mid and final semester tests were administered on which the final grades were based. The target population of the study was all non-English students of 32 classes who took English 1 in Semester 1 of the academic years 2014/2015. Given the number of population was quite large and spread out in different faculties within the university, the cluster sampling technique was considered most aappropriate to be employed whereby all the members of the selected groups had similar characteristics and were representative to the whole population (Gray, 1976). The sample of the study was 3 classes (75 students) who were taught by different lecturers with different teaching qualities ranging from excellent, good, and 22 of them were taken as the sample.

The collection of the data was based on the triangulation method where more than one instruments were employed in the study of some aspect of human behavior (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p. 233) in order for the data to be valid and reliable. In this study, two

sets of questionnaires, a semi-structured recorded interview, and documents were used aiming at obtaining better results, meaning that the results of all of the instruments used complemented each other. Both the Items of the questionnaires for the students and the staff were designed on the basis of three main themes, that is, the students' motivation to study English and the staffs' motivation to teach English at RULC, their perceptions of the quality of teaching and resource provision. The items of the staff questionnaire, in particular, were linked to the interview questions of the three staffs that represented others. This was mainly aimed to support the information obtained from the questionnaire, i,e. by exploring some of the issues arising in more depth. The data of this study were analysed using both Excel and SPSS software and on the basis of a thematic approach where the questionnaires were grouped into themes. Each item was valued accordingly in a tabular form except the ones that require general interpretation in open-ended questions. The results of the analysis were presented in the form of mean gained from the division of aggregate scores into the number of respondents choosing an alternative scale ranging from 1-5 (5 as being the highest in value). The results were also presented in the form of percentages such as the items that required the yes/no and neutral answers, statements of agreement or disagreement, frequency and the like. Whereas the answers to the open-ended items were used to support the results of the questionnaires in the form of explanations. In addition, the results of student's exams were linked to the results of the questionnaires in order to see whether their views or attitudes towards the whole program including the staff's teaching qualities affect their learning achievement. In the case of the interview, the results were also linked to the results of the questionnaires to see if they complemented each other.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The students' motivation to study English and the staffs' motivation to teach English at Riau University Language Centre.

Having analysed the data, the results showed the students were motivated to study English because it is an international language with the mean of 4.12. Then because with English they were able to find jobs easily was the second reason with the mean of 3.83 followed by wanting to speak English with foreigners with the mean of 2.29 and to pass the exam with the mean of 2.13. The three scoring responses indicated that instrumental motivation was more dominant than integrative motivation that motivated the students to study English. These results were underpinned by the results of the questionnaire where some 59 respondents (79%) agreed that the more they learned English, the better their English and achievement would be (integrative motivation). Only two respondents (3%) disagreed and 14 respondents (19%) stayed neutral. In addition, the questionnaire data also indicated that 65 of 75 respondents (>73%) responded it was still important for them to take another English other than at Riau University Language Centre. It means they had high motivation to learn English.

In the case of the staff's motivation to teach English at RULC, the finding showed that 8 of 22 respondents (>36%) responded they taught English in order to meet different students, 5 respondents (23%) responded to get experience, 4 respondents (>18%)

responded to get pay and 2 respondents (>9%) responded to get credit point, Also there were more staff who wanted to teach more than once a week. Besides, the questionnaire data provided the evidence that 21 of 22 respondents responded they wanted to teach from two times to five times a week. Based on the results of the study, it could be concluded that the staffs taught English at RULC for more intrinsic rewards rather than extrinsic rewards.

Student's and staff's perceptions of the quality of teaching

Based on the student questionnaire, it was clear that the students liked the method used by teachers with the highest mean of 4.36. This result was rather different from other the result where some 32 of 75 respondents (43%) responded that teachers rarely used various methods in teaching, 22 respondents (>29%) responded frequently, and 20 respondents (275) occasionally. Besides, the findings of the study presented that 40 respondents (>53%) responded that quality of teachers was good, 7 respondents (>9%) responded excellent, and 28 respondents (>37%) respond average. From these result, it could be concluded that teachers need to improve their teaching methods by using different techniques so that students would be motivated to learn the language.

In terms of teaching material, the students liked the materials they learned with the mean of 3.82 after the teaching methods. On the other hand, the questionnaire that revealed that grammar appeared to be the most difficult for the students to learn with the mean of 3.65, then speaking with the mean of 3.45, and vocabulary with the mean of 3.32. These results, to some degree, correlated with the result of the staff's perception of the improvement of the current syllabus. In the case of reading a special emphasis of improvement should be placed on the topics in the sense that they were arranged based on the level of difficulty and the topics that suited the students' needs. This idea was supported by the results of the interview in which the interviewees commented more on the improvement of reading materials.

Students' and staff perceptions of the Language Centre resources Provision

Referring to the results of the analysis it was apparent that the students liked CALL programme. They felt positive it could improve their English and achievement as can be seen from the questionnaire data where 57 respondents (>76%) agreed, 13 respondents (>17%) stayed neutral, and 5 respondents (>6%) disagreed. The responded CALL programme benefited the students with the highest mean of 3.83. However, improvements needed to be made especially the teaching methods and the number of computers as reflected in the questionnaire data where the teaching methods got the highest mean of 4.13 and the number of computers with the mean of 3.57. Since CALL programme had newly been introduced, it was reasonable that there were weaknesses. Therefore, there was a need for organizing a short training course for the staff about CALL teaching methods. This idea was in line with the interviewees' comments for the improvement of both CALL and SAC. In terms of the number of computers, it was understood that the students were asking for more because one PC was being used by three students at the same time.

DISCUSSION

Apart from its strengths, a number of weaknesses were still present in the implementation of the whole programme of the Language Centre. The weaknesses could be seen from the design of syllabus, teaching techniques (because not all staff were professional in teaching the language as they came from different disciplines other than English), and lack of teamwork and collegiality amongst team members which was vital to an educational organisation to succeed in its programme. Good lessons could be taken from these weaknesses for the improvement to be made in the future. However, it should be borne in mind that change does not happen at once but through stages.

Having gathered the information, it was discovered that the majority of the students were not satisfied with the programme as a whole, and the staff rated the quality of the whole programme 'average'. The dissatisfaction on the part of the students might stem from inadequate learning facilities such as computers for CALL programme (most of them suggested to increase the number) in addition to the teaching materials and methods. They also suggested that teachers vary their teaching methods, use interesting reading materials, and give more speaking activity in class. Their suggestions closely linked with the staff's suggestions in the questionnaire and interview, saying that the focus of improvement of the teaching material was placed more on reading. They further suggested that all staff be introduced how to deal with CALL teaching methods and the management of SAC needed improving such as better services for students and teachers. All these suggestion would help RULC to take necessary measures for improvement.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data analysis and findings, it was clear that there was a tendency for students of Riau University to be motivated to study English for better future employment. In other words, they were instrumentally motivated to study English. The reason for this appeared to be that English had become the main requirement for better jobs especially in Riau province where many foreign companies have been operating. One possibility to enable the students to possess the ability to communicate in English is to match the curriculum with their needs. In term of the quality of teaching that included the methods or techniques used by teachers and the curriculum, it was apparent that the methods employed by teachers were good, but they needed to be varied in order to encourage the students to learn. There were also areas of improvement to be made especially in terms of the content and the level of difficulty of reading materials along with grammar and vocabulary that suited the students' needs. What is more, it was suggested that teachers not only relied on the materials in the handbook but that they also needed to use authentic materials such as periodicals. CALL programme and other facilities at SAC were very useful both to the students and the staff although they were

still limited in number. Another crucial point to consider was a suggestion for good teamwork and leadership where collegiality was of prime importance. It was very important to be borne in mind as failure to pay attention to it may affect the whole programme. The implementation of the whole programme may be said to be good. However, if better management and students outcomes were to be achieved, it might be worthwhile to take into consideration the following recommendations as the way forward for the improvement of RULC management.

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