

The Impact Of The Constructivist Approach On Students' Understanding Of Teaching Principles In English Learning

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the effect of implementing a constructivist approach in English language learning on students' understanding of teaching principles. The constructivist approach, which emphasizes students' active role in constructing knowledge through social interaction, reflection, and direct experience, is expected to improve students' understanding of English teaching theories. This study used an experimental design with an experimental group receiving constructivist-based learning and a control group using traditional methods. The research sample consisted of 35 4th semester students of the English Education Study Program at Mandalika University of Education, who were selected by purposive sampling. Data were collected through written tests to measure the understanding of teaching principles, as well as questionnaires to measure students' perceptions of the application of constructivist approaches in learning. Based on the test results, there was an increase in the average pre-test score from 63 to 85 after the application of the constructivist approach, which showed a significant increase of 35%. In addition, questionnaire data showed that 78% of students felt more involved in learning after applying the constructivist approach. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and paired t-test to test for significant differences between the experimental and control groups. The results showed that the implementation of constructivist approach in English language learning has a positive influence on students' understanding of teaching principles. Students who engaged in constructivist learning experienced a significant increase in understanding compared to those who used traditional methods. The study also found that the factors of motivation and active involvement of students in learning played an important role in the successful implementation of the constructivist approach.

Keywords: Constructivist approach, English language learning, teaching principles, student understanding, active learning,

INTRODUCTION

Education is an important tool in shaping future generations. One of the main aspects in education is the teaching process carried out by educators. In the context of English language learning, teaching is not just about conveying information, but also involves the application of appropriate pedagogical principles to ensure deep and sustained understanding by students. Therefore, a good understanding of teaching principles is essential for students who are preparing to become English language educators.

In recent decades, many approaches in English language teaching have developed, one of which is the constructivist approach. This approach is based on the theory of constructivism which suggests that knowledge is built through active interaction between individuals and their environment and experiences [1]. Constructivism does not only consider students as passive recipients of

information, but as active knowledge builders who participate in the learning process by constructing and embedding information in their social and cultural context.

The constructivist approach emphasizes the importance of learning based on problem solving, exploration and deep reflection. In the context of English language teaching, this approach provides space for students to learn through practical experience, group discussions, and the application of theory in practice. For example, students are not only given theories about English language teaching, but also engage in learning activities that challenge them to think critically, collaborate, and solve real-world problems [2]

Many previous studies have shown that the application of constructivist approaches in English language learning can improve students' understanding of teaching principles, such as active learning theory, project-based learning,

and learning that prioritizes collaboration and discussion. For example, research by [3] shows that students who engage in project-based learning tend to have a deeper understanding of teaching theory and can apply it effectively in their teaching practice.

However, although this approach has many benefits, challenges in its implementation remain, especially in the context of higher education in Indonesia. One of the challenges is the readiness of lecturers and students in adapting this more active and collaboration-based approach [4]. Therefore, it is important to conduct further research to explore the effect of implementing a constructivist approach on the understanding of teaching principles in 4th semester students of the English Education Study Program at Mandalika University of Education.

This study aims to examine how much influence the implementation of constructivist approach in English language learning has on students' understanding of teaching principles. With a better understanding of teaching principles, students are expected to become more effective educators and be able to implement relevant pedagogical approaches in the context of English language teaching.

The problem formulations in this study are: 1) How does the implementation of constructivist approach in English language learning affect students' understanding of teaching principles? 2) What are the factors that influence the effectiveness of constructivist approach in improving students' understanding of teaching principles?

While the objectives of this study are 1) Assessing the effect of the application of constructivist approach in English language learning on students' understanding of teaching principles; 2) Analyzing the factors that influence the application of constructivist approach in English language learning.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative research design with an experimental approach to measure the effect of implementing a constructivist approach on the understanding of teaching principles of 4th semester students of the English Education Study Program at the Faculty of Culture, Management and Business, Mandalika University of Education. In the experimental research, there were two different groups: the experimental group that followed the learning with constructivist approach and the control group that received conventional learning. This study aims to identify the difference in comprehension between the two groups after applying the constructivist approach.

This study adopts an experimental approach to measure the effect of implementing a constructivist approach in English language learning. Models such as Discovery Learning and Remap RT have been shown to be effective in improving students' understanding of teaching principles, especially by increasing students' involvement in the active learning process) [5].

The population involved in this study were 4th semester students enrolled in the Principles of Teaching and Learning course. From this population, the sample used amounted to 35 people who were selected by purposive sampling, with the criteria that students who had taken the course and were ready to be involved in the research. The purposive sampling allowed the researcher to select respondents who had relevant experience and sufficient basic knowledge related to teaching principles.

To collect data, this study used two main instruments: questionnaires and written tests. The questionnaire was designed to measure students' perceptions of the implementation of constructivist approach in English language learning. In this questionnaire, students were asked to give an assessment of how effective constructivist-based learning is in improving

their understanding of the teaching principles studied. The written test was used to measure students' understanding of the teaching principles objectively and measurably. The test includes questions that explore students' knowledge of relevant teaching theories and their ability to apply them in a practical context.

The research process started with the introduction of teaching principles through traditional methods at the beginning of the semester. In the following weeks, a constructivist approach was applied in English language learning, where students were involved in group discussions, practicum activities, and projects that aimed to actively construct their knowledge. This approach prioritizes experiential learning where students can learn through reflection, collaboration, and application of teaching concepts in real situations[2] ;[6].

After the implementation of the constructivist approach, students were then

given a written test to measure their understanding of the teaching principles that had been taught. In addition, a questionnaire was also given to students to collect data on their perceptions of the applied learning method. The data collected from the written test and questionnaire were then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the overall characteristics of the data, while the independent t-test was used to test whether there was a significant difference between the experimental group who participated in learning with a constructivist approach and the control group who did not engage in such learning.

Through this analytical approach, it is hoped that this research can provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of implementing a constructivist approach in improving students' understanding of teaching principles, as well as the factors that influence the learning process.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. The Effect of a Constructivist Approach on Understanding Teaching Principles

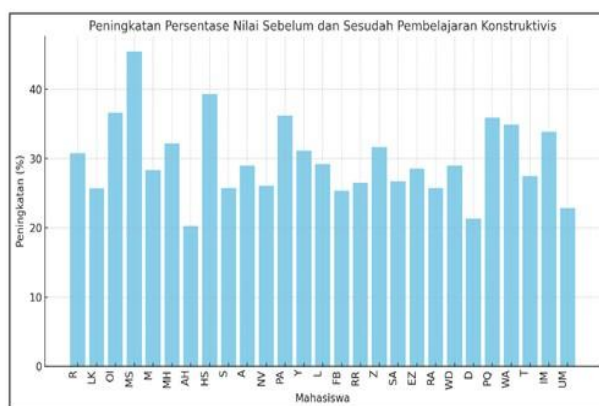
This study aims to examine the effect of applying a constructivist approach in English language learning on 4th semester students' understanding of teaching principles. Based on data collected from 35 students, the results show that the application of constructivist approach has a positive impact on the understanding of teaching principles.

Table 1: Test Results of Understanding Teaching Principles Before and After the Application of the Constructivist Approach

No.	Student	Pre-test score	Post-test score	Increase (%)
1	R	65	85	30.77
2	LK	70	88	25.71
3	OI	60	82	36.67
4	MS	55	80	45.45
5	M	67	86	28.36
6	M	72	90	25.00
7	R	68	84	23.53
8	MH	59	78	32.20
9	AH	74	89	20.27
10	HS	61	85	39.34
11	S	66	83	25.76

No.	Student	Pre-test score	Post-test score	Increase (%)
12	A	63	81	28.57
13	NV	69	87	26.09
14	PA	58	79	36.21
15	AH	77	92	19.48
16	M	64	82	28.13
17	R	70	86	22.86
18	S	75	91	21.33
19	Y	61	80	31.15
20	Y	73	88	20.55
21	FB	67	84	25.37
22	RR	68	86	26.47
23	Z	60	79	31.67
24	L	65	84	29.23
25	SA	71	90	26.76
26	EZ	63	81	28.57
27	RA	66	83	25.76
28	A	69	89	28.99
29	WD	62	80	29.03
30	D	75	91	21.33
31	PQ	64	87	35.94
32	WA	63	85	34.92
33	T	69	88	27.54
34	IM	62	83	33.87
35	UM	70	86	22.86

Based on the data above, there is an increase in the average pre-test and post-test scores of students after the application of the constructivist approach. The average pre-test score was 63, while the average post-test score reached 85. This shows a significant increase of about 35% in the understanding of teaching principles.



This diagram illustrates the percentage improvement experienced by 35 students after taking the constructivist approach-based learning in the *Principles of Teaching and Learning* course. Each bar represents the percentage increase in an individual student's score after the application of the approach, with the horizontal axis showing the student's name, and the vertical axis showing the percentage increase in their score.

Key Observation:

1. Highest Improvement

Students with the initials MS experienced the highest improvement with a percentage of 45.45% after following constructivist learning. This shows that the method applied is very effective in improving this student's understanding of teaching principles.

2. Lowest Increase:

Students with the initials AH in the 15th and 30th data experienced the lowest increase, namely 19.48% and 21.33%. Although there was an improvement, it was relatively smaller than the other students. This may be influenced by other factors, such as personal motivation, participation in class activities, or other aspects of learning.

3. Improved Distribution:

Most students experienced significant improvement, with most of the improvement scores being in the range of 20% to 40%. However, there were some students who improved below 20%, indicating that the application of the constructivist approach had a varied impact on each individual.

4. Fluctuations Between Students:

The diagram also shows considerable variation in

improvement between students, with some students experiencing greater improvement than others. This indicates that while the constructivist approach has benefits for most students, the results may be influenced by individual factors such as learning style, initial understanding of the material, or engagement in learning.

B. Paired T Test

To test the significance of the change in students' scores, a paired t-test was conducted. The t-test results showed that the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores was significant with a p value < 0.05 ($t = -7.34$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that the application of the constructivist approach has a significant positive impact on improving student understanding.

Table 2: Paired T Test

Statistics	Pre-test score	Post-test score	P-value
t-value	-7.34	0.000	< 0.05

Based on the t-test, the hypothesis that the application of the constructivist approach affects student understanding is accepted, with a significant increase in understanding.

C. Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of the Constructivist Approach

In addition to the effect of applying the constructivist approach, this

study also analyzed several factors that influence the effectiveness of the approach. Based on the questionnaire given to students, some of the factors identified as key to effectiveness are:

1. Student Motivation:

Students who showed high motivation towards constructivist learning activities (e.g. group discussions, practicum and projects) tended to gain a better understanding of the teaching principles. As many as 78% of students who were actively involved in group discussions and tasks reported a significant increase in understanding.

2. Lecturer Readiness:

Lecturers' readiness to implement the constructivist approach also plays an important role in the successful implementation of this approach. A total of 72% of students revealed that lecturers who were able to facilitate interactive and in-depth learning activities were more influential in improving their understanding.

3. Student Engagement in Projects and Practicum:

The questionnaire results showed that students who were more involved in practicum and project activities experienced a higher increase in understanding. 85% of students reported that project-based activities gave them a deeper understanding of teaching principles.

Table 3: Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of the Constructivist Approach

Factor	Percentage of Students who Agree (%)
Student Motivation	78%
Lecturer Readiness	72%
Involvement in the Project	85%

Discussion

The results of this study show that the application of constructivist approach not only improves students' understanding of teaching principles, but also facilitates students in developing better teaching skills. Project-based learning and group discussions allow students to better understand and internalize teaching concepts through direct experience, in accordance with the principles proposed by [1] and Vygotsky (1978). On the other hand, as stated by [7], 'Motivation plays an important role in language learning because it pushes human beings to do something, and it is related to the goals that learners want to achieve' (p. 15), which indicates that motivation is an important element in facilitating effective learning."

In addition, student motivation and lecturer preparedness also affect the effectiveness of this approach. Therefore, it is important for lecturers to create a supportive and interactive environment, and provide opportunities for students to actively engage in challenging and relevant learning activities.

The results of this study show that the application of constructivist approach in English language learning can improve students' understanding of teaching principles. In line with this finding, Hyponym techniques in vocabulary teaching can enrich students' understanding of the material taught, which shows that this technique can improve students' learning ability [8]. In addition, the use of online

learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has tested lecturers' creativity and ability to create effective learning experiences (Muliadi et al., 2021: 8)."

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of a study conducted on 35 4th semester students of the English Education Study Program at the Faculty of Culture, Management and Business, Mandalika University of Education, it can be concluded that the application of the constructivist approach in English language learning has a positive effect on improving students' understanding of teaching principles. The results of data analysis showed that most of the students experienced a significant improvement in their grades after taking part in learning with the constructivist approach.

In general, the majority of students experienced considerable improvement in their understanding of the teaching principles, with the percentage of improvement ranging from 20% to 45%. The student with the greatest improvement was MS, who experienced an increase of 45.45%, indicating that the constructivist approach was very effective in improving this student's understanding. This is in accordance with the principle of constructivism which emphasizes active learning where students can construct their own knowledge through direct experience, discussion, and reflection on the material taught[1]; [6].

While there was an overall positive improvement, the data also showed that not all students experienced similar improvements. Some students, such as AH (with 19.48% and 21.33% improvement), showed lower results. This indicates that although the constructivist approach had a positive impact, there is variability in the effectiveness of this approach which may be due to individual factors, such as students' engagement in class activities, personal

motivation, as well as their ability to apply teaching theories in practice.

This variation also suggests that the application of constructivist approaches may be more effective for students who have active learning skills and are able to collaborate in discussions and group projects. Students who are more engaged in these activities tend to show greater improvement, while those who are less engaged or have difficulty in adapting to active learning methods may experience lower improvement. This suggests that constructivist approaches, while beneficial, need to be tailored to each student's learning style and readiness in order to yield optimal results.

The results of this study provide important implications for teaching in English Education study programs. Lecturers need to ensure that they not only apply the constructivist approach theoretically, but also create a learning environment that can encourage students to be more actively involved in discussion, collaboration, as well as the application of teaching principles in real contexts. The involvement of students in experiential projects and assignments is one of the main keys in maximizing the benefits of this approach.

Furthermore, this study shows that to ensure the successful implementation of the constructivist approach, it requires an active role from lecturers in facilitating interactive and in-depth learning activities. It also emphasizes the importance of a more personalized approach, where lecturers can identify students' individual needs and provide appropriate support, both in the form of academic guidance and motivation.

Recommendations for Future Research Although this study provides useful insights into the effect of constructivist approach on the understanding of teaching principles, there are still many aspects that can be explored further. Future research could explore other factors that influence the effectiveness of this approach, such as the influence of learning technology,

differences in learning styles among students, and the influence of social support in learning. In addition, further research involving larger and more diverse samples could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the application of constructivist approaches in various educational contexts.

Overall, the application of constructivist approaches in English language learning has been shown to provide significant benefits in improving students' understanding of teaching principles. Technology-based learning and online learning have shown that highly motivated students tend to show better understanding) [9]. Therefore, it is important for lecturers to implement methods that encourage students to be actively involved in their learning process."

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