

Understanding EFL Teachers' Beliefs about Lesson Study and Their Knowledge Development Viewed from Social Cultural Theory of Vygotsky

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Abstract

Lesson study has been implemented in Indonesian classrooms since more than a decade ago, and it is seen as a means to improve teacher knowledge. This study aims to investigate secondary English teachers' opinions about lesson study in relation to their knowledge development viewed from the lens of Social Cultural Theory of Vygotsky. Using a descriptive qualitative design, the study involved twelve secondary English teachers from two different cities as the participants. In collecting the data from the participants, group interviews were used. The findings showed that most of the participants developed their teaching capacity, particularly in terms of English language knowledge, teaching pedagogy, and teaching innovation. This implies that lesson study is worth to be conducted in different contexts of teaching and learning process.

Keywords: lesson study, teacher knowledge, sociocultural theory, teacher professional development

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INTRODUCTION

Lesson study is a Japanese professional development by which teachers who are involved in a lesson study group collaboratively plan, observe, and reflect their teaching practices (Lewis, Perry, & Friedkin, 2009). Of several types of professional development, lesson study is regarded as the most suitable activity for teachers because it is conducted in the real classroom, using hands-on and minds-on activities (Saito, Imansyah, Kubok, & Hendayana, 2007), and school-based activities (Supriatna, 2011). It means that teachers remain in their classroom and teach their students as usual while they are doing their professional development.

In implementing lesson study, teachers normally invite their colleagues such as the principal, peer teachers, school stakeholders, and outside specialist or expert of the subject to an open lesson / research lesson activity. Open lessons, or sometimes called as research lessons, are real classroom activities in which a model teacher delivers a lesson and other teachers or colleagues observe the teaching and learning process focusing on students' learning (Lewis & Tsuchida, 1998). In these open lessons, teachers not only invite their colleagues to observe their teaching and learning process, but also welcome them to give input and suggestions related to their students' learning. The main objective of lesson study is to ensure that students learn something from the lesson. The practice of lesson study applied by Japanese teachers since a century ago has proved to increase teachers' competences in teaching (Farrell, 2015), and therefore lesson study has been adopted in Indonesian teaching and learning process, especially in secondary school contexts, since more than a decade ago.

Lesson study is regarded by many researchers as a means to develop teachers' knowledge (Lewis, Perry, & Hurd, 2004; Lim, White, & Chiew, 2005; Stigler & Hiebert,

1999; Tall, 2008; Yoshida, 1999) because of its cyclical processes. In the Indonesian context, the cyclical process of lesson study is simplified into Plan, Do, and See. Due to the steps of Plan, Do, and See, teachers are exposed to various learning opportunities (Anggara & Chotimah, 2012). These become beneficial factors for improving teachers' knowledge. In fact, teachers' development has become an important issue in Indonesia as it corroborates the Teacher and Lecturer Law No 14/2005. Based on this Law, teachers and lecturers in Indonesia are demanded to maintain their competencies such as professional, pedagogical, personal, and social competencies. Therefore, all teachers, including English Foreign Language (EFL) teachers must have these competencies and failing to do so will result in poor qualities of EFL teaching and learning process.

The English language subject has been included in the curriculum of Indonesian education, starting from secondary schools to the highest levels of education. As one of the compulsory subjects, the English language is taught to all secondary school students by which the students are expected to master the four basic skills of English language such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These basic skills of English are very important for the students so that they can update the latest news, information, and technology. In addition, these skills are necessary for them to help them prepare their national exam as well as continue their study into higher level of education. To achieve these goals, EFL teaching should be effective, and in order to have effective EFL teaching, teachers should be qualified and competent. However, many researches have reported that the current teaching and learning process of EFL in Indonesia is regarded as unsatisfying due to the low levels of EFL teacher competences (Nurkamto, 2000). Furthermore, many EFL teachers in Indonesia do not master the English language itself so that it is very challenging for them to deliver the lesson and transfer their knowledge in their EFL classrooms (Lie, 2007). Therefore, teachers' knowledge should be improved by implementing continuous professional development.

Among various types of continuous professional development, lesson study is regarded as the most effective way to increase teachers' capacity (Hendayana, 2015; Lewis, Perry, & Murata, 2006; Marsigit, 2015). Initially implemented in Mathematics and Science subjects, lesson study has now been conducted in almost all subjects, including EFL subject. Indeed, the development of teachers' knowledge happens as a result of their interaction with other colleagues during lesson study cycles Plan, Do, and See. How these phases enable the teachers to improve their knowledge, especially EFL teachers at secondary schools in remote areas of Yogyakarta province, is quite interesting if viewed from Social Cultural Theory of Vygotsky. While much research are focusing on lesson study implementation and how lesson study build teacher's knowledge, only few discusses about lesson study from the perspectives of social cultural theory. This study was then aimed to investigate more about the EFL teachers' belief about lesson study and their knowledge development at secondary schools through the lens of Vygotsky Social Cultural Theory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Lesson Study

Lesson study was initially implemented in Indonesia in 1998-2003 by three leading universities in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) through IMSTEP (Indonesian Mathematics and Science Teacher Education Project). Being successful in Indonesia (Suratno, 2012), it was then followed by various similar projects such as IMSTEP follow-up in 2003 – 2005, SISTTEMS (Strengthening In-Service Teacher Training in Education of mathematics and Science) in 2006-2008, and PELITA from 2008

to 2013. Since then, lesson study has been implemented by many schools in different parts of Indonesia.

The concept of lesson study is simple because if teachers want to improve their teaching, the most effective way to do so is in the context of classroom lessons (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Lesson study becomes an important aspect to improve effective teaching practice due to the underlying principles attached to it, such as: 1) Teachers are able to learn and improve their teaching by observing other colleagues; 2) Knowledgeable teachers should share their knowledge and experience with novice teachers; and 3) Teachers should empower students' interest and emphasize their learning quality (Burghes & Robinson, 2010).

As lesson study in Indonesia is conducted based on the three phases Plan, Do, and See, during the Plan phase, teachers collaboratively design a lesson plan based on the goals chosen by the teachers. The lesson plan is then discussed and revised based on the feedback during the discussion. The next step is delivering the lesson plan in a real teaching and learning process in which one teacher becomes the model teacher and other teachers become the observers. In this step called Do, these teachers critically observe the students' learning and write detail situations about the teaching and learning process in the classroom. It is common to record the lesson for research and reflection purposes. When the lesson is completed, the teachers engage in a reflection session. This session usually begins with the model teacher reflected on what worked well in the lesson and what did not work based on the objectives of the lesson plan. Then other members of the group give their critical opinion focusing on the lesson and the students, not on the model teacher. They are, in fact critiquing themselves in the reflection session, and this is an important part of the lesson study because it shifts the focus from a personal evaluation to a self-improvement activity (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Based on their observations and reflections, the lesson study group revises the lesson plan. Once the revised lesson plan is ready, it is taught again to a different class with a different model teacher, and thus another cycle of lesson study begins.

Sociocultural Theory and Knowledge Development

Teachers learn through interaction with their peers, meaning that learning happens as a result of a sociocultural process (Bocala, 2015). Sociocultural theories explain that individual learning and development are attached to social events and happen as a result of people's interactions with other people, objects, or events in their community (Vygotsky, 1978). In this context, social-cultural theories appear effective to explain EFL teachers' development caused by their interaction during lesson study activity.

Vygotsky (1978) believes that knowledge construction includes both a social and cognitive process. According to him, community plays a central role in the social process of individual knowledge development. Thus, how people develop their knowledge and how they get meaning from their knowledge are created in social contexts. The social interaction between an individual and his/her community is mediated by psychological symbols such as language, number, arts, and technical tools such as books and a calculator. Among these symbols, Vygotsky puts more emphasis on language as one of the social interaction mediations. Though there are many forms of language such as symbols, gestures, or motions, the most common type of language, verbal language, is mostly used among the participants in the study because that type of language can make sense of complex and abstract thought. Therefore, Vygotsky believes in the role of language as the most important tool for accessing this social knowledge. Thus, teacher learning in the study is mediated by language.

In addition to the previous concept, Vygotsky also believes that learning includes cognitive process, meaning that learning will be effective only if an interactive process of

interaction such as discussion, negotiation, and sharing occurs. Further, he asserts the cognitive process of an individual is influenced by cultural and social factors. In this case, Vygotsky mentions that the first cultural development of people on the social level is called inter-psychological, and the second one lies on the individual or personal level called intra-psychological.

Regarding the social factor, Vygotsky believes that children have curiosity and eagerness to learn something new that leads them to a learning situation. Learning, in this case, occurs through social interaction between the children and people who have more knowledge or as Vygotsky termed as the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO). The More Knowledgeable Other can be parents, teachers, coaches, experts, professionals or friends who can provide verbal instructions for the children. The MKO can be anyone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the learner, with respect to a particular task, process, or concept (Vygotsky, 1978).

Besides the MKO, Vygotsky (1978) introduces the concept of the Zone Proximal Development (ZPD) to describe a difference between what a child can complete independently and what a child can complete with the guidance of another. The gap between what is known and what is not known by the child creates a learning situation. To help the child achieves the new knowledge, the MKO gives step by step guidance based on the knowledge level of the child. In this case, scaffolding occurs. Despite the fact that sociocultural theory is frequently used to frame child's knowledge development researches, as mentioned earlier its theory is still relevant to explain adult learners (Bonk & Kim, 1998) like the participants in this current study, and few researchers and educators have addressed adult learning from sociocultural theory (Bocala, 2015; Bonk & Kim, 1998).

Bonk and Kim (1998) argued that sociocultural theory can be used not only to explain children and students' cognitive development but also to frame adult learning. Also, as learning resources have expanded, adult learning becomes more self-directed; therefore, there are more chances to assist and scaffold adult learning. Concerning the principles of sociocultural theory such as the ZPD and the MKO, learning assistance may come from friends, relatives, text resources, mass media, technology, or work colleagues. However, one of the greatest challenges and opportunities in adult education is utilizing assisted learning practices teacher-centred when most adult learners have lived their entire lives with more traditional, programs and assembly line schooling (Bonk & Kim, 1998).

Previous Related Studies

Sociocultural theory of Vygotsky has been applied in various fields of education and other disciplines of study. Research on a group of EFL teachers implementing lesson study was conducted using Vygotskian sociocultural theory as one of its theoretical frameworks to understand the interaction among the EFL teachers, their students and the administrators of the school, and the trace of teachers' cognitive development (Tasker, 2014). Using a grounded content analyses, the findings showed that 1) school administrator involvement is necessary to affect school change; 2) outside experts might need to take a more active, longer-term role to help teachers adopt a critical perspective; 3) EFL teacher professionalization should include participation in professional development activities; and 4) lesson study is a viable 'second stimulus' and potential to provide teachers with an effective conceptual tool to mediate their learning and bring about expansive transformation; and 5) sociocultural theory provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how teachers learn through participation in lesson study (Tasker, 2014).

An interesting study on sociocultural theory was also conducted by Lantolf and Beckett (2009) who analyzed forty-eight notable publications as an attempt to seek common patterns emerging from those research focusing on the theory that all mental activity is

symbolically mediated. Within the general mediational framework, the findings showed four themes which characterized their publications which can support the literature such as 1) the theory as a lens for interpreting data (naturally occurring as well as elicited), 2) the theory as an educational framework for promoting L2 development (i.e., developmental education), 3) a concern with specific concepts with which the theory operates, and 4) a concern with explicating a concept or theoretical issue.

While the research focusing on sociocultural theory in relation to teaching and learning process have been done by many researchers, the one focusing on lesson study is still in scarcity. Therefore, this study was aimed to bridge the gap. The findings on sociocultural researches are expected to inform the current study focusing on adult learners such as the English teachers and the English lecturers. As adults have more opportunities to learn, their learning environment are developing too. With more exposure to learning possibilities, adults have more opportunities to improve their knowledge, and in this case, a sociocultural view of adult learning can promote their learning and better utilize their experience and wisdom (Bonk & Kim, 1998).

RESEARCH METHOD

The study employed the qualitative research approach using a qualitative descriptive design which enabled the researcher to describe in detail what was happening in a group, in a conversation, or in a community (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). In addition, as understanding the EFL teachers' beliefs about lesson study and their knowledge development requires human experiences and invites the researcher's interpretation to understand their meanings and their impact on the world, this qualitative approach fits into this study. In addition to the qualitative approach, a qualitative descriptive is chosen as the research design. The qualitative descriptive design used in the study aimed to give "a comprehensive summarization, in everyday terms, of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals" (Lambert & Lambert, 2012, p.255). In this case, the design was applied to describe detail summary of particular events related to lesson study implementation experienced by a group of EFL teachers at secondary school levels.

Focus group interviews were used to collect the data from the participants. Focus group interviews were intended to obtain the participants' beliefs about lesson study in a 'permissive, nonthreatening environment' (Krueger & Casey, 2014). The focus group interviews which consisted of twelve EFL teachers enabled these teachers to 'hear each other's responses and to make additional comments beyond their original responses as they hear what other people have to say' (Patton, 2002). The data collected from these EFL teachers enabled the researchers to figure out the teachers' development as the result of their interaction with other peer teachers in implementing lesson study in secondary schools level.

Twelve participants included in three lesson study groups were involved in the study. Two groups were from Braga (pseudonym) province, while the other one was from Yamuna (pseudonym) province. The idea to include different groups of participants was to find out whether there were differences in lesson study implementation between one province and another province. In addition, these groups of lesson study implemented different types of lesson study; the junior secondary school teachers conducted Subject Teacher Lesson Study and the senior high school teachers implemented School Based Lesson Study. Purposive sampling focusing on selecting the participants who were potential to give resourceful information was used to obtain the objectives of the study (Patton, 2002).

In selecting the participants, some criteria were applied. First, these EFL teachers were involved in lesson study for at least three years so that they had enough experiences

regarding lesson study. Next, these EFL teachers implemented lesson study in their teaching so that they experienced lesson study cycle starting from Plan, Do, and See. Finally, these participants were willing to participate voluntarily in the study. Having these criteria, these participants were expected to be familiar with lesson study, and therefore they were able to share their experiences and give their opinions about how lesson study was implemented and how it supported their knowledge development in teaching. In presenting the findings, the participants' pseudonym was used in order to maintain their confidentiality.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected from the focus group interviews revealed that there were three themes emerging from the participants. After implementing lesson study for more than three years, most of the participants believed they developed their English language knowledge and teaching pedagogy as well as teaching innovation as the results of their interactions with their peer colleagues when conducting lesson study. These findings are now discussed in the following section.

Lesson Study Develops EFL Teachers' English Language Knowledge

Since the very beginning, the participants were required to work together in all phases of lesson study. As the teachers worked together in planning, observing, and debriefing, at the same time, lesson study also promoted sharing activity among these teachers so that they were able to exchange their teaching experiences. The data obtained from the focus group interviews revealed that collaboration and sharing activity during lesson study phases had improved these EFL teachers' capacity, especially in their English knowledge. The following statement from Isabel proves the fact.

"During planning, we discuss many things, such as finding appropriate media to teach a certain topic, followed by (planning) the steps. Thus, when we get back (to our school), we still remember about this topic as well as the steps to conduct the lesson" (Isabel).

Based on this excerpt, it is shown that Isabel improved her English knowledge due to her involvement in the first step of lesson study, Plan, by which she worked together with her peer colleagues in designing the lesson. Thus, it can be concluded that Plan phase in lesson study is useful in improving her English language knowledge.

Indeed, a lesson plan took important roles in teachers' teaching as it functions as 'a scenario' for teachers so that they knew what to do in the classroom and what learning targets should be achieved. Therefore, lesson plans should be designed carefully and with full of thought by the teachers. To achieve learning objectives, the teachers should design their own lesson plan as they know the characteristics of both the students and the class. However, the situation is slightly different in lesson study process by which lesson plans are discussed and written collaboratively by teachers. In some cases, sometimes the model teacher makes the lesson plan herself, and after that, she asks for inputs and suggestions from the peer teachers. The interaction happening during the discussion creates learning activity among the teachers, and they are motivated to perform better teaching by designing the best lesson plan. This model of lesson plan designing seems suitable for these teachers and they admit that they feel more confident using their lesson plans due to the collaboration attached in it. This is what Chloe said:

"Lesson study improves my English knowledge because we plan the lesson collaboratively. So, we discuss the lesson plan together. Of course, during the

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discussion, sometimes we do not know about something. But, we can always ask to other peer teachers.”

As mentioned earlier, a lesson plan functions as a ‘teaching scenario’ so that it can help teachers perform their teaching in front of the class. In lesson study, the lesson plan is presented in an open lesson by the model teacher, and when it is over, the teachers gather and discuss what has happened in the classroom. One of the discussions is related to the lesson plan regarding its effectiveness in achieving learning goals in the class. Based on the discussion in the reflection session, the lesson plan is often revised and then applied in another class. The revised lesson plan then can be used by other teachers in their class. Thus, the authenticity of the lesson plan is not important as it is written by many teachers, and it can be used repeatedly by other teachers in the same group of lesson study. Also, the lesson plan is not a fixed thing which cannot be revised, so the more teachers use the lesson plan, the better the lesson plan because it can be continuously revised based on the real situation happens in the classroom.

Similarly, the improvement in teachers’ English knowledge can also be traced from another phase of lesson study such as Do (Observation). Amy stated: “I learned from Bu Rini, a lecturer from a public university in Braga city, when she taught ‘English for Children’ using English songs. I previously never used songs, but now, I use English songs and the students like them much.” It is interesting to find the fact that Amy was inspired by one of the expertise during lesson study implementation in which this expertise demonstrated teaching practices using English songs as the media to teach in the classroom. As she found the effectiveness of the media, she applied this teaching method in her classroom. Interestingly, this teaching improvement led to another positive thing when she added another statement: “Also, I try to use media when teaching (English) now...”

These excerpts show that the nature of lesson study which involves teachers’ collaboration and sharing activities in its phase has improved the EFL teachers’ English knowledge. Thus, most of these participants believed their teacher’s capacity developed due to lesson study. Indeed, the EFL teachers involving in lesson study have been exposed to social interactions in which they meet professionals such as various teachers from different subjects and other professionals in education such as the principal, the superintendents, the students’ parents, the knowledgeable resources, and so forth. Collaboratively, these professionals interact with each other and design open lessons which focus on students’ learning aiming to improve their achievement. To achieve their goals, these professionals must have similar visions and missions. Because the teachers and the other professionals have many opportunities to learn from each other while doing collaborative work in lesson study, their knowledge develops. This situation fits the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky which states that individuals’ knowledge develops as a result social interaction. This finding is also in line with the study conducted by Tasker (2014) who stated that the interaction done by the teachers in lesson study became a potential trigger for these teachers to accelerate their learning, and therefore the social cultural theory is able to foster teacher learning (Tasker, 2014).

Lesson Study Develops EFL Teachers’ Pedagogy

Besides improving English knowledge, the EFL teachers also gained skills on how to deliver teaching materials in front of the class. This improvement was mostly caused by their observation to the model teachers during open lessons and by teachers’ discussion during reflection sessions. Lesson study gives chances for these EFL teachers to observe other teachers delivering a lesson in an open lesson, a real classroom which is observed by other teachers. At the beginning of lesson study implementation, the teacher who was

teaching in the research lesson was usually a lesson study facilitator, a senior teacher, or even an expert or a knowledgeable resource to give good teaching samples to other teachers. Thus, it can be said that the model teacher represents someone who is more knowledgeable as mentioned by Vygotsky (1978). In this case, the teachers also got many of teaching methods from other teachers who taught subjects other than English. After these EFL teachers were mainly involved in English teaching practices and their experiences were limited to English teaching areas, they finally gained new teaching insights from teachers who taught subjects other than English. One of them mentioned:

"Well...lesson study is currently implemented in all subjects, and teachers may attend open classes other than their subject. This is good as we (observers) can then get new knowledge from another teacher who teaches different subject from us, for example, Math teacher, or Economic teacher, and others. Thus, teachers from cross subject complete and inspire each other" (Hendry).

In addition to the previous finding, the EFL teachers also learned teaching pedagogy from model teachers. These teachers got much benefit such as more learning strategies from these model teachers who taught other subjects. Irish said: "When I observed open lessons from English class, I probably have been familiar with the (lesson plan) steps. Thus, I got more (experiences) when I observed lesson study from other subjects."

Through this observation and reflection, the EFL teachers obtained many ideas in teaching styles and strategies. The following excerpt described the situation:

"..., we always got something (useful) ..even we can get something [teaching ideas] from a new teacher...only, we have to adapt this idea [of teaching] into our own school culture...different school different culture...and different school different students too...thus it all depends on us [the teachers] (Samuel).

Another teacher added some more information:

"From model teacher, I could get something good and bad, and if it's bad, then I promised myself not to do the same thing in my class. So, we adopt the positive things, and we ignore the negative things from another teachers' teaching. (Rosemary)

As stated by some participants, their teaching strategies improve since they are involved in the interactions of professionals and peer colleagues during lesson study. The observation to the model teacher in the research lessons and the debriefing discussions after the lessons are believed to be the factors improving their teaching pedagogy. The model teacher in the observation session of lesson study often presents new teaching innovations, and thus gives ideas to the other teachers who observe the lesson. This also happened to preservice teachers (Soviyah, 2018). In this case, the model teacher functions as the More Knowledgeable Others (MKO) like what is stated by Vygotsky's social-cultural theory because many participants who were initially unfamiliar and unaware about certain teaching style became familiar and got new ideas in teaching. Then, after that, they tried to apply what they got from the model teacher in the observation session into their class. It is also interesting to know the finding that the More Knowledgeable Others are not necessarily from the same subject with the teacher. One of the English teacher participants stated he got new techniques in teaching from a model teacher whose subject is not English. This

phenomenon appears reasonable as according to Vygotsky (1987) the MKO can be anyone who is expert in their field.

Lesson Study Develops EFL Teachers' Teaching Innovation

During the phases of Plan, Do, and See, the teacher participants had many opportunities to learn how to improve their teaching practices from peer teachers, model teachers, facilitators, knowledgeable resources, school principals, as well as supervisors from district education department which finally encouraged their motivation to become better teachers by applying new and innovative teaching and learning ideas. The intention to perform new and innovative teaching was caused by their motivation such as motivation to have more teaching preparation that leads to better teaching performance, motivation to conduct research, and motivation to be more innovative in teaching. Based on the interview results, most of the participants had strong motivation to perform new and innovative teaching practice due to collaborative observation in open lessons. Samuel mentioned:

"...when I became a model teacher, I prepared my best..... However, when we didn't have open lessons, we were back to our previous teaching style because it took a lot of time and energy in preparing an open lesson in lesson study." (Samuel)

Samuel's statement proves that lesson study led his teaching practice to be more innovative due to the existence of many observers in the classroom. First, he became more creative and innovative in preparing his teaching when he became the model teacher in the open lesson. The open lesson is live teaching in which a model teacher is delivering a lesson while observed by peer teachers and sometimes by the school principal and superintendent. This enthusiasm barely happens when he teaches in a normal class where no observers come. Second, Samuel revealed his reluctance in conducting innovative teaching in his daily class due to limited time and resources. He confessed that lesson study took a lot of time and energy, while as a teacher, he had other responsibilities such as maintaining students' achievement in the national examination and support them to pass the exam.

However, the first fact emerging from Samuel's statement gives evidence that he wanted to perform better in his teaching and therefore prepared everything prior to teaching because of the presence of many observers in his class. Thus, it could be assumed that a model teacher would use all his/her efforts to perform the best teaching in the open lesson. In many cases, the effort to prepare better teaching by making various media or using various teaching techniques, no matter what reasons underline his actions, results in knowledge development of the teacher.

In addition, open lessons, as a part of lesson study activity, are usually attended by many observers, and it often leads to learning ideas to the teachers. One of the ideas was the use of technology by the model teacher. Based on the focus group discussion with these EFL teachers, it is revealed that they seem more advanced than teachers from other subjects. They often employed technology and software assistance such as computer, power point presentation, and other teaching software. The application of technology usage by these EFL teachers have motivated teachers from other subject to learn technology from them since they also want to present the best practice of their teaching in the future. The followings are teachers' excerpts on this case:

"...other teachers from different subject, such as Indonesian subject were mostly senior teachers and they were not familiar with the use of computer in teaching. When they became observers and attended my class, they saw how I used power

points in my teaching. Then, they were motivated to use computers in their subject too. They wanted to learn from me” (Yendy).

The excerpt above shows that EFL teachers are regarded more advanced in terms of their skills in teaching and their technology skills in teaching. This is caused by their English language skills which make them easy to learn new technology such as using computers, using hot potatoes software, and so forth because usually such information is presented in English language. Indeed, in Indonesian context, people who can speak English well is regarded as prestigious, and thus having higher status than other people who cannot speak English. The same case also happens to the English teachers. As EFL teachers, they are assumed to be more sophisticated than other teachers, and thus the other teachers sometimes expect them to share their teaching methodology and their knowledge, especially in terms of Information Technology in teaching.

Another interesting fact about the findings of the study is that the EFL teachers were eager to research due to their lesson study experiences. In addition, they were willing to join workshops, seminars, and similar activities where they became not only the participants but also the presenters where they could present their research results. The researches the teachers mostly did were based on their daily teaching experience. This situation was not common in the past because research activity was usually dominated and conducted by lecturers in the university level. Irish stated:

“...uhm...in my school, we had assistance from a lecturer of the Indonesian University of Education, and she said that open lessons could be conducted using action research. Therefore, many teachers did action research and presented their research in seminars, both in local and international seminars”.

The idea of becoming presenters or being researchers for secondary school teachers was probably not present in these EFL teachers' mind in the past. Hence, lesson study had brought the teachers motivation to become better or even extraordinary professionals because a lot of research opportunities it provides which could be conducted in their classroom. Indeed, the best research the teachers could do was based on their classroom because it was attached to their work place, manageable, affordable, and accessible (Stigler & Hiebert, 2009; Yoshida, 1999).

CONCLUSION

The current study investigated EFL teachers opinion about lesson study in relation to their knowledge development viewed from the lens of social cultural theory of Vigotsky. The findings revealed that the EFL teachers believed they developed their English language knowledge and teaching pedagogy as well as teaching innovation as the result of their interactions with their peer colleagues during the phases of lesson study.

These findings bring implications that lesson study should be implemented in broader contexts, not only in secondary level but also in tertiary level. In addition, since lesson study should be carried out collaboratively and systematically, its sustainability should be maintained so that teachers can have more opportunities to enhance their professional development.

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