



Sorogan and How to Use it in Teaching English

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Abstract

One of the obstacles in learning English is ignorance in the use of distinguishing functions of part of speech, verbal and nominal sentences, and tenses. This article describes the application of the Sorogan method in learning English for beginners, where for many years this method is still being used in learning Arabic in Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. Descriptive design works to explain the use of this method. The population and samples were obtained from students majoring in English Education Department of University PGRI Adi Buana Campus Blitar. The results of the questionnaire display that students feel engaged in the implementation of Sorogan.

Keywords: learning, sorogan, beginner

Introduction

English is one of the most popular foreign languages studied in Indonesia besides Arabic, Mandarin, or others. Learning this language is not easy because English has many different things from Indonesian that students need to understand. How to pronounce the alphabet, words, word order, and grammar are some examples of these differences. Students should study all language features in detail step by step as this will improve their understanding better. So far, new students majoring in English still have quite a low mastery level even though they have known English from kindergarten to high school; however, the results are not satisfactory. One of the main drawbacks is that they do not have a good foundation for the basic components of the language itself. Students at least need to understand the types of English sentences, English tenses, and English parts of speech.

One of the knowledge needed to be well understood is tenses because they represent different purposes and meanings. Every language has ways of talking about time. In most languages there is a variation of interpretations that can be employed to show when something happened or will happen. (Kroeger, 2005) Particularly, it specifies the situation's "location" in time. (Analyzing Grammar - Google Books,

n.d.) This shows that when a student wants to express his ideas both orally and in writing correctly, he must first master the tenses. Students need to understand tenses to distinguish the function of each word, sentence type, and time sequence based on the sequence of events correctly. They need to avoid misunderstandings when communicating. The inability to use tenses in certain cases seems unimportant but this can be very important because it can lead to making misunderstandings either orally or in written form.

Moreover, Kroeger argues that some linguists use the term tense only when the time reference is indicated by verbal morphology or morphological tense. (Analyzing Grammar - Google Books, n.d.) The morpheme "study-studied-will study" for instance. They involve three semantic distinctions but only have two morphological tenses: nonpast (study) and past (studies). English has sixteen tenses in which each of which has different ways to use. Although not all of them are used in daily communication, students must slowly begin to learn to understand them. Students do not realize that in their daily communication they use at least three forms of time, namely simple present tense, simple past tense, and future tense interchangeably. In fact, during the tenses learning process, stu-

dents also need to understand the use of some basic components in learning. Varieties of English sentences, such as simple sentences and compound sentences, are included in the domains that students should practice regularly so that they know the differences in their daily use. Students with good understanding are able to distinguish whether they will produce nominal or verbal sentences orally or in writing.

In Indonesia however, Arabic is also widely studied in society as a foreign language. Many people, more specifically those who study in Pondok (Islamic boarding school) can speak the Arabic language very well. This can be assumed that the ways of learning this language are quite effective. Learning Arabic is more difficult than learning English. There are some reasons: 1) the Arabic alphabets differ from English, while English alphabets are the same as Indonesian, 2) some word signs called harokat are read differently, 3) mahraj or ways of reciting words and sentences, whether they are read with the short tone, medium, a little bit longer or longer will affect the meaning, and there are still many other differences. With a method called Sorogan, a teacher who is usually titled as 'Kyai or ustadz' practices this method for his students. Kyai is a title given by the community to someone who is an expert in the field of Islamic religious knowledge who owns a boarding school and teaches classical Islamic books to his students. (Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Budaya Pesantren - Google Books, n.d.) He is a public figure who is an expert in religious knowledge because of his formal education in Islamic studies as an alumnus of pesantren or madrasa. (Islam, the State, and Population, 2005). The kyai or teacher is considered a knowledgeable person, has Arabic language skills, has broad insight, is a wise person who is not only able to teach various disciplines but is also able to instill moral values, norms, humanity to his students. It is highly expected that in the end of education period, students will not only have cognitive and psychomotor abilities but also have affective or moral character.

This is an individual teaching model that is still commonly used in Islamic boarding schools (classical Pondok) in learning Arabic for years, mostly in Java. Often, a teacher finds students who own a different level of understanding. Those who have a better understanding sometimes will feel bored easily if they have to wait for their friends who have a lower one.

Sorogan is one of the traditional methods used in learning Arabic literature in many Islamic boarding schools. So far, this method is still believed able to give any solution toward the need on teaching Arabic literature that can accommodate students' needs in learning the language. From various descriptions of the effectiveness and benefits of using the sorogan method which has been used for many years in Arabic language learning in Islamic boarding schools until now, the authors are interested in applying this sorogan learning model for students majoring in English in the first three semesters at UNIPA Kampus Blitar.

Literature Review

Qualitative research concentrates on how people understand or construe their experiences. (Ary et al., n.d.) This paper describes experience using words or sentences by explaining how the Sorogan method is implemented in Arabic learning, briefly about its history and how this method is still widely used in traditional Islamic boarding schools (Pondok Salaf) and is still seen as one of the language learning activities, accordingly this method needs to be implemented in learning English.

A Sorogan method is a form of the individualized tutorial where the teacher reads and translates some passages of the Qur'an or some Arabic texts into Javanese; this is followed by the students repeating and translating the same passages as correctly as possible. (*Islamic Education and Indoctrination* - Google Books, n.d.). furthermore, Sorogan is a teaching-learning process in which the *kyai* (teacher) personally addresses. (*Introduction to Integrated Education* - Google Books, n.d.). This method can be held anywhere in particular places usually in a room, where there has been prepared a seat for a teacher and a short bench to place book being learned for him who comes forward. Both teacher and students are not using a chair for sitting, however, they have to take a seat on the floor. Sorogan is individual learning activity where a student comes to his teacher so that there will be an interaction between them. Learning way is done face to face while other students wait for their turn to learn one by one. In general, this is an individual learning model specifically designed for a beginner. In other words, while a student comes to his teacher others can have a sit a little further while listening to what their teacher explains to their

friends. A student can repeat what he learns many times to make sure that he understands. To prove students' comprehension, a teacher will ask him to re-explain what he has already learned. To apply this method, a teacher needs patience and discipline. In its application, a student will get more attention because the learning process is held intensively. Students presence does not build upon their level of knowledge or age. The system in this sense only provides santri (students) with regular daily learning. Where the kyai (teacher) or senior students read certain works (in Arabic) by previous scholars, translate them into the local language and provide explanations about them. (Turmudi, 2006). If the procedure goes appropriately, students can get what they need in learning, read better, and can re-explain the material well. The philosophical base of this learning is sorogan should be done regularly so that every student will get appropriate assistance from a teacher. Some research results explain that the Sorogan method is a logical consequence of providing maximum services to the students. Maturity and attention, as well as one's skills, can be produced from the sorogan method. (Ummah Karimah, 2018).

Materials And Method

In this section, Private Conversation, reading passage one in practice and progress book, is presented as sample material for teaching English.

“LESSON 1 PRIVATE CONVERSATION

Last week I went to the theatre. I had a very good seat. The play was very interesting. I did not enjoy it. A young man and a young woman were sitting behind me. They were talking loudly. I got very angry. I could not hear the actors. I turned around. I looked at the man and the woman angrily. They did not pay any attention. In the end, I could not bear it. I turned around again. 'I can't hear a word!' I said angrily. 'It's none of your business,' the young man said rudely. 'This is a private conversation!'"(*Practice and Progress - Google Books*, n.d.)

From the sample material, it can translated partially to provide some possible meanings of every word used (e.g., last = akhir, lalu, final,

lampau, week = minggu, pekan, last week (meaning in phrase) = minggu lalu, i = saya or aku, went = pergi, enyah, berjalan, to = ke, kepada, untuk, di, the theater = teater, seni, gedung pertunjukan. Next, it can be seen that the whole meaning of "Last week I went to the theatre" in the Indonesian language is "Minggu lalu saya (the writer) pergi ke teater". This sentence is a verbal sentence because it employs the ordinary verb "went". Grammatically. It provides a *Simple Past Tense* (e.g., *Last week I went to the theatre*) that can be indicated by the adverb of time "last week" and the past verb "went". Learning activities like this are indeed hard, but they should be carried out continuously so that students will have a strong basic ability in learning English

Teaching Procedure

Sorogan in the form of its utilization applies two interrelated methods, i.e. Reading Method and Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is taught by mentorship or tutorship. Reading is very important, students' awareness of the process of reading and thinking is encouraged in many parts of the book with exercises that require them to work in pairs or in small groups. To hold discussion with other students, they formulate and articulate their ideas more precisely and thus gain new manners of speaking and thinking about texts.(Mikulecky S. & Jeffries, 2007) When students are asked to write sentences or paragraphs, they are also asked to swap their duty so that they can gain experience about the relationship between reading and writing.

• Pre-teaching

1. Prepare texts or books for example Practice and Progress books by L.G, Alexander can be used for students' material because the passages involve graded materials. This contains daily vocabulary, simple sentences, the English part of speech, and tenses which are important for early students. The materials given can vary based on the learning objective determined.
2. A student should have a copy of the materials

• Whilst-teaching

• For teacher;

1. Read the text sentence by sentence

using the target language (L2),

2. Explain whether the sentence is verbal or nominal, this can be done communicatively by proposing a question to students whether being read is verbal or nominal. Not many students in an early semester can distinguish them well.
3. While reading, translate directly the meaning of every word using Indonesian and explain their functions. This step is used so that students have a better comprehension of the English part of speech, besides they will realize that one single word in English may have several meanings.
4. Translating the meaning of every sentence as a whole based on its context is useful to avoid misinterpreting to texts being read.
5. Give more explanation toward particular words or terms during the class
6. It is better not to change the level of difficulty till students have a better understanding.
7. Ask some students who have a good understanding to do mentoring for their friends; this will reduce the feeling of worry and save the time of learning.
8. As a student is doing analysis, a lecturer can do mentoring and or propose several questions or correct the mistakes, such as the pronunciation, meaning, grammar or contents. It is a time for them to share each other

• **For Students;**

1. write the meaning of difficult words right below them. This will be useful so that students keep in mind the meaning of part or all of words and sentences along with their interpretation of meaning during independent study at home.
2. listen to your teacher explanation attentively and make notes needed for things you do not understand
3. Learn the model on how to analyze sentences. Do it regularly to find out the function of part of speech such as; nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and verbal or nominal sentences
4. Go to the teacher to read and ana-

lyze the text with the previously prepared books in turn. Read aloud so that the other students can listen and those who haven't had a turn can make corrections.

• **Post-teaching**

1. After the learning process is complete, students must repeat what the teacher has explained
2. Suggest students to be ready for upcoming reading by at least finding the meaning of unknown terms.
3. The teacher can put a signature on students who are considered to have met the criteria for success

Results And Discussion

Teachers can monitor student learning progress because each student can complete his studies according to his abilities so that the learning progress of smart students is not disturbed and can continue the material without having to wait for students who are slow in learning so that they are not bored in learning. This allows the speed of the learning process to be different for each student so that there will be healthy competition. Teachers can coach, supervise, and accompany their students to the fullest. Textual and literal understanding are the characteristics of this learning method. It is very adequate to be employed for beginners in learning English.

The Advantages

There are several advantages of the sorogan method. They can be minimally described as follows:

1. The sorogan method has high effectiveness and significance in achieving learning outcomes because this method allows the kyai (teacher) to supervise, assess, and guide fairly.
2. This is in accordance with the opinion expressed by Ismail in chapter II page 55 the didactic-methodical sorogan method proved to have high effectiveness and significance in achieving learning outcomes.(Tohir & Lubis, 2020)
3. With the existence of a teaching system with this sorogan, a kyai (teacher) can directly assess the ability of students (students), and the relationship between students and kyai (teachers) is closer, a kyai (teacher) can directly assess the abilities of students (students), and the relationship of

students (student) and kyai (teacher) are closer. In this case, it can be said that the boarding school system is free, free to learn, and not to learn.

4. the sorogan method methodically proven to have high effectiveness and significance in achieving learning outcomes. (Pulungan, n.d.) Because this method allows the teacher to supervise, assess and guide the maximum ability of students in mastering the material.

Weakness

A teacher needs a lot of time to apply this method so that this is less effective. Moreover, if there are many students, he has to spend a long time and more teaching energy. A teacher who uses this method should be patient, diligent, persistent, and individual disciplined. Without those said above, the learning process cannot run maximally. And this is the most difficult phase for every teacher who uses Sorogan as a method of teaching basic language.

1. Time efficiency cannot be realized because of the large number of students who have to be in direct contact with the teacher. (Nizar, 2013)
2. The weakness in the sorogan method is not only in the standard characteristics for classifying students who are studying but also in terms of age and ability levels. (Nizar, 2013) This is challenging work for teachers to generalize the abilities of students
3. The utilization of the Sorogan resulted students being passive. This is because creativity in the teaching and learning process is controlled by teacher (kyai) while the students just listen to the explanation. (Pulungan, n.d.)

Conclusion

So far, the sorogan learning method has only been implemented in many Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. Although it has long been used in the Arabic text learning system and has proven its effectiveness to date, this method has never been applied in English learning. Therefore, this method can be considered as an alternative way of teaching English in Indonesia

Suggestion

With the Sorogan, students will have a strong base

of mastery of English, especially for beginners, and provide a deep understanding for advanced students. More than that, this method not only teaches students cognitive knowledge but also affective, psychomotor, norms, values, and more importantly morals.

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