

ACTION AND FUNCTION METHOD (AFM)

*Sihombing, Elsina. developed AFM in 2008 at
SMA YADIKA SOUTH SUMATRA*

ABSTRACT

Sihombing, Elsina. developed AFM in 2008 at SMA YADIKA SOUTH SUMATRA. The method was carried out in the experiment of 720 minutes (every week except days off, in a mount of 90 minutes per week for 8 weeks). It was handled by 2 English teachers who have been selected through YADIKA STANDARD on the basis of undergraduate degree with the average grade of GPA on 2.75. Since the writer was the 'Principal' in that school at that time, so she directly supervised those two English teachers in applying the method discussed. Before applying such a method, both of them were trained by the writer as their supervisor and as their principal as well for 15 hours; 1.5 hours a day for 10 days. This program was only focused in 8 weeks using AFM purely toward 2 classes of 38 students per each at the tenth grades. Each of the two teachers handled one class from the starting point until the end of the program. The main purpose of conducting this action research was to prove whether AFM was significantly effective or not. Practically, the writer gave hand books to students and the teachers as well, then, they were drilled by using AFM. As the result of this action research, the students speaking achievement increased (100%) mastered ± 500 words, (100%) could express their feeling, condolence, the condition of themselves, the condition of family, and other related topics. The students became able to communicate in English (>90%), got high motivation to learn (>95%), became able to break the ice(>95%), the students and the teacher competed positively to increased their motivation to learn

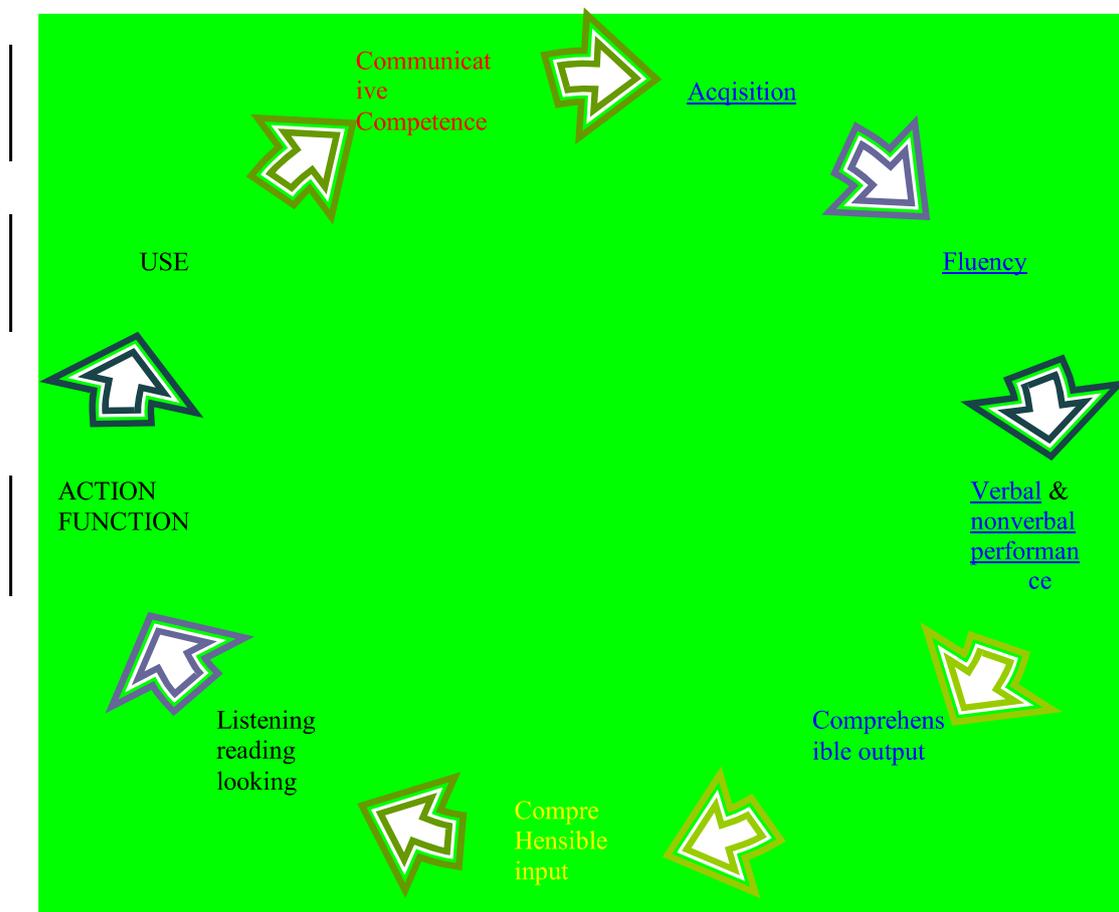
Key words : Action, Function, Method, Communicative Competence.

B. REGULATION

AFM focuses on Action and Function which was done against the students, and the students would give responses in the form of motor skills as their real action. The action discussed here is

the learners' responses to the teacher's command which is taught right from the beginning. The function is the learners' response to the teacher's functional model which is taught gradually in the process of teaching. The command and the functional model should be the learners' comprehensible input. The 'input develops her/his 'action' and 'function'. The action and the function develop her/his language use. The 'use' develops her/his communicative competence. The 'communicative competence' develops her/his language acquisition. The 'acquisition' produce her/his language ability in verbal (spoken and written) performance and non-verbal performance as the learners' comprehensible output.

Here is the diagram of the AFM-system :



The learners' comprehensible input is that the message listened, read or looked at which is understood by the learners. The 'action and function' are the learners' physical responses to the teacher's command as well as her/his meaningful expressions as the

response of the teacher's functional model. The 'use' is that the natural verbal (spoken and written), or natural non-verbal performance that develops her/his communicative competence.

The 'communicative competence' is the learners' ability to communicate effectively in a culturally significant setting (Hymes, 1972; Wilkins, 1976; Widdowson, 1978; Savignon, 1983; Wenden and Rubin, 1987; Wenden, 1991: in Zainil , 2003). It develops the learners' acquisition.

The 'acquisition' is the learners' mastery of the language. It produces the learners fluency. The "fluency" is the learners natural use the language without thinking of its structure and without translating the language into her/ his native language. Finally, the comprehensible 'output' is the learner's natural verbal (spoken and written) performance as well as her/his natural non-verbal performance which is understood by the message sender and the message receiver. The message sender can be the speaker, the writer, or the person who does the non-verbal signal. The message receiver can be the listener, the leader or the person who pays attention to the non-verbal signals. The sender's and receiver's understandings increase their motivation. Finally, the writing and the reading activities are taught later at the intermediate level.

Thus, AFM focuses on teaching and learning process. The process must be focused on 'use' message or meaning, not on 'usage' forms. Since this method aims to drill the learners to communicate accurately (communicative competence) both verbally and non-verbally to enhance them involving in the teaching-learning process.

C. CORE ACTIVITIES

The purpose of this method is to make the students to raise ACTION and FUNCTION during the process of teaching and learning. At this chance, the teachers play a big role to apply elicitation to elicit the students' responses in the form of gesture or language production unstratifiedly. When the teachers found a troublesome, they would find troubleshooters to overcome such a case.

The activities are classified as follow :

1. ACTION ACTIVITIES

First of all, class is started by using TPR technique as follows:

- a. The teacher's position is in the middle of two students on the right and two students on the left side.
- b. The teacher use gesture to motion four students coming forward the class and pleased them to be seated two on the left and the other two on the right without any noise.
- c. The teacher starts to give instructions to stimulate the four students to act like what the teacher acts. The teacher says :”hands up!” she shows her hands up to the students and the students imitate the action. Then, she instructs “hands down” together with, she puts her hands down as she stimulates the four students to act the same. It is drilled two to three times.
- d. The teacher instructs without action, “hands up...!down...!” and the four students respond physically. Even, the patterned four students engage the other students in the class to do the action joyfully. At the end, some of the students want to be the volunteers to act in front of the class.
- e. The teacher takes steps, a, b, c, and d for all the students in the class alternately in groups.
- f. The teacher continues to teach new vocabularies by adapting steps ‘a to e’ involving all the students alternately in group.
- g. The teacher elaborates the given instructions and the new ones, illustrating or sometimes commands only and elicits the students to respond in action, in group, individually, or wholly.
- h. For the purpose of comprehension, the teacher reviews the given and the new instructions without illustrating (from the teacher) but the students automatically respond in action, in group, individually, or wholly.
- i. For the purpose of improvement, the teacher presents new vocabularies in the form of instruction by applying the previous steps ‘a to h’.

2. FUNCTION ACTIVITIES

To break the ice in the classroom, the teacher makes a model of the language function, in other words, a language pattern for instance, 'Expressing Condolence':

- a) "I'm so sorry to hear that your grandma was dead yesterday!"

Four students are welcomed to come forth and positioned them two on the right and the other two on the left side of the teacher.

- b) While the four students stand up near the teacher, she says 'welcome and please be seated'

- c) The teacher makes the language pattern as the model of the language function, by saying :

"I'm so sorry to hear that your grandma was dead yesterday" (twice or more)

- d) The four students are regulated, she says 'stand up' (while pointing to one of the four students.)

- e) The teacher expresses uncompletely : "I'm so sorry to hear that..." Then, the student who is pointed to stand up try to repeat and complete the teacher's utterance with " I'm so sorry to hear that your grandma was...". If the student is confused, the teacher leads him by presenting some equivalent options such as : 'dead, sick, on accident, acute'.

- i) The teachers give a stimulus and says 'good, please be seated' next, points to another students in the group to do the same and so forth to the third, the fourth students.

- j) The second round, four other students are welcomed coming forward to do steps 'a to f' of which the teacher substitutes the content of the language pattern with the others similar words.

- k) For the purpose of comprehension, the students are drilled intensively until step g.

- i) For the purpose of improvement, the teacher adds the former expression with the new phrases and drills step a to h, for instance :

"I'm so sorry to hear that your grandma was dead yesterday morning in the hospital."

- j) The teacher practice step 'a to i' per group alternately.

During the process of teaching and learning, the teacher should be initiatively anticipates the hesitance from the students. The students surely are interested and involved joyfully in such a good circumstance. In other words, the teacher never out of seeing and evaluating the students performances. To decide whether the lesson will be continued or reviewed based on the process – evaluation results. To evaluate the students mastery, the teacher gives them oral-test of which the purpose is to elicit the students to have English production.

D. FINDINGS

During the treatment (720 minutes) of using AFM, here are the results noted :

1. The method could minimize the hesitance from the students and even, the former taciturn students became eager talkable students.
2. Most of the students (> 95%) always put questions on the teacher at the end of teaching and learning process .
3. The total number of the samples (100%) mastered ± 500 vocabularies.
4. The total number of the students (100%) could express their condolence shortly or completely in accordance with the context given.
5. The total number of the students (100%) can ask and answer the questions of individual condition, family condition, giving opinion, asking and expressing feeling, telling the time in a dialogue.
6. Most of the students (>95%) were involved joyfully during the learning process.
7. Most of the students (>95%) had a braveness to break the ice when the teacher starting the topic of the lesson.
8. All the students were engaged and always raised their hands to be selected by the teachers to act out the instruction from the teachers.
9. At the end of the teaching and learning process, the students always felt that it was lack of time.

10. The climate of the English class seemed always bright, in which the students and the teachers competed positively to increase their own motivation to learn until they get satisfaction, since the teacher varies the strategies of motivation.
11. The teachers always need additional time to teach the students without feeling boring.
12. The students performance and relationship toward the teachers noted closer and friendlier.

E. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

1. CONCLUSION

Based on the process of which the method adapted, and the result of the method, it is really proved that 'ACTION AND FUNCTION METHOD' can, not only engage the students to take participation to play a role (producing language and gesture), but also motivate them be the subjects of the process since the teachers always stimulated them to reduce their hesitance and even unpossessed it at all during the process.

It is reasonable to emphasize that this method is very suitable to be applied against multi level learners by the English teachers for the purpose of gaining the English achievement effectively and efficiently.

2 . SUGGESTION

Since this method (ACTION and FUNCTION) has good biases toward multi level learners and lets the two-sides subjects (teachers and learners) to compete to learn more without neglecting the function of each, so it is suggested for all English teachers around the world especially in Indonesia to apply this method for various skills of learning English as a foreign language as well as language acquisition.

Moreover, for the educational researchers can also take this issue to be investigated scientifically.

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