# AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHER AS MEDIATOR IN EFL CLASS

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**Abstract:** This paper concerned about how criteria of mediator applied in role of the teacher in EFL class and what the most dominant criteria of mediator done by the teacher in EFL class. It was limited to analyze the role of teacher as mediator based on Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience criteria (1980) in Xiongyong *et al.*, (2012). The method was qualitative research by using techniques structured observation and questionnaire that the process of teaching and learning was recorded by video then it was transcribed to identify the existence of criteria of mediator in the class. It also used observation worksheet to show the existence of criteria of mediator during three times observation. Based on the findings of the research, the teacher applied all criteria of mediator well which shared intention was the most dominant criteria that was done by the teacher in the class with percentage 87%. It means that the teacher made instructions clearly during the learning so that the students could understand about the lesson and present their tasks well.

Keywords: role of teacher, mediator, mediated learning experience, EFL class.

#### INTRODUCTION

English is international language and used in many aspects such as science, technology, and culture (Aprijal, 2012: 1). It has big role in transferring information in the world for example in Indonesia. In Indonesia, English also influences aspects in human life. The presence of English in Indonesia from Independence to the present has played in society at large, and in particular in business, politics, education and the media (Lauder, 2008: 10).

As previous explanation that Education has large role in Indonesia. The opinion is also supported by Lauder (2008: 10) that says that English is a compulsory subject in schools and it can not be denied about the role in University which learning process can not occur without some readings in English.

As we know that in Indonesia, English is not first language or second language. It is a foreign language. According to Brown (2000: 116), foreign language context occurs when the students can not communicate beyond their classroom with society by using English because it is not language that is used in the environment. Beside in school, students can get it by language clubs, special media opportunities, books, or an occasional tourist (Brown, 2000: 116). It is difficult enough to learn it and need much efforts to master it.

Moreover, English was first mentioned formally in 1955 at conference of teacher trainers by Mr. Wachendorff who is the first head of the Central Inspectorate of English language Instruction in the Ministry of Education. He says that English is never used in daily life in Indonesia, or even be the second language, but it should be the first foreign language (Komaria, 1998: 24-25 in Lauder, 2008: 16). It means that English as foreign language has established since long time ago. Furthermore, it has also had rule of law that can strengthen previous statement and exact time to start learning English. Komaria (1998: 29) in Lauder (2008: 16) states that The 1989 Law renders English as first foreign language and compulsory subject at the secondary level, but it is also given in Primary Four.

Moreover, in producing the learner that is good in English, teacher has also role to make it true. Brown (2001) in Xiongyong, Samuel and Hua (2012: 118) says that teachers are decision-makers in facing learning process and must be able to handle whatever educational setting, potentials, and problems. Besides, Tseng (1999) in Xiongyong et al., (2012: 118) states that teacher is place where students learn about the world of work and prepared to be successful persons through collaborating with people around them. The statements explain that role of teacher influences in teaching and learning process and gives big contribution for education. Teacher also has wide role in future life of students.

In addition, good teacher must produce effective learner. It means that the role of teacher should be realized. But, there are many things that must be fulfilled so that it happens. Researchers in cognitive education considered that children can become effective learner through teaching fundamental principles of thought, perception, learning, and problem-solving (Feuerstein, 1980 & Haywood, 1986 in Seng, 1997: 1). The perspective is based on the three assumptions that two assumptions stated that the learning of effective cognitive processes occurs and

more efficient cognitive functioning can be taught through mediated learning experience (Samuel, 1987 in Seng, 1997: 1).

Therefore, a teacher should be a good mediator in order to effective learning can be achieved. William & Burden (2000) in Xiongyong et al., (2012: 118) states that mediation gives chances for learners to practice English in communication and make the language learning more effective. It means that mediation is important in teaching and learning process and should be applied. Because of that, role of teacher should use mediator to reach effective learning. It also should be priority in language instruction (Feuerstein, 1990 in Xiongyong et al., 2012: 118).

Furthermore, in social constructivist framework, theory of mediation is a main role (Sun, 2005: 6 in Xiongyong *et al.*, 2012: 119). It means that mediation has big role. Mediation help learners to become autonomous, to control their own learning, to become independent thinkers and problem-solvers (Williams & Burden, 2000: 68 in Xiongyong *et al.*, 2012: 119). As we see, mediation is very helpful to be independent learners and appropriate to apply.

Moreover, in mediation, mediators are the people around learners. Seng, Pou, & Tan (2003: 11) in Xiongyong (2011: 230) say that they may be the parent, facilitator, teacher, or some significant other who plays the intentional role of explaining, emphasizing, interpreting, or extending the environment so that the learner builds up a meaningful internal model of the context or the world experienced.

This present study limits teacher as mediator. In classrooms, teachers should interact and assist learners for using language themselves not only providing them with the language knowledge (Fisher, 2005 in Xiongyong, 2011: 230). Besides, if they interaction each other constantly, they learn using language and making sense of the world (Vygotsky, 1978 in Xiongyong 2012: 233). It means that teacher help learners to understand using language in real life and the context.

In addition, Seng *et al.*, (2003) in Xiongyong (2012: 230) says that current education reforms imply that teacher role as mediator is important not only as disseminator of value of adult mediation but also in children's learning can never be overstressed. For the explanation, mediation help learner to enjoy their lesson without being stress of it.

After knowing that teacher as mediator is important for education, we should know what mediated learning experience is that becomes basic from teacher as mediator. Seng (1997: 1) states mediated learning is the process that a mediator manages and interprets the world to child. It occurs when a person gives meaning to occurence, assists children to choose relevant variables, and try to improve children's abilities to think that individual is involved in mediated learning. Besides, Seng (1997: 5) stated "Mediated learning is the second and vital approach that ensures effective learning". It is explained with statement from Seng (1997: 5-6) as follows:

Feuerstein develops Piaget's formula of S-O-R further to include a human mediator between the world of stimuli, the organism and the response. His new formula for mediated learning is then S-H-O-H-R, where H is the human mediator. The human mediator interposes himself between the learning organism and the world of stimuli to interpret, guide and give meaning to the stimuli.

One of Feurstein's program developments mediated learning experiences is Instrumental Enrichment. Samuel (1987) in Seng (1997: 2) states that teachers that apply the program are very enthusiastic toward its effect on the children's thinking and their own teaching skills and then teachers' ability increase after teaching this program. In addition, it is a facilitator to create effective learning through the teacher/mediator and which keep independent learning and thinking in children (Seng, 1997:2).

Therefore, it is important for the teacher to apply mediated learning experience in the class. But, "as not every interaction with a task, learner, and a mediator has a quality of mediated learning experience (MLE), Feuerstein (1980), developed a system of the MLE criteria to identify mediation interaction" (Xiongyong *et al.,* 2012: 119). They were 1) Significance: The teacher makes students realize the importance of a learning task so that they can look at the significance of the task to their own and in a broader cultural context, 2) Purpose beyond the here and now: Explains to learners how conducting a learning activity will help them in the future beyond the moment and situation at present only, 3) Shared intention: Makes instructions clear and ensure the intention is understood and reciprocated by learners in presenting a task, 4) A sense of competence: Fosters learners' feelings of competence and capability of learning, 5) Control of own behavior: Encourages students to become autonomous by self-controlling their learning procedure, 6) Goal-setting: Teaches learners how to establish achievable targets and to locate approaches for realizing them, 7) Challenge: Helps learners to develop an internal need to confront challenges and

to seek for new challenges in life, 8) Awareness of change: Urges learners to monitor changes in themselves and to understand that humans are changeable all the time, 9) A belief in positive outcomes: Stimulates learners to assume that there is always the possibility of finding a solution, even when faced with an apparently intractable problem, 10) Sharing: Invites learners to share behaviors among themselves and to perceive that it is advisable for some problems to be addressed collaboratively, 11) Individuality: Helps learners realize their individual characteristics in terms of unique aspects, 12) A sense of belonging: Aids learners to establish a consciousness of pertaining to the whole class community in the process of completing a learning task.

#### **METHOD**

In this research, the researcher used a qualitative research method which aims to explore and understand the social phenomenon (Creswell, 2009: 22). A case study is a strategy that the researcher used. It is used to explore activity in one or more individual deeply (Creswell, 2009: 30). In this research, the phenomena explored and understood was about the teacher as mediator in EFL Class.

The research was undertaken at a Junior High School in Kuningan, Indonesia. The participant involved in this research was an EFL teacher and the data collected through structured observation, and questionnaires. In collecting data, an observation worksheet as suggested by Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience Criteria (1980) in Xiongyong *et al.*, (2012) as variables in analyzing the teacher as mediator.

The researcher also determines one of Junior High Schools in Kuningan that

is favourite school to research. Questionnaire contains 12 Feurstein's (1980) MLE criteria in Xiongyong *et al.*, (2012) that teacher does in the class. There are twelve statements which one statement consists of one criterion.

In analyzing the observation, the researcher used via Guttman scale (Yes or No) for analyzing the existence the 12 criteria of Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience. Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience is assessment rubric to analyze the applying Mediated Learning Experience by the teacher in the class. The teaching was also video-recorded and fully transcribed to identify the existence with criteria of Mediated Learning Experience in the class.

For analyzing the questionnaire, the researcher used likert scale. It is instrument to measure how often teacher has role as mediator. The researcher uses checklist form with four variables answer of the statements (always, often, seldom, never).

For the result of questionnaire, it will be counted each number which one number show one criteria to measure what the most dominant criteria of mediator in EFL class.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Criteria of mediator that occurs in role of the teacher in EFL class

To know how the teacher taught in the class, the writer did observation three times and recorded it to watch and analyze how the teacher applied the criteria. The writer also provided observation worksheet to know the existence of the criteria of Mediated Learning Experience during learning. The observation worksheet consisted of two choices (Yes or No) in analyzing 12 criterias of Mediated Learning

Experiences by Feuerstein (1980) in Xiongyong *et al.*, (2012).

During three times observation, the topic that teacher taught was "Asking and Showing Ability and Willingness". Based on the observation in the class, the writer found the difference of existence of Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience criteria (1980) in the class for three times of observation, but during observation the teacher applied all of the criteria as follows:

### Significance

In this criteria, the teacher connected between the task and the importance of learning the lesson. The teacher wanted the students to realize that the task was important to themselves and their life. She appointed the task for the first after that she involved and explained about the content and the function. It showed with the dialogue below:

T: "So what do you think about this one?" (appoint table of activity 2 in the white board). "What we are talking about today? *Kira-kira apa sih yang akan kita pelajari hari ini?*"

Ss: "He can, I can."

T: "Yes about he can, she can, do you can? What is expression? *Ini ekspresi apa*"

Ss: "Ability, giving ability."

T: "Giving ability? It is expression of asking and showing ability" (Teacher wrote in the whiteboard). "Kita akan belajar tentang kemampuan seseorang dan menyatakan kemampuan seseorang."

(Observation Video recording 1, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014)

In the dialogue above, the teacher wanted to make students realize that the the task that had given (activity) was important and useful for them. For the

first she gives the task after that she asked to the students that the task is about what and stated what it is for and the importance of it.

# Purpose beyond here and now

In this criteria, the teacher explained that the learning had benefit in the future for the students. It was not only useful for now but also when the students grow to be adult. It was not just useful in the school for English learning but also in the real life. In the observation, the teacher taught about "Asking and showing ability and willingness". In there, the teacher explained that the lesson about ability had benefit when they want to show about their ability in daily life. She said that they will need it in the real life if we want to work to show their ability that is match with criteria of work. She said, "Learning about it is not only useful for English lesson but also you can need it in daily life such as in the job. You can show your ability by the expression when you want to apply for job or job interview" (Observation Video-recording, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

#### Shared intention

In three times of observation, each day the teacher always ensured whether the students understand what the teacher said and explained. She never forgot to say, "Do you understand?", "Any questions?" in the middle of lesson or in the end of lesson. By saying them was expected no misunderstanding in lesson and task so that students could present task well. Moreover, she also often gave them questions to ensure that the students understand about the lesson. The criteria is showed by the dialogue below:

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T: "Sampai di sini. Any questions?"

Ss: "No."

T: "Are you sure?"

Ss: "Yes."

T: "Kalo gitu ibu yang nanya ya? What about this sentence? Can't Ben swim?" (Teacher wrote in the white board). "Bisa ga pertanyaan ini?"

For the first and the second underlined sentences, she ensures that the lesson is understood well. And for the third underlined sentence, she gives question to measure how far the students' comprehension about the lesson.

## A sense of competence

To make the students confidence and feel capable in studying, the teacher never forgot to say, "thanks", clapped the hands and asked students to clap their hand for the students that become volunteers to do the task, and stimulated someone to says more about something. We can see from the dialogue above:

- T: "Sudah itu saja Raja?" (Teacher wrote it in the white board)
- S: "I'm pretty good at it, I think."
- T: "Ok ada lagi?"
- S: "I love chess and I often joined the tournament."
- T: "What else?"
- S: "Swim".

(recording#1, September 29, 2014)
The underlined word above showed that the teacher stimulated the students to more about the task.
Beforehand the students just said little and was not confidence to speak but with the help of teacher, the students spoke more. According to Williams and Burden (2000: 73) in Xiongyong et al., (2012: 123),

If learning is to be successful, it is crucial that teachers establish in their classrooms a climate where confidence is built up, where mistakes can be made without fear, where learners can use the language without embarassment, where all contributions are valued, and where activities lead to feelings of success, not failure."

## Control of own behavior

In applying these criteria, the teacher guided the students to assess their lesson and the task. The teacher directed the students to asses their task by themselves such as teacher asked students to correct the answer together and asked what it is right or wrong. It is showed by the dialogue:

T: "Kira-kira what do you think about this answer? This is right?"

Ss: "No."

T: "So, we would like to listen one more time and check what it is wrong or what it is right."

(Observation Video-recording 1, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014)

The dialogue is showed after the students did the task from listening to the audio. The teacher asked students to come forward and write the task in the whiteboard. After that she asked to students to check the answer in the whiteboard. As Skuy (1991) in Seng (1997: 7) states, "Mediation of self-regulation and control of behavior involves helping the child analyse the task in order to adjust his behaviour appropriately".

She also made students to be responsible with their behavior. She ordered the students that came late to explain about their tardiness and promise not to come late again. She says, "Please come forward to tell why you come late and promise not to come late again" (Observation Video-recording 1, September 29th, 2014). Moreover, she also emphasized the importance of

doing homework. She gave punishment if the students did not do the homework. She said, "Do it and don't forget! You have to sing a song in front of the class if you don't do the assignment!" (Observation Video-recording 1, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014). Williams and Burden (2000: 73) in Xiongyong *et al.*, (2012: 123) said, "Feelings of competence are necessary but not sufficient for learning to be effective; learners also need to become competent, that is, they need to learn the necessary skills and strategies in order to take control of their own learning."

## Goal-setting

To reach goals in learning, the teacher had a way that was students' reflection paper. Every meeting the students had to make a reflection about the learning in the class. The teacher reminded the students about the reflection, "Yang reflectionnya belum hari ini bisa?....Ini adalah refleksi termin ke-1 dengan hari ini berarti 2. Jadi jangan tanya lagi ibu buat refleksi ya? Itu mah wajib setiap pertemuan." (recording#2, October 10, 2014). It consisted of the summary, the difficulty, and what they caught about the material. It was individual task and handwriting. They had to made it by themselves and by using English. It was collected every daily tests. By using the method the students was hoped to be able to understand the material and practice their English.

Besides, the teacher made the class to be life. She was friendly and delightful. She made the students not to be awkward and fear to ask and share about the lesson. It made the goal of the lesson to be easy to reach. There was always little conversation between students with teacher about the lesson and the material which have nor been understood.

## Challenge

In applying this criteria, the teacher offered students to be volunteers to involve in lesson and task or she appointed the students directly to be volunteers. She asked them to come forward, to write in the whiteboard, to raise the hands for showing that they could do the task and destroy all obstacles. She said, "Siapa yang mau ke depan and write down the information you get from the audio. Listen! You can give checklist for the right answer"). And she also said, "Habil, would you like to try? Or Who wanna try number 5?" She also appointed the students directly to do the task, it was hoped the students could face the challenges and the fearness. She said, "Ok next, Rio for doing number 10".

Related to such method of teacher, Williams and Burden (2000: 75) in Xiongyong *et al.*, (2012: 124), confirms that:

No matter how much information a teacher may have about a group or even individual learners, it is virtually impossible to match each learner with the right level of task without involving the learners themselves in the process. Since the ultimate goal of mediated learning experiences is to produce independent learners and problem solvers, increasing the involvement of the learners in all aspects of the learning process should be encouraged at every opportunity.

## Awareness of change

The teacher noticed the learning process in the class. She realized each of change happened with the students. She ordered students to monitor changes in themselves in learning, attitude, or body condition because humans are

changeable all the time. It happened in the third observation when there was a student that was sick. He seemed lethargic in learning in the class. The teacher asked to him, "Are you sick? Be better for you to take a rest in UKS, please for his friend to accompany him to there". She also said, "Important for you all to monitor your condition so that the lesson can be understood well." Besides, the teacher also asked to students to monitor their progress about English in the class where it increases or decreases by making notes about what the ability/progress that students got in every meeting. She said, "For you all, to know and measure you progress in English, you can write in your book every change in positive side in English".

## A Belief in positive outcomes

The teacher was never angry or snapped the students when the students made a fault in task/ learning. She always smiles and supports the students to do the task though it feels difficult for them. She always gives belief to what the students did whether it was right or wrong. It would make the students believe that there was a solution in every difficulty and a positive outcome in every matter. She said to a student that felt difficult to do task, "Please, you can do it. It was easy for you, believe me. Just try!"

#### Sharing

In the class, there was good cooperation between teacher and students or fellow students. Teacher often moves around in the class and shares about lesson. The students were active to ask if they did not understand about the lesson. The English learning in the class was not only presented with individual task but also group task. In

the second and third observation, the teacher involved cooperation among the students. In the second observation, the teacher gives the task about friends' ability so that the students had to ask to four friends, two girls and two boys, so they had a little conversation by English to complete the task. Then, in the third observation, the teacher ordered the students to make a group 2 or 3 person to make a simple dialogue about asking and showing ability and willingness. She said, "Work in pairs. Kerja berdua/bertiga ya. Make a simple dialogue, just it's easy, right? Jadi jangan yang susah-susah silahkan percakapan sehari-hari yang sering kalian buat. Ok. Ada asking ability, ada juga willingnessnya".

According to Williams and Burden (2000: 77) in Xiongyong (2012: 124) stated, "Sharing and working cooperatively are a vital part of our social existence, the absence of which can result in cognitive difficulties and a very idiosyncratic view of the world".

# Individuality

In the class, the teacher gave the task to the students that showed their uniqueness. She ordered students to ask to four friends about the ability. The students had to asked it by using English. They made a table about ten abilities that teacher gave and they asked it to four friends, two boys and two girls. They had to gave checklist if the friend had ability about it. The students had to asked by using, "Can you do math? Can you play chess? Can you swim? Can you.....?....." until ten abilities that the teacher gave. By the task, the teacher hoped that the students realized their uniqueness that distinguished with the others. They realized that they had something more than the others.

Besides, the teacher also appreciated the difference of students' characteristics, different opinion, and ability in the class. It made the students not to be shy and fear to show themselves as a whole. According to Williams and Burden (2000: 79) in Xiongyong *et al.*, (2012: 125), "The language classroom is a place where this sense of individuality can be fostered in various ways through the task given, the teacher's actions and the climate created. Learners can be encouraged to express their own individuality through the foreign language."

# A sense of belonging

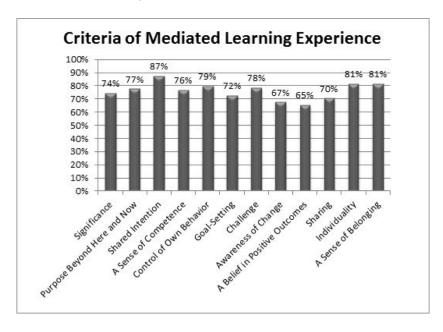
Sense of belonging in the class was strong. The teacher could make the students comfortable in learning English. Every one was enthusiastic when the teacher explained and gave the task. She could make the class to be cheerful. He said, "Are you with me so far?" (Observation Video-recording 1, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014) to ensure that the students focused in learning English, and had a sense of belonging in the class. He also said, "Ok silahkan perempuan, tadi laki-laki udah" (Video-recording 3) to

show their sense of belonging when the teacher wanted a girl to represent their group. It showed that a girl had a sense of belonging in the class community.

The most dominant criterion of mediator in EFL class

To know the dominant criteria of teacher as mediator, the writer used criteria of Mediated Learning Experiences by Feuerstein (1980). There were twelve criteria. The writer used questionnaires to know the dominant criteria of a teacher in a class of Junior High School. There were twelve statements which one statement consisted of one criterion of Mediated Learning Experiences. Then, the questionnaire consisted of four choices (never, sometime, often, always) that must be given checklist as match as the way of teacher in teaching English in the class.

Based on the questionnaire given to the students, the writer found that the teacher applied all criteria of Mediated Learning Experience. It means that the teacher played the role as mediator well, as illustrated by diagram below:



Based on the diagram above, it showed that the most dominant criterion was shared intention (87%). The other criteria were significance (74%), purpose beyond here and now (77%), a sense of competence (76%), control of own behavior (79%), goal-setting (72%), challenge (78%), awareness of change (67%), a belief in positive outcomes (65%), sharing (70%), individuality (81%), and a sense of belonging (81%).

From all criteria, shared intention was the most dominant criterion teacher applied in the class with 87%. According to Feuerstein (1980) in Xiongyong et al., (2012), making clear instructions will ensure the intention may be understood and reciprocated by learners in presenting a task. It means that the teacher always ensures whether or not the students understand about what she explained in the class. In the observation he often said, "Do you understand" or "Any questions?" in the middle or in the end of the lesson to make sure about their comprehension. She also often gives questions to them to check their comprehension about the lesson but the researcher did not focus in the kinds and patterns of the questions.

By analyzing teacher as mediator in EFL class, it could be concluded that teacher played role as mediator well with the most dominant criterion was shared intention (87%).

#### **CONCLUSION**

In the perspective of mediation, teacher played the role well. In the three times of observation that the writer did, the teacher applied all of the criteria of Mediated Learning Experience as basic role of teacher as mediator in the EFL class. They are significance, purpose beyond the here and now, shared intention, a sense of competence, control

of own behavior, goal-setting, challenge, awareness of change, a belief in positive outcomes, sharing, individuality, and a sense of belonging. She could direct the learning well and made students reaching the goal of the lesson for being effective learner.

From all criteria of Mediated Learning Experience, shared intention was the most dominant criterion of mediator done. The teacher made the instructions clearly during the learning so that the students could understand about the lesson and present their tasks well.

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