Framing Behaviorist Theory toward Situational Language Teaching (SLT)

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Abstract— The changing of foreign language teaching methodology happens over the years due to the shift of the changes of language teaching's goals in different periods and in different places regarding the nature of language and the nature of learning. The aims of the paper are contextualizing behaviorist theory for Situational language teaching (SLT) and its relevance in current language teaching from practical experiences. The paper follows a narrative approach to review the previous works of literature on behaviorist theory, SLT, and its implementation. The findings are behaviorist theory becomes the fundamental learning theory of SLT that flourishes in SLT's teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Influenced by behaviorist theory, SLT becomes a teaching method that provides more guided repetition and substantive activities. In addition, along with the existence of the trend of communicative language teaching and scientific approach, SLT is still implemented by teachers for various education levels to achieve teaching objectives. In conclusion, unfashionable methods do not mean that they are not able to apply in current teaching practice. Some modification activities can be created to attain meaningful learning. Therefore, it is suggested that in applying certain methods in teaching practice, practitioners or teachers should consider the following question: who the learners are, what their current level of language proficiency is, what their goals want to be achieved through learning activities, what sort of communicative need they have, and so forth.
Keywords— behaviorist theory; situational language teaching; teaching methods

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I. INTRODUCTION

There are some changes in language teaching from time to time that is engineered by various factors. The first is the changes in language teaching's goals in different periods and in different places. These changes are assumed as the main prompt for the implementation of language teaching change. In certain areas, language teaching was focused on enabling language learners to understand a text. Meanwhile, the others, language was taught in order to facilitate oral communication. Second, the theory of language teaching was shifted about the nature of language. By the shift in the nature of language learning, it emerged the change in language teaching. Third, the rapid growth of education internalization also created a demand for new types of language programs. The last but not least, in the recent era, globalization and technological growth allow one to access the internet, and the global use of English also contributes to the need to evaluate language teaching policies and practices [1].

Practically, the changes in language teaching were triggered by a search for more effective language teaching. Hence, Richards and Rodgers [2] stated that the foundations of approaches to language teaching were developed as the expertise sought to develop principles and procedures for teaching methods and materials design, drawing on the developing fields of linguistics and psychology. Therefore, the method concept in teaching becomes a prominent one and the foundation for better methods was a preoccupation of many teachers and applied linguists for many centuries and other centuries. In this case, a method is assumed as a systematic set of teaching practices based on a particular theory of language and language learning.

Driven by chronicle changes in language teaching practices, this paper discusses teaching methods that are underlined by the existence of the behavioristics strand that is Situational Language Teaching (SLT). Behaviorist psychology states that people's language is conditioned behavior, they learn language through the process of training and conditioning [1]. Furthermore, this paper will discuss about the relation of behaviorist theory to SLT.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This paper aims are contextualizing behaviorist theory for Situational language teaching (SLT) and its relevance in current language teaching from practical experiences. Material this paper includes books, book chapter, and journal articles that are relevant to behaviorist theory and SLT.

Furthermore, it adopted a narrative approach [3,4,5] in reviewing the context of behaviorist theory for Situational language teaching (SLT) and its relevance in current language teaching from practical experiences. The sample for the literature review was developed into steps. First, the authors conducted a keyword search for "learning theory", "behaviorist theory", "the implementation of SLT" in the web of science as well as in Google Scholar, covering a period

between 1940 and 2022. As the database search method has been found to be insufficient for identifying a universal set of relevant publications, we applied snowball sampling to identify additional articles, e.g. by pursuing references of references This step resulted in a basic sample of publications, which were collected using the citation management software Zotero. Second, from this basic sample, conference papers were excluded to ensure the publications' quality through peer review, whereas empirical studies, conceptual papers, and literature reviews from peer-reviewed journals, as well as books, were included.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Behaviorist Theory in Foreign Language Teaching

Behaviorism was simply defined in the dictionary as theory and method of psychological investigation based on the objective study of behavior [6,9]. This definition is supported by behaviorism practitioners, Torndike and Skinner (1976). Torndike contended the major principle of the behaviorist theory rested on the analysis of human behavior in observable stimulus-respond interaction and the association between them. In sum, behaviorism believed that only observable behavior, measurable through stimulus respond interaction and the association with them is worthy of scientific inquiry.

Along with its development, behaviorist practitioners have conducted some research to observe stimulus-respond phenomena. From those researches, Torndike and Skinner have led important contribution in education field. Torndike (1874-1949) worked with his law effect that was an act that is followed by a favorable effect is more likely to be repeated in similar situation; an act that is followed by an unfavorable effect is less likely to be repeated. Furthermore, Skinner made a large contribution to research into instructing the learning process. His work commonly called operants. They serve to manipulate the environment in order to effect a change which will result in a reward. The impulse to perform operants will become stronger or weaker depending on their consequences [10]

To the behaviorist, human being is viewed as an organism that capable of a wide repertoire of behaviors furthermore, the existence of these behaviors is dependent on three crucial elements, they are a stimulus, which serves to elicit behavior; a response which is triggered by a stimulus; and reinforcement, which serves to mark the response as being appropriate (or inappropriate) and encourages the repetition (or suppression) of the response in the future[1,6,11,12], Reinforcement becomes a vital element in this process because it increases the likelihood that behavior will be repeated and finally change into a habit. In contrast, no reinforcement or negative reinforcement

elicited so that it is not likely to occur again. The representation of this explanation can be seen in the following figure.
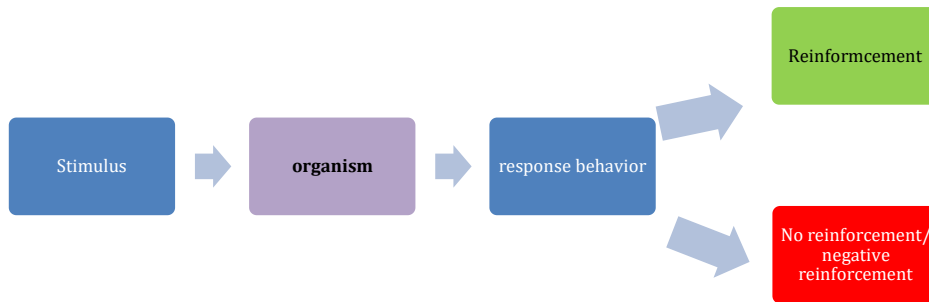

Figure 3.1 The behaviorist learning process (Richards, 2014)

As mention above that behaviorism only concerns in describing, explaining, and influencing behavior, so it has particular features(Ertmer & Newby, 2013). First, the most important causes or motivations for behavior depend on the outside rather that within the individual. Second, the dualistic portrayal of human being which distinguishes between mental processes and observable behavior is scientifically unproductive. It is proved by fact that in human being daily life it is often known that explanations for human behavior are sought in inner believe and disposition, not from mental processes. Third, the scientific study of human being should be restricted as much as possible to directly observable quantity. Fourth, human behavior is quite complex that it is influenced by the outside (stimulus and environment). Fifth, human being is generally a shallow and imprecise observer of both own and others' behavior. The last, attempts to influence behavior must be preceded by a thorough behavioral analysis.

Behaviorism influence education system. It is become the basic learning theory besides cognitivism and constructivism. Behaviorism equates learning with changes in either the form or frequency of observable performance(Anne Weegar Dina Pacis, 2012; Clark, 2018; Tolman, 1926). Learning is accomplished when a proper response is demonstrated following the presentation of a specific environmental stimulus. The key elements are the stimulus, the response, and the association between the two. Of primary concern is how the association between the stimulus and response is made, strengthened, and maintained. Behaviorism focuses on the importance of the consequences of those performances and contends that responses that are followed by reinforcement are more likely to recur in the future. No attempt is made to determine the structure of a student's knowledge nor to assess which mental processes it is necessary for

them to use (Herschel J, 1967; Richards, 2014). The learner is characterized as being reactive to conditions in the environment as opposed to taking an active role in discovering the environment.

In order to provide more effective language teaching, linguist have adopted behaviorism as the theory of learning. It was underlined by the argument that behaviorist theory, which is basically a psychological theory in its essence, founded by J.B. Watson is actually a theory of native language learning. Adopting behaviorist theory into language learning enable language learner acquire target language closely similar with native (Ajdini, n.d.; Mehuıet DEMİREZEN, n.d.) It is proved by the fact that the babies obtain native language habits via varied babblings which resemble the appropriate words repeated by a person or object near him. Since for his babblings and mutterings he is rewarded, this very reward reinforces further articulations of the same sort into grouping of syllables and words in a similar situation. In this way, he goes on emitting sounds, groups of sounds, and as he grows up he combines the sentences via generalizations and analogy (as in *goed for went, *doed, for did, so on), which in some complicated cases, condition him to commit errors by articulating in permissible structures in speech. By the age of five or six, or babblings and mutterings grow into socialized speech but little by little they are internalized as implicit speech, and thus many of their utterances become instinguishable from the adults. This, then, obviously, means that behaviorist theory is a theory of stimulus-response psychology(Ertmer & Newby, 2013).

As consequences of the adoption of behaviorist into language learning, basic tenets of behaviorist theory have been formulated as follows (Mehuıet DEMİREZEN, n.d.):

1. Behaviorist theory dwells on spoken language
2. Behaviorist theory is the habits formation theory of language teaching and learning
3. Stimulus-respond chain is a pure case of conditioning
4. All leaning is the establishment of habits as the result of reinforcement and reward for each individual.

For instance, the application of behaviorist theory in foreign language learning are (1) the organism (mention in figure 4.1) as the learners, (2) the behavior is assumed as verbal behavior, (3) the stimulus as what is presented of foreign language, (4) the response as the learner's reaction to the stimulus, and (5) the reinforcement as the extrinsic approval and praise of the teacher, peer, and self-satisfaction of the target language use. Furthermore. Language acquisition is represented as acquiring a set of appropriate language stimulus-response chain.

Situational Language Teaching

Situational language teaching or commonly known as SLT draws from the reform movement and the Direct Method that adds some features some prominent figures from applied linguists such as (Hornby, 2014). Palmer, Hornby, and other British applied linguists from the 1930s to the

1960s develop a more scientific foundation for the oral approach in language teaching more that the direct method. The result of their development was systematic principles and procedures that could be applied to the selection and organization of the content of language courses (Fauziati, 2014). This systematic principle involved selection, gradation, and presentation. Selection refers to the procedures by which lexical and grammatical content is selected. Gradation deals with the principles by which the organizational and sequencing of the contents is determined. Presentation is defined as techniques used for presenting and practicing of the items in a language course (or in language teaching procedure). Furthermore, this systematic principle is called the Oral Approach to language teaching.

In its development, SLT became an influential set of teaching materials and it was widely used in Australia, New Guinea, and the pacific territories (Richards, 2014). The main characteristic of SLT are as follows:

1. Language teaching begins with the spoken language. Material is taught orally before it is presented in written form.

2. The target language is the language of the classroom.

3. New language points are introduced and practiced situationally.

4. Vocabulary selection procedures are followed to ensure that an essential general service vocabulary is covered.

5. Items of grammar are graded following the principle that simple forms should be taught before complex ones.

6. Reading and writing are introduced once a sufficient lexical and grammatical basis is established.

In addition, the third principle of SLT becomes the key feature of the language teaching approach. As the study applied linguists in exploring more systematically the relationship between theory and practice in language teaching methods.

SLT as Language Teaching Method

The practitioner is still confronted with a set of options at the levels of theory and practice, especially the terms of approach, method, and technique. the American applied linguist clarified that terminology as the chart below (Anthony, 1963).

Approach ——————— Method ——————— Technique

Approach	Method	Technique
• Theories of language • Theories of language learning	• Procedure/ overall plan of presentation	• Classroom practice, technique
Axiomatic	Procedural	implementation

Chart 3.1 Anthony's diagram of Approach, Method, and Technique (Fauziati, 2014)

Following Anthony(Anthony, 1963), the approach refers to theories about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching. Mostly language teaching methods are explicitly from a theory of language and theories about how language is learned. The theory of language is a very complex part that is studied from the perspective of different disciplines, such as linguistics, literature, psychology, anthropology, and sociology. There are six models of language that influence language teaching methods and approaches i.e cognitive model, the structural model, the functional model, the interactional model, the sociocultural model, the genre model, and the lexical model. Meanwhile theory of learning covers the cognitive, personal, interpersonal, and social processes learners make use of in second language learning. Research on second language acquisition has led the rich finding theories to explain how language are learned, they are behaviorism, cognitive-code learning, the creative-construction hypothesis, skill learning, interactional theory, constructivism, sociocultural learning theory, and individual factors.

A method is defined as an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material. Furthermore, a method is associated at the level of design in which the roles of teachers, learners, and instructional materials are specified. Other applied linguists Richard and Rodgers identified the method as design because it is theoretically related to an approach (Richards, 2014). Then, the technique is the implementation which actually takes place in the classroom. It covers techniques that encompass the real step-by-step teaching practice and behaviors that operate in language teaching in the classroom. Furthermore, it is also known as procedure.

Framing SLT as a language teaching method, the following description detail mentions SLT in its approach, design (consisting of objectives, the syllabus, types of learning activities, learner roles, teacher roles, and the role of instructional materials), and procedure.

SLT Approach

SLT approach is constructed by the theory of language and learning theory. The theory of language delineates that SLT was developed based on the British structural model or structuralism. Underlying this model, language is assumed as a system of grammatical patterns and structures that had to be mastered in learning a language. Following its development, the British theoreticians had a different focus on their version of structuralism, especially the notion of the situation. They view the theory about knowledge of structures must be linked to situations. J.R Firth followed by M. A.K Halliday developed powerful views of language in which meaning, context, and situation were assumed given a prominent place in language. As a result, language activity is defined as part of the whole complex events which together with the participants and relevant objects create an actual situation (Richards, 2014).

Behaviorist learning theory was adopted in SLT. Palmer in Richards and Rodgers (Richards, 2014) pointed out the process of language learning i.e. receiving the knowledge or materials,

fixing it in the memory by repetition, and using it in actual practice until it becomes a personal skill. Furthermore, the meaning of words or structures is not given through explanation in either the native language or the target language but induced by the way the form is used in a situation. By doing so, the learners are expected to deduce the meaning of a particular structure or vocabulary item from the situation in which it is presented.

SLT Design
1. Objectives

    The objectives of SLT methods in language teaching are [2,21]:

    -   to teach a practical command of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing);
    -   to achieve language skills through structure;
    -   to control basic structures and sentence patterns both oral and written skills;
    -   to introduce language skills form speech work then followed by written work (reading and writing).

2. The syllabus

    The syllabus of SLT is a structural syllabus and word list. It means that the syllabus consists of structure, sentence pattern, and vocabulary that is arranged according to their presentation. It is presented from the simple to the complex one. In SLT, vocabulary never stands alone. It is taught inbound within sentences, and vocabulary is selected based on the sentence pattern. The example of the structural syllabus of SLT is provided by Frisby(Frisby, 1957).

Table 3.1 Frisby Syllabus of SLT

Lesson	Sentence pattern	Vocabulary
Fist lesson	This is … That is …	Book, pencil, ruler, desk
Second lesson	These are … Those are …	Chair, pictures, door, window
Third lesson	Is this…? Yes, it is Is that…? Yes, it is	Watch, box, pen, blackboard

3. Types of learning activities

    Learning activities in the classroom employ a situational approach to presenting new sentence patterns and a drill-based manner of practicing them. In order to provide situational learning, teachers make use of concrete objects, pictures, and realia that are accompanied by actions and gestures to demonstrate the meaning of the new language item. The practice technique generally consists of a guided repetition, and substitution activities including

chorus repetition dictation, drills, and controlled oral-based reading and writing tasks. Pair practice is sometimes used in practicing oral activities.

4. Learner roles

In SLT, learners have a passive role. The learner has to listen and repeat what the teacher is saying;

- He has to respond to the questions asked by the teacher;
- The learner has to situationalize the structure and meaning;
- The class is teacher-controlled hence, the pupil has to do chorus repetitions, dictations, drills, oral-based reading and writing exercises, pair practices and group works.

5. Teacher roles

The teacher has a dominant function in SLT method (Hussain et al., n.d.), such as:

- The method leads to threefold activity for a teacher-setting the stage for a new structure, presenting the model structure, and finally drilling and correction.
- The teacher strictly checks the pronunciation, grammar and structural errors during drilling.
- The instructor is highly demonstrative through different teaching aids like wall charts, flashcards, posters, pictures, stick figures, and so on.
- The teacher is supposed to have mastery over prescribed textbook.
- The instructor is a classroom controller like a director of orchestra music.
- He sets the pace of the lesson; skillfully manipulate the situation to elicit correct sentences from the learners.

In addition, Pittman summarized the teacher's responsibility in teaching English using the SLT method as dealing with: (1) timing; (2) oral practice to support the textbook structures; revision and review; adjustment to special needs of individuals; (5) testing; and developing language activities other than those arising at the available book.

6. The role of instructional materials

In line with the syllabus in SLT that is structural and consists of a word list, thus instructional materials play a significant role in the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. The process of teaching and learning relies on both textbooks and visual aids. The textbook contains organized lessons that were planned in various grammatical structures. Many kinds of visual aids are make used by English teachers, such as wall cards, flashcards, pictures, stick figures, and so on. They may produce the visual aids or use the commercial produced one. The combination of structural grammar and visual aids becomes a crucial

aspect of SLT. Pittman(Pittman, 1963) suggested that textbooks should be used to guide the learning process, and the teacher is expected mastering of the available book.

Classroom procedure

The teaching procedure of English in SLT is different from one grade of the class to another. The purpose of teaching at any grade is to move from controlled practices to freer ones and from the use of oral in structural sentences to the automatic use in speech, reading, and writing. The most popular teaching procedure of SLT is PPP format lesson and it is still used today. PPP stands for Presentation- practice- production (Richards, 2014). The following is the explanation of those terms.

- **Presentation**. Text, audio, or visual is used by the teacher to present the grammar in a controlled situation.

- **Practice**. A controlled practice phase follows where the learner says the structure correctly, using such activities as drills and transformations, gap-fill or close activities, and multi-choice questions.

- **Production**. In the production phase, the learner transfers the structure to freer communication through dialogues and other activities, where there is more than one correct answer.

Empirical Studies of Situational Language Teaching

Even though more than a century of SLT has existed, it is still used in English Language Teaching (ELT) today. English teachers' perception of using situational language teaching method for teaching vocabulary has been investigated (Masna et al., 2020). This research was conducted at the elementary school level. The result of this research found that the advantages of using SLT were enhancing students' motivation, and creating an effective teaching-learning process. Whereas, the challenge of using SLT in teaching vocabulary was preparing instructional material and related to students' boredom.

Another researcher conducted a study on improving elementary students' vocabulary using SLT. This research tried to analyze some implications of SLT on oral learning in primary schools. From this research, it is suggested that first, English teachers should avoid situations where the form is far from the teaching content. Secondly, teachers should design a balance implementation of creation and presentation in the classroom. Thirdly, teachers should concern about the teaching steps which are started with preparation to reflection. The last, the teacher should implement mutual exchange between students and teacher, teacher-center class is out of date. In order to stimulate interaction, the teacher can utilize any kind of teaching both conventional and using technology. That research explicitly informs that SLT is still implemented by an English teacher at the elementary school level, where the students are categorized as young learners. Teaching

English to young learners must be fun so that it can serve joyful learning to the young learner. Due to the unique characteristics of young learners, English is delivered using more repetition and started with oral to written activities (1990 Teaching English to Children (Longman Keys to Language Teaching) by Wendy A. Scott and Lisbeth H. Ytreberg (z-Lib.Org), n.d.; 1992 Teaching English in the Primary Classroom (Longman Handbooks for Language Teachers) by Susan Halliwell (z-Lib.Org), n.d.; 2004 Teaching English A Handbook for Primary and Secondary School Teachers by Andrew Goodwyn, Jane Branson (z-Lib.Org), n.d.; The Routledge Handbook of Teaching English to Young Learners, n.d.).

The empirical practices of SLT in English language teaching at middle school have been by some researchers (Husniati, n.d.; Jusriandi, 2020; Li, n.d.; Si, 2022). The studies found that SLT can be used to teach both grammar and vocabulary. In general, grammar is viewed as difficult and uninterested material. By using SLT teaching grammar can be modified to be easy to understand and interesting material (Si, 2022). In addition, SLT is also used to teach vocabulary. Action research on vocabulary found that teaching vocabulary by using SLT can improve students' vocabulary mastery(Husniati, n.d.; Jusriandi, 2020). Furthermore, in senior high school found that SLT was implemented to teach grammar (Wenrong, n.d.). From a critical view of some investigation in teaching grammar, it can be suggested that to improve the students' learning results in grammar class the use of SLT in teaching grammar can be improved and optimized. The contrast finding gotten from the implementation of SLT at the university level. The investigation of the application of SLT for teaching Mongolian English major students revealed that the obstacles existing in the implementation of this method, students are passive participants, weakening the role of teachers, and ineffective transfer of language, image, and meaning (Du, 2017).

Along with the growth of educational technology, SLT can be embodied in ubiquitous learning (u-learning). Situational mashups were proposed to identify learners' situations and learning requirements by merging situation awareness with service mashups in order to enable its innovation and give situational learning services on demand. Learning with situational mashups and learning without situation awareness support were compared and contrasted as two types of u-learning. According to experimental findings, the students who received support from situational mashups performed better in their learning and exhibited better behavior. In order to support U-SLT and the core problem of a ubiquitous learning school, situational mashups were therefore seen as a valuable and desirable solution(Anne Weegar Dina Pacis, 2012; Huang et al., n.d.) .

IV. CONCLUSION

Behaviorist theory considered that people's language is conditioned behavior; they learn language through the process of training and conditioning. Even though they have been changed into other teaching methods but they have contributed to teaching procedures to attain certain teaching goals. Unfashionable methods do not mean that they are not able to apply in current teaching practice. Some modification activities can be created to attain meaningful learning. Therefore, in applying a certain method in teaching practice, practitioners or teachers should consider the following question: who the learners are, what their current level of language proficiency is, what their goals want to be achieved through learning activities, what sort of communicative need they have, and so forth. Unfashionable methods do not mean that they are not able to apply in current teaching practice. Some modification activities can be created to attain meaningful learning. Therefore, in applying certain methods in teaching practice, practitioners or teachers should consider the following question: who the learners are, what their current level of language proficiency is, what their goals want to be achieved through learning activities, what sort of communicative need they have, and so forth.

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