

Students' Perception on Teachers' Syllabus Presentation at the Beginning of  
the Course

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*Sarjana Pendidikan*



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## Approval Sheet

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the Course

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## Statement of Authenticity

I am a student with the following identity:

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Certify that *skripsi* with the title “Students’ Perception on Teachers’ Syllabus Presentation at the Beginning of the Course” is definitely the result of my own work. I am totally responsible for the content of this paper. Others’ opinions and results involved in this *skripsi* are quoted in accordance with ethical standards.

Yogyakarta, 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2018

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rina Indriana' with a stylized flourish above the name.

Rina Indriana

# **Students' Perception on Teachers' Syllabus Presentation at the Beginning of the Course**

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**Abstract.** Presenting the syllabus is one of activities conducted by a teacher especially at the beginning of a course. This study aims to investigate the perception of students on teachers' syllabus presentation at the beginning of the course. The focuses of this study are the adequacy of the content of teachers' syllabus presentation and the benefits of teachers' syllabus presentation perceived by the students. A descriptive qualitative research design was used as a research method of this study. The result showed that the students perceived the contents of teachers' syllabus presentation as adequate information. Most of the students also argued that the content of teachers' syllabus presentation has been complete like what they expected. Moreover, teachers' syllabus presentation also gives students some benefits. It can be said that teachers' syllabus presentation is important for helping students to start their course.

**Keywords:** teachers' syllabus presentation, content of syllabus, and the benefits.

## **Introduction**

Teachers have the key role as a planner in their course (Crosby, 2000). As a planner, teachers have a responsibility in arranging the plan to set the whole course. The plan that teachers have made will be helpful to organize the course and the students as well. The course without plan will impede the activity during the teaching and learning process. The plan used during the course is usually made in a document called syllabus. Mansbach (2016) stated that syllabus is a document that contains important information about the class. Teachers usually give a syllabus before they start the course. In addition, Eberly, Newton, and Wiggins (2001) also added that the syllabus is used to be communication tool for being the most formal mechanism to share information with students regarding the course.

However, beyond the written text of a syllabus, how the syllabus is presented is important (Thompson, 2007). The presentation of the syllabus itself may obtain the advantage. Teachers' syllabus presentation is a time for teacher to explain the information in the oral presentation by emphasizing some point in the syllabus (Thompson, 2007). McKeachie (2002) revealed that the presentation of the syllabus is used to communicate what the teacher is like as a person. It also contributes to students' first impression of the teacher (Grunert, 1997). Besides making a first impression on the students, the presentation helps teacher sets the tone of the course. In fact, there are some teachers who did not give students syllabus or even only present some information related to the course. Consequently, the students do not have any idea about the course. The students who have less motivation in that course will be more demotivated in choosing that course because the teachers do not explain what students will get from or enjoy in the course (Thompson, 2007).

## **Methodology**

This study used qualitative as research design. The data were gathered from the students of English Language Education Department in a private University in Yogyakarta. A descriptive qualitative research design was used as a research method of this study. Four fourth-year students became the participants of this study. Furthermore, the data were gathered through interviews.

## **Result and Discussion**

Students' Perception on the Adequacy of the Content of Teachers' Syllabus Presentation

The result showed that all of participants revealed that at the first day of the course, the teachers present their syllabus that they have made in front of the class. The students get deeper explanation about some information in the syllabus. From three of four participants perceived the content of teachers' syllabus presentation as an adequate

content. The content or information that students get is enough to be used in knowing and following the flow of the course because it includes any answer of students' question related to the course. However, the teachers also have to be aware of the information that helps students keep their attendance in the class, such as class cancelation. It is because when students have already attended the class and got nothing, it will decrease students' willingness to attend the class on the next meeting.

### Students' Perception on the Benefits of Teachers' Syllabus Presentation

*Help students' preparation toward the course.* It is not only about the syllabus itself, but also the presentation of syllabus done by the teachers, give students some benefits. The first benefit is help students' preparation toward the course. In the syllabus, teachers have provided course reading that the students need to have, but there is no more information how students can get the book. That point is stated by Aster. Aster said "for book list, we know where we can get the book, because the teachers tell us" (Aster). By having syllabus presentation, teachers can help students to prepare and get the course's reading easily. Aster's statement is still in line with Anggrek's statement. Anggrek also started from this statement "if we are explained what we're going to study, we can prepare more, for example we have to find the book, so in early time we have prepared it" (Anggrek). That statement supported a statement from Becker and Calhoon. Informing and explaining course schedule is important to guide students' preparation for the examination and the whole course (Becker & Calhoon as cited in Slattery & Carlson, 2005).

*Help students manage their time.* The data of the interview showed that teachers' syllabus presentation helps students to manager their time. Each participant

has their own explanation about that. Anggrek said, “we know how many time we can get chance to absent the class because it is not written in the syllabus..” (Anggrek). In addition, in every courses, teachers provide students a chance to get absent from the class which it is not told in the syllabus. By having teachers’ syllabus presentation about that information, it will be helpful for students to arrange or manage their time for inside class activity or outside class activity. In addition, the students sometimes faced two different courses in the one day. Thus, it helps students to sharpen their time management to keep anything under control and to be covered. Identically, Parkes and Harris (2002) presented that by including more specific information during presenting the syllabus may help students to improve their time management skill, to identify the time spent in outside and inside the class.

*Help students to clarify and negotiate the information in the syllabus.* Based on the interview that has been conducted, the researcher found that the students perceived teachers’ syllabus presentation helps students to clarify and negotiate the information in the syllabus. The clarification includes asking and confirming the information in the syllabus or other information related to the course. Asoka mentioned that “if there are any questions, it can be asked to the teacher directly and the students also can negotiate the information in the syllabus” (Asoka). This finding was in line with Thompson’s (2007) finding which showed that teachers’ syllabus presentation helps students to ask questions or make sure and confirm the information in the syllabus.

*Avoid miscommunication between teacher and students.* The next benefit of teachers’ syllabus presentation based on students’ perception is avoid miscommunication between teacher and students. Asoka said that if teachers present

their syllabus “so, no miscommunication between the teacher and the students” (Asoka). Every people have different perception in understanding something. This case could appear on both teachers and students. The teachers who make a syllabus and the students who understand the syllabus will be possible to have different understanding. However, if the teacher present it and explain it more, the different understanding between both of them will be avoided. Correspondingly, all of the statements supported Sulik and Keys’s statement in their research. Sulik and Keys (2014) stated that syllabus can be an agreement between students and the teacher. Then it can be used to prevent misunderstandings and can help the course run more smoothly (Slattery & Carlson, 2005).

*Create first impression about the teachers and their attitude toward teaching.*

More benefit of teachers’ syllabus presentation is found. Syllabus presentation that is done by teachers will give students first impression about the teachers and how the teachers teach in the class. This benefit can be gotten especially for students in first year or students who get a new teacher in their course. Aster argued that “we know what kind of the lecturer is, the character of the lecturer . . . we also know the learning method that the lecturer uses” (Aster). The finding is stronger because this finding supported the previous statement from Thompson. Thompson (2007) revealed that during presenting the syllabus, teacher welcomed students by getting to know them and shared teacher’s information (family, interest and experience) in order to make them felt more comfortable.

*Motivate students to follow the course.* This finding will be the last finding of the benefits of the teachers’ syllabus presentation. According to the finding, the



researcher found that the students get more motivated because of syllabus presentation that is done by the teachers. For instance, Aster mentioned that “by having syllabus presentation about what will be done during the course, it can motivate the students” (Aster). Sometime at the first meeting of the course, students have no idea about the course that they enrolled. The first meeting is the time for students to find out what they are going to do and get in that course. By having explanation of the course’s material and activities, the students will gain more motivation and interest to join and “the students can do the course activity as well as possible” (Asoka). Similarly, Aster also added, “we know the purpose of that course, so we are motivated to follow the course” (Aster). Additionally, in the first day teachers usually shared their love of the subject and emphasized the usefulness of the course in order to help students feel welcome and more motivated to succeed in the course (Thompson, 2007).

## **Conclusion**

Teachers’ syllabus presentation is important for students in passing their course. The result showed that teachers’ syllabus presentation gave some benefits to the students and their learning process. The benefits are used to guide students on the right track. Teachers also have to be aware of what students need to know and any possible question related to the students’ expectation for the course.

## **Recommendation**

**For teachers.** To start the course, it would be better if the teacher presents or explains such things about the course because students expect not only to get the syllabus

but also expect to get explanation or presentation about that. For instance, teachers' syllabus presentation also helps students to be more motivated in succeeding the course.

**For students.** The beginning of the course is the time to get understanding of the course that students enrolled. To get understanding of the course that students enrolled, the students should ask the teachers to present their syllabus. It is because teachers' syllabus presentation will be helpful for students to prepare and organize their learning. Moreover, students also should attend the first meeting because it provides many benefits.

**For further researchers.** The next recommendation would be for further researchers. The further researcher is expected to conduct a further study related to this topic and use this study to be the background knowledge. The further researcher is also recommended to investigate the same topic but using different focus or any other aspect that is related to presenting the syllabus, such as teachers' strategy in constructing and presenting the syllabus.

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