Multilingual Lecturers’ Competence in English Teaching at the University of Iqra Buru, Indonesia

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Abstract:

This study aims to determine; 1) the competence of multilingual lecturers in English teaching at the University of Iqra Buru; 2) the factors influenced the multilingual lecturers’ competence; and 3) the students’ perception of multilingual lecturers’ competence.

This study employed qualitative research by applying grounded theory. The informant of the research was two of non-native English lecturers who have multilingual competence at the University of Iqra Buru. In collecting the data, the researchers employed three primary data collection techniques, namely; observation in which the researchers as nonparticipant observer who observed and wrote the field notes on teaching and learning process to see the multilingual lecturers’ competence; Interviewed both the lecturers, the head of department, and the students using voice recorder. In addition, the data also was gathered through teaching document. To analyze the data, the researchers adopted a technique
suggested by Strauss and Corbin which consists of three steps; open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

The result showed that; 1) The multilingual lecturers have high competence in personal and social, while the lack of their pedagogical and professional competence has been reinforced by their good intercultural and emotional competence; 2) The main factors influenced the multilingual lecturers’ competence were educational background, experiences, social interactions, and cross-cultural communication; and 3) The students mostly evoked positive perception toward the multilingual lecturers’ competence in English teaching.

**Keywords:** Multilingual, Lecturers’ Competence, English Teaching

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The lecturer’s competence is the main factors that contribute to the students’ success in learning a particular field of study or a subject. Competence is a combination of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which are reflected by the lecturer in the situation and the learning process so that the objectives of education and learning can be achieved. Although the learning process has been facilitated by the completeness of the materials and the modern media of teaching, but if the lecturer was not competent in teaching then it would have a bad impact on the students’ learning performance (Depdiknas, 2004, Usman, 1992; Katane, et. al. 2006; Gupta, 1999).

In the Indonesian context, the competence of lecturers has been regulated in the Law Number 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, which asserts that the competence is a set of knowledge, skills, and behaviors that must be owned, lived and ruled by a teacher or lecturer in performing the duties of professionalism. So the educator, teacher or lecturer should have four basic competencies, namely pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competence. Despite all that has been set in the Law of the State, but in reality, there are many teachers and lecturers in Indonesia who have not mastered the four competencies as a whole, especially in provinces that are far from the state capital.

Maluku is one of the provinces in the eastern of Indonesia are facing very complex issues related to the competence of teachers and lecturers. Based on the results of *Teacher Competency Test* (UKG) conducted in 2013-2015, Maluku is ranked 32 out of 34 provinces in Indonesia. The low test result correlates with qualified teachers in which most of them
are not graduates of bachelor degree (S1). From a total of 29,466 teachers, only 10,181 of them are qualified S1, while graduates of master degree (S2) amounted to 116 teachers, the rest of them are high school graduates, D2, and D3. Even still there are 7,291 teachers are a high school graduate (LPMP Maluku, 2015). These appalling conditions occur in public schools and also in private schools who will graduate students to continue their study at the university. This will obviously have an impact on the future of their education and learning in the college and also will burdensome for lecturers to teach them.

It also occurred at the University of Iqra Buru as one of the two universities in Maluku who will graduate teachers, especially teachers of English in which the lecturers often face problems in teaching due to weaknesses of students in mastering basic of English lessons. Nevertheless, the students were eager to learn due to the lecturers who can motivate them. Based on observations and initial interview conducted on January 22, 2016, it was found that the lecturers were mastered several local and foreign languages that are often used in teaching. The results of preliminary observations also show that the lecturers were multilingualism that was able to speak and communicate in three or more languages (Vildomec, 1963; McArthur, 1992; Edwards, 1994; Kemp, 2009; Bin Tahir, 2015). The uniqueness of the lecturers’ method in teaching and motivating the students had attracted the attention of researchers to study it in an in-depth fashion.

Some of the previous studies about the competence of teachers and lecturers have been carried out by researchers over the world (Jubaidah, 2015; Balgis, at.al, 2014; Wong, 2008; Penn-Edwards, 2010; Bin Tahir, 2015). But their studies were focusing on motivation, perception, attitude, and the effect of competence quantitatively to the learning achievement without exploring more in an in-depth study of the competence partially and the factors that strengthen or weaken the competence that will contribute to the development of the lecturers’ competence and to be more qualified and expert in teaching.

Based on the background, this study aims to determine; 1) the competence of multilingual lecturers in English teaching at the University of Iqra Buru; 2) the factors influenced the multilingual lecturers’ competence; and 3) the students’ perception of multilingual lecturers’ competence. The results of this study are expected to provide additional information and reference for governments, educators, and researchers who wish to study this field and efforts to improve the competence of teachers and lecturers.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Multilingual Lecturers’ Competence

Competence is the set of knowledge, skills, and experience required for the future, which is manifested in the activities (Katane, et. al. 2006). While Gupta (1999) defines competence as knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, motivations and confidence to be successful in the job. These definitions provide an indication to the general competencies that must be owned by a teacher can be divided into three domains, namely; field, pedagogical, and cultural competency.

Based on the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, competence is a set of knowledge, skills, and behaviors that must be owned, lived and ruled by a teacher or lecturer in performing the duties of professionalism. Competence is also the knowledge, skills, and values reflected in the basic habits of thought and action (Depdiknas, 2004). In other words, competence is the specification of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a person as well as its application in the work, in accordance with the required performance field. Meanwhile, Usman (1992) stated that the competence of teachers is a teacher's ability to perform the duties and is responsible for its actions. The above definition shows that an educator, teacher or lecturer should have four basic competencies, namely pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competence (Danim, 2010).

Pedagogical competence is the ability of teachers to manage learning process and activities which include: 1) Understanding insight or educational foundation; 2) Understanding of the learners; 3) Development of a curriculum or syllabus; 4) Design of learning; 5) Implementing the learning process; 6) The use of technologies; 7) Evaluation of learning outcomes; 8) The development of learners aptitude to actualize their various potentials.

Personal competence show on the teacher's personality is intact, virtuous, honest, mature, faithful, morality; capabilities such as self-discipline, responsibility, sensitive, objective, flexible, resourceful, able to communicate with others; the ability to develop a profession such as creative thinking, critical, reflective, willing to learn throughout life, can
take decisions etc. Personal competence further concerns the identity of a teacher as a good person, responsibility, open, and willing to learn to move forward (Mulyasa, 2009).

Social competence is the ability of teachers to communicate and interact effectively with the community and environment inside or outside of the school. A teacher also should try to develop communication with learners’ parents so intertwined continuous two-way communication between them (Agus & Hamrin, 2012).

Professional competence means that the teacher should have a broad knowledge of the subject matter as well as in the field of study are taught, as well as methodological within the meaning of theoretical concepts, is able to choose the appropriate method, as well as being able to use in teaching and learning. Professional competence is the mastery of learning materials is broad and deep, which includes mastery of curriculum subjects at school and substance of knowledge that overshadow his material, as well as mastery of the structure and methodology of science (Kusnandar, 2007).

While multilingual is defined as a person who has the ability to use three or more languages, either separately or in various degrees of code-mixing, in which different languages are used for different purposes, competence in each varying according to such factors as the register, occupation, and education. It may not have equal proficiency in or control over all the languages he/she knows (McArthur, 1992: 673; Edwards, 1994: 33; Wildomerc, 1963: 28; Kemp, 2009: 11; Bin Tahir, 2015:11). Thus, multilingual lecturers' competence here referred to an English lecturer who is able to speak and communicate in three or more languages and then implement them in the teaching process to facilitate students understand the lesson.

2.2. Factors Affecting Lecturers’ Competence

There are several factors that affect the lecturers’ competence, namely; adequate facilities, work discipline, supervision of principals, training, and reward. It has a huge influence on the improvement of lecturers’ competence and the quality of education of a department or the institution (Mulyasa, 2009).

The success in improving the lecturers’ competence cannot be separated from the role of the principal with the direct supervision such as attendance, discipline, dedication to work, providing infrastructure facilities even with the welfare of the teacher. Thus, the efforts to increase lecturers’ competence in teaching and learning will be realized in line
with expectations and educational purposes. To address the factors that can hinder efforts to increase the competence of the learning process, the principals, educational institutions, and teachers themselves must mutually support one another for educational purposes to be achieved that can be realized together. Of course, there are many more factors that contribute to the success and the failure of teachers in teaching due to the low of students’ achievement that should be explored to the surface.

3. METHOD

The researchers employed qualitative study by applying grounded theory. Qualitative research is to collect data on the subject of research in order to obtain deep insight of the phenomena of interest. The data collection will analyze and interpret descriptively or narrative (Gay et al., 2006: 399). Grounded theory is a systematic methodology involving the discovery of theory through the analysis of data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

This research was conducted at the University of Iqra Buru. The respondent of the current research were two of non-native English lecturers who have the ability to speak and communicate in three or more languages. Before deciding the respondent, the researchers did a primary study in intended the subject through an interview. Thus, we decided to take the two lecturers as the participant. The two lecturers are a male and a female. The male lecturer has the ability to speak in local language, Indonesian, English, and Arabic, while the female lecturer has the ability to speak in some of local languages, Indonesian, English, and Mandarin. The data gained from documentary record of the two lecturers’ teaching activities and data interview with them and the students.

The primary data collection instrument was the researchers themselves (Gay, at al, 425: 2006) as an observer and an interviewer. It means that they decided what to be observed related to the problem statements then interpreted the data and confirmed the information about what have been observed by interviewing both the lecturers and students. The secondary instruments were an observation scheme and interview protocol.

In collecting the data, the researchers employed three primary data collection techniques, as follows:
1) Observation

Here, the researchers as nonparticipant observation or external observation in which they did not directly involved in the situation being observed. They wrote field notes in all classroom activities during the learning process. In addition, they also used a videotape to record verbal and nonverbal communication between lecturer and students which later be confirmed and adjusted to field notes, and also a volunteer assisted them in the interview section.

2) Interview

The researchers interviewed both the lecturers and the students by using voice recorder. Type of the interview was a semi-structured in which some questions were prepared before interviewing and some additional question will be asked on the spot. The lecture’s interview was used to collect qualitative data or confirmation toward what had been observed, it was done at the end of every meeting. And students’ interview was aimed to obtain the students’ perceptions of the multilingual lecturers’ competence in English teaching. The way to interview the students was by doing the group interview.

3) Examining Records

In addition to the observation and interview, the information was gathered through documentary evidence. This third primary data collection technique was examining records. The researchers examined various types of videotapes and audiotapes.

To analyze collecting data, the researchers adopted a technique of grounded theory in data analysis suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990) which consisted of three steps; open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding is a process of labeling the observed phenomena of multilingual lecturers’ competence which in turn revealed categories. Axial coding is a set of procedures whereby data on lecturers’ competence are put back together in new ways after open coding by making connections between categories. Selective coding is a process of selecting core category and connecting with another category.

4. FINDING

The data on multilingual lecturers’ competence were obtained through observation, interview, and recording of the teachers’ interventions and English learning activities at
English Department of the University of Iqra Buru. Data were also gained from the teaching document and field notes. All of the data were analyzed to know the multilingual lecturers’ competence, factors affecting their competence, and students’ perception of multilingual lecturers’ competence process as can be explained in the following.

4.1. Multilingual Lecturers’ Competence

Based on observations and interviews for both lecturers during four times meeting of English teaching in the classroom, we found that the two lecturers have an established personality, morality, and can serve as a role model for the students. In addition, the two lecturers were able to make social contacts in teaching and learning with students inside or outside the classroom well, they were able to establish good cooperation with leaders, staff, peers, and communities on campus. While the lack of both lecturers is that they do not develop learning materials; they do not take advantage of information and communication technology, and they are less evaluate the achievement of student learning well. This can be illustrated in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Multilingual Lecturers’ Competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Lecturers</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>1st Meeting</th>
<th>2nd Meeting</th>
<th>3rd Meeting</th>
<th>4th Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Symbol (√) in Table 1 indicates the existed competence of lecturers, while the (-) symbol shows up the lack of competencies possessed by the lecturers. The table above shows that the two lecturers have good personal and social competence, but they were less competent in pedagogical and professional. However, we also found that the two lecturers have the good intercultural and emotional competency to cover the shortfall of their
competence and be able to support the learning process and increase the students’
motivation in learning.

4.2. Factors Influencing Multilingual Lecturers’ Competence

There are several indicators of theoretical factors that affect the multilingual
lecturers’ competence and we have taken them as a reference or guideline in conducting
observations and interviews in this study. In addition, we also found several factors that
affect their competence, and one of the factors that really stand out was intercultural
communication. It can be described in table 2 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Existed</th>
<th>Non-Existed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reward</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Strict supervision and controlling</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lecturer’s autonomy</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Background of study</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Social interaction</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Intercultural communication</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows the factors that affect the multilingual lecturers’ competence was
dominated by internal factors of themselves on how to empower their independence in
improving the competencies individually based on their educational background,
experiences, social interactions, and cross-cultural communication. All these factors
increased their competence as a lecturer despite the absence of adequate facilities, no
implementation of training that support the quality of competence, or lack of reward for
their achievements. This is in line with the results of interviews to both lecturers who stated
that:

"What we have applied in teaching and learning in the classroom was the result of
experience, educational background and the result of interaction with colleagues or
professional in this field as well as interaction with others who have the different
educational and cultural background".

This statement further confirms that the independence of the lecturers was the main
aspect of improving their competence that can be acquired through experience or sharing
with colleagues and the professional as well as the communication between cultures so as to trigger creativity in teaching and awareness of cultural differences and students’ nature when teaching in the classroom.

4.3. Students’ Perception of Multilingual Lecturers’ Competence

We have conducted interviews with all students collectively or in group interviews in the classroom to determine their perceptions of the multilingual lecturers’ competence. From the results, we found that 91% of students stating very pleased with the competence of multilingual lecturers and highly motivated to learn. As the statement of students (RB and HR):

“We loved the lecturer because of his way of teaching, he mastered several foreign and local languages that used to give a more comprehensive and understanding of English learning, communicative with the students and low profile”.

Statements of students (ER, YR, and HT):

“We are very pleased with the way he teaches us because he is so creative to make us understand what been taught and highly interactive to motivate us in attending the subject and make us feel happy and comfortable when learning and he was also able to overcome the naughty and lazy students to keep learning”.

The statements above confirms that the lecturers have a mature personality, understanding of others, having experience of social interaction, experienced in communicating cross-cultural, having the emotional maturity to interact with students in the classroom so that they feel comfortable to learn and easy to accept lessons from the lecturers.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings from this study indicate that the multilingual lecturers have excellent personal and social competence and they have deficiencies in pedagogical and professional competence. Despite the lack of those competencies, they can overcome and cope them with the other competencies which include intercultural and emotional competence. The findings can be simplified in a syllogism figure below:
The figure above shows the syllogism between the personal and social competence of a lecturer toward his pedagogical competence and it is affected by the intercultural competence that has implications for the emotional maturity that would drive him to become a professional lecturer. All of this syllogism will eventually return to the personal. Thus, we can conclude that there is some competence also contributed in enhancing the competence of a lecturer.

The general understanding about the competence of teachers and lecturers in Indonesia is more focused on four areas of competence, namely; personal, social, pedagogical, and professional. Whereas the competence of teachers and lecturers could be composed of other dimensions which would greatly contribute to learning to be unexplored before they become professional teachers (Bulajeva, 2003: 41; Bridge, 1993; Hansen, 1998: 169; James et al, 1998: 113; Stoffels, 2005: 544). It is also similar to what has been stated by Selvi (2010) that there are various dimensions that have contributed to making someone as a professional lecturer, including the emotional and social-cultural competence which in this study was called intercultural competence.

Emotional competence includes values, morals, beliefs, attitudes, motivation, and empathy associated with the implementation of psychological counseling and guidance for
students to improve their learning emotional dimension. Emotional competence also helps teachers become effective teachers in monitoring student learning. In other words, teachers can be a learning consultant and mentor on learning for students and be a consultant for other lecturers. While intercultural competence includes knowledge and awareness of teachers about the differences in socio-cultural background of the students and the lecturers so that he/she can adjust to the teaching process and material based on the students’ culture and to avoid cultural conflicts that would eliminate the students’ interest in learning.

Based on the explanation, it can be concluded that there are many other dimensions of the lecturers’ competence such as emotional and intercultural which patronize to the successful of their teaching in the classroom and should be further explored as a benchmark for the development of the lecturers’ competence in Indonesia.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, the researchers can summarize the conclusion as follows:

1. The multilingual lecturers have high competence in personal and social, while the lack of their pedagogical and professional competence has been reinforced by their good intercultural and emotional competence;
2. The main factors influenced the multilingual lecturers’ competence were educational background, experiences, social interactions, and cross-cultural communication; and
3. The students mostly evoked positive perception toward the multilingual lecturers’ competence in English teaching.

From the research results and conclusions, we can give some suggestions and recommendations as follows:

1. The educational institutions should provide more opportunities and training for the lecturers to improve their competence;
2. For further researchers to pay more attention to the emotional and intercultural competence of lecturers as a separate part of personal and social competence.
References


