

## The issue of teachers' professional competence and pedagogical competence in English teaching- learning process

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### ABSTRACT

The existence of development in the education field requires teachers to be able to act more than just a teacher who knows how to teach. To become an advanced teacher, a teacher should have good professional competence and pedagogical competence. However, there are still problems that hinder the teacher when conducted the teaching and learning process. The problems that appear in the English classroom are teachers' professional competence and teachers' pedagogical competence. This study aims to describe and explain teachers' experience in dealing with their professional and pedagogical competence in teaching the English language. This is a qualitative study and used interview and observation as the instruments to collect the data from 3 teachers as the participant in SMA Negeri Benlutu So'e - East Nusa Tenggara. The results of the study found that teachers' low professional and pedagogical competence caused the teachers to have inadequate English teaching competence in teaching. It caused the teachers to teach the students with inappropriate learning materials, monotonous learning activities, and uncooperative assessment methods. The results of this study also recommend that teachers have high English language proficiency and teaching competence to be able to teach English in Senior High School.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In today's developed world, there are a lot of changes that occur in our daily lives, such as human development, social development, sustainable development, industry development, and many more. The development also happens in our education world. There is rapid development in every element of education that prepares students' competitiveness when students attend school and when competing in the work world after students graduate from school or when students enroll at the university level. In line with what was said by Gleason (2018) that the spread of improvement has forced us new challenges and demands in our recent education era. The progress in Indonesia education almost happened to all levels and subjects of learning which includes learning English. Take, for example, nowadays, we can easily find many schools system apply international school standard which uses English as an important part in-class activity, such as teacher deliver the material using English, the availability of printed books that use English as students learning source, and many more. By looking at developments that occur in the sphere of education, it is expected that school can provide the capable and professional teacher in teaching and preparing the students in learning about all subjects including English. Suherdi (2019) also stated that by looking at the education development now then, the teacher is expected to be more than able to teach the students accordance with the world change without leaving the subjects characteristic but also capable to motivate the students to have the strong positive attitude in learning.

However, there are still obstacles that prevent students in Eastern Indonesia from following the developments in the world of education especially in learning English. The barriers are coming from

teachers' professional competence and pedagogical competence. Syamsinar & Baso (2015) describe teachers' professional competence as the ability in mastering the materials in purpose to accomplish the standard base competency which has been set by the Minister of Education. It means that teachers' professional competence is related to the teachers' ability to master the knowledge. On the opposite side, pedagogical competence supported by (Madhavaram, Laverie, 2010) means that it may be a person's skill to mix existent resources because the instruction materials like books, articles, and cases and technology like software and hardware and intangible resources like knowledge, skills, experience to attain efficiency or effectiveness in pedagogy. Here, pedagogical competence is related to how the teacher can manage the learning process, which includes planning, implementing, and evaluating the learners' outcomes. Those previous aspects become one of the reasons because the average teachers who teach English in rural Eastern Indonesia are still weak in mastering the English language both spoken and written. This often happens because the teacher who teaches English subject is not from the English education background or they are English teacher who has the educational background in English but never improve their teaching competence and mastery of English competence. Besides that, In Eastern Indonesia teachers commonly used the traditional method to teach English. Rather than getting through the English practice, and very simple grammar, students are thrown into the deep end and given advanced passages to read and translate. Here the teachers assume that by mastering Basic English material such as grammar and translating passages students also can speak and write English well by themselves. Therefore, the application of the English language practice is rarely done in the process of learning English in class. The idea is similar to (McLeish 1968; Davis and Alexander 1977; Saunders 1980; Bonwell and Eison 1991; Gardiner 1994; Fink 2003) in Alexandar and Poyyamoli (2014), they said that classes that applied traditional teaching methods will produce less effective results on student learning outcomes, therefore, it is recommended that teachers apply the active teaching-learning approach to make the students become independent self-learners so they can retain information and develop their skills in transferring knowledge and solving problems in the teaching-learning process.

Based on the factors that explained earlier, the main reason can be drawn to the basics of choosing the topic. The motivation is how teachers' professional competence and pedagogical competence can give impacts in English teaching and learning process. So, the result will be beneficial for both teachers and students in English education, especially in Eastern Indonesia. To get certain data the next question research is raised to be answering those previous problems. The question is "How do the teachers' professional competence and pedagogical competence inhibit the English teaching-learning process in SMA Negeri Benlutu?"

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

Since this research is qualitative research, to answer the research question, there are two instruments used to collect the data. The first instrument is the interview guide which the kind of interview guide that the researcher used is a structured interview and the second instrument was the field observation checklist. The structured interview is used to find out the real data directly from the teachers because in line with Oniyinde (2019) stated that interview is an instrument here the researcher can ask questions, where the questions raised, refer to the responses of the interviewees, and not only that, in interviews we can also observe the behavior, personality, opinions, ways of thinking, and beliefs of the interviewee. While the field observation checklist is used to see how the teachers teaching-learning process experience where the teachers implemented their professional and pedagogical competence in teaching the students about English in SMA Negeri Benlutu The participants involved in this research were 3 English teachers from SMA Negeri Benlutu, So'e-East Nusa Tenggara.

## **3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

### **3.1. The issue of teachers' professional competence in English teaching learning process.**

The following part will show the result of and teachers' opinions related to teachers' professional competence. Professional competence is closely related to the ability to master the material in any field of study with other scientific substances as a teacher. Sugiharti, (2016) stated that professional competence is an important skill that the teacher should have because the teacher will have to teach the students with the ability to create an efficient variety of classroom environments. The indicators of success that exist in teachers who have professional competence can be measured with essential indicators, including teaching materials understanding, able to understand the concept, structure, teaching materials method, able to understand the concept of certain subjects, and able to apply all the concepts that exist in everyday life. Unfortunately, the teachers' professional competence skills sometimes cannot support the learning process well. Like what happened in an English class, many factors occur as the source of problems that inhibit the English teaching-learning process.

The next three focus questions are asked to the teachers to find out what inhibits factors that inhibit them in teaching the students and whether those factors are come from the students or from the teachers themselves and how the teachers will handle the problems. The first question is *“What factors that inhibit your skill and performance in English teaching and learning process?”*

From the question above the researcher got the teachers' answers that the problems that hamper them in their teaching ability and performance are students' weaknesses in English, limited school facilities, and time limitation.

*(1). The students' limited ability and understanding in English itself that makes me hard to do more in teaching them. So, in the end, my ability is also reduced due to the absence of reciprocal interaction in class. In addition, the limited school facilities and time also become problems. It is because there is no language lab or laptop and speakers to teach children listening skills and books. Because not all these students do have books, so in class, they should sit in groups and study together. It is difficult for me because sometimes they did not pay attention while I am teaching them. (Teacher 2)*

The answer above indicated that most factors that inhibit the teachers' skill and performance in teaching English are students' English background knowledge. It becomes the main problem because, with students' English low ability, teachers find it difficult to develop them in teaching the students. This is due to at the time the teachers want to teach them with material that suits their grade level, but they cannot accept or understand what the teachers said in English. Therefore, the teachers keep teaching them about Basic English wherein the end will decrease the teachers' English knowledge and their teaching ability. Apart from that, the other problems that obstruct the teachers' skill and performance in teaching English are the lack of school facilities and teachers' limited time in teaching the students. The limitations of school facilities such as language lab, English books, and dictionaries make teachers difficult to develop materials and create interesting teaching methods for students. Because of the absence of such support facilities, the teacher can only teach by grouping the students to share books and learn together with their friends. This is very hampering because in the group there are students who cannot learn maximally because they are not paying enough attention to the teachers' explanation and cannot see the material in the book well because they must share with their other friends. This situation also has an impact on the teacher's time in explaining the material to the students. The teacher needs extra time to explain slowly to the students to make sure they could understand the material even though they are all sitting in a group without seeing their own English book.

The existence of obstacles in teachers' skills and performance in teaching English makes the teachers need ways to create a good teaching-learning process. Therefore, the following questions aim to find out what strategy is used by teachers in teaching English to achieve the goals. The question is *“What strategies do you use to teach your students in learning?”* The next answer is one of the teachers' responses to represent the other finding data from the other teachers.

*(2). There are several strategies that I use. Usually, I give the reading text that I choose from the handout and after that, I asked them to answer the questions related to the reading text. Or I will ask them about other English material, whether it's from the material I just taught or from last week's material. But sometimes they cannot answer me, so I just explained the reading contents from the reading text in Indonesia if they did not understand the text, told them to memorize new vocabulary, and give them examples in the sentences. (Teacher 3)*

From the answer above it can be concluded that the teachers are still using the traditional way of teaching English in SMA Negeri Benlutu. Although the teachers mentioned that they have many ways of teaching but because of the circumstances of students who still do not understand English. Then the method used in teaching is the grammar-translation method where the teacher reads the text together, translates it, and instructs the student to answer the questions from the text or memorize the new vocabulary found in the text.

The last focus question is about teachers' disposition. It is asked to find out about the nature of teachers as educators. Teachers' disposition in a learning process is needed to show teachers' position as a positive role model for students. That is why the next question is asked the teachers to find out whether they already can be called a good teacher who already qualified in teachers disposition as one of the teachers' professional competence characteristics. The question is *“What strategies do you use to encourage your students in learning English?”* From the question, the data that showed all the teachers give the students motivation to encourage them in learning English. One of their answers is seen below.

*(3). The strategy that I use is I give them motivation such tell them that English is important for their future education, not for now but later. Because as we know that our school and students here are still far from perfect from various aspects then the most needed by them is just support. In addition, I*

*always give them examples of how English is useful for anything in this globalization era. So, it makes them motivated to keep learning English. (Teacher 1)*

The above answer showed that the teachers use the responsibility in maintaining the students' desire to learn by giving the students motivation to keep studying English. Motivation is positively correlated with the success of second language learning. It means that the students, who are motivated especially from their teacher, family, or any type of motivation, are more likely to succeed in learning the language. On the other hand, language learners who are not motivated will find it difficult to achieve good English. Take for example the lack of motivation that may be evident to the students result in learning English in class. That is why according to the teachers, their support is needed to improve students' learning because they cannot get support from many factors such as the rural environment, local culture, and their English background itself. Those above answers from teachers related to problems in teachers' professional competence are also supported by observations results from four meetings where it showed that teachers' knowledge mastery, teaching skills, and performance and teachers' disposition is still needed improvement. From the observations data it showed that in the English teaching-learning process, the teachers still have difficulty in showing good performance in teaching the students. In the observation, the researcher saw that the teachers explained the material in a monotonous way. The teacher simply asked the students to form groups and discussed the reading text together. Although the teachers always start the lesson by giving a little brainstorming about the material but on the learning process the teachers only give an explanation by translating the text into Indonesia or the local language and discuss the meaning of the text together and rarely used English. In the explanation, the teachers are rarely doing the movement to observe the student in groups so that many students are not monitored by the teachers and this causes the other students to make noises in the group and disrupt their friends who want to learn. Otherwise, there is no question and answer interaction between the teachers and students because the teachers only asked the students to read the text and later the teachers only asked the students to memorize the new vocabulary that they found in the reading text. There is also no time management, so the class takes place very shortly. The class will be finished after the students have finished reading the text and have interpreted the reading. After that, the teacher only gives time to have the students answer short questions from the reading and ask students to memorize the new vocabulary from the reading.

From the data above, the result can be said that teachers' professional competence really depends on how their students' English background ability. From the interviews obtained that the students' skill in English makes the teachers difficult to make a teaching material. This is because students still do not understand English well so that when teachers want to teach them with material that suits their class level, they will be difficult. This is exacerbated by the school situation which is very less with supporting facilities. Students did not have any access to get good English books in the library, dictionaries, and the absence of a language lab, so it makes the students never get listening practices.

### **3.2. The issue of teachers' pedagogical competence in English teaching learning process**

Besides teachers' professional competence, there is also teachers' pedagogical competence that also becomes one of the criteria to become a good English teacher. According to Ryegard et al. (2010) in Aimah, Ifadah, and Bharati, (2017), pedagogical competence is one of the requirements for teachers in the teaching and learning education field. Pedagogical competence has the same function with professional competence where it is about teachers' readiness in teaching, as indicated by the teachers' knowledge acquisition and teaching skills. It also includes teaching based on syllabus and lesson plan, teaching method, teaching media, and teaching evaluation. This competence will also determine the success of the learning process. As well as in learning English, the materials selections and teaching methods based on the syllabus and lesson plan can improve student success. This can happen because students are taught based on predefined learning standards so later students do not find it difficult to achieve the English learning objectives. But the students' success and the learning process itself sometimes cannot run well because teachers cannot meet the criteria that are contained in the pedagogical competence.

The same problem is also faced by the teachers where they are also not familiar with the use of syllabus and lesson plan in teaching English. Even though the teachers stated that the syllabus and the lesson plan are very important aspects in teaching and learning process, the teachers said that the use of syllabus and lesson plan in the context in the rural school is very useless because they rarely use it as a reference in teaching the students. In teaching the students, the teachers only refer to the students' English ability to create the material, so it fits with their English level. One of the teachers' responses can be seen below.

*(1). I think it is not important because for me I rarely make or revise my Lesson Plan and syllabus. In my opinion, the teaching material is more important than making the syllabus and Lesson Plan. So, if the material that I choose is understandable by the students then I think it is all good. We do not have to refer to the syllabus and Lesson Plan. (Teacher 3)*

From the answer above shows that, even though the syllabus and lesson plan is important for the teachers, still some teachers think that the syllabus and lesson plan is not necessary for them. As mentioned earlier that lesson plan and syllabus are useful for teachers in preparing the teaching materials, learning steps, and assessment. Then, if the teachers do not make the lesson plan and syllabus then there will be some problem in learning itself. The problems that arise are the learning activities will have no purpose. The teacher will not focus on giving the lessons in accordance with basic competencies. If so then students will experience the bad effect because the teachers teach them regardless of the students' needs. Not only that but also the teacher will look unprofessional.

After getting the result above that all the teachers did not use any syllabus and lesson plan in their teaching process then this next question is asked to find out what factors that make the teachers could not create the lesson plan and syllabus and how they deal with those problems. The question is "What are the factors that inhibit you in designing your lesson plan and syllabus and how do you overcome those difficulties?"

From the question, the researcher got the response below that represented all the teachers' answer which has the same problems.

*(2). The problem is I find it difficult to follow the standard competencies that have been set by the government in creating the lesson plan and syllabus in the school curriculum. So, I prefer to make the lesson plan and syllabus using my own words and model which is easy to understand. In addition, I do not really understand in making the lesson plan and syllabus is also the problem. So sometimes I must see or borrow the old lesson plan and syllabus from the previous teachers to teach the students. Not to mention students' low English ability here. It just too difficult to adjust the standard competencies and materials that suitable for our students. So, I create the material referring to their English ability that easier for them. (Teacher 1)*

The above answers indicate that teacher' difficulties lies in the teacher's own ability to develop a lesson plan and syllabus. Teachers still lack knowledge in adjusting the standard competency that set in the curriculum and fit the students' low English background. This situation may give the teachers and students' disadvantages since teachers have a decisive position to manage the success in learning English. It is because the teachers have a major function from designing, managing, and evaluating learning within a school. So, if the teachers do not have the ability in designing the material that fits the students' English background then the students will not get the maximal success in learning English and the other side the teacher will be considered failed in teaching the students.

Similar results are also found from the observation result wherefrom the four meetings the teachers could not show me the lesson plan and syllabus. The teachers said that they usually teach students without referring to the syllabus and the lesson plan. At the time of teaching, the teachers will refer to the students' English standard as like what already discussed earlier that students are still very low in English knowledge. Therefore, the materials and teaching methods used are the easy and simple text which is adapted to teachers' and students' circumstances. From the observation, it seems that the material was chosen by the teacher from the teachers' handbook or from the internet which later the reading material will be copied and distributed to students at the meeting. Not only because of the limitation facility and students' low English ability but the reason why teachers do not make syllabus and lesson plans are that they cannot make it in line with the government standards. This causes them to always teach the students by preparing the material by them. The common materials that teachers always use to teach the students are the reading material where there are short text, easy questions, and also new vocabulary that they can use for students' class activity.

Teachers' inability to design syllabus and lesson plans are also influenced by teachers' lack of understanding about the school curriculum. In the finding that related to the school curriculum, it found that the school applied two kinds of curriculum. They are 2013 curriculum (K-13) for the grade 10th students and The School-Based Curriculum (KTSP) for the grade 11th and 12th. From the data mentioned by the teachers that for the K13 curriculum the school already applied it for quite long and they have just used the K-13 curriculum, so they are not used to it. Therefore, they find no obstacles in applying the KTSP. In the teachers' opinion, the learning materials for the 10-grade set in the curriculum by the central government for education were too much. The numbers of materials were not balanced with the teachers' and students' conditions in the field. The teachers were unable to create materials that match with the targets set by the government in the K-13 curriculum. One of the teachers' statements is below.

*(3). The problem is that we as the teacher in this environment are not very well informed about how to make lesson plan and syllabus, so when we have to create one, sometimes we have to ask each other and sometimes look from others friends or we did not make it at all. So does the curriculum standard set by the government without seeing our condition here which still lacks many aspects. It makes us difficult to develop appropriate materials and methods for the students (Teacher 3)*

Teachers also recognized that students had to struggle to study other subjects in the same year. The teacher recognizes that in the process of learning English, the teacher does not use communicative teaching approach in their class because the approach will not succeed if used in their classroom conditions. However, according to the teacher, grouping the students and help them translated the reading materials was the teachers' solution to reduce the negative impact from the factors that occur in the use of limited teaching media and teaching methodology. They said this way was effective because students' conditions which not possible to read directly from their own books. That is why with the teachers helps in translating the text, they will quickly understand the material. This also applies to teacher teaching methodology issues. Besides that, the teachers also tried to be more passionate about teaching, so the students were interested to hear the explanation as they sit in groups.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

From the results of this study, it is concluded that not enough teachers' professional competence and teachers' pedagogical competence do prevent the teachers' performance in the English teaching and learning process. The factors found in the study are teachers' time limitation which makes them rarely come to the class and unattractive teaching methods. These things that cause the teachers' professional competence to decrease and make the English teaching-learning process do not go well. The teachers assumed that the students' weaknesses in English, lack of supporting facilities such as books for students is still a major problem causing them to have weak professional competence. Teachers become difficult to make the right materials for students and having the limitation in creates their teaching skills and performance. In addition, the observation results also concluded that, although the teacher seemed to master the material when the explanation took place, it was done by using Bahasa and the local language. This is done because the students are very difficult to understand the material described in English.

For teachers' pedagogical competence, the results concluded that there are still many factors that inhibit the students and teachers in learning English. This resulted in the absence of syllabuses and lesson plans, lack of media use and teaching methodology, and teacher evaluation. The problems that make teachers' pedagogical competence become the issues that must be considered is the teachers never make the lesson plan and syllabus and it has resulted that the teacher teaches the students without referring to standard competencies in the set curriculum. This is very unfavorable because by doing this, students and teachers will continue to be at the same English level since they have never practiced and learned to improve their English standard. Not only that, the very limited teaching media and monotonous teaching methods also make the students feel bored and could not learn other English skills besides reading competence.

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