

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL
COMPETENCE OF ENGLISH TEACHERS IN TEACHING
ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
(A Case of Teachers in SMU Negeri 1 Soe)**

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ABSTRACT

The teacher is considered the most crucial factor in implementing all educational reforms at the fundamental level. To get a good result in education, it needs competent teachers. This study aims to find out how teachers implement their professional competence in the form of knowledge mastery, creativity, and the use of media in teaching English as a foreign language. This study used a qualitative descriptive design. The instruments used were observation and interview. The data of this study was collected by doing observation and interview. The data in this study were analyzed by using Miles and Huberman's model of analysis (Flow Model). The study showed that the teachers could implement well their professional competence in the form of knowledge mastery, creativity, and use of media. Based on the result of the study, it can be concluded that the teachers implemented their professional competence well in the teaching and learning process.

Keywords: *Implementation, Professional Competence, Teachers' Competence.*

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INTRODUCTION

Richards (2011 : 192) writes that English is the most important foreign language learned for many reasons. Since it is an international language, it plays an important role in communication that people use to communicate with other countries. In Indonesia, English is learned as a foreign language after the native language (Bahasa Indonesia). The process of English learning needs to be started at an early age. In Indonesia, English is taught at schools from primary school up to senior high school level as a compulsory subject.

In the process of teaching and learning English, some important factors determine its success. These factors range from the ideological and socio-economic needs to the education system's existing structure and defined theories and practices of teaching and learning. One of the really important factors is the teacher. Education scholars have pointed out that education quality is the reflection of education essence. There would be no good education without good teacher quality, for teaching effectiveness is the core mission of schools (Wang & Fwu, 2007). The teacher is considered the most crucial factor in implementing all educational reforms at the very basic level. It is proven that the academic qualification,

knowledge of the subject matter, competence and skill of teaching, and the teacher's commitment have an effective impact on the teaching-learning process. Lin (2010: 2) stated that teachers' quality is defined as teachers engaging in education tasks with specific characteristics and being able to conduct teaching activities, arousing students' interest in learning, and enhancing students' learning achievements. It is clear that the teachers' role in the process of teaching and learning is very important.

The discussion on teacher competence is not only raised by the Indonesian Government (Minister of Education) but also stated by the expert like Murcia. Murcia (2001: 356) argued that English teachers need good competency to make effective teaching and learning to gain students' good achievement. Furthermore, the English teachers should improve their competencies to have an excellent teaching way of teaching them. In teaching English as a second or foreign language, teachers responsible for keeping the development of the students learning. That is why teachers need to have many resources that can be searched to find much information to improve their teaching. Based on what is stated by the Indonesian government (Minister of Education) and Murcia (2001), English teachers must have awareness of their competencies, language learners, learning process, approaches to the classroom instruction, good understanding, experiences, and practices in the target language.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching and learning do not merely mean transferring the teachers' knowledge or ability to the students. Still, it is a more complicated process because it deals with the understanding, mixing, and implementing the general knowledge with its component that should be done to achieve the goals of teaching and learning. Some important components become crucial parts of doing the teaching and learning process. They are; the syllabus and lesson plan, the media and method of teaching, the learning evaluation, and the ability of teachers to use the knowledge to manage and prepare these components for producing a good result in teaching and learning. From this point of view, understanding learning underwent a change known as the understanding of modern teaching. The nature of teaching, based on new thinking, is guiding learning activities. The essence of teaching is a process in the sense that the activity teaching and learning are not separated, the eye-centered to the teacher as a motivator for students' learning activities. Also, the teaching is to regulate and organize the environment around students to be encouraged and fostered learning activities. To implement the process of teaching and learning well, it needs the ability of the teachers. Teachers have to have good competence to manage and control the process of teaching and learning. Competence refers to the effectiveness of someone concerned to apply the acquired knowledge and skills to achieve the target intended. Richards and Schmidt (2002:94) define competence as a description of the essential skills, knowledge, and behaviors required for the effective performance of a real-world task or activity. At the same time, Bailey (2006:210) describes competence as statements about what teachers are supposed to know and be able to do.

Jalal et al. (2009: 7) mention that teachers' good quality can produce good quality of students' achievement, and teachers' poor quality can produce a low quality of students' achievements. It means that the teaching and learning process, teachers have a really important role as a model teacher or role model for the

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students and as a manager for learning. It happens because the success of learning depends on the way teachers use their knowledge and ability to perform and act well in teaching and guiding the students.

Based on the Government Law number 19 Year 2005 about National Education standard chapter 28 verse 1, teachers have to own academic qualification and competence as learning agents, healthy and religious, thus having skills to reach national education goals. Actually, this argument becomes the standard guideline for teachers to work hard to upgrade their ability and skills in teaching to produce a better result.

According to what is stated by the government in the above, it can be said that the teachers have to be competent in doing their task that become the standards and guidelines to achieve the teaching and learning targets or goals. In implementing the teaching and learning process, teachers have to use their pedagogical competence by implementing the suitable methods and media, thus the professional competence by using their knowledge and ability they have on how to teach and guide the students in doing teaching and learning process.

Tight propose one theory about competence that refers to competent teachers (1996: 6) mentioned that a competent teacher could learn well. He also stated that learning management is a series of lessons for students to receive, respond, control, and develop the learning materials related to the interrelationship process between students and teachers who are actively working or learning.

Improving the quality of basic education remains a central challenge in Indonesia. Without a good quality basic education, students will fail to acquire the skills they need to lead full and productive lives. Education's quality plays an important role in human life and determines the nation's competitiveness (Jalal et al., 2009). It is also becoming an indicator to measure the growth of a country. Therefore, in Indonesia, education is seen as a tool for change, growth, and development. It is often seen as a means of passing on wisdom, experiences, achievement, and other activities from the past generation to the young generation. Thus, education can be formally interpreted as changeability of thinking by educating and enabling people with good knowledge to be better in the future.

To improve the quality of English teaching in Indonesia, some efforts are made by the government. Large-scale reforms have been targeted to improve the teachers' qualification in teaching English as a foreign language. As a part of improving the teachers' quality of teaching, the government paid big attention to the teachers' workforce, which has presented several challenges. Teachers' quality is an essential part of a successful educational system. The government's efforts to upgrade the teachers' teaching quality are by spending big funds in providing many kinds of training, seminars, and other activities to improve their teaching quality.

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The research design was a form of qualitative research because the focus was on figuring out and describing the way teachers' professional competence when they were teaching. Cresswell (1994: 145) stated that one of the purposes of qualitative research is to understand the participants' point of view of the events, situations, and actions they are involved in and the explanation they give about their lives and experiences. About research design, Nunan (1993: 2- 3) defines research as a

process of formulating questions, or problems, or hypotheses. Three elements are proposed by Nunan, such as; problem, data, and data analysis and interpretation. Any activity which lacks one of these elements should be classified as other than research. In this study, the design was employed to understand the teachers' professional competence. This study was conducted in State Senior High School 1 Soe from March 12th to May 12th, 2017. In dealing with this study, some teachers were taken as the participants to gain the data. Due to the subject's selection being an important step in conducting research, the study subjects were all English teachers who are teaching English as a foreign language in State Senior High School 1 Soe.

This study was focused on analyzing the teachers' professional competence in teaching English as a foreign language. The aspects analyzed were how teachers implement their professional competence in the form of knowledge mastery, creativity, and media use in the teaching and learning process. There were some steps in collecting the data for this study. As argued by Creswell (1994: 148), data collection steps involve setting boundaries for study, collecting information through observation, interviews, documents, visual materials, and establishing the protocol for recording information. There were two instruments used; observation checklists and interviews.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

The data of this study were gained by doing observation in the class when the teachers were teaching. There were four English teachers in State Senior High School Soe 1, as mentioned in the chapter. The observation was done for all four teachers. The result of this kind of data gained would be presented as follows.

To find out how teachers implement their competence, there were some ways to get the data. Several classroom observations were conducted to investigate the teachers' professional competence in teaching English as a foreign language. This stage was done by breaking down the competence into some parts. The focus was on three elements of teachers' professional competence: the teachers' knowledge mastery, creativity, and the use of media when the teaching and learning process. The analysis of observation results in the form of an observation checklist was presented below to explain the researcher's class observation to determine the professional competence of the English teachers in the teaching and learning process. The analysis was based on the table below:

Table 1. The Analysis of Teachers' Knowledge Mastery

No	Scope	Items	Score			
			T1	T2	T3	T4
1	Teacher's knowledge mastery.	1. The teacher knows the aspects of language (English).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		2. Teacher masters English oral and written productively and respectively in all aspects of communication.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		3. The teacher understands the standard and basic competence of the subject.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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		4. The teacher understands the learning goals	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		5. Teacher designs and implements interesting teaching and learning activities.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		6. The teacher selects and organizes subject content in a structured teaching and learning process that reflects what is taught.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		7. Teacher masters the lesson (materials)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Total Score						

Table 2. The Analysis of Teachers' Skills and Performance

No	Scope	Items	Score			
			T1	T2	T3	T4
2	Teacher' Creativity	1. The teacher reflects on his or her teaching continually and uses the result to improve the teaching quality.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		2. The teacher teaches using up to date materials from various sources.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		3. The teacher chooses and elaborates the teaching materials based on the students' level of understanding.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		4. The teacher uses questions and classroom discussions effectively to probe students' understanding of the content.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		5. The teacher selects, develops, and uses various appropriate resources and materials that engage the students and support their learning.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		6. The teacher demonstrates the capacity to apply effective strategies for teaching the students.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		7. The teacher applies current knowledge and skills that help the students to meet the learning outcomes.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Total						

Table 3. The Analysis of Teachers' Disposition

No	Scope	Items	Score			
			T1	T2	T3	T4
3	Teacher's use of media	1. The teacher uses computer/IT in the teaching and learning process.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

		2. The teacher uses the book published by the native speaker country as the secondary source.	No	No	No	No
		3. The teacher provides any sources for listening (CD/Cassette).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		4. The teacher uses books that are published by the government to support the teaching and learning process.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		5. The teacher uses the worksheet that was locally published by the school as the supporting source.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		6. The teacher uses a dictionary to check any difficult words or pronunciation.	No	No	Yes	No
		7. The teacher uses the handout as the primary source.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Total						

Discussions

Looking at the result of the researcher's observation, it was clear that in doing the teaching and learning process, the teachers could perform their ability in teaching well. The teachers' performance saw it in the classroom during the lesson. They prepared everything that needed to be related to the materials discussed and applied clearly and orderly in detail what they have prepared. It helped them organize and control the students well to learn the materials given. They applied every step of the scientific approach, and the students followed it well by doing it step by step that makes the learning student-centered. Simultaneously, the teachers only act as the learning facilitators who tried to help their students when they found difficulties. The class atmosphere was supportive because the teachers mastered the materials well and knew how to treat their students to motivate them to learn many things based on what they discussed. The teachers showed their knowledge mastery by explaining everything related to the materials discussed in every meeting and make the students understand the lesson well by giving the real examples that the students could find in their everyday life situation. The teachers also show their creativity by choosing and using appropriate media to support teaching and learning. They also used a suitable teaching method to let the student absorb the knowledge by themselves, so it encouraged them to work hard to solve every problem they found in learning. In dividing groups, the teacher divided by considering the students' ability, so they initiated it by asking them to make a group in pairs that indicated no dependency on particular students, but they need to work together.

In line with the observation result, the teachers said similar answers to the question related to the teachers' professional competence in teaching English as a foreign language. The teachers give some reasons stated based on what they have done in the teaching and learning process. The teachers also did some ways to

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encourage their students by using some strategies in the teaching and learning process. They applied particular strategies like giving quizzes to the students. They asked them to compete in groups, so after doing the quizzes, then their score was written down on the whiteboard, and the group with the highest score became the winner. By doing so, the students felt encouraged to learn. They sometimes give them interesting materials to learn, and when the students are bored, they told some jokes to refresh their minds so they could laugh, then they continued learning again. The teachers even asked the students to sing songs related to the topic discussed, so they keep focusing on the lesson. Sometimes, they applied the strategies to encourage the students by giving them motivation and suggestions, even rewards when they feel encouraged.

The findings of class observation and interview about the teacher's professional competence in the form of teachers' knowledge mastery, teachers' creativity, and media use showed some slight differences that the teachers owned on how to apply their professional competence. Some aspects could be identified from the finding data. All the teachers had good knowledge mastery in delivering the materials to the students. It could be seen by the way they communicate with the students during the lesson. The teachers also mastered the materials they discussed with the students in every meeting. The teachers believed that knowledge mastery was an important thing that needed to be owned by them from the interview. By mastering the materials, the teachers did not find serious difficulties when applying the lesson plan, delivering the materials, choosing the appropriate methods and teaching media, and evaluating the students' learning process.

Besides the ability to master the materials, the teachers were also had their creativity in teaching. Each of them had their creativity (skills) in managing the classroom when learning. They had different skills from one another. The teachers' creativity was shown by the way teachers demonstrated the capacity to apply effective strategies for teaching the students; thus, they selected, developed, and used a variety of appropriate resources and materials that engage the students to achieve the learning outcomes.

From the interview result, it could be seen that the teachers had different creativity (skills) in teaching. The teachers used all the creativity differences to support and motivate, even help the students in learning. The students were allowed to learn more many things when they were discussing something in the classroom or when they did the teaching and learning process by the teachers' creativity. The teachers knew the effective ways to apply the teaching strategies in learning and put the students in the group when they were working together to discuss something related to the materials discussed. Therefore, all the students actively participated in learning without depending on particular students with the good knowledge mastery or achievement.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

From the result of observations and interviews, all English teachers applied their professional competence well in the teaching and learning process. The teachers applied at least 95% of the professional competence in teaching English when the teaching and learning process was done. Moreover, in applying their

professional competence, all of the teachers applied it by seeing from the classroom's real situation, thus learning the students' needs.

All the teachers believed that teachers have to have good knowledge mastery that could be used to do the teaching and learning process. Moreover, the teachers creativity and use of media were also applied by teachers to help them learn effectively in finding much information related to the topic or the lesson discussed. When the teachers apply their knowledge mastery, creativity, and using media well in doing the teaching and learning process, it will automatically help the student understand the lesson well. By doing so, the goals of education will be achieved well.

From the portrait of observation and interview result, there were some suggestions to the teachers, especially English teachers who are teaching English as a foreign language, to apply the professional competence well in the teaching and learning process. Teachers also need to apply the appropriate teaching methods and media related to the students' skills to help the students comprehend the lesson delivered by the teachers.

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