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### Analysis on EFL teachers pedagogical problems at sampaga mamuju

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**Abstract.** This research investigated the pedagogical problems of EFL teaching practice in the rural area of Sampaga, in Mamuju. This research aimed: 1) To find out the EFL teachers' pedagogical problems at Junior High School in Sampaga, Mamuju; 2) To find out how the EFL teachers solve the pedagogical problems at Junior High School in Sampaga, Mamuju. The research employed a descriptive qualitative design in the context of a case study. The participants were three Junior High School English teachers in Sampaga, Mamuju. The data were collected through interviews and observation. The result of the research showed there are five EFL teachers' pedagogical problems found: 1) Very low ability to make lesson plans, 2) Less varied and innovative learning materials used in teaching, 3) Lack of up-to-date teaching methods and varied activities, 4) Limited knowledge of ICT, and 5) Lack of understanding of authentic assessment. This research also proposed ways to solve the problems based on the EFL teachers, as follow: 1) To increase the role of MGMP (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran) as a forum for teachers to share knowledge and skills, 2) To encourage Regional Education Authorities to carry out teacher development activities in line with technological developments, 3) To ask the Government to provide more chance for teacher to develop themselves through Teacher Professionalism Training Program or continue to higher education.

**Keywords:** EFL; Pedagogical; Teachers; SMP Sampaga.

## INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a foreign language is a significant challenge in developing countries such as Indonesia, especially in rural areas. Although English has been a compulsory subject from junior high school through higher education, its implementation has not yielded satisfactory outcomes. Despite years of instruction, many students in rural areas fail to meet the expected proficiency levels in reading, listening, writing, and speaking.

One of the major issues in English language teaching in Indonesia is the disparity in quality and access between urban and rural regions. Schools in urban areas tend to have better educational resources and teacher qualifications compared to those in rural settings. As noted by Luschei & Zubaidah, (2012), Indonesia's vast geographical landscape and numerous remote regions present substantial challenges to equitable education. Similarly, Hargreaves et al., (2009) reported that rural schools are disadvantaged due to limited access to qualified teachers and instructional resources.

In addition to geographical constraints, various educational factors contribute to low learning outcomes in rural areas. These include ineffective teaching methods, inadequate learning facilities, limited instructional media, and insufficient teacher competence. Previous studies also highlight common challenges such as the shortage of teaching materials, lack of technological access, and insufficient teacher training in English language pedagogy (A'ing, 2015) (Rosliana et al., 2015).

According to Law Number 19 of 2005, teachers in Indonesia must demonstrate four core competencies: professional, personal, pedagogical, and social. Among these, pedagogical competence is critical as it involves the ability to design and implement effective teaching processes, assess learning outcomes, and facilitate students' potential development. Fauth et al., (2019) emphasized the importance of pedagogical competence in enhancing student engagement and improving learning performance.

This study is considered essential, as teachers play a central role in determining the success of the teaching and learning process. Preliminary observations in Junior High Schools in Sampaga, Mamuju, revealed that many teachers lacked adequate preparation, resulting in disorganized classroom management and ineffective instructional delivery. Teachers also demonstrated limited creativity in utilizing available teaching media, particularly those based on information and communication technology (ICT).

Therefore, this research was conducted in a rural area of Mamuju, West Sulawesi, Indonesia, to identify pedagogical challenges faced by EFL teachers and explore strategies used to address these issues.

## **METHOD OF THE RESEARCH**

This study employed a descriptive qualitative case study design. Qualitative research is used to explore issues in depth and gain a comprehensive understanding of specific phenomena (Creswell, 2012). The findings of this study are presented descriptively based on interview transcripts and observation checklists. The research was conducted in Sampaga, Mamuju, with three English teachers from junior high schools in the area serving as participants. All participants were female, referred to by initials (Msd, Mi, and Mby) to ensure confidentiality.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants. According to Creswell, (2012), purposive sampling involves intentionally selecting individuals and research sites to best understand the central phenomenon. The three teachers were chosen based on preliminary observations, with the following considerations: (1) they have extensive teaching experience in Sampaga, Mamuju; (2) two of them teach at the largest and oldest junior high school in the region, while the third teaches at a school in a more remote area.

Data were collected through observations and semi-structured interviews. Classroom observations were conducted using a checklist to identify pedagogical challenges faced by EFL teachers. Semi-structured interviews were then carried out to obtain further information and clarify the observed findings. Additional documents such as photographs, audio recordings, and video recordings were also collected to provide a deeper understanding of the research focus.

The data were analyzed using an interactive model, which included data collection, data display, data reduction, and conclusion drawing/verification (Ridder et al., 2014).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

After analyzing the data, the findings are presented below based on the order of research questions;

### **1. The EFL teachers' pedagogical problems**

From the investigation, the researcher found that the three teachers all English Education undergraduate degree from universities, in order that basically they all have academic qualification to teach English. The teachers' pedagogical problems found are discussed as follow:

- a. Very low ability to make lesson plan

*Interviewer: Do you make your own Lesson Plan by yourself?*

*Interviewer: Actually to make the lesson plan by myself, honestly, I don't. For the lesson plan, I usually download it from internet. Because the internet has many Lesson Plans, I used to download some, and then I choose and match it with the school condition, then I edit it. Yes like that. To make it myself, I don't do it.*

The finding showed that the ability of the teachers is still very low. In fact, they admitted that they did not make lesson plan by themselves instead only retrieved the lesson plan from the internet. The teachers said that they edited the lesson plan but mostly it was only limited to identity of teacher, school, and other things.

*Interviewer: Do you use the lesson plan in teaching in the class?*

*Interviewee: The use of lesson plan in teaching. Ee.. Huumm.. I. don't.. I only teach directly, probably the Lesson Plan is as for formality and administrative only.*

The teacher honestly admitted that the lesson plan is only for administrative purpose. The teachers tend to teach without following the lesson plan, but mostly according to the course of the English book prepared by the school or the ministry of education.

- b. Less varied and less innovative learning Material used in teaching

*Interviewer: Do you use the lesson plan in teaching in the class?*

*Interviewee: The use of lesson plan in teaching. Ee.. Huumm.. I. don't.. I only teach directly, probably the Lesson Plan is as for formality and administrative only.*

Based on the result of the interview above, it can be interpreted that the school has prepared course book for the teacher. The teacher admitted that mostly she only used course book in teaching.

*Interviewer: What are the source of the material you used in teaching?*

*Interviewee: About the material, it is clearly from the book. But sometimes I also took from the Internet as addition.*

Another teacher also stated that the source of their material is from book. The teacher added that sometime she also took material from the internet. But during the observation, the teacher only use book as the main source in teaching.

- c. Lack of up-to-date teaching methods and varied activities.

*Interviewer: What method do you usually use in teaching?*

*Interviewee: Actually, I more often use conventional method.*

The teacher admitted that she used conventional method more often in teaching English in the class. The conventional method employed is like giving explanation, giving task, memorizing or reading.

*Interviewer: How do you teach in the class? What activity do you usually use?*

*Interviewee: The activity that I used to do, mostly I only explain the material firstly. And then directly, I give them task, sometimes I give them individual task or group task. Moreover, now the teaching should have been based on Curriculum 13. So the students should have been more active while the teacher just guide the students if they are out of the learning.*

Another teacher explained about the way she taught in the class. The teacher explained that she will always explain the material firstly, and giving task based on the text book either individually or group task. The students will be given a few minutes to do the task, and the teacher will check the students' task afterward.

- d. Limited knowledge on ICT

*Interviewer: What media and tools do you usually use in teaching?*

*Interviewee: Generally, white board. I rarely use laptop. Because the school only has one projector, so the teachers should take turn to use it. Thus, I mostly only use white board.*

The teacher stated that generally she will only use white board in teaching. The teacher said that she rarely use laptop and projector. She explained that it was because there was only one projector in the school, while there are many teachers in the school. Therefore, the teachers should take turn to use the projector.

*Interviewer: What media do you usually use?*

*Interviewee: The media sometimes, ee depend on the material, we sometimes use LCD (Projektor) in Class 8A, But usually in other classes we only use white board,*

marker, and book.

Another teacher explained that sometimes she used a projector in certain class. But the teacher mostly only uses whiteboard, marker, and book in other classes.

- e. Lack understanding of authentic assessment.

*Interviewer: How do you evaluate the students?*

*Interviewee: My method to evaluate the students is by giving them either individual or group task. I usually stand near the students to see how they do the task. Thus, we can see "ooh he/she really want to learn", "he/she is active", there are also some students who are careless with the task.*

The teacher explained how they usually doing assessment. She evaluated the students by giving them task in the class. Then she will observe the students directly to see whether the students do their task or not. The teacher will also evaluate how the students do their task.

*Interviewer: How do you do evaluation?*

*Interviewee: Usually, I directly observe in the class. Using like pre-test before teaching is never. So I do direct observation.*

Another teacher explained that she also evaluate the students by observe the students directly in the process of teaching. The teacher will directly ask the students about the material they are learning during the process of teaching. The teacher stated that she only evaluated the students during the process of lesson and gave test in the end of the lesson. The teacher also admitted that she never do pretest at the beginning of lesson.

## **2. The EFL teachers' ways to solve the pedagogical problems.**

This section provides what might be the solution to solve the problems in accordance with the teachers' expectation.

- a. To increase the role of MGMP (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran) as a forum for teachers to share knowledge and skills.

*Interviewer: What is your suggestion to solve the teachers' pedagogical problems?*

*Interviewee: For me.... Honestly, we have MGMP here. Everywhere has MGMP, but here in our region, the MGMP is not active. There are hardly any activities, so it will be better if the MGMP is active, then we can make activities which could improve the students' knowledge. We can share between the teachers about the up to date method, newest learning and teaching media. There we can share the best and newest method.*

Based on the transcript above, the teacher explained every region should have Teacher Union of Specific Subject (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran or MGMP). According to the teacher, MGMP in the countryside are mostly inactive. Therefore, the teacher proposed to increase the role of MGMP as a forum to share between the teachers about the up to date method, newest learning and teaching media.

- b. To encourage Regional Education Authorities (Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten) to carry out teacher development activities in line with technological developments.

*Interviewer: What is your suggestion to solve the teachers' pedagogical problems?*

*Interviewee: For the Education Authorities should support to make teachers' development activities. Don't just make the same activities. Because we are English teacher also think that Language development is also important.*

It can be seen from the extract the teachers hope that the Regional Education Authorities to support and carry out teachers' development activities. The teachers feel that teacher development activities are rarely carried out. They assumed that the Education Authorities only do the same activities without real impact on the teachers' development.

- c. To ask the Government to provide more chance for teacher to develop themselves through Teacher Professionalism Training Program or continue to higher education.

*Interviewer: What is your suggestion to solve the teachers' pedagogical problems?*

*Interviewee: For the central government, to pay more attention to the teachers in the countryside. It is better if the program for improving the teachers' competence in countryside would be prioritized. Such as teachers' training and certification.*

Based on the transcript above, the teachers admit that they want the central government to pay more attention the teachers' situation in the countryside. They stated that the government should prioritize more on the teachers' competence development in the countryside such as providing them a chance to attend teachers' training and certification.

*Interviewer: What is your suggestion to solve the teachers' pedagogical problems?*

*Interviewee: We hope that the government will provide more opportunities for teachers to develop themselves, for example take part in Teacher Professionalism Training Program (Program Profesi Guru or PPG) or teachers' certification.. or continue to higher education.*

Another teacher also hopes that the government provides more chances and rooms for teachers to improve their competence. The teachers hope they could take part in Teacher Professionalism Training Program (Pendidikan Profesi Guru or PPG) or continue to study to higher education.

### **Discussion And Conclusion**

The result of the research showed that there were five problems in pedagogical competence faced by the teachers in teaching English in Junior High School in Sampaga, Mamuju.

First, the finding showed that the teachers' ability to make lesson plan was insufficient. The teachers admitted that they did not make lesson plan by themselves instead only modified the lesson plan from the internet. Therefore, the lesson plan might not be suitable for the students' condition and needs, it might not be supported with the school's facilities and tools available. In fact, they admitted that the lesson plan is only to comply the administrative responsibility. The teachers tend to teach without following the lesson plan, and the teachers only teach according to the English course book provided by the school or the ministry of education. As result, the teachers sometimes go to the class without adequate preparation in terms of learning media and facilities to be used in teaching.

Secondly, learning Material used in teaching is less vary and innovative. The teachers are very dependent on only one source of material. Most of their material is solely from the course book. Although one of them stated that sometimes she takes additional material from the internet, but they commonly used books as the dominant learning source in the class. It is uncommon for them to use learning sources like audio, song, video, or picture in the class. Febriana et al., (2018) noted that rural schools have limited facilities, for example because supplementary textbooks are not available and learning media are of no value. Saiful & Triyono, (2018) found that the challenges of teaching English in rural areas are the very limited learning opportunities such as books and dictionaries, and the ease of preparing lessons. Ajibola, (2010) also added that ensuring the availability of sufficient textbooks, computers, hearing aids, practice tools and other educational tools is a difficult task.

Furthermore, the observation also confirmed that EFL teachers did not apply upto-date teaching methods as well as monotonous class activities. During the observation, the teachers only used traditional method such lecturing, explaining, and task-based activities. What worse is that the interview also exposed that one of the teachers only give task to the students for a few minutes, and later ask them to read their task one by one in front of the class until the end of the class. Doing this activity consumed much time that the lesson was not efficient enough in terms of time management. The teachers admitted that they rarely used activities such as sing a song, watching learning material, playing learning games or other interesting learning activities. Songbatumis, (2017) explained that one of the problems in the rural ELT sector is lack of teacher training, limited teaching method proficiency, IT ignorance, and lack of professional development.

Dealing with the latest technology to apply teaching, one of the problems arise is that the teachers did not possess enough knowledge on ICT to be applied in their class. The teachers admitted that they. As a result, the media used by the teachers are not vary. They had hard times operating media such as projector, recorder, smartphone and computer. The media in Information and Communicaitaion Technology (ICT) such as Youtube, Facebook, English video, quizzes, and other learning apps and websites are also never been used. In addition, the observation also showed that the teacher did not integrate any ICT in their teaching.

Finally, the research also found the lack of understanding of authentic assessment by the EFL teacher. According to Dirjen Pendidikan Islam Authentic (2014), Authentic assessments are measurements taken to holistically assess aspects of attitudes, knowledge and skills, from inputs to processes to learning outputs. The teacher has responsibility to assess all aspect of teaching such as performance and result. In authentic assessment, the teacher could assess using various ways and instruments. But from the interview and observation, it showed that the teacher only assesses the students by direct observation or giving task.

Regarding the problems above, some solutions expected to be able to solve those problems are proposed. First, the teachers need to increase the role of MGMP (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran) as a forum for teachers to share knowledge and skills. MGMP is a forum that facilitates the gathering of teachers of the same subject to develop the teachers' competence in teaching through discussion, sharing, coaching or training. The teacher stated that their MGMP hardly do any activities to develop teachers' competence. To activate and make use of this forum, the cooperation from Education Authorities (Dinas Pendidikan) and the teachers are needed. The Education Authorities as a policy maker at the district level should increase the MGMP role and encourage teachers to be active in MGMP activities to develop teachers' competence.

Second, Teachers to encourage Regional Education Authorities (Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten) to carry out teacher development activities in line with technological developments. It is expected that the Education Authorities to be more sensitive to the teachers' competence need in accordance with the latest development of the way of teaching and learning, method, media, and technology. It is also hoped the Regional Education Authorities to encourage all components of education such as teachers, teaching staff, head master, supervisors, as well as MGMP to play a role in developing teacher competence.

Last, the teacher hopes that the government provides more chance for teacher to develop themselves through Teacher Professionalism Training Program (Pendidikan Profes Guru or PPG) or continue to higher education especially for teacher in rural area.

## **CONCLUSION**

The teacher should have the courage to accept and admit their weaknesses in teaching in order to be able to find ways to solve their problems and develop their pedagogical competence. Most importantly, the teacher should have awareness and willingness to strive to develop themselves independently through learning, sharing, training, and innovating in accordance with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) development.

In addition, the researcher suggested that the Education Authorities should encourage all components of education such as teachers, teaching staff, head master, supervisors, as well as MGMP to play a role in developing teacher competence. Also, the Education Authorities should support and carry out teachers' development activities based on the teachers' need such as teacher training program, as well as encouraging the teachers to actively writing scientific papers or doing research.

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