

Perception of Senior High School EFL Teachers in Papua, Indonesia towards Their Own Competence

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Abstract—This paper reports the competence of the English Foreign Language (EFL) Senior High School (SHS) teachers in Papua, Indonesia which sought to investigate the EFL SHS teachers' perception towards their own competence. This cross-sectional survey research design applied multistage sampling technique in determining the sample of the study. There were 159 EFL SHS teachers from six selected townships in Papua as the sample. The researchers employed questionnaire and interview as the instrument for collecting data. Data were analyzed utilizing descriptive statistics to run for frequencies and percentages. The result revealed that the EFL SHS teachers in Papua perceived that their teacher competence was good. As the majority of the respondents (91.8%) contended that they possessed good competency and only a few of respondents (8.2%) claimed that their competence was very good. None of the respondents asserted either they have poor or fairly good competence.

Index Terms—perception, EFL teacher, teacher competence

I. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesian, English is a foreign language and a compulsory subject taught to students from grade seven to tertiary level (Lauder, 2008; Mattarima & Hamdan, 2011). English has even begun to be taught in the 4th grade of elementary school students as the prudence of the school (Indonesian Government Regulation, Number 28, 1990) or as a local content subject (Mappiase & Sihes, 2014). Although English in Indonesian schooling is formally taught to students from grade 7 to university level, the students' English proficiency, in general, is considered relatively low. Students graduated from schools or universities are still unable to show their ability to communicate in English (written and orally) intelligibly (Lengkanawati, 2005). Let alone graduated students from schools or colleges in Papua. Possessing good score in English does not guarantee that students are able to communicate in English (Rinantanti & Suhirman, 2017).

There are numerous causation factors to the lack success in EFL instruction in Indonesian schooling (Dardjowidjoyo, 2000; Yuwono, 2005; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Soepriyatna, 2012). These factors include the low motivation of students in learning English, over-crowded English learning classes, inadequate facilities and learning resources, the continuously changing curriculum, and less qualified or less competent of the English teachers (Hamied, 2001; Bradford's, 2007; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Sulistiyo, 2009; Kassing, 2011).

Given the factors that led to the less successful learning of English aforementioned, the writers assume that the less competent of the English teachers were the most crucial factor, especially in Papua province (Rinantanti, 2013). Papua is not very different from Maluku province in which facing complicated issues related to the teachers' competence (Bin-Tahir & Rinantanti, 2016). As the teachers' competence affect the quality of the teachers' performances or instructions and it is also a determinant of the student success (Soepriyatna, 2012). With regards to this, Jalal et al (2009:7) contend that "good quality of teachers can produce good quality of learners, and then the poor quality of teachers can contribute to the poor achievement of students." As the English proficiency of graduate students in Papua is relatively low, it is necessary to conduct a study to overcome this issue. Considering this, for the initial steps, investigating the perception of the EFL SHS teachers in Papua towards their own competence is necessary as their perception may steer and direct the teachers in their teaching performance.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Concept of Competence and Competency*

Competence and competency are interconnected words which have mingling meanings (Mulder, 2007). Competence ascribes to the Latin word *competentia* which means the deed, the enlightenment, skills, and responsibility in conducting something (Gniteki, 2005). Deakin (2008: 42) defines competence as a complex blend of knowledge, skills, understanding, values, attitudes, and desire of someone to do something in a certain domain effectively. Richards and Schmidt (2002: 94) define it as a description of the skills, knowledge, and behavior that a person needs to achieve effective performance in his or her job activities. So the word competence contains three main elements to indicate the effectiveness of a performance knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Knowledge is an awareness of a material or information that a person acquires through his or her experience, books or other media. Skill is a person's ability to perform certain tasks whereas the attitude shows the person willingness (Soepriyatna, 2012).

Competency according to Trinder (2008) is the standard of achieving in various levels of work. Gupta (1999: 24) defines competency as a person's ability in applying knowledge and skills to produce the expected product. Hence, competence refers to a person's knowledge and abilities; competency, on the other hand, refers to the description of how something should be done. Competency refers to the feature of knowledge, skills, and experience required in doing the job. In other words, it is the ability of someone to apply his/her knowledge and skill to produce a required outcome. So competency is a part of competence.

B. *Teacher Competence and Competency*

Teacher competence (henceforth TC) or teacher competency is a concept used in relation to educational contexts since the emerging of education reform throughout the globe (Mulder, 2007). TC is defined as "statement about what teachers are supposed to know and be able to do" (Bailey, 2006: 210). Soepriyatna defines teacher competence as "a description of skills, knowledge, and behaviors required by teachers to perform effective teaching" (2012: 38). Based on aforementioned definitions, it implies that teachers must have the knowledge, skills, and attitude of being effective and successful teachers or competent teachers. Hence, not everyone can be a teacher (Rinantanti, 2015) as teaching is an intricate prodigy. It takes into account a wide range of personality traits, professional abilities and specific knowledge (Cole & Chan, 2009).

A good teacher must have the basic knowledge for the teacher. They are the knowledge of the subject, pedagogical in general, curriculum and pedagogical content, the learners and their characteristics, educational context and educational goals (Shulman, 1987). Teachers must know the subject and how to teach it, the students and how they learn, how to create lesson plans, evaluate their instruction, communicate effectively to students, create and maintain a safe, fun, and challenging learning environment, manage their classes, constantly improve their professional knowledge and teaching, and active in the professionalism activities (Murray, 2009).

With regard to the language teachers in order to be able to teach the language effectively, teachers need to have "language specific competence," or good language proficiency factors, the role of content knowledge, teaching skills, contextual knowledge, the language teachers' identity, learner-focused teaching, pedagogical reasoning skills, theorizing from practice and membership of community practice as well as professionalism (Richards, 2011: 3). Teacher competence includes pedagogical, personality, social, professional and language proficiency competence (UURI No. 14, 2005).

C. *Perception*

Perception has a very close relationship with the attitude. Perception deals with the use of mind or senses to understand a person's surrounding. Attitude, on the other hand, is the person's feeling or a way of thinking about something based on their perception (Pickens, 2005).

Perception is the basis for understanding individual differences, as for how people perceive something will affect how people behave (Cillessen & Lafonta, 2002; Lópes, 2010). Teachers' attitude is the reflection of their perception and their perception can guide and set their sights on their own teaching (Artini, 2010). Teachers' instructions are related to their perception of teaching and learning and their perception often determines their decisions and affects many aspects of classrooms such as the interactions, activities, assessment, and students' engagement (Zhu & Wang, 2014; Stipek et al., 2001).

III. METHOD

This study attempted to describe the extent to which the EFL SHS teachers in Papua, Indonesia perceive their own competence in the present time, hence applying a cross-sectional survey research design was considered suitable. Survey research design is typically used to describe preferences, attitude, opinion, and perception of people of interest to the researcher (Latief, 2013; Ary, et al, 2007; Cohen, et al, 2007; Postlethwaite, 2005). In the cross-sectional survey data are collected one by one at a time (Creswell, 2010, Trochim, 2006).

Multistage random sampling technique was adopted to determine the sample of this study. The sample of this study (50% of the population) was 159 EFL SHS teachers derived from six selected townships in Papua province. In

collecting data the researchers applied self-constructed four-point Liker-type scale questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire has been piloted to 33 non-sample EFL SHS teachers to test the validity and the internal consistency of the items. The items were valid as the calculated of the *r* value were greater than the *r* table (0.449). The result of reliability testing through Cronbach’s Alpha Split-half technique value was 0.82. The interviews were used as the supporting data. Data were analyzed using the descriptive statistical method to run for the frequencies and percentages.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Results

The Perceptions of EFL SHS teachers in Papua towards their own level of competence was measured using questionnaire that consists of 50 items of statements covering the dimension of the pedagogical competence which encompasses of 26 items, the dimension of personal competence consists of 6 items of statements and so does the dimension of social competence, and the dimension of professional competence which consists of 12 items of statements. The finding presented based on the dimensions.

1. The Pedagogical Competence of the EFL SHS Teachers

The dimension of the teachers’ perception towards their pedagogical competence was measured using a questionnaire consisting of 26 items of the statement. The lowest score for each statement was 1 and the highest score was 4 so that the theoretical score was between 26 and 104. The minimum score of 26 exists if the respondents gave an answer choice 1 for each of statement and the maximum score of 104 exists when the respondents gave an answer choice 4 for every statement.

Data of the pedagogical competence dimension were then presented in frequency distribution list within 4 categories. The tendency of frequency distribution score of the EFL SHS teachers’ pedagogical competence can be seen in table 1 below.

TABLE 1.
THE FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS’ PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE

Interval	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
26 – 46	Poor	0	0
47 – 66	Fairly Good	0	0
67 – 86	Good	122	76.7
87 – 104	Very Good	37	23.2
Total		159	100

Table 1 indicates the frequency, percentage, and classification of the EFL SHS teachers’ perception towards their own level of pedagogical competence. Based on the table, it can be said that the teachers’ pedagogical competence was perceived of being acceptable. As most of the respondents (76.7%) stated that their pedagogical competence was good, while the rest of the respondents (23.2%) stated that their pedagogical competence was very good. The teachers’ perception towards their own pedagogical competence can be illustrated in the following figure.

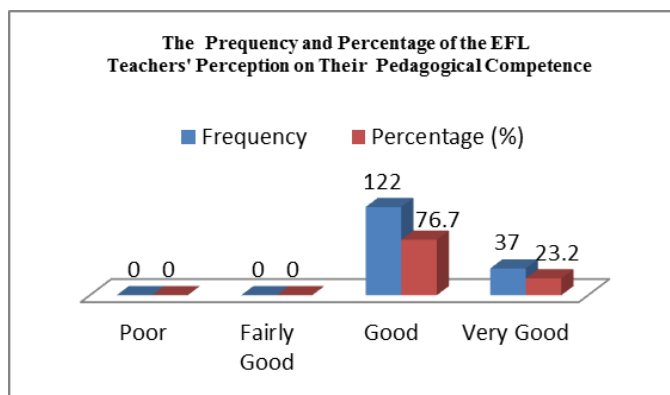


Figure 1. The Frequency and Percentage of EFL Teachers’ Perception on Their Pedagogical Competence

2. The Personality Competence of the EFL SHS Teachers

The dimension of the teachers’ perception towards their personality competence was measured using a questionnaire consisting of 6 items of the statement. The lowest score for each statement was 1 and the highest score was 4 so that the theoretical score of this dimension was between 6 and 24. The minimum score of 6 occurs if the respondent gave an answer 1 for each of statement and the maximum score of 24 occurs if the respondent gave an answer 4 for each statement.

Data of the personality competence dimension were then presented with the frequency distribution list within 4 categories. The tendency of the frequency distribution score of the personality competence of the teacher can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 2.
THE FREQUENCY & PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TEACHERS' PERSONALITY COMPETENCE

Interval	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
6 – 10	Poor	0	0
11 – 15	Fairly Good	0	0
16 – 20	Good	71	44.6
21 – 24	Very Good	88	55.4
Total		159	100

Table 2 indicates the frequency, percentage and the classification of the EFL SHS teachers' perception towards their own level of personal competence. From the table, it can be seen that the teachers' personality competence was great. Because more than 55% of the respondents perceived that their personality competence was very good and 44.6% of respondents perceived that it was good. There was no respondent stated either having poor or adequate competence. The personality competence distribution of the EFL teachers have can be illustrated in the following figure.

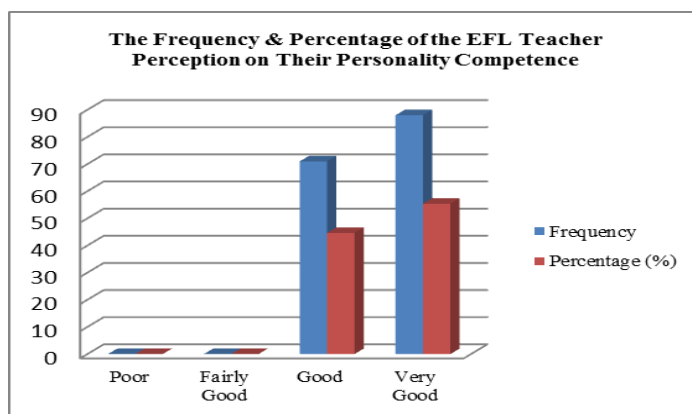


Figure 2. The Frequency and Percentage of the EFL Teachers' Perception on Their Personality Competence.

3. The Social Competence of the EFL SHS Teachers

The dimension of the teachers' perception towards their social competence was measured using a questionnaire consisting of 6 items of the statement. The lowest score for each statement was 1 and the highest score was 4 so that the theoretical score of this dimension was between 6 and 24. The minimum score of 6 occurs when the respondent gave an answer 1 for each of statement and the maximum score of 24 occurs when the respondent gave an answer 4 for each statement.

Data of the social competence dimension were then presented with the frequency distribution list within 4 categories. The tendency of the frequency distribution score of the social competence of the teacher can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 3.
THE FREQUENCY & PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TEACHERS' SOCIAL COMPETENCE

Interval	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
6 – 10	Poor	0	0
11 – 15	Fairly Good	1	0.6
16 – 20	Good	141	88.6
21 – 24	Very Good	17	10.6
Total		159	100

Table 3 shows the frequency, percentage and the classification of the EFL SHS teachers' perception towards their social competence. Based on this table, it can be asserted that the social competence of the teacher was good. From 159 respondents, there were only 0.6% of the respondent who stated that their social competence was desirable. Less than 11% of respondents stated that their social competence was marvelous and the rest of respondents (88.6%) claimed that they have good social competence. The teachers' perception towards their social competence can be displayed in the following figure.

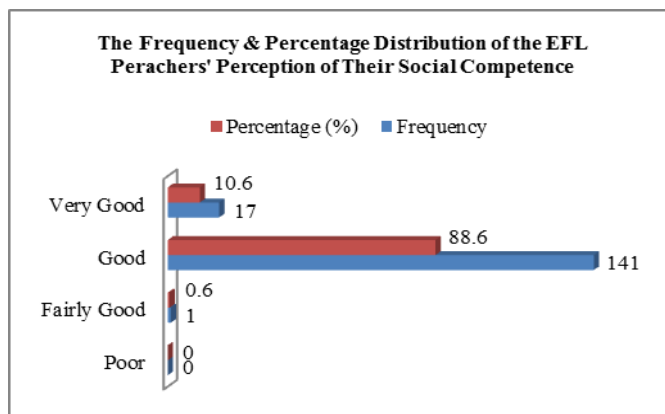


Figure3. The Frequency and the Percentage of the EFL Teachers' Perception on Their Social Competence

4. The Professional Competence of the EFL SHS Teachers

The dimension of the teachers' perception towards their professional competence was measured using a questionnaire consisting 12 items of the statement. The lowest score for each statement was 1 and the highest score was 4 so that the theoretical score of this dimension is between 12 and 48. The minimum score of 12 occurs if the respondent gave an answer 1 for each of statement and the maximum score of 48 occurs if the respondent gave an answer 4 for each statement.

Data the professional competence dimension were then presented with the frequency distribution list within 4 categories. The tendency of the frequency distribution score of the professional competence of the teacher can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 4.
THE FREQUENCY & PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

Interval	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
12 – 21	Poor	0	0
22 – 31	Fairly Good	2	1.2
32 – 40	Good	139	87.4
41 – 48	Very Good	18	11.3
Total		159	100

Table 4 indicates the frequency, percentage and the classification of the EFL SHS teachers' perception towards their professional competence. Based on the table, it can be asserted that the professional competence of the EFL SHS teacher was great. From 159 respondents, there were 18 (11.3%) respondents stated that their professional competence was very good. Even though 2 (1.2%) respondents stated that theirs are not so good, but the majority (139 or 77.4%) of the respondents claimed that theirs are good. The teachers' perception towards their professional competence can be displayed in the following figure.

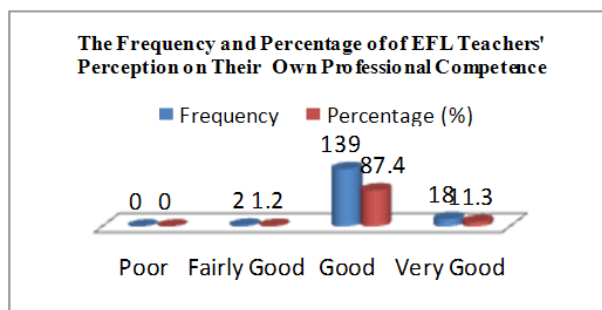


Figure 4. The Frequency and Percentage of the EFL Teachers' Professional Competence

The EFL SHS teachers' perception towards their teacher competence in a whole was measured using a questionnaire which consists of 50 items of statements. The lowest score of each statement was 1 and the highest score was 4 so that the theoretical score was between 50 and 200. The minimum score of 50 exists when the respondents gave an answer 1 for each of the statement and the maximum score of 200 exists when the respondent gives an answer 4 for each of statement.

Data from the questionnaire were presented in frequency distribution list within 4 categories. The tendency of the frequency distribution score of the EFL teachers' perception towards their competence can be seen in table 5 below.

TABLE 5.
THE FREQUENCY & PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON THEIR COMPETENCE

Interval	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
50 – 90	Poor	0	0
91 – 130	Fairly Good	0	0
131 – 170	Good	146	91.8
171 – 200	Very Good	13	8.2
Total		159	100

Table 5 indicates the frequency, percentage, and classification of SHS EFL teachers' perception towards their own competence. Even though based on separate dimensions of this variable there were considerable amount of respondents who claimed that they were excellence on certain dimension, for instance on their personality competence (more than 50%), on their pedagogical competence (23.2%), on their social competence (10.6%), and on their professional competence (11.3%), in general however, the teachers competence cannot be stated that it was very good. As the majority of the respondent (91.8%) stated that the competency that they possessed was good and only a few of respondents claimed that they had a very good competence. The teachers' perception towards their own competence than can be illustrated in the figure bellow.

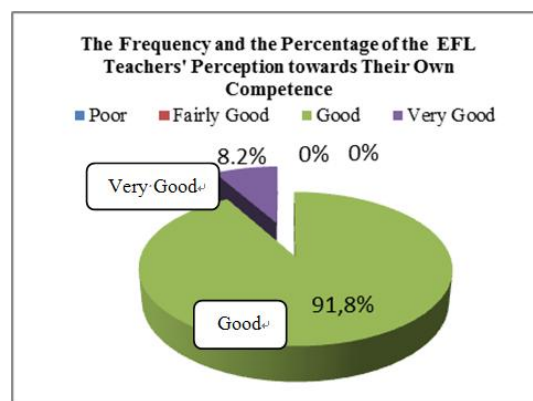


Figure 5 The Distribution of the Frequency and Percentage of the SHS EFL Teachers' Perception towards Their Competence

B. Discussions

This study revealed that the perception of EFL SHS teacher in Papua towards their pedagogical competence was good. The teachers' knowledge of their students and their characteristics reached the highest mean score of 3.66, followed by the ability of the teacher in designing the lesson plans and using the result of assessment for various aims with the means score of 3.53 and 3.37 respectively. From the interview found that teachers believed that knowing their students was pivotal (Shulman, 1987; Murray, 2009). It indicates the teachers' awareness that it benefits teachers in making suitable lesson plans, selecting and developing the suitable teaching material, as well as designing the classroom activities that engage students in learning (Richards, 2011). Without understanding the background of the students, the teachers will not certainly able to make the suitable teaching preparation and run effective instructions.

With regard to their personality competence, teachers perceived it as very good. Teachers felt that being proud and confident to be the English teacher is mandatory. It reached the highest mean score of 3.59, followed by behaving honestly, humanly, wisely and firmly reached the mean score of 3.33. Being proud to be teachers was necessary (Bhargawa & Pathy, 2011; Zhu & Wang, 2014). It can generate a sense of joy and triggers teachers to do things as best as they could in carrying out their duties. The teacher also realized that upholding the teaching profession code was imperative. As it was a set of moral principle and norm that underlie the implementation of the teachers' professional duties and services in relation to students, parents, colleges, and professional organization as well as the government in accordance with religious, educational, ethical and humanitarian values.

On the subject of the teachers' social competence, the teacher perceived it as good. Teachers ascertained that they have to be objective and do not discriminate students (Bhargawa & Pathy, 2011). Treating students fairly will create the best learning atmosphere and then this will increase the student motivation to learn. Competent teachers have to be able to communicate well with students, colleges, parents, and communities. Social interaction is absolutely necessary for teachers (Magelinskaitė, Kepalaitė, & Legkauskas, 2014).

As for the professional competence, the teacher perceived that their ability to communicate in English both orally and written, productive and receptive skills within all communication aspect was the best with the mean score of 3.98, followed by mastering the standard and core competencies of teaching English at SHS with the mean score of 3.96. The EFL SHS teachers in Papua were fully aware that mastering the material, the concept, the structures of the language, and the scientific approaches that support the teaching was absolutely indispensable. Similarly, to the mastery of standard competencies and core competencies of the English subject. Teachers must be able to develop teaching material creatively, develop their professionalism in sustainable reflective action, and utilizing ICT to support their

instruction and develop personally. According to Hilferty (2009), the teachers' professional competence dimension was the core competence of the teacher because it encompasses both pedagogical competence dimension and the knowledge of the subject being taught.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the finding and the discussion above, it can be concluded that the perception of EFL SHS teachers in Papua toward their competence was commendable. It is more than 90% of the EFL SHS teacher respondents contended that their competence was good. The EFL teachers were fully aware that possessing, internalizing, mastering and actualizing the teacher competence in accomplishing their professional responsibilities are mandatory. This study has an important theoretical and practical contribution to teachers' professional development. EFL teachers with such awareness logically should have excellent competencies. Therefore, it is necessary for conducting in-depth research on how these teachers perceptions can steer and direct their instructions.

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