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INVESTIGATING PLURILINGUAL AND PLURICULTURAL COMPETENCE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AT ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate teachers' pluricultural and plurilingual competencies in foreign language teaching at the Islamic boarding school. The field research method was conducted by using qualitative and quantitative approaches. The Qualitative Data aims to explore descriptive information about teachers' perception of the pluricultural and plurilingual competence in foreign language teaching at Islamic boarding school. While the quantitative approach aims to determine research results statistically. The subjects of this research were foreign language teachers at Islamic boarding schools in several regions in Indonesia. The Instruments of the research consisted of questionnaires and interviews. Data is collected through distribution virtual questionnaire using Google Form. Statistical questionnaire data using score calculations using the T x Pn formula. The Interpretation results of the data statistically shows that foreign language teachers' perceptions of Pluricultural competency is concluded as good category because it reaches 67%. Meanwhile the percentage interpretation of foreign language teachers' perceptions of competence plurilingual is also in good category by 73%. it can be concluded that the foreign language teachers at the Islamic boarding school perceived good plurilingual and good pluricultural.

Keywords: Plurilingual, pluricultural, foreign language Teaching, Islamic Boarding School.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding school (Pesantren) is an institution for Islamic studies that has a long history in Indonesia. It has a characteristic of students' social background where they come not only from one particular group of society but also from various parts communities of Indonesia and even abroad. This condition makes pesantren such as miniature of Indonesia, at least in the context of academic pluralism. This phenomenon has also socially a direct impact on pesantren in the form of a multi-cultural community.

Over the years, the education system in Islamic boarding schools has typologically shifted. Dhofier (1983) stated that the of Islamic boarding schools' typology divided into two main types such as the Salafi boarding schools which only focus on the teaching of Islamic literatures *turots* as the core of education, and secondly is Modern Islamic boarding schools

which integrated between religious studies and general science and also as an open public school in the Islamic boarding school environment.

On the other hand, Savage and Armstrong stated in (Thobroni & Mustafa, 2011) that Pluricultural and Plurilingual education can helps language learners to recognize the cultural diverse and linguistic views, and it also assists them in developing their cultural heritage and language behavior. In the foreign language learning context, the term pluricultural and plurilingual is part of the material component that cannot be separated in every language learning. This is because the understanding of pluricultural and plurilingual values has several dimensions that should be applied in language learning. In general, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism can accelerate language and cultural learning, as they use of pre-existing sociolinguistic and pragmatic skills, achieve a better perception of the linguistic organization of different languages (metalinguistic and inter-language awareness), and enhance their knowledge of how to learn and able to establish relationships with other people and new situations (Niemczyk, 2019).

The reason above leads the writer to take an account to conduct the research on pluricultural and plurilingual competence in foreign language learning. Questioning how Pluricultural and Plurilingual competence is integrated in foreign language learning in boarding schools and how teacher perceive the awareness of pluricultural and plurilingual are the main focus of this study. The author also limits the subject of research where only foreign language teachers become respondents. The object of research is also limited to their pluricultural and plurilingual competencies.

From the background above, there are two important things that are the purpose of this research, knowing the understanding of pluricultural values owned by foreign language teachers in Pesantren and measuring the competence of Plurilingual values competence possessed by foreign language teachers in pesantren.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Pluricultural Plurilingual

The term of plurilingual and pluricultural competence according to (Delgado and Algarra 2019) refers to the ability to use language and intercultural interaction for communication respectively. The communicative competence focuses on people as social actors with different competence in language and cultural experiences. It includes knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that possible lead to act and interact with others in a specific cultural environment. Likewise, the concept of "plurilingual social actor" emphasizes the relationship between linguistic and cultural diversity, including the strategies used in a certain context. In short plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use language for communication purposes and to take part in intercultural interactions where a person situated as a social actor has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experiences several cultures and not seen as a superposition or juxtaposition of different competencies, but rather as the existence of complex or even composite competencies on which a social actor can draw (Coste and Simon2019).

Simplistically, culture is perceived as a unique reality which provides a series of clichés, stereotypes such as the notion that Javanese are gentle, Batak people are rude, and so on. However, culture basically in a wider comprehension, it sense is the combination of characteristics that distinguish members of one social group among different people in an individual level. Cultural features are not only related to the country in which one is born or

grows, but also configured by a highly variable set of factors. These range from aspects of religion, family, personality, friends, economic, education, profession etc.

The basic concept of pluriculturality is to analyze and characterize situations of coexistence between different cultures, without intervene into differences and distinctions. On the other hand, interculturality concerns how different cultures relate to each other, respecting their differences and seeking relationships and communication without coercion (Schrieffer 2016).

Plurilingualism differs from multilingualism, where it is the comprehension of a number of languages, or the coexistence of different languages in a given society. The plurilingual approach emphasizes the reality as a person's individual experience of language evolves in his cultural context from their own language to the language of society and to the languages of others, it does not keep these languages and cultures in a strictly separation mental dictionary, but rather builds a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contribute to languages interrelation and interaction".

In the other side, plurilingual and pluricultural approaches can also accelerate language and cultural learning, as they make use of pre-existing sociolinguistic and pragmatic skills, achieve a better understanding of the linguistic organization of different languages, when language learning is involved in communicative situations, awareness should be presented in two directions such as language learners should be aware of the plurality identity of their interlocutors and language learners should be aware of the cultural conventions of the language they use. Language is a culture-bound phenomenon, and there are conventions that set up every communicative act in both written and spoken. An awareness of such cultural conventions can facilitate communication at the same time, a positive attitude of the listener/reader can prevent them to ignore, forget or scaffold in the conventions (Barnlund 1994: 30).

Islamic Boarding School

Islamic boarding school (pesantren) is the center for Islamic studies that has existed before the independence of Indonesia. It grows along the local wisdoms fo Nusantara throughout history. The Islamic boarding school that familiarly called as pesantren refers to the place of a traditional education for santri to learn Islamic knowledge. Nurcholis in (Abudinnata, 2001) explained that pesantren etymologically comes from the Javanese language; catrik (a student who always follows the teacher wherever he goes to learn his craft). The word "pesantren" is morphologically taken from the word "santri" itself, starting with "pe", ending with "an", and means as a dormitory for students. Nurcholis defines that boarding school is a traditional educational institution to study, understand, live and practice Islamic teachings by emphasizing the importance of religious morals to guide daily behavior. Furthermore, Ridwan in (Erma, 2017) added that pesantren is also a religious institution that organizes education and teaching that disseminates Islamic sciences. In short, Pesantren is a public house for santri (KBBI, 1995) who want to learn religious sciences (MPR Socialization Working Team 2017).

METHOD

This research uses qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach aims to explore descriptive information and the quantitative approach aims to statistically determine the results of the research. The subjects of this study were foreign language teachers in Islamic boarding school in Indonesia.

The research instrument was adopted from Silvia Melo-Pfeifer and Christian Ollivier (2023) with 13 questionnaire statements about pluricultural, 12 statements about plurilingual and followed by five open-ended interview questions. Data were collected through virtual questionnaires using google forms. Open-ended interview data was analyzed interpretatively to obtain a general interpretation. Meanwhile, the questionnaire data was analyzed statistically using the T x Pn formula such as follow:

Calculation formula: T x Pn

T = Total respondents

Pn = skor Likert.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data of this study were obtained through distributing questionnaires to several foreign language teachers in modern pesantren in several regions in Indonesia. Only foreign language teachers are the subjects of this study where they are the participants who fill out the questionnaire. The Pluricultural and Plurilungual (PPC) Questionnaire adopted from Gruber and Bailay (2021) is a series of statements to measure how PPC can be reflected in the language and cultural behavior of foreign language teachers in pesantren. A total of 12 foreign language teachers participated as respondents in this study. A total of 24 statements (Galante, 2018) were given to the teachers to allow them to respond on a Likert scale; strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. Data on whether foreign language teachers perceive themselves as plurilingual or pluricultural or both through this study will be described in qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Prior to the respondents filling out the questionnaire, the author conducted an interview by asking several questions related to the objective conditions and social background of the students and teachers in the pesantren, foreign language textbooks and curriculum used by the pesantren, motivation for cultural diversity of the teachers, and teaching experience of foreign language teachers. The data obtained by the author through these interviews indicate that the students and teachers come from various regions with different languages and cultures, the foreign language textbooks used partly contain cultural competence, all students and teachers have the motivation to learn in order to understand cultural diversity. Meanwhile, the experience of the teachers in teaching foreign languages is an average of more than three years of experience.

Percentage interpretation data analysis.

The acquisition of quantitative data on the results of questionnaire calculations related to the perceptions of foreign language teachers in pesantren towards pluricultural understanding obtained a fairly high value score with a range of 43% to 90% as in the following table:

Tabel I

No.	Pluricultural Statements	SS	S	N	TS	STS	Total skor
		5	4	3	2	1	Yx100
1	I am reluctant to accept cultural differences when talking to people of a different culture.	1	1	1	5	4	43%
2	2 Then communicating with culturally different people, I	3	6	3	0	0	78%

	feel the need to adapt my speaking style to theirs.						
3	3 find it difficult to explain stereotypical things from my culture when interacting with people from different cultures.	0	4	3	5	0	58%
4	When I already know more than two cultures, it does not mean I can easily learn a new culture.	0	11		1	0	77%
5	I don't want to learn about other cultures, except those related to English/Arabic.	0	0	4	5	2	40%
6	Cultural differences are sometimes considered weird to some people, but normal to others.	2	6	0	4	0	70%
7	I find it easy to talk to people from different cultures and discuss similarities and differences in viewpoints.	2	6	2	2	0	70%
8	Someday, the language I speak now will become more or less fluent depending on the experiences I have and the way I use the language.	4	8	0	0	0	87%
9	We need to share the same values and beliefs as culturally different people in order to understand each other.	6	3	1	2	0	82%
10	People of different cultures in order to understand each other.	1	4	3	4	0	55%
11	When communicating with people of different cultures, I find it difficult to explain misunderstandings.	7	4	1	0	0	90%
12	To have a good understanding of the people of the world, I have to study the similarities and differences between cultures.	4	7	1	0	0	51%
13	I understand there are differences in intercultural communication, so I need to adjust my behavior to avoid being misinterpreted.	4	7	1	0	0	51%
Total score of percentage							67%

Based on the assessment referring to the interpretation of the percentage, the perception of foreign language teachers towards pluricultural competence is in the good category because it is at a value of 67%.

0% – 19,99% : very disagree

20% – 39,99% : disagree

40% – 59,99% : Neutral

60% – 79,99% : agree

80% – 100%   : very agree

Based on the quantitative data above, the author analyzes descriptively the participants' responses related to their understanding of pluriculturalism in learning activities. There are several main points of pluricultural competence in learning that are explored with foreign language teachers in pesantren based on this research instrument.

Willing to accept cultural differences and being able to adjust the style of speech in communication (items 1 and 2). The respondent's data score shows a high percentage. This shows that when teachers are dealing with students of different cultures, they do not feel objections to communicating. Item 2 also shows that foreign language teachers can adjust the style of communication when talking to people of different cultures. They are also able to discuss similarities and differences in viewpoints (items 7 and 12). This is important because being a teacher in an institution with a heterogeneity profile requires accepting and adapting to speaking in cultural diversity. However, respondents generally find it difficult to understand things related to stereotypes in certain cultures and they realize that sometimes cultures will be strange to certain people and normal to others. (items 3 and 6).

The motivation to learn about cultural diversity from foreign language teachers in pesantren is also quite high. They do not feel it is enough to know only one culture, especially in relation to foreign languages (items 4 and 5). They also realize that we need to learn and share the same values and beliefs as people of different cultures in order to understand each other (items 9, 10 and 11).

There is a high level of confidence among foreign language teachers in their fluency in the future in relation to their ability to use the language they have mastered. This shows their awareness that a person's ability to competence in a language may decrease depending on the frequency of their use of the language (item 8).

No.	Plurilinguals Statements	SSS	SS	N	TSS	STS	Total skor
		5	4	3	2	1	Y x 100
1	When speaking to someone whose language is NOT the same as mine, I feel comfortable switching from one language to another.	5	6	1	0	0	88%
2	When speaking a foreign language such as English/Arabic, I find it easy to use expressions that do not exist in English.	2	8	1	1	0	78%

3	I easily adapt my interlocutor's communication style despite cultural differences.	5	5	1	1	0	83%
4	I am reluctant to understand people who speak a language I don't know, even if they speak slowly.	0	3	2	6	1	51%
5	I speak my first language and English, but I also know words and expressions in other languages.	2	6	4	0	0	77%
6	When talking to someone who speaks the same language, I find it hard to respond when they switch from one language to another.	0	2	2	7	1	55%
7	The more languages I know, the better I understand the people of the world.	6	6	0	0	0	90%
8	When we talk to people whose language is the same as mine, we should not use two languages at once in a conversation.	0	3	1	6	0	45%
9	When I already know more than two languages, it means I can easily learn a new language.	1	9	2	0	0	78%
10	I can recognize some of the languages others speak if they are similar to mine (e.g. same language family).	4	7	1	0	0	78%
11	When working on a task with someone whose language is similar, we should use only one language and not switch to another.	1	4	6	1	0	99%
12	I get together with several people interacting in a variety of languages, I find it difficult to keep up.	0	3	3	6	0	55%
	Total score percentage						73%

Based on the assessment referring to the interpretation of percentages, the perception of foreign language teachers towards pluricultural competence is in the Good category because it is at a value of 73%.

The same thing is also done by the author, namely descriptively analyzing the results of quantitative data. The author each item of statement from the participant's response related to their understanding of plurilingualism in learning activities. In each statement contained in the questionnaire has the aim of exploring pluricultural competence in each individual foreign language teacher in pesantren.

Based on statement item number 1, it shows that foreign language teachers in pesantren have good foreign language competence. They find it easy to switch from one language to another in communicating even they also have no difficulty expressing other foreign language terms in daily communication (item 2), they also recognize some of the languages used by others that are similar to their language (item 10, 78%). In terms of communication style, they are also quite flexible, able to use communication styles despite different cultures (item 3). Even when talking to someone whose language is not the same as theirs, they feel comfortable switching from one language to another. The percentage of respondents was quite high with 88% (item 1). In addition, they also have sufficient vocabulary of foreign languages other than Arabic and English (item 5).

From the point of view of motivation to learn a foreign language, it is also quite good. It can be seen in their response to the function of language as a way to understand the culture of the world community (item 7). They also realize that understanding the behavior of a particular society is not enough with just the language (item 9).

In terms of language ethics, there are various responses from participants. They tend to be neutral when faced with the willingness to understand other people's language that they do not understand (item 4, 51%). They also realize that when gathering with people with different languages, it is difficult to understand their communication (item 12, 55%.), (item 6. 55%). Respondents also believe that using one language that is mutually understood between them is better than using multiple languages in the same communication process (item 8, 54%), (item 11, 99%).

CONCLUSION

After investigating the pluricultural and plurilingual competence of foreign language teachers in pesantren, the author concludes that:

- Foreign language teachers in pesantren have a fairly good plurilingual competence where they have good foreign language competence, being able to communicate styles they are quite flexible.
- Foreign language teachers in pesantren are able to use communication styles despite different cultures. They also feel comfortable switching from one language to another. Their foreign language learning motivation towards the function of language as a way to understand the culture of the world community is also quite high, as well as their awareness that understanding people's behavior must be comprehensive not only with language alone.
- In terms of ethics, they tend to be neutral when faced with the need to understand other people's language that they do not understand. They also realize that when gathering with people with various languages, it is difficult to understand the communication.
- Foreign language teachers in pesantren also believe that using one language that is mutually understood between them is better than using various languages in one communication process at once.
- The foreign language teachers in the pesantren have an attitude of accepting cultural differences and are able to adjust the style of speech in communicating and can adjust the style in communicating when talking to people of different cultures, they are also able to discuss similarities and differences in viewpoints.
- The foreign language teachers in the boarding school have a high motivation to learn about the cultural diversity of the foreign language teachers, not feeling that it is

enough to know only one culture, especially with regard to foreign languages. They also realize that we need to learn and share the same values and beliefs as people of different cultures.

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