

Linking Language Proficiency to Teaching Competence: A Case Study of EFL Teachers in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

In Indonesia, English teachers and lecturers have to pass specific number of TOEFL score as a passing card to carry out teaching activity. Yet, there is no further observation from researchers or government about how much the English teachers' proficiency affects the classroom instruction capability. Hence, this research is worth pursuing to reveal information for teachers' professional development. This study is a case study that aims to gather information about the relation between English teachers' proficiency and teaching skills. The data were obtained from semi-structured interview and class observation. To analyse the data, the researchers coded the data manually to eliminate errors. There are two English lecturers from one private University in Malang, East Java, Indonesia as the participants of this study. They were selected purposefully based on their level of general proficiency in English. This study revealed that high level of English proficiency alone cannot be a single indicator for conducting effective English teaching and learning process. Teachers need to obtain both high level of language proficiency and own pedagogical skills to provide optimised learning and teaching environment. This research is seen as a fundamental framework for teachers to improve their English teaching perseverance.



1. Introduction

In the field of English language teaching, English language teaching competence should include many aspects including English proficiency or known as the capability of someone to teach English subject through English language. Based on the common conventional, the more someone understands a language, the better prepared someone is to instruct it in classroom (Richards, 2017). Commonly speaking, English proficiency means someone's ability to use English for a range of communicative purposes. According to Madya et al. (2018) and Renandya et al. (2018), a teacher's language proficiency relates to the teacher's capacity to utilise the language for any communicative aims. Those include mastery of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, speech, and also writing skills. There are 5 indicators to indicate that someone has a good English proficiency, they are "accuracy, fluency, complexity, appropriacy, and capacity" (Richards, 2017).

For instructional and certification purposes, there are some standardised test to measure the English proficiency like CEFR, TOEFL, TOEIC, and IELTS (Renandya et al., 2018). In Indonesia, common standardised tests that are used to measure English proficiency for certification and instructional aims is TOEFL and TOEIC test. Considering the popularity of TOEFL test in Indonesia, a pertinent point to consider is whether or not TOEFL alone is an adequate assessment for assessing educators' language competency. As many scholars claimed that English teachers require to

obtain many complex skills in order to able to teach English subject effectively through English language (Faez et al., 2019; Renandya et al., 2018; J. C. Richards, 2017).

Since English has been a global demand for education programs around the globe because of its dominant position in many countries, there is a burgeoning solicitation for qualified, competent, knowledgeable, and professional English teachers to support the demand. That is why, English language proficiency is a crucial elements that should be owned by an English educators to make up their professional knowledge (Renandya et al., 2018). Since decades ago, there are increasing demand for English around the world. As the consequence, it has resulted in a demand for a large number of English teachers that should have the important qualifications, they are English proficiency, content mastery, and pedagogical skills (Anderson, 2016; Coniam & Falvey, 2013; Sahin & Yildirim, 2016). It can be said that the teacher's language proficiency is seen as an essential indicator of their expertise and considered as a good English teacher. Indeed, every teacher has a teacher guide book. Still, the teacher's book itself needs the teacher's ability to understand the content and adequate knowledge of the subjects and the ability or skills to figure out how to use it according to what they and their students need.

In Indonesia itself, there are some negative evaluation concerns about English language learning, they are the teachers' limited theoretical and linguistic knowledge (Renandya et al., 2018). According to the Ministry of

Education and Culture of Indonesia, there are so many English teachers who teach International Standard schools (RSBI) that have insufficient language proficiency based on their TOEIC test result. The below expectation language proficiency of Indonesian English teachers can be a big problem for English language learning (Richards, 2017). Richards (2017) explained that in South Korea in 2004, from more than ten thousand English teachers from primary to secondary school level, there were 92% had insufficient English proficiency in order to teach English effectively. According to the report, the teachers' limitation became an issue that interfere the English teaching and learning process. Renandya et al. (2018) explained how important it is for teachers in Indonesia to master English and gain the English language proficiency level before they teach English classes. When the teacher has passed the required measurement of advanced language proficiency, they are considered fluent language users and can deliver the students' language knowledge.

Referring to the Indonesian Regulation of Teachers and Lecturers Article 1 Verse 9, "academic qualification is academic certification according to educators' formal education level and unit in wherever they are assigned at." Furthermore, in the same Law of Teachers and Lecturers, Article 1 Verse 12 added, "educator certification is a formal warrant given for teachers and lecturers as professional workers." As mentioned in the same teachers and lecturers' law, the only department that can release educator certification, Article 47 Verse 1, "the passed certification is only provided by a university that provides an education procurement program endorsed by the government." Those are the global indicator, but for English teachers, they have to pass some specific number of TOEFL test score. However, there is no study or statement from the government or researchers on the relation between English teachers' proficiency and their classroom instruction capability. Yet, it is crucial to be researched to provide data for teachers' professional development (Ambrose-Yeoh, 1988; Marashi & Azizi-Nassab, 2018). Thus, the research question underlying this study is, "how is the relationship between English teachers' language proficiency and their teaching performance?" This article begins with review of related literature, research method, followed by a presentation of finding, discussion, and a conclusion of the analysis.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Language Proficiency of Teachers

It is difficult and complex to define about language proficiency. Language Proficiency is context-bound in which distinctive level as well as kinds of proficiency are needed for distinctive context and objective. The complexity is compounded by the varieties of English. Teachers who have higher proficiency in a language variety do not mean that they have high level of proficiency in all varieties of language (Mahboob & Barratt, 2014). Thus, the problem of

educator's language proficiency and the degree of proficiency needed to be successful in teaching and learning activity is a complex issue.

The majority of research on teachers' language proficiency has focused on teacher's general proficiency (Faez & Karas, 2017), which is a matter of consideration for non-native English teachers (Richards, 2010). He stated that in order to teach efficiently and successfully, educators must achieve a particular level of proficiency. Tsang (2017) emphasised the concept of a proficiency threshold, arguing that educators' general proficiency has an essential role in the class, yet just to a certain extent, when a specific threshold is reached, other considerations like pedagogical competence and personalities become more vital. Nevertheless, given the variety of contexts, cultures, duties, as well as contents in which teachers must act, the standard remains elusive (Faez et al., 2019).

Although the focus on teachers' language proficiency is important, it has yielded in unfavorable situation. For instance, native speakers are sometimes preferred over non-native speakers in recruiting practice since several conditions relate the word "nativeness" with successful instruction (Freeman et al., 2015). According to the term "native-speakerism" of Holliday (2006), the situation is pervasive concept in language teaching, thus, "nativeness" is still classified as a recruiting standard (Mahboob, 2013).

There are some previous studies related to language proficiency. A study conducted by van Canh & Renandya (2017) in Vietnamese context. The study investigated about the relation of teachers' language proficiency and the teachers' performance in their class to engage their students in teaching and learning process. The study revealed that there is a complex relation between language proficiency and the way they use the target language to interact and support the students. They stated that teachers' general proficiency significantly impacts the promotion of language learning process. Besides, Sadeghi et al. (2019) conducted a research in Iranian context. They investigated 8 Iranian teachers to see the link between their English proficiency and the way they use the language to engage learners in classrooms. They concluded that language proficiency is as important as their pedagogical skills. If the teachers have high language proficiency level, they will have high self-efficacy, high self-esteem, and high classroom-management satisfaction. Many experts claim that "nativeness" of English language is not needed for effective classroom instruction mode (Richards, 2017). The majority of English teachers around the world, according to Richards (2017, p. 9), are not native speakers who "do not have nor require native-like mastery" to teach effectively (Freeman et al., 2015). Freeman (2017) has debated whether the general proficiency is required in the course goals.

According to the perspective of language for specific purpose, he proposed that educators require English for teaching, a particular language spectrum that demonstrates typical words or phrases utilised by educators in the English

classroom. While still in its early stages, researchers believe that the English for teaching will help English language teaching field better train English teachers for complex roles in the mode of classroom instruction (Freeman, 2017; Richards, 2017). Whereas, others have stated that native-like competence is not needed for instruction, scholars have investigated how the proficiency of language teachers affects the belief and efficacy in teaching ability.

2.2 Teachers' Professional Competence

Knowing the connection between teachers' language proficiency and pedagogical competence has currently resurfaced as the concern in language teacher education, most notably through studies on educator cognition and classroom instruction skill (Freeman et al., 2015). Like Freeman has noted, the skill to teach a language using the language necessitates recognition of several relevant aspects, because in language teaching, the language is either the subject of instruction and the medium through which it is learned. It is not similar with physics or other lessons, in language course, the language as a means of communication is also the content of the course. (Freeman et al., 2015) stated three interlinked aspects of knowledge-for-teaching, namely subject knowledge, pedagogical skill, and discourse skill. The difference between the three facets of an educator's competence and abilities offers a valuable analytic foundation for understanding the essence of "teaching a language through the language".

Content knowledge means the subject mastery of the teachers (Faez et al., 2019; Freeman et al., 2015). In the English case, the point encompasses a wide range of sources of language-related insight which derived from the fields in that English is the object of language learning, like linguistics, language acquisition, discourse analysis, and sociolinguistics. Yet, content expertise alone is insufficient for teaching a language. For instance, a student who study about linguistics might be an expert in grammar as a tool to analyse a text or they might be skilled in phonology, but to write an appropriate syllabus and to organise classroom instruction strategies for teaching a language, they need another skill that is pedagogical ability.

Pedagogical knowledge contributes to the educator's classroom instruction competence. It encompasses an educator's understanding about their subject, the teaching methods and practices repertoire, as well as the theories, principles, beliefs, values, and concepts that they are based on (Rahimi et al., 2018; Yeung, 2020). As it is known in relation to learners' understanding, curriculum, context of teaching, and teaching techniques, pedagogical skills and knowledge draws on content understanding as well as other sources of knowledge, yet in the development of transforms it. For instance, educators will be required to understand the distinction between stative and non-stative verbs. In this case, the distinction is communicated to the students using a skill that refers to pedagogical competence.

The last teachers' professional competence is the English discourse skills as well as the degree to which the ability empowers him or her to teach a language through the language. The condition involves the educator's capacity to preserve fluent, correct, accurate, and understandable. What more is the extent to which the skills can be used as a means for teaching English. Although teacher's general oral communication capacity in English is essential, teaching English through English often needs knowledge of a particular English genre as well as the discourse skill required for teaching, the so-called "functional language competence" (Hobbs, 2013). The profession in English language teaching has believed that native English teachers are naturally capable of using the language in this manner, while non-native English teachers would be able to do so if they enhance their English mastery. Nevertheless, both native and non-native English-speaking teachers must improve the capability to utilise English in a manner that promotes English language learning.

3. Method

This research is a single case study which requires comprehension and the ability to indulge various data sources, including evaluation as researchers, learn and analyse a case, event, activity, program, and process in society (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The study was conducted in East Java, Indonesia. Specifically, the respondents of this study are two lecturers from one private University in East Java, Indonesia. They were selected purposefully based on their level of general proficiency in English. Both lecturers had six years of teaching experience. To measure their language proficiency, the researchers used the Test of English as a Foreign Language Institutional Testing Program (TOEFL ITP) score. Once the test results were converted to the CEFR level. Lecturer X got TOEFL ITP to score 579 in TOEFL test that the participant has done in 2020, which means the lecturer has achieved B2 level. Meanwhile, the lecturer Y got a TOEFL ITP score of 560 in TOEFL test that the participant has done in 2020, which means the participant has earned a B2 level. According to the results, which show lecturers' score level, they are categorised as Independent User – Vantage.

The researchers used check-listed observation that adapted and modified from Brown & Lee (2015) to gather the data. The researchers also used a set of questions in advance for conducting semi-structured interviews. The questions for conducting semi-structured interview adapted and modified from Richards (2017). There are five questions that asked about their general English proficiency, teaching performance, requirements needed to be English lecturer, the test steps that they required to follow to be English lecturer in the University, and how the University provides their professional development opportunities. Since the researchers used semi-structured interviews, there will be numerous follow-up questions that permitted a more in-depth clarification of problems arising from previous responses.

Each lecturer was observed for 90 minutes during teaching and learning activity by using an observation check-list. The researchers did the check-listed observation to determine his/her teaching ability in the classroom (Brown & Lee, 2015). That activity included 5 indicators: 1) preparation, 2) presentation, 3) execution/method, 4) personal characteristics and 5) teacher-student interaction during a learning activity. The total point which has to be observed was 41 points. Furthermore, there were 5 options as mentioned in the check-list: 4 = teacher always does the statement, 3 = teacher often does the statement, 2 = teacher sometimes does the statement, 1 = teacher rarely does the statement, and 0 = teacher never does the statement.

In this recent study, the researchers coded the data from the interview and classroom observation manually since it seems more reasonable to eliminate errors and inaccuracy. This research used numerous approaches to collect research data. The stage is essential, which is called triangulation (Patton, 2015). The researchers used a grounded approach to categorise the teachers' verbal accounts into themes for semi-structured interviews that contrasted with the data from participants' TOEFL scores and classroom observation. Then, the codes were clustered to shape themes that highlighted participants' general English proficiency level overview and their teaching practice in their classrooms.

4. Results

4.1 Teachers' General English Proficiency Related to their Teaching Ability (Interview Results)

This part aims to give the general English proficiency level overview and the lecturers' effectiveness in delivering the learning material. The information provided in this part was collected from the result of two lecturers' interviews. They are the representatives and academic models of the private University in East Java. It was a semi-structured type of interview. Those two respondents were asked about their English proficiency level in general, their capability and creativity during the performance of learning and teaching activity. The interview result can be described as the following:

As the researchers interviewed the requirements needed to be an English lecturer in the University, lecturer Y explains:

"At the time of recruitment, the department seek some clarification of new English lecturer candidate about English language proficiency through TOEFL test. However, it is a standard procedure after we have done *Tes Potensi Akademik* (Academic Test)."

Excerpt 1

Next, the researchers also inquired about the next step after lecturers-candidates did *TPA* (General Academic Test) and linguistic proficiency test, known as the TOEFL test. Regarding that question, lecturer X replied:

"The University conducted micro-teaching test to know the level of teaching competencies of English lecturers'

candidates because they consider that effective teaching requires not only high-level proficiency in the language being taught but also appropriate teaching ability, knowledge of educational traditions and student attitudes."

Excerpt 2

As the lecturers are asked to explain how their Institution supervised their language proficiency, they mentioned professional development opportunities, which are available for the lecturers. Regarding the question, lecturer Y responded: "Our Institution always tries hard to nurture the lecturers. There are lots of opportunities provide by our Institution for lecturers to upgrade their skills."

Excerpt 3

As English lecturers were asked about their general English proficiency, lecturer X responded:

"I can say that I am a communicative educator as I collected all experience in my career and putting them all together for me to feel free to use the most appropriate approach in my class. I got that skill from many training, workshop, seminars/conference, and many others. I always learn to use my language proficiency so that it can collaborate effectively when I use it in my classroom and make varied teaching approach and I use it based on the students' need, for instance, ESP, EGP, etc."

Excerpt 4

Based on the lecturer X's responds, it indicates that her decisions during the classroom teaching process are influenced by her prior educational degree and professional experiences, continue to adapt to the current situation, and implement her knowledge and skills whenever needed. Meanwhile, lecturer Y stated:

"I feel confident enough with my English competence, and in teaching and learning activities, I offered some supplementary worksheets and textbook for learners, and I like additional practice from a grammar-oriented perspective."

Excerpt 5

It can be identified that lecturer Y felt confident in her language proficiency. However, the lecturer applies a grammar-based approach and textbook or text-based approach to deliver knowledge. The researchers also asked about the dominant quality used for the teaching performance. Lecturer X indicated:

"Linguistic proficiency is only one element. A lecturer has to have another requirement to provide a good educational environment for learners and parents. Also, a lecturer needs to know what to do with their (high) language proficiency. Fluency is only one component of language proficiency. Many fluent English lecturers do not know how to do their such skill when they teach in class. As a lecturer, you have to understand how to use the skill and how to teach a learner. The lecturer has to be an expert, an enthusiastic person, an artist, a psychologist, a writer, a commentator, a comedian, a mother/father, and whatsoever. The lecturer also has to be cheerful, funny, patient, assertive, dedicated, and at the same

time, have to be strong. Hence, lecturers have to be a ‘real teacher’, not a matter of native or non-native English-speaking teacher.”

Excerpt 6

Meanwhile, lecturer Y implied that an English lecturer’s language proficiency is seen as primarily linguistic proficiency. If lecturers own low language ability, so, they are not considered as a good English lecturer. Nakata also stated that English language proficiency is a crucial aspect of teaching area and expertise (Nakata, 2010; Widodo & Riandi, 2013).

4.2 Teachers’ General English Proficiency Related to their Teaching Ability (Observation Results)

As stated previously, lecturer X and Y's TOEFL ITP scores were 579 and 560. Both participants is considered to achieve a B2 level or categorised as *Independent User* (Vantage). Meanwhile, there are 5 indicators for observation check-list, which include: 1) preparation, 2) presentation, 3) execution/method, 4) personal characteristic, and 5) teacher-student interaction in the classroom. From those 5 indicators, there were 40 points in total as it was taken from the following 5 options to answer each indicator; 4 = teacher always do the statement, 3 = the teacher often do the statement, 2 = the teacher sometimes do the statement, 1 = the teacher rarely do the statement, and 0 = the teacher never do the statement. The gathered information according to observation of the participants is shown in the following brief:

Table 1. The Teaching Ability Observation Result (Modified from Brown & Lee, 2015)

I	Preparation	4	3	2	1	0
1.	The teacher prepares a course outline/lesson plan, materials, and other learning resources before teaching.	√	√√			
2.	The teacher discusses and reviews the previous topic and introduces the students to a new topic that will be curiously discussed.		√		√√	
3.	The teacher points out the learning objectives.	√		√√		
II	Presentation	4	3	2	1	0
4.	The teacher demonstrates and explains the topic and materials creatively and clearly through the use of various media.	√	√√			
5.	The teacher delivers the lesson smoothly, obviously, and logically.		√		√√	
6.	The teacher’s lecture is well-paced.		√		√√	
7.	The teacher provides a clear path of instruction.	√	√√			
8.	The teacher teaches the lesson based on the level of learners’ comprehension.	√		√√		
9.	The teacher recognises the students’ productive skills.	√			√√	
10.	The teacher addresses the question of the students with respect, pleasure, and satisfaction.	√		√√		
11.	The teaching technique is sufficient for age and ability.	√		√√		
12.	The teacher ensures that all of the students have already understood the material. They do not have problems understanding the lesson.		√	√√		
13.	The teacher has a strong interest and enthusiasm in teaching.	√		√√		
III	Execution/Method	4	3	2	1	0
14.	The teacher uses appropriate teaching method and activities during the class.	√		√√		
15.	The teacher should adapt to the unexpected and unanticipated condition during the class.	√		√√		
16.	The teacher emphasise English materials.		√		√√	
17.	The teacher walks around the class and interacts with the students.		√	√√		
18.	The teacher knows and attempts to memorise the names of the students.	√		√√		

19.	The teacher appropriately reinforces the students.	√		√√		
20.	The teacher allows and encourages the students to give a response to the lesson that has been delivered.	√		√√		
21.	The teacher adds examples, descriptions, and illustrations while explaining the materials.	√	√√			
22.	The teacher utilises teaching resources, various media, or instructional tools from offline and online sources appropriately.	√		√√		
23.	The teacher gives simulations and discusses the content systematically through an exciting technique.	√		√√		
24.	The teacher teaches with relevant resources linked to the students' culture and knowledge of their background.		√	√√		
25.	The teacher gives feedback to the students.		√	√√		
26.	The teacher tells the students to learn from their prior mistakes and errors.	√				√√
IV	Personal Characteristics	4	3	2	1	0
27.	The teacher is cooperative and patient when responding to the students' questions.		√	√√		
28.	The teacher has a loud and clear voice while teaching.	√		√√		
29.	The teacher has a good personality, performance, as well as appearance.	√		√√		
30.	The teacher is effortful, resourceful, as well as creative, and initiative.	√		√√		
31.	The teacher has good pronunciation, intonation, and fluency in speaking.		√	√√		
V	Teacher-Student Interaction	4	3	2	1	0
32.	The teacher encouraged and motivated the students to take part in and actively engage in class.	√			√√	
33.	The students are free to ask, oppose, or share their thoughts.	√			√√	
34.	The teacher can manage and handle the class.	√			√√	
35.	The teacher can make the students feel happy and relaxed even in a difficult lesson.	√		√√		
36.	The teacher treated the students equally, impartially, and professionally during the class.	√		√√		
37.	The students are inspired and motivated to give their best to perform an evaluation and do a project.	√			√√	
38.	The teacher communicates and speaks English confidently.	√		√√		
39.	The teacher knows the needs of the students.	√			√√	
40.	An explicit positive assessment, like "very good" or "great," was used appropriately and not overused.		√	√√		

Notes: √ = teacher X; √√ = teacher Y; 4 = the teacher always does the statement, 3 = the teacher often does the statement, 2 = the teacher sometimes does the statement, 1 = the teacher rarely does the statement, and 0 = the teacher never does the statement.

According to Table 1, the teaching ability of participant X and Y can be identified as follows. Participant X, based on criteria number 1 (Preparation), was very capable of preparing teaching material suitable for the current curriculum and teaching tools. The learning and teaching activity demands the best preparation from a teacher. Therefore, teaching materials and resources have to be

prepared before the teaching and learning activity are conducted. According to the finding of this research, participant X prepared teaching materials and resources from newspapers, journals, the internet, and supporting book references. Based on those circumstances, the lecturer prepared either online and offline materials for her students. Her preparation to provide teaching experience tools is

outstanding as the lecturer has good digital literacy, including an operating computer, LCD, audio-speaker, smartphone, and many digital devices in the language laboratory to gather, sort, and process the material resources for her classroom.

Furthermore, criteria number 2 (Presentation), participant X explained the materials very well. Her ability to define and deliver the lesson was considered excellent as the lecturer has done it smoothly, logically, and in sequence. Because of her skillful material delivery, her skill is regarded as above average. However, the lecturer still has to upgrade her teaching pace. As the lecturer teaches the students, the lecturer was also superb at providing learning direction for all students that it is easier to follow the lecturer's instruction. Other than that, the way the lecturer presents the material was based on students' comprehension level, and it was the ideal way. Based on this case, the lecturer utilises some resources, including short stories, video learning of native speakers speaks, news reports, and more. During the teaching-learning process, the lecturer was also considered superb in handling students' questions and provide appropriate and satisfying answers.

Next, according to criteria number 3 (Execution/Method), the lecturer incorporates various learning and teaching activities in the classroom. For example, the lecturer would ask her students to watch the video, learning by playing like digital games in Kahoot, discussing students' feelings about what is happened in the content of reading materials, and more. The learning activities provided by the lecturer could encourage students to learn more. Investing technology into English teaching-learning activities would provoke students' motivation and ability to improve students' English skill achievements, and the lecturer is great to do that area. Besides, the lecturer was great at preparing some anticipations to some unpredicted situation during classroom activity, which proves that the lecturer can adapt almost in every case that interrupts the learning and teaching process. The lecturer can strengthen the students' material delivery and make sure that they absorb the material very well. During teaching, the lecturer mobilised around the class and made eye contact accordingly with her students. Those moves would create bonding and sound vibration during a classroom activity. What's more interesting is that the lecturer does not reinforce her students too much either verbally, non-verbally, or even combine both. For example, the lecturer would not be hesitant to give compliments such as Well done! Good job! Nice Answer! Whenever her students can present their projects well.

Furthermore, as mentioned in number 4 (Personal Characteristics), participant X could be considered a very patient lecturer to obtain students' responses. During the teaching process, the lecturer has expert clarity in her voice and tone. Furthermore, the lecturer is very creative and full of resources to deliver materials and preparing them for mistakes. Her pronunciation for teaching EFL was also outstanding.

Besides, based on indicator number 5 (Lecturer or Students Interaction). The interaction between students and the lecturer is significant, even more, critical than the fewer materials and learning techniques provided by the lecturer (Mori et al., 2011; Wong, 2005). Participant X set up the class to adopt classroom activities that portray students' autonomy. The lecturer inspired her students to participate into a teaching-learning process, the lecturer is considered as a very good lecturer. Hence, the students are allowed to ask for some questions, expressing their ideas and view based on their opinion. Thus, the lecturer handled the class very well, as students were also considered and involved in the lesson experience. They felt happy and relaxed in spite of the fact that they were learning difficult learning material. It could happen because of lecturer's ability and skill to deliver difficult material into easy to be understood material for students. The classroom environment and atmosphere were very positive as students and the lecturer respect and treated each other well. The lecturer always encourages students to do their best in the learning process. Lastly, the distortion was used positively and was not being overused during learning instructions for her students. Those prove well that the lecturer was aware of what is needed to maximise her teaching performance. Those prove to speak louder why easy-to-understand about her English proficiency. Her confidence has helped her to motivate students and make them actively participate in a classroom activity.

Furthermore, the lecturer has achieved a high score on TOEFL ITP. The lecturer also has achieved a high IELTS score that is 7. The lecturer owns teaching experiences related to public speaking. Also, the lecturer has gained the pre-Overseas training scholarship (PKBI) for permanent lecturer, which was released by the Ministry of Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (DIKTI) 2019 in Bandung for three months. The past education, training, workshop, seminar, both international and national, and teaching experiences influence how lecturers take action during learning and teaching activity in the classroom (Kahraman & Pipes, 2018). All of those were the reason why the lecturer feels so confident with her language skills. Besides, during the classroom activity, there was also a student-to-student interaction while participating in group task participation.

5. Discussion

This research aims to identify the relation between English teachers' language proficiency and their teaching performance. The findings of this study indicated that the University has some requirements for lecturers' candidates, such as they have to passed administrative test, academic test, and TOEFL test. There is micro teaching test to see lecturers' candidates' pedagogical skills. Those tests are also administrated for Philippine teachers and lecturers as well (Faez et al., 2019; Faez & Karas, 2017).

Moreover, both of the participants also stated that the professional development will be available for language lecturers to enhance their linguistic skills and teaching

methods. The participants stated that their Institution offers scholarships for their lecturers to gain the experience to study either overseas or domestically. It was implied that teaching competency was considered ideal if the lecturers have the ability to deliver all language skills, including speaking, reading, listening, and writing through English. Beside language proficiency, pedagogical skills were also essential to deliver materials for students. Therefore, clear and good English command and teaching skills are must-have abilities for English lecturers. The findings are in line with the statement of Richards (2017) and Faez & Karas (2017) who stated high level of language proficiency can affect the language teachers' belief and efficacy in teaching and learning process.

The findings also indicated that the decisions during the classroom teaching process are influenced by lecturers' education degree and professional experiences. Lecturers' experiences also can influence their ability to adapt to the recent condition and implement their insight and skills whenever needed. The findings supported by the statements of some scholars that stated that lecturers' professional experiences will support teaching and learning process since the lecturers can offer more alternatives based on learning conditions to provide more language input during lesson activities (Choi & Lee, 2016; Moradkhani et al., 2017; Sadeghi et al., 2019).

Regarding the result shown from the interview and observation check list, it can be inferred that there are three comprehensive language teacher proficiency components. Those three include "linguistic knowledge," "cultural knowledge," and "pedagogical knowledge." The participants accentuated that both pedagogical and linguistic knowledge are essential. For example, participant X stated that become an excellent educator means successfully bringing a great pedagogy and a language ability in the learning process, including helping students achieve their learning goals. If a lecturer has high level of language proficiency but he or she does not own pedagogical skills, his/her teaching performance will void his/her fluency. Thus, as lecturer reached appropriate language proficiency, it will increase his/her confidence while teaching and own enough professional sense while performing language learning activity (Akbari & Moradkhani, 2012; Richards, 2010).

Based on the findings, participant X is considered a digital literacy person because the lecturer can process information in multiple formats from various resources via a computer (Xu et al., 2019). The ability to review previous lesson material was considered skillful. To review the previous lesson, the participant uses various interesting games as a learning medium. The lecturer also frequently uses applications, like kahoot and quizziz when she wants to raise learning topic which will be brought up in the classroom and followed by stating the learning objectives smartly. Hence, the students would acknowledge the learning goal and what they would learn. Hence, reviewing prior foreign language material is considered a more exciting

way and building a contextualised learning environment (Dourda et al., 2014). In accordance with the findings, Xu et al. (2019) argued that the game-based approach could encourage the students' problem solving and critical thinking skills, helping them reach their learning achievements.

Moreover, based on the observation check list, the participant X owns suitable teaching methods and activities that can enable learners to actively interact in classroom, such as using SCL (student-centred learning), PBL (*Project Based Learning*), and Discovery Learning method, reader-response method. They are considered as suitable methods according to students' age and ability. The lecturer focuses more on the students' development. She emphasises on the students' progress rather than the product of learning. What is more important is that the lecturer has always shown high interest and enthusiasm in teaching activities. The statement is supported by the theory of Vygotsky that is "*Zone Proximal Development*" that said cognitive skills evolve from social and physical interactions.

Furthermore, based on the findings of this study, the researchers found that participant X frequently used explicit positive statements such as 'very good' or 'great' and giving a variety of emoticons on the students' works. In the activities, the teachers are rooted within the class activities constructed to generate students' competence. Moreover, during the teaching process, lecturer X often provides illustrations and examples related to their students' culture, age, and comprehension level. The lecturer could even maximise the learning activity by using aids and learning resources to help students understand complex materials. As students made some errors, the lecturer will give them feedback which involve stimulation rather than giving answer directly. According to some previous studies, those activities will improve students' participation and reduce their learning anxiety (Farrell, 2016; Anderson, 2016).

Different to lecturer X, lecturer Y was also considered as highly proficient, yet, based on the classroom observation check list, it can be seen that the lecturer does not provide appropriate command to improve the students' learning opportunities to reach their target language achievement. It was assumed that the high level of lecturer's language proficiency did not affect her pedagogical skills. The lecturer provides lengthy instructions and only did small negotiations during the learning and teaching process. Although the lecturer can speak English fluently, the lecturer still needs to upgrade the communication skills because the lecturer cannot transfer the knowledge to the students appropriately. It can be seen from the students who have problems in understanding the explanation. None of the questions that the lecturer asked to the students were referred to the topic of discussion. Moreover, the language knowledge the lecturer delivers was mostly obtained from the textbook. Whenever the lecturer tried to enrich the references out of the textbook, the lecturer seems experience some difficulties. The lecturer could not use English accordingly to acquire responses from the students or deliver material in simple English sentences.

It can be implied that high language proficiency does not guarantee that lecturers can give effective classroom teaching performance. The language proficiency in ELT could not be a stand-alone aspect. Creating a thriving learning environment requires a combination of qualified language proficiency and language teaching (Coniam et al., 2017; Richards et al., 2013).

Although native-like language mastery may not indicate good English teachers, the ELT scholars claim that pedagogy requires educators to achieve a great language proficiency to provide efficient classroom activity. The teacher's role in education is a learning mediator between material delivery and students and utilises a language as a psychological tools to build a good learning atmosphere through the classroom interaction and communication (Renandya et al., 2018; Richards, 2017). Gaining an advanced language proficiency level would support English teachers and lecturers to speak the target language smoothly during the teaching process. Moreover, with those capacity, English teachers and lecturers can be a model for students to speak a language. Teachers also can obtain a good self-efficacy and self-esteem while teaching. Furthermore, as shown by educator X, a good level of language proficiency will make the lecturer speak confidently during lesson activities. The result has shown that language proficiency level contributes to the lecturer's instruction ability, allowing them to handle the classroom discourse. Thus, it serves optimum language learning opportunities (Richards, 2010; Nhung, 2018).

The connection between educators' language proficiency and the capacity to instruct is nuanced. For language educators, language proficiency and teaching capability are fundamental to their identity and efficacy as a lecturer. The proficiency is not similar with teaching capability. When educators have enhanced their English level, they will be capable of teaching English efficiently. Conventionally, the capacity to teach English using English has been viewed as largely language proficiency issue. The statement indicates that native speaker English instructors are considered as more legitimate and competent language educators than those who are not. Nevertheless, the assumption about NESST is failed to acknowledge the nature of teaching English through English. For instance, lecturers who teach English for specific purposes (ESP) do not need to have native speakers proficiency, yet, it needs particular knowledge and ability to give appropriate instruction.

There are some requirements of a good lecturer, including having professional, social, and pedagogical competencies. Those requirements cover various learning methods, discipline, and mastery of learning material, owning general evaluation skills as a lecturer, collaborating instructional media for the learning activity, and social skills. Those are needed as lecturers' competencies must influence their learning and teaching process. This was meant to improve teaching knowledge and skills in the future because lecturers need to evaluate what they have given for teaching

activity (Azizah et al., 2018; Karimi et al., 2016; Klassen & Tze, 2014; Webb & Chang, 2012). Hence, students' satisfaction with their lecture's performance can be achieved. This research is seen as a fundamental framework for teachers to improve their English teaching quality. It can be used as a teacher's reference to amend their teaching standard. Furthermore, the data from this study can be used as the basis for teachers' professional development. Based on the result of this study, training should be conducted progressively for English teachers to improve their knowledge and teaching practice. Since this study only provides data from interview and observation check list, it would be more informative if further research provide data from teachers' utterances/command while teaching.

6. Conclusion

To sum up, this study revealed that beside owing good English proficiency, English teachers and lecturers need to embrace content mastery and pedagogical skills to serve effective English teaching and learning process. English teachers and lecturers have to be able to be learning mediator between material delivery and students. They also have to be able to utilise language as a psychological tool to build students learning environment through two-way interaction. Those teachers' roles were clarified in considerable second language acquisition knowledge and literature. Maximum learning performance can be obtained as long as it is assisted by how lecturers use classroom English accordingly during a classroom activity. To create optimal learning cycle, English language teachers and lecturers have to gain an advanced classroom English proficiency level in order to support effective learning environments and engage the students in pedagogically meaningful interactions. Thus, both English proficiency levels must be balanced out by owning teaching ability for an effective and optimal learning environment.

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