Internal Factors Hindering the Indonesian Students' Attainment of English Proficiency Based on the ASEAN Common Competency Standards in Tourism

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Abstract

This study is aimed to investigate internal factors hindering the attainment of English proficiency standard in the Common ASEAN Tourism Curriculum. The study was conducted on tourism students. The study used a descriptive qualitative method and the data were gained through a questionnaire for the students in three sub divisions; Hotel Accommodation, Food and Beverage and Hotel Engineering. The findings show that there are several internal factors which hinder the attainment of English proficiency standard. The internal factors include the minimum ability to reach general English and English proficiency standards; the monotonous learning style in learning English; the lack of self-esteem in case of following the learning process by doing an assignment or practicing; the limited exploration and use of knowledge about English terms based on their sub division; the lack of intrinsic motivation as the reason to improve their skill in English; the passive attitude by the students toward learning process of English subject.

Keywords: English Proficiency Standards, Common ASEAN Tourism Curriculum, Internal Factors

Introduction

Tourism has a contributing factor to support mutual understanding among people through social, economic, cultural among countries. According to World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism can be defined as the activities of persons travelling to and staying in place outside their usual environment for leisure, business and other purposes. English for the tourism industry as a foreign language has its own characteristics rather than common English. It is because in the tourism industry, English is the way of daily communication so the learners should master it in their spirit to be a hospitality professional. In Indonesia, where English is foreign and not a second language, the English status as a primary language of global trade and commerce and tourism in many countries become an urgent problem in a practical way, especially for 'answering' the needs of professionals in the industry. This problem also occurs among tourism students. Most students have problems with practical use of English as one main requirement in the tourism industry.

Hickman and Irwin (2013) in the research about Gap Analysis on the Implementation of MRA on Tourism Professionals, have stated that Indonesia has an English proficiency gap in the tourism sector. The gap can be seen in tourist's complaints related directly to low levels of English, their frustration of not being able to be understood, and tourist expectations not being met as a result. Moreover, nine out of ten complaints in the tourism sector relate to

service and in non-native English speaking countries, low level English language proficiency accounts for the majority of these complaints.

There are four ratings that show the level of English proficiency in communication in the tourism sector. Rating 1 shows large gap, that represents the English language is neither integrated with tourism education nor one of the official national languages, and tourism professionals have very limited English proficiency. Rating 2 means a significant gap, in which the English language is neither integrated with tourism education nor one of the official national languages, and tourism professionals have only rudimentary English proficiency. Rating 3 represents a small gap, in that the English language is neither integrated with tourism education nor one of the official national languages, but tourism professionals have moderate English proficiency. Rating 4 indicates insignificant gap, which means the English language is integrated in tourism education or English language is one of the official national languages, and tourism professionals have good English proficiency. Based on the data from Gap Analysis on Implementation of MRA on Tourism Professionals, Indonesia takes place in rating 1 in English proficiency. It means that the English proficiency ability of tourism professionals is still low.

Tourism will be the main source and income for Indonesian foreign exchange. However, there are several main problems that appear during its 'journey' being the main income generating source: i.e. (1) infrastructure; (2) human resources; (3) communication and publication; (4) regulation and policy; (5) IT; (6) society; and (7) investment. The second biggest problem is human resources and it must be related to their skills including English. At present, tourism lacks professional workers who are qualified for excellent service quality. Indonesian human resources in the tourism industry sits in the 53rd position of 141 based on the travel and tourism competitiveness index. The problem between the tourism industry's needs and the output of vocational higher education i.e. college usually appear in many skills, such as English. English should be mastered in a theoretical and practical way. The graduates as the outputs of vocational college in tourism education are prepared to be tourism professional. There are standards that should be met by the students to be professional worker in industry; one of them is ACCS in the form of toolboxes. The standards focus on competencies that support service quality, such as main skills and language proficiency. Therefore, it should be important to investigate internal factors hindering the students' attainments of the standards.

The gap between students' ability and the competency standard must be influenced by some internal factors. Internal factors can be investigated through learners' individual difference, intelligence, motivation, self-esteem, and learning style. Those factors have important part as the basic data to set the needs of the students. The needs analysis will give positive recommendation to the students so that they can improve their ability in English by attaining the ACCS. The college also has its part to support the students in decreasing the gap within it. Therefore, the students will become professional worker with appropriate qualification in tourism, especially the hospitality industry.

There are some related studies which support this research: the first research was conducted by Avina in 2012. This study focuses on how language affects the cultural tourism experience in the international tourism context. Data were obtained through semi-structured interview of 13 student-travelers, who traveled with the SanJose State University's study-

abroad programs. The analysis of the datawas carried out within a sociolinguistic context using grounded theory methods. The findings indicated that travel motivations and the perception of the significance of the language spoken at a destination were intimately connected. Tourism experience was negatively or positively affected by the level of fluency of the student-travelers in the local language. The local language can be a facilitator of positive experiences or created a language barrier that inhibited positive experiences.

Factors affecting foreign language also had been researched by Auota Ghania (2012) entitled "*An analysis of some internal and external factors influencing learners' success in EFL: the case of third year LMD students at Biskra University*". This is a qualitative study which examined and described the factors influencing third year LMD students' success in learning English, focused on the factors hindering or encouraging students of English in general and third year students in particular. The data were collected by the questionnaire for the students and teachers. The result showed that there are some factors that influence the students' success in EFL, internally and externally: internal consist of intelligence, perception, self-esteem and learning style; while external factors contain motivation and socio-cultural status. After that, the conclusion of this research is all those factors have a great influence on learning in general and learning a language in particular. Therefore, the learners should pay attention to those factors because the factors can enhance their learning rather than hinder it. In addition, there is also the teachers' responsibility by being aware of the learners' different styles, different attitudes toward learning, and their different social backgrounds.

The other previous study was conducted by Mele F. Latu (1994) entitled "*Factors affecting the learning of English as a second language macroskills among Tongan secondary students*". This study is aimed to determine factors which might have an impact on the learning of English as a second language macroskills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) by Tongan secondary learners. The data were collected by tests for the students and questionnaire for the students and the teachers. The results are there are seven factors were shown to have significant correlations with the students' learning of English macro skills at secondary school. They were: the age of the students; their perceived ability in English; frequency of use of English with non-Tongan speakers; use of English to read for enjoyment; use of English for communication at home; integrative motivation; and career aspirations.

Methodology

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach to give a complete understanding of the phenomenon under study. The research design enabled the researcher to examine educational issues systematically used research techniques. The qualitative research approach usually consists of researchers' attempts to provide an explanation and/or provide an in depth meaning of a phenomenon through the use of observations, artifacts, and interviews (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007). Knupfer and McLellan (1966) also stated that descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events, organizing, tabulating, depicting, and describing the data collection.

In order to support the method, the design was represented in the form of a competency test and questionnaire's results from the respondents' (the students). The data came from an analysis to determining how internal factors impact tourism students' academic achievement

toward competency standard in ASEAN. Further, the identification of the gap lied between the skill required in ASEAN Common Competency Standards and the skills that students have at present as the support elements. Therefore, descriptive research was considered as an appropriate design to be applied to investigate the factors that hinder the students' attainment of ASEAN Common Competency Standards for Tourism Professional (ACCSTP).

The population of this study was the fourth semester students of Akademi Komunitas Negeri (AKN) Lombok Barat in academic year 2017/2018 with the total population of 115 students. The researcher used probablity sampling technique to select the sample. The probability sampling technique done by giving an opportunity to all members of the population to be sampled. In this way, the sample obtained is expected to be a representative sample. This research used simple sampling technique (random sampling) by lottery number.

This study used total 60 students from three sub divisions as the samples. The study took place at Akademi Komunitas Negeri (AKN) Lombok Barat located in West Nusa Tenggara. The respondents came from three sub divisions named hotel accommodation, culinary, and hotel engineering. In order to effectively conduct the research, the researcher chose to use stratification and single sampling to select students within the population that have specific characteristics that relate to the research questions that inform the study. When using stratification, the researcher purposefully selected members within a population that shared specific characteristics. The researcher had access and/or had selected specific names from a population utilizing single sample procedures (Creswell, 2012).

In this study, the researcher collected the data through a questionnaire. Questionnaires were one source of the instruments used in obtaining data in this study. Questionnaires can be divided into three types: (a). closed-ended (structured) questionnaires; (b) open-ended (unstructured) questionnaires; (c) a mixture of closed and open-ended questionnaires. According to Selinger and Shohamy (1989), close-ended questionnaires are more efficient because of their ease of analysis. Therefore, this study used closed-ended questionnaires to obtain the data.

Generally, internal factors that hinder the attainment of ACCSTP consist of (1) individual learner's differences, including: age, gender, aptitude, learner's language level; (2) intelligence; (3) motivation; (4) self-esteem; and (5) learnig style. The statements in the questionnaire are based on the internal factors above. The statement point about factors hindering the attainment of ACCSTP can be stated as follow:

The Statement Point of Questionnaire Instrument

Factors	Sub-Factors	Statement number	Total
Internal Factors	Individual learner's differences: - Age - Gender - Aptitude - Learner's Language Level	1, 2, 3	3
	Intelligence	4, 5, 6	3

	Motivation	7, 8, 9	3
	Self-esteem	10, 11, 12	3
	Learnig Style	13, 14, 15	3
Total			15

The questionnaire used Likert Scales with 4 choices of answer as the measurement. The questionnaire contains questions that are given to the respondents. The four choices of answer are suitable to the purpose of the statement in the questionnaire, as follow: (1) Strongly Agree (SA) with score 4; (2) Agree (A) with score 3; (3) Disagree (D) with score 2; dan (4) Strongly Disagree (SD) with score 1.

The researcher distributed the questionnaire to the fourth semester students of the tourism department at Akademi Komunitas Negeri (AKN) Lombok Barat. The questionnaires were given to students and were aimed to gain information about internal factors that hinder the students' attainment of ASEAN Common Competency Standards in English language proficiency. The scores taken from the questionnaires were computed using Likert Scale. To analyze the data gathered, there are several steps the researcher took: calculating the total score of each item based on the questionnaire given to students; calculating the total score of each factor based on the data in step one; calculating the mean score of each factor; calculating the percentage of each factor.

This study used descriptive qualitative as a data analysis procedure. Data analysis can be defined as the process to inquire systematically about the interview's transcript, observation result, and distributed questionnaire in order to get information about the data and elaborate on what has been found in the research place. The purpose of description is to describe the potential data that will answer the research question qualitatively. Then, the conclusion has been used to give recommendation about the internal factors that hinder students to attain the ASEAN Common Competency Standards (ACCS).

The result of students' questionnaire determined the factors affecting the attainment of ASEAN Common Competency Standard. The researcher used questionnaire to triangulate information gathered from the gap with colleagues in order to ascertain various perspectives and validity. Next, this step has gained the information about internal factors that support or hinder the attainment of ASEAN Common Competency Standards (ACCS). The results of questionnaire were categorized as "strongly agree (SA)" & "agree (A)" group and "disagree (D)" & "strongly disagree (SD)" group. The last, the researcher investigated those statement which represent the hindering factors in the attainment of the standard.

Findings and Discussions

The results of the research are explained in more detail in this chapter. The data gained are presented in the findings section and the explanation is provided in the detail in the discussion section.

Findings

Based on the results of the questionnaires, there are several internal factors that hinder the students' attainment in acquiring English. The internal factors are categorized into 5; individual learners' difference (age, gender, aptitude, learners' language level), intelligence, motivation, self-esteem, and learning style. After investigating the whole internal factors, the findings show that the intelligence category takes the lowest score 430 (12%), followed by individual learners' difference at 465 (13%), the third position is learning style with a score 472 (13%), then the motivation has score 502 (14%), and the last self esteem in 538 (15%) has the highest score. Based on the score, it can be stated that the lowest score category (intelligence) has a bigger influence and the highest score category (self-esteem) has a smaller influence hindering the students' attainment of the ASEAN Common English Competency Standards. The summary of the findings in internal factors is presented in the Table below.

The Internal Factors that Hinder Tourism Students in Attaining ASEAN Common Competency Standards

No	Internal Factor Categories	Score	Percentage
1	Individual Learners' Differences	465	13%
2	Intelligence	430	12%
3	Motivation	504	14%
4	Self-Esteem	538	15%
5	Learning Style	472	13%
	Total	**2409**	**67%**

Discussion

The results of this research show that internal factors represent the individual capability that the learners bring when they are learning English. The results indicate that "weak ability to achieve the standard" has contributed to hindering the students' attainment of the ASEAN Common Competency Standards. In this case, intelligence refers to the ability of the students to achieve the standard score in English subject. Tourism students have the large gap in attaining the standards. They also faced difficulties in using English as the language of interaction in the learning process. The students also have problems finishing their assignment in English proficiency, even sometimes they do not want to do the assignment.

Ellis (1985, p.293) states that intelligence is the general ability to master academic skills. Intelligence also gives them certain strategies to solve problems, in this case, the problem in the learning process. Gardner (1985) points out that there are seven kinds of intelligence, as follow: (1) visual spatial-intelligence; (2) verbal linguistic-intelligence; (3) logical mathematical-intelligence; (4) bodily kinesthetic-intelligence; (5) musical rhythm-intelligence; (6) interpersonal intelligence; (7) intrapersonal intelligence.

Here, intelligence comes from the students' differences background. There is a strong relationship between intelligence and acquisition in foreign language learning. It is proved that intelligence level can hinder the students' attainment of the ASEAN Common Competency Standard in language learning. This is in line with Auota Ghania (2012) who

state that intelligence can predict the rate and success of second language acquisition in the formal language classroom. Furthermore, Intelligence as a behavior is the role of skills with specific strategies and appropriate context. Thus, the learners can improve their potential and intelligence when they are learning by doing challenging activities which help them to develop their strategies for learning English. However, the students do not apply various activites in order to improve their intelligence outside the classroom. In addition, Stemberg (1985, cited in Brown, 2000:101) proposes a theory of intelligence which contains three types of smartness: (1) componental ability for analytical thinking; (2) experimental ability to engage in creative thinking combining disparate experiences in insightful ways; and (3) contextual ability street smartness that enable people to play the game of manipulating their environment (others, institutions, situations, contexts). Therefore, as the learners they should know what type of intelligence that they have, so that they can choose the appropriate style to learn foreign language.

The second internal factors is individual learners' differences. There are several individual differences that hinder the ability in learning foreign language, such as age, gender, aptitude, and learners' language level. It is proved that one respondents' achievement toward the ASEAN Common Competency Standards can be different with the others because they have different inner characteristics. The uniqueness of the respondents always play the central role in learning foreign language, so that there should be more attention in applying material, teaching method and activities in the learning process. This is in line with Mc. Donough (1981:130) who argues that all teachers know that some of their students will cope easily with the learning materials and activities and some will not. Some will succeed and others will not. Therefore, individual differences of the respondents have implication for the classroom management.

The individual difference can be explored as the students have a different level of ages, starting from fresh graduated of senior high school to someone who are already working in the industry. Students of different ages have different abilities, needs, competencies, and cognitive skills in learning a language. Learning a foreign language is always influenced by the age of the learners. The younger learners who already have solid literacy skill in their own language will be best to acquire a new language. Different from younger learners, the older ones can be better in learning new language by struggling to achieve the 'perfect' competency. Older learners usually have certain learning goals rather than younger ones.

Moreover, the students are separated in three sub divisions which have two classes in each of them. The students are not separated by the different level of ages, but they are included in one class. It is opposite to the opinion that students with different ages level should have different approach to learning foreign language. Therefore, age becomes one of the individual difference that hinder the attainment of ASEAN Common Competency Standard.

Learners' language level differences also affect the lesson plan and process, the materials, and which techniques will apply. In this study, generally, there are three levels of learners' language level i.e. (a) beginner (have competence in basic English for example vocabularies); (b) intermediate (have basic competence in speaking and writing); (c) advanced (have the ability in communication with a native speaker, basic competence in reading and listening). According to Harmer (2001:45), it is easier for beginner learners to

perceive their progress rather than intermediate learners who usually have subtle progress. Therefore, the teacher has to set clear challenging goals also achievable activities which are interesting to them. This setting is very important to attract the learners to do their best in attaining the competency standard.

Teaching techniques and activities applied in the learning process can be different at each level. The teacher may use simple vocabulary by reading one by one word for beginner level, while for advanced, they may use more complex activities for example in a discussion. The languages used in the learning process are also influenced by the learners' language level, from complexity and fluency; it depends on the learners' level. Then, the choice of the topic, books or modules also use different types of languages that are appropriate to the levels. Advanced learners can deal with abstract items but for beginners' level, the topics or books should be simpler.

The monotonous learning style is the third hindering factors in this result. In this case, learning style also have contribution toward the students in learning achievement. Each student has their own style in learning. It will be have different result when it is combines with the teachers' teaching style. This phenomenon also in line with Hedge (2000:18) who opines that learning styles as a characteristics and preferred way of approaching learning and processing information.

In the same way, Harmer (2001:43) also addresses that the teacher needs to balance the interests of his students regarding certain individual traits. Learning style are the approaches that learners use in acquiring new foreign language. There is one classification of learning styles; (a) visual (spatial): this kind of people cannot learn something till they it; (b) aural (auditory musical): they prefer learning by heart; (c) physical (kinesthetic): they prefer using their body, hands, and sense of touch.

The lack of motivation becomes the fourth internal factors that hinder the competency standards. There are two kinds of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation comes from the individual students while extrinsic motivation is come from outside the students. As adult learners, the tourism students have certain reasons to learn English. Some of them may learn it as working needed and the others for educational needed. Based on the result, the students; motivation is high enough to achieve ASEAN Common Competency Standard. They realize that English is very important in the industry, so that they try to attain the competency standard. However, it is quite difficult to keep their motivation in learning English especially intrinsic motivation.

In addition, William and Burden (1997:112) have stated that human motivation to learn any particular thing was accoutered for in terms of what biological needs were being met during the early learning years and what kind of reward was provided for an early attempt to learn. It is proved that tourism students are motivated by extrinsic motivation, such as a compliment, reward, work requirement, etc. Moreover, Garden et al (1976:54) state that learners with different types of motivation may display different patterns of interaction in the language classroom and different progress levels. This statement proves that motivation has a relation to learning's needs which lead to the goals in the learning process. This statement is in line with McDonough (1981:155) who stated that achievement in language learning is many sides: some students wish to become linguists, translators, interpreters, and so forth; others to get a prestigious job; others to survive on other causes taught in the new language

(perhaps competition with native speakers); others in some parts of the world, to identify with other language community.

Those students are motivated more by their purposes to learn English extrinsically rather than intrinsically. Intrinsic motivation comes from the learners' interest in the learning process although there is no any extrinsic reward. According to Ellis (1994:515), intrinsic motivation is the positive response to stimuli based on existing cognitive structures in such a way that learner's curiosity is aroused and sustained. From this statement, curiosity and discovery are also the main elements of intrinsic motivation. In contrast, tourism students have weak intrinsic motivation in learning English. Motivation to learn English can be affected by the attitude of a number of sources around the learners: (a) the society/environment (the negative attitudes toward English learning); (b) the others' influence (such as unsupported family); (c) the teacher (the monotonous activities and boring atmosphere in the classroom). These important sources will affect the learners' attainment toward learning English.

Self-esteem is the last internal factor that influence the attainment of ASEAN Common Competency Standards among tourism students. Self esteem also takes part in hindering the attainment of these competency standards although less than the previous internal factors. Self esteem is included as an affective value in the learning process in order to achieve learning goals. Based on the research, the students have a quite high level of self esteem in learning English. Most of the students try to pay fully attention to their lecturer in the classroom. They also want to give maximum effort to do assignment and activities in the learning process.

In addition, internal factors that cause the gap between students' competence and their attainment of the ASEAN Common Competency Standards are "supported" by several elements, such as the minimum ability to reach general English and English proficiency standard; the monotonous learning in learning English; the lack of self esteem in case of following the learning process by doing assignment or practising; the limited exploration and use of knowledge about English terms based on their sub division; the lack of intrinsic motivation as the reason to improve their skill in English; the passive attitude by the students toward learning process of English subject.

Conclusion

The questionnaire's result shows that there are several factors which hinder the tourism students at Akademi Komunitas Negeri (AKN) Lombok Barat to attain ASEAN Common Competency Standards. Internal factors that cause the gap between students' competence and the attainment of the ASEAN Common Competency Standard are influenced by several internal factors, such as the minimum ability to reach general English and English proficiency standard; the monotonous learning in learning English; the lack of self esteem in case of following the learning process by doing an assignment or practising; the limited exploration and use of knowledge about English terms based on their sub division; the lack of intrinsic motivation as the reason to improve their skill in English; the passive attitude by the students toward learning process of English subject.

This study tried to analyze the internal factors hindering the students' attainment of the ASEAN Common Competency Standards among the tourism students. The findings and

discussions indicate the correlation between theory and the findings. Therefore, there are some suggestions, as follows: it is important for the lecturer to know the students' competence In English proficiency for attaining the ASEAN Common Competency Standard as the ASEAN standard for the tourism field; future researchers may explore a different point of view to do future research and relate it with the previous studies, such as hindering factors that come from teachers' or institution; the future researchers are suggested to analyze the English competence that is integrating with core skill in tourism for professional worker at industry; this study is not perfect, so that the suggestions are very needed to improve the quality of the topic.

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