

Competence of Professional Language Teachers in Providing Educational Services to Improve Students' Retention Ability

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Abstract

The current research investigates how professional language teachers' educational services improve the retention ability for high school students. The population in this study are 635 students of Al Manara School, located at city of Sirte, with 65 students as the sample taken with proportional random sampling technique, and involved two language teachers from the same school, an English teacher and an Arabic teacher. To collect research data, researchers used questionnaire and interview. The data was analyzed using a simple regression formula. The data with a simple regression model with a significance level of the regression was matched with the significance test rules. The result of data analysis indicates that the competence of professional language teachers in educating has a significant effect on increasing students' memory toward lessons. In addition, the researchers found that there are three pillars of educational services applied by language teachers in educating students. Therefore, it can be concluded that if the professional language teacher education services in educating are improved, there will be an increase in students' retention ability toward lesson materials.

Keywords

competence, professional language teacher, students' retention ability

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INTRODUCTION

When discussing a noble profession, teacher as a profession will occupy the first rank. Teacher in the sense of educator and guide is a primordial job that has been known by humans since ancient time. No one knows when the teacher was institutionalized in a professional form (Arisandi & Vanissa, 2020; Nesje, Brandmo, & Berger, 2018). However, what is certain is that the history of human life is built on educators or teachers. Educators who teach humans about the norms of life, ethics, morality, and the ability to survive.

Human's dependence on education as a whole requires professional teachers. Bakar (2018) stated that a professional teacher is a teacher who makes his/her profession a part of himself/herself. Thus, people who make teacher a choice in life must have integrity as teacher. The teacher is truly someone who is admired and imitated in every action.

The heavy task teachers carry is an obligation that is philosophically attached to the teachers (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008; Keay, Carse, & Jess, 2019). This is what demands self-development to improve the quality and professionalism of teachers. This demand is in line with the development of an increasingly complex and advanced world. Donaldson (2011) and Sherpa (2018) explained that teachers in the 1980s, had different demands professionally from teachers in the 2000s. Teachers in the middle century, both in Europe, and in other parts of the world, had different demands. It adapts to the context of its existence.

Teachers as professional educators have the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students at an early age, at the primary and secondary education levels (Grimmett, Forgasz, Williams, & White, 2018; Muhayat, 2019). Therefore, the teachers' responsibility is to fulfill students' right, treat students fairly, give freedom to students, direct students to understand other groups, provide opportunities for students to develop their potential, and carry out effective learning. Hubbard (2019) added a professional teacher must know clearly the difference between the traditional education model that s/he may have applied so far, and the future education model. The two models are philosophically different.

The task of teachers as educators, instructors, and mentors becomes very heavy along with the times. In principle, good teachers will be able to classify every student they care for. Naturally, each student has a different character and intelligence. Some students quickly understand and remember the subject materials, but others are slow (Baharun & Ummah, 2018; Pant & Srivastava, 2019; Ros-Morente, Mora, Nadal, Belled, & Berenguer, 2018).

This difference can be caused by the different memory or retention ability of students. Retention ability (memory ability) is an ability to maximize the brain in thinking so that learning barriers can be overcome (Zhou & Wei, 2018). According to a Kelman (2018) many things can cause students to be unable to maximize their memory skill, such as environmental factor, family, or due to physical disorder. All of that has an impact on the retention ability of students not maximal.

The teacher has the task of directing students who have poor retention. Tutoring or other educational services can be provided to those students so that they can learn well and catch up with other students. This service can retrigger the students' brain activity, so that the students' memory can return to normal. It is also very dependent on the professional ability of teachers in educating, guiding, and teaching. Teachers can also try to create appropriate models and methods to be applied to students.

Seeing this problem, the researchers examined more deeply the competence of professional teachers in providing educational services to improve students' retention ability of the subject materials. This research is focused on language teachers because the language lesson is a subject that requires memory skills. Besides that, language acquisition is also directly proportional to retention ability improvement. The research problem formulation is how professional language teachers' education services improve retention ability for high school students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Educational services are guidance services aimed at providing relevant, objective, and actual education to students. The material provided contains various things related to oneself and the environment (Yan, Zhang, Yang, & Ning, 2008). From a research conducted by Aziz and Abdolghader (2018), educational services operationally can be given in the form of providing information about the development process, talents and interests, career development and demands in the community, curriculum, study programs, effective learning methods, social ethics, school rules, extracurricular programs at school, and various organizations in society.

An educational service is a service that seeks to meet individual student deficiencies in the educational information they need. Thus, the purpose of an educational service is to provide mastery and utilization of education for students. This service can meet students' need towards education (Zhezhnych & Shilinh, 2018).

Another research by Bilaver and Havlicek (2019) found that an orientation service is included in educational services. The result of data analysis on the study concluded that the orientation service is a guidance service to assist students in recognizing and understanding learning objects and new environments so that they can adjust well. One example of an orientation service is introducing new students to the school environment and all the intricacies in the school, such as curriculum, rules, school subject matter, school facilities (class rooms, laboratories, library, and so on).

Hematinezhad, Shabani, and Faraji (2019) underlined that educational services have general purpose and specific purpose. In general, educational services aim to provide mastery of subject matter in schools. In specific, educational services are related to the function of understanding, namely students understand the lesson materials given to them, and utilize the information obtained to solve problems. This services make students independent, namely understanding and accepting themselves and their environment in a positive, objective, and dynamic way. Finally, students are able to make decisions and direct themselves according to their needs.

From the result of their investigation, Zulaiha, Lian, and Mulyadi (2020) proposed that educational service components include every service that is covered by the presence of teachers as service implementers, students as service targets, and information or subject matter as service content delivered. The educational services are provided directly and openly by teachers, especially language teachers. In addition, educational services can be presented in the following forms:

1. The material is delivered through lectures, questions-answers, and discussions
2. Using learning media
3. The activity can be supported by special activities, for example outbound
4. To further deepen, the teacher can invite expert speakers

Through their research, Yousefi, Jahantab, and Khadem-Rezaiyan (2021) found that in carrying out educational services, a teacher should be able to identify five domains of the subject mastery. The five domains are:

1. Comprehensive basic insight, which includes: understanding, purpose, and benefits
2. Components that play a major role in educational services
3. standard operating procedures of service
4. Location and condition
5. Assessment and reporting

Professional competence can be interpreted as a set of responsible intelligence actions possessed by a person as a condition to be considered capable of carrying out tasks in a particular field of work. Therefore, someone who is professional in a field of work requires mastery of a field of knowledge. By mastering the knowledge, the person will be able to do the tasks in his field of work (Cochran-Smith, Grudnoff, Orland-Barak, & Smith, 2020; Hubbard, 2019).

Teacher competence is a person's ability to carry out obligations responsibly and appropriately as a teacher. The competence possessed by each teacher will show the quality of the teacher in teaching. The competence is manifested in the form of mastery of lesson materials, knowledge, skills, and the ability to carry out their functions as teachers professionally (Wyss, Rosenberger, & Bührer, 2021).

The term 'professional' refers to two things. First, people who have a profession, such as someone who has a profession as a doctor, someone who has a profession as a judge, someone who has a profession as an entrepreneur, and others. Second, a person's performance in doing work in accordance with his profession, which means that a professional person has a different attitude from an unprofessional person, even though they are in the same job. Professional nature is proven not by speech but by performance (Earley, 2010; Lee, Mojica, & Lovett, 2020; Malm, 2020; Mogashoa, 2018). In line with that, Shaw (2020) proposed that professionalism is defined as the commitment of members of a profession to improve their professional abilities and continuously develop the strategies used in carrying out work in accordance with their profession.

After conducting a descriptive research, Hadar and Brody (2021) concluded that professional language teachers are teachers who have special abilities and expertise in the field of teaching so that they are able to carry out their duties and functions as teachers to the maximum. In other words, professional teachers are teachers who are well educated and trained, and have expertise in the field of education. Being educated and trained in this matter is not only shown by obtaining formal education, but is also proven by mastering various strategies or techniques in teaching and learning activities, and mastering educational foundations.

In general, the competencies that must be possessed by teachers as learning agents at various levels of education include: (1) pedagogic competence, (2) personality competence, (3) professional competence, and (4) social competence (Baron, Sklarwitz, & Coddington, 2021). Based on this description, the indicators of language teacher's professional competence used in this research are: (1) the ability to master the materials, (2) the ability to arrange learning sets, (3) the ability to carry out teaching programs, (4) the ability to evaluate, and (5) the ability to carry out a follow-up program.

Based on the research results, Gondwe (2021) suggested that teacher as a special field of work, carried out based on the following principles:

1. Having talents, interests, vocation, and idealism
2. Having a commitment to improve the quality of education, faith, piety, and noble character.
3. Having academic qualifications and educational background in accordance with the field of assignment
4. Having the necessary competencies in accordance with the field of assignment
5. Having responsibility for the implementation of professional duties
6. Earning a determined income in accordance with work performance
7. Having the opportunity to develop professionally on an ongoing basis by lifelong learning
8. Having guaranteed legal protection in carrying out professional duties
9. Having a professional organization that has the authority to regulate matters relating to professional duties

Teachers are required to have qualifications consisting of academic qualification, competence, educator certificate, physically and mentally healthy, and have the ability to realize educational goals (Gondwe, 2021). In carrying out professional duties, teachers have the following rights:

1. Obtaining guarantees above the minimum needs and social welfare guarantees
2. Getting promotions and awards according to work assignments and achievements
3. Obtaining protection in carrying out duties and intellectual property rights
4. Getting the opportunity to improve competence
5. Obtaining and utilize learning facilities and infrastructure to support the smooth running of professional tasks
6. Having the freedom to provide assessments and participate in determining graduation, awards, and/or sanctions to students in accordance with educational rules, teacher code of ethics and applicable laws and regulations

7. Gaining a sense of security and guarantee of safety in carrying out tasks
8. Having the freedom to associate in professional organizations
9. Having the opportunity to play a role in determining education policy
10. Getting the opportunity to develop and improve academic qualifications and competencies
11. Obtaining training and developing professions in their fields of teacher obligations

Retention or memory strength means the ability to recall past experiences. Memory is an activity of the human brain. The brain is the greatest gift to humans. In the brain, all activities of thinking, remembering, and reason are attached. The ability to think and remember in students is a psychic activity (sense) in order to provide answers to a particular problem. The way of activity is to connect one thing to another so that you can find a solution to a problem. Thinking and remembering is an attempt to use reason to provide varied answers to a problem that occurs (Arifin, Setyosari, Sa'dijah, & Kuswandi, 2020).

Wang (2021) found that memory must be trained from an early age because it will affect the child's memory ability when he grows up. At school, every student has different memory abilities. There are students who have good memory and there are children who are lacking. Teachers must deal with the teaching and learning process between students who have a strong memory and those who lack it. Teachers with their professionalism can use many services and guidance to try to understand children who are lacking in memory.

Poor memory can have implications for learning outcomes. Therefore, the teacher must have sufficient ability to identify students who are lacking in memory skills and students who are good at memory. Teachers with their abilities can provide learning methods or methods that are very suitable and can be understood well by students who have poor memory.

Based on the description above, the indicators of student memory are:

1. Retention ability is the ability of students to remember the lessons given by the teacher.
2. Students' retention ability can be developed by paying attention to the psychological aspects of students.
3. Students' retention ability can be improved by the teacher looking for appropriate learning models and methods for those with low memory.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research location was Al Manara School, at city of Sirte. The population in this study were all students in Al Manara School, namely 635 students, and involved two language teachers from that school, an English teacher and an Arabic teacher. As the sample, 65 students were taken by using proportional random sampling technique. The data was collected by using questionnaire and interview, and analyzed by using a simple regression formula as follows:

$$\hat{y} = a + bx$$

Note:

\hat{y} : Projected dependent variable subject

x : Independent variable

a : The value of the constant price Y if X = 0

b : Directional value as a predictor (prediction) which shows the value of increasing (+) or decrease value (-) of variabel Y

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Researchers have established communication with schools, especially language teachers, regarding the educational services provided by teachers in relation to students' retention ability. The hypothesis in this study is that there is an effect of teacher education services as professionals in educating, guiding, and teaching, on students' memory of the lesson materials. As a statistical hypothesis:

Ha: alternative hypothesis

Ho: null hypothesis, statistical testing only tests the null hypothesis

Because the null hypothesis is a statement about the parameters that contradict the researcher's beliefs, if from the test a decision is obtained that supports or agrees with Ho, it can be said that Ho is accepted. In this study, the statistical hypotheses are:

Ha : There is an influence of professional language teachers' education services in educating, guiding, and teaching on students' retention ability

Ho : There is not an influence of professional language teachers' education services in educating, guiding, and teaching on students' retention ability

From the result of questionnaires, it was found that the implementation of educational services by language teachers at Al Manara School was carried out with the following steps:

1. Planning

The planning step functions as identification of information needs for service objects, determining service materials, determining service subjects, determining resource persons, establishing procedures, tools and service media and preparing administrative completeness.

2. Implementation

Teachers organized service activities, activated service participants, and optimized the use of methods and media.

3. Evaluation

Teachers evaluated by setting evaluation materials, establishing evaluation procedures, compiling evaluation instruments, applying instruments and processing instrument results.

4. Analysis of evaluation result

After conducting the evaluation, the teachers set the norms or standards of evaluation by conducting an analysis and interpreting the results of the analysis.

5. Following-up

Teachers determined the type and direction of follow-up, communicated the follow-up plan to related parties, and implemented the follow-up plan.

6. Reporting

The final step was the teachers compiled an orientation service report, submitted reports to related parties, and documented reports.

To grow students' retention ability naturally, based on the data analysis result, it was found that language teachers applied three pillars, namely:

1. Environmental arrangement

In terms of the arrangement of the environment outside and inside the classroom at school, every room, from the floor, walls, bookshelves, windows, to the ceiling can be made attractive. Likewise in terms of structuring the environment outside or inside the classroom at school, starting from the gate, the road to the classroom, ornamental plants, living pharmacies, all are designed in an attractive manner.

2. Playing activities with educational game tools, designing, and developing various types of educational game tools, creative educators will use materials found in the child's environment, for example made of newspapers, cardboard, green bean seeds, matchsticks, candles, and so on. Likewise, in students' ability development activities, the teacher will package them into interesting activities. In a teaching and learning activity, in opening the learning process, brainstorming is carried out; in the learning process, reading or story telling was conducted.

3. There is an educative interaction shown by the educator

Teachers had understood and implemented appropriate educational actions, starting from the opening of the teaching-learning process activities to the closing stage. The educator's action began by setting an example, for example how to sit, dress, and talk, and so on. Likewise, how to act, for example giving praise and encouragement to children, showing affection and attention fairly.

From the interview result conducted to research participants, it was found that language teachers apply 10 factors to hone students' memory, namely:

1. Physiological factor

Memory is part of a child's cognitive and is influenced by physiological and environmental factors. Parents should pay attention to food intake related to the development of the brain and other organs. The intake of nutrients and vitamins to stimulate a child's brain will affect his memory. If the nutritional and vitamin needs are not met, the child will easily fall asleep, so that he is not optimal when receiving or remembering information.

2. Enough clean air

Oxygen requirements are also important. If the oxygen supply is met, the blood circulation will be smooth considering that the toddler has more activities outside the room, so that it will support his cognitive processes, so that the child's memory ability also increases.

3. Remembering while singing
Many ways can be done to improve memory and sharpen the sharpness of children's thinking. One of them is learning while singing. Even simple things can stimulate memory sharpness, such as remembering colors, letters, and numbers, through songs.
4. Remembering with things
The cognitive part of children is still in the process of development, therefore in inviting children to remember something, it must use concrete media. Children will be easier to understand using props than just words.
5. Memorizing through fairy tales
Read a story book to a young child before going to bed. When finished, invite him to return to remember the storyline earlier, such as the name of the character, the name of the place and so on. By doing repetition, children will get used to listening and recording it in their memory.
6. Imitating the movement
Physical activity at an early age is needed to develop motor sensors and as a way to explore the environment. It can also be used to stimulate the ability to remember.
7. Associating things
If parents want to introduce various types of numbers to their children, parents need to associate them by using certain object shapes so that children will easily remember them.
8. Procedural games
If you want to introduce toys, choose toys that are suitable to stimulate your child's memory. Introduce toys or games that have procedures, for example: snakes and ladders game.
9. Remembering sound through pictures and sounds
There are several types of learning for children, for example through visual (pictures), auditive (song/ sound), and kinesthetic (movement/ props). These types of learning should be considered by educators.
10. Mind mapping
The concept of mind mapping can be taught when children begin to recognize shapes, colors and visual symbols. This method does not have to use words, but uses pictures.

CONCLUSION

From this research, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. In this study, it is known that the simple regression model formed is that if professional language teachers' education services are improved, there will be an increase in students' retention ability toward the lesson materials.
2. In the analysis for significance, it is known that there is a significant effect of professional language teachers' education services in educating, guiding, and teaching, on students' retention ability toward the lesson materials.

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