English, Islam, and Secular Values: A Hybrid Curricular Approach to Pre-service English Teacher Education in the Era of World Englishes?

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the principles, nature, content, and implementation of Pre-service English Teacher Education curriculum in the context of Islamic and secular public universities in a Sumatran province in Indonesia. It also discusses the extent to which the curriculum reflects representation of Islamic or secular institutional identities, responses to national teacher certification program, and the increasing role of English as a global language. This study is an attempt to highlight the importance of more research and research-based policy on Second Language Teacher Education in EFL context. Preliminary analysis of data collected from pre-service teacher and program administrators through interviews and document analysis shows that there is lack of consistency between the intended hybrid or integrated PETE curriculum and its content in one hand, and its implementation in the other. It also indicates that the current curriculum in both universities has not sufficiently responded to global and local development in ELT.

Key words: English, teacher education, curriculum, Islam, secular values, world Englishes

INTRODUCTION

As in many other Asian countries where English is taught as a foreign language, a principal goal of teaching English in Indonesia is to contribute to the improvement of the country's education quality. Achieving such a goal will, in turn, help provide the path for efforts to increase the quality of the country's human resources, which, in considerable instances and along with the increasing role of English as a Global Language (EGL), require the provision of effective English Language Teaching (ELT) programs (Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Jazadi, 2000). Studies in this area (Choi & Lee, 2007; Graddol, 2000, 2006; Nunan, 2003) indicate that English teacher education programs are in a strategic position to contribute to the empowerment of human resources across Asia. Consequently, an important element in this regard is the ability of English teacher education programs to prepare qualified teachers, who, as indicated in Feiman-Nemser and Norman (2000), play significant roles to help schools in developing knowledge, fostering socially acceptable values, and "lay[ing] the foundation or productive work and active citizenship" (p. 732).

This paper reports preliminary findings of a doctoral study on Second Language Teacher education (SLTE) that explores the principles, nature, content, and implementation of Pre-service English Teacher Education (PETE) curriculum in the context of an Islamic and a secular public
university in Indonesia. The study aimed at generating insights on what need to be considered and included in the evaluation, innovation, and development of curriculum for a sustainable 21st century Preservice English Teacher Education program in Indonesia and other similar contexts of English education and teacher education.

BACKGROUND

Over the past few decades, Indonesia has witnessed the involvement of its Islamic public universities in the provision of education programs that traditionally are only offered in secular universities. As Kraince (2007) observed, this development reflects changes in the traditional view on higher education institutions in Indonesia, where boundaries between education programs offered by secular public universities and those offered by Islamic public universities have blurred, particularly after the transformation of several former state institutes and schools for Islamic studies (IAIN and STAIN) into universities. While Indonesian secular universities remain their focus in providing secular education programs, the country's Islamic universities have expanded their education provision from mainly offering education programs in Islamic studies to offering a wide range of secular education programs as well, which among others include Pre-service English Teacher Education (PETE) program. This is a phenomenon that reflects a shift in the Islamic universities' perspective toward education and may pose challenges to as well as provide opportunities for cooperation with the secular universities.

Although the provision of secular education programs in Indonesian Islamic universities has occurred for quite some time (see Kraince, 2007), how these education programs are implemented in the context of Islamic higher education in Indonesia and how they are different from the same programs implemented in Indonesian secular universities are relatively unknown to the academic communities both inside and outside Indonesia. Unavailability of empirical evidence regarding these issues indicates an inability to maintain the currency of higher educational studies and development in the country. Besides, considering the significant role of universities and colleges as agents of change in today's society and particularly in influencing social relations and inter-group relations both inside and outside the university campuses (Kraince, 2007), the dearth of empirical evidence in this area noticeably requires immediate response from the academic and research community.

In response to the phenomenon mentioned above, this study has been designed to explore the curriculum of PETE in an Indonesian Islamic public university in comparison with the curriculum of the same program in a secular public university. The underlying reason for studying the PETE curriculum is based on consideration of both national and international issues indicating the need toward investigating the curriculum of PETE programs in Indonesian universities. These considerations of both local and global issues are also in line with the view that "if an education policy is to respond systematically to the needs imposed by the globalized world yet retain its relevance to different local contexts, then both global and local influences on teaching must be considered" (Ben-Peretz, 2009, p. 74).

Nationally, there are three major issues that drive the need for the exploration of the curriculum of PETE in Indonesia. The first is the observation and claims that ELT (English Language Teaching) in Indonesian schools remains with unsolved problems and continues failing to bring about the expected satisfactory results (Bradford, 2007; Cahyono & Widiati, 2004; Dardjowidjojo, 2000;
Jazadi, 2000; Lengkanawati, 2005; Madya, 2007; Marcelino, 2008; Sadtono, 2007). While certainly there are a range of possible factors that can be attributed to this failure, the teacher factor and the nature of how teacher candidates have been prepared to become teachers deserves an investigation.

The second issue is the teacher certification program, which is aimed at increasing teachers’ teaching qualification to a level that meets a certain set of standardized criteria as stipulated by the government (Law Number 14 Year 2005). It still remains a question as to how PETE programs in Indonesian Islamic and secular public universities have responded to the national agenda.

The last issue is the transformation of several IAIN and STAIN or State Institutes/Schools for Islamic Studies into UINs or State Islamic Universities (SIUs). As implied earlier, this has led to the opening of secular education programs (such as PETE), which previously were unavailable or additional in nature under the umbrella of IAINs or STAINs (see Abdullah, 2005). This transformation suggests the need to understand how two traditionally incompatible concepts of education, secular education and Islamic education (see Halstead, 2004), interact within the institutional framework of modern Islamic universities.

Along with the national issues above, there are two international issues that also show the need for exploring the PETE curriculum in Indonesian universities. The first is the issue of English as a Global Language (EGL). Studies on this new role of English have revealed that its increasing role as a global language has resulted in significant impacts on educational policies and practices all over the world (Burns & Richards, 2009; Graddol 2006; Nunan, 2003). Nunan's study, for example, revealed the inadequacy of the quality of teacher education in Asia and indicated the need for evaluation and reformulation of English teacher education programs in the region to respond to the impacts of EGL in Asian countries.

The second international factor is the issue of radicalism in Muslim-majority countries. Coulson (2004) suggested that education can play a significant role in decreasing the popularity of radical ideology in these countries. Mentioning Indonesia as "the world's most tolerant Muslim-majority nation" (pp. 11-12), Coulson, however, observed that indoctrination of radical ideology has gained its place in a handful of Islamic education institutions, which surprisingly also include a few government-run ones. To the contrary, however, the provision of the PETE program, and also other secular education programs, in Indonesian Islamic public universities reflects efforts to de-radicalize fundamentalism in Muslim society. This also reflects change in the perception that English is not the language of the Muslims (see Argungu, 1996; Mohd-Asraf, 2005), and thus leaves questions on the institutional and philosophical groundings for offering PETE program in Islamic public universities.

In addition to consideration of national and global issues above, the emphasis on curriculum in this study is based on the consideration that curriculum refers to "[a]ll the planned learning opportunities offered by the organisations to learners and the experiences learners encounter when the curriculum is implemented" (Print, 1988, p. xvii). That curriculum provides learning opportunities and experiences to learners signifies its central role in the education of all types of learners, including pre-service English teachers. However, it should be noted that curriculum of teacher education has also been criticized as irrelevant by prospective teachers, novice teachers, and critics (Anderson, 1995; Farrell, 2007), which suggests that more studies need to be conducted to facilitate the development of curriculum that effectively links content of teacher education to realities of school and teaching in classrooms. This is in line with the view that, "[c]urriculum and curriculum.
development cannot be detached from the social, cultural, and political contexts, both at local and international levels" (Ben-Peretz, 2009, p. 43). Thus, it can be argued that a representative curriculum of PETE is one that reflects the inclusion of learning opportunities and experiences which respond to a variety of local and international issues relevant to English education and English teacher education. This research aims to find out to what extent the PETE curriculum in the universities investigated in this study has achieved that expectation. Findings from this research can become the basis to develop a framework of a more representative PETE curriculum in such contexts as ELT in non-English speaking countries or Muslim-majority countries. Such a framework can become an invaluable starting point for curriculum innovation, evaluation, and development of PETE program in such countries.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

An exploration of pre-service English teacher education curriculum, as a part of research in the area of second language teacher education, needs to reflect the view that the curriculum "is an interdependent, situated set of educational processes and tools whose aim is teacher learning" (Graves, 2009, p. 115). This understanding of curriculum suggests the need to view second language teacher education as a process that goes beyond the learning of second language as the subject matter per se by teachers or pre-service teachers—a prevalent nature of traditional language teacher education programs (Freeman and Johnson, 1998). The 'interdependent' and 'situated' nature of a second language teacher education curriculum illustrated by Grave above indicates that it needs to draw on sociocultural perspectives to second language teacher education in which educational, social, cultural, political, and institutional aspects affecting the curriculum are taken into account (see Johnson, 2009).

![Diagram](Image)

Figure 1 Disciplinary Areas of the PETE Curriculum in Indonesian Public Universities

Therefore, as shown in Figure 1 above, investigation of pre-service English teacher education curriculum in Indonesian Islamic and secular public universities requires an Interdisciplinary understanding of English teacher education, that is, it needs to be explored within the hybrid context.
of literature in second language teacher education, secularization and Islamization of education, and Indonesian education. Based on the work of Gimmelst and Hall (1995), Johnson (2009), Lukens-Bull (2001), Mohd-Asraf (2005), Richard (1998), and Roberts (1998), pre-service English teacher education curriculum can be conceptualized as consisting of five major components. These include general education, content or subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (knowledge drawn from the synthesis of pedagogy, content knowledge, and other relevant knowledge), and contextual knowledge.

In addition to looking at SLTE curriculum as representing the knowledge base of SLTE, it is also important to view SLTE curriculum as a bridge to teachers' lifelong professional development. In other words, SLTE curriculum needs to represent knowledge base of SLTE that promotes ongoing teacher learning, and not become an end to their professional development when they complete their SLTE program (Graves, 2009). In this regard, understanding the different approaches to SLTE is crucial so that the ongoing nature of professional development can be reflected in the curriculum and in the instructional practices of delivering its content.

METHODOLOGY

Because the study aims to generate in-depth and holistic findings based on the investigation of two different cases of pre-service English teacher education curriculum and does not aim to make any statistical generalizations of the findings, it has been carried out using a qualitative approach and case study research design. However, although the study is based only on data collected from two universities (an Islamic Public university and a Secular Public university) in a province in Indonesia, it is argued that the study is also potential to shed light on pre-service English teacher education curriculum in other universities in the country due to the similar education system and bureaucracy in operation across the country.

In order to collect the relevant data in this study, a number of pre-service teachers, lecturers, and program administrators were involved in this study through their voluntary participation in semi-structured questionnaire survey, interviews, and observation. Because the investigator has not completed the data analysis, this paper only presents findings based on data collected from pre-service teachers' focus group interviews, program administrators' interviews, and analysis of relevant documents. The focus group interviews were conducted with final year (the sixth semester) students or pre-service teachers enrolled in the undergraduate program at the Department of English Teacher Education at the purposively selected Islamic and Secular public universities in Sumatra. Six focus group interviews were conducted with final year pre-service English teachers in the Islamic public university, which has more than twice as many final year pre-service English teachers as the secular public university where only two focus group interviews were carried out. The sixth semester students were selected because they have generally taken all units of study except teaching practicum, community service, and undergraduate research project. Thus, they have experienced most part of the curriculum and have had sufficient capacity to respond to issues related to pre-service teacher education curriculum in their respective university.

Interviews were also conducted with program administrators (program chairs, deans/vice deans of the faculty of education under which the pre-service English teacher education program is administered) to triangulate data collected from the pre-service teachers. All interviews were audio-
taped, transcribed, and checked for accuracy. Due to time constraints and space limitation, data from classroom observations, pre-service teachers’ and lecturers’ questionnaires, and lecturers’ interviews are not included for analysis in the present paper.

As a qualitative study, analysis of data in this study include “organization, classification, categorization, a search for patterns, and synthesis” (Schloss & Smith, 1999, p. 190). In line with Schloss and Smith (1999), the analysis has been recursive so as to facilitate the construction of findings as subsequent pieces of data are reviewed. Another dimension of the analysis is that data analysis is conducted both at the stages of data collection and data analysis itself due to the emergent nature of the research inquiry (Patton, 2002). Therefore, due to the exploratory nature of this case study research and the researcher’s lack of prior conception or proposition about policies and practices of pre-service English teacher education in Indonesia, Constant Comparative Approaches will be used in analyzing data in this study (see Schloss & Smith, 1999). In this study, each individual case analysis was completed earlier so as to allow cross-case analysis to be carried out.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Preliminary analysis of pre-service teachers’ focus group interview transcripts, relevant documents, and program administrators’ interview transcript has led this exploration of pre-service English teacher education curriculum to several emerging themes. These themes include principles underlying the curriculum, nature of the curriculum, content of the curriculum, implementation of the curriculum, and curricular responses to global and local issues related to SLTE (Second Language Teacher Education). Each of these themes is presented and discussed below.

PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE CURRICULUM

Principles underlying the PETE (Pre-service English Teacher Education) curriculum refer to theories or norms believed to underpin the design, content and implementation of the curriculum. These principles, therefore, are strategic in providing guidance for curriculum design, implementation, evaluation, and innovation. Whether these principles are germane to the current local and external context of PETE program in the selected universities reflects the level of understanding by curriculum designers of the situation, resources, and potential surrounding the PETE program. Data analysis of data collected for this paper showed that principles underlying PETE curriculum in the selected Islamic and Secular public universities include contextual principles (religious, secular, local, national, global), linguistic principle, and pedagogical principle.

In the Islamic public university, it was found that the PETE curriculum was underpinned by contextual principles that promote awareness and development of religious/Islamic personality and contribution to local and national development. The vision, mission, and objectives of the PETE program indicated that its curriculum is underpinned by the belief that the Islamic, local, Indonesian, and global contexts in which the PETE program is offered are integrated into its efforts of preparing professional English teachers. One of the PETE program objectives, for example, reads:

To produce graduates and Muslim intellectuals who possess expertise in teaching English as a second/foreign language with an added value of Islamic knowledge and noble characters (Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, 2011, Tujuan Program Studi, para. 3).
On the other hand, consideration of contribution to local and national development reflects well in the following mission of the PETE program:

To carry out research and assessment in efforts to develop knowledge on English education that is relevant to national development, particularly within the framework of regional/local autonomy (FTK UIN Sultan Syarif Riau, 2010, p. 83).

Though not explicitly stated, there is also indication that the PETE curriculum in the Islamic public university is underpinned by an understanding of global context that may be responded by the PETE curriculum. Vision of the PETE program in the university aims to provide quality English education through teaching and research within the Southeast Asian region in 2013 (FTK UIN Sultan Syarif Riau, 2010). Interview transcript with the Dean of the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training under which the PETE program is administered offered a good summary of the contextual principles underlying its curriculum, including its global context. The Dean indicated that the PETE curriculum in the Islamic public university takes into account Islamic, local, national, and regional/global contexts within which the PETE program is offered. She explained:

What we want to achieve is to produce Muslim graduates with noble characters who master knowledge of education and teaching... certainly in this regard it is concerned with English education and teaching... Then [those graduates are expected] to be able to implement [the knowledge] professionally and...certainly [it is expected that they are] quality Muslim graduates because when talking about Muslim graduates with noble characters [that means] they have good quality as we expected... I always perceive good quality graduates as graduates considered by the society as significantly reliable at local, national, and hopefully also at regional [international] levels. (Program administrator: Dean of the faculty of Education and Teacher Training at an Islamic public university)

The accommodation of these contextual principles as underpinning the PETE curriculum in the Islamic public university echoes Ben-Peretz's (2009) argument put forward earlier in this paper that contexts surrounding curriculum and curriculum development should always be part of the curriculum. However, it is important to note that contextual principles, as also other principles later, underlying the PETE curriculum are not always well reflected in the nature, content, and implementation of the curriculum. More discussion about this issue will be presented in the later part of this paper.

Unlike contextual principles underlying the PETE curriculum in the Islamic public university, contextual principles underlying the PETE curriculum in the secular public university are less religious, more secular, and more general. This is found to be relevant to the secular and general nature of the university in which its PETE program is administered. In other words, specific religious context is not formally accommodated to underpin the curriculum. Religious values from all recognized religions in Indonesia are marginally accommodated to influence the PETE curriculum through pre-service teachers' own faith or religion. Islam, though found to be the religion of most pre-service teachers and lecturers in the PETE program of this secular public university, is not formally and as intensely accommodated to contextualize the PETE curriculum as it is in the Islamic public university.

General and specific objectives of the PETE program in the secular public university showed that general moral values required of any Indonesian citizen and teacher, regardless of his or her
religion underpin and guide the PETE curriculum (FKIP Universitas Riau, 2010). These include faith to *Pancasila* (The Five Principles representing the official philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state), high personal integrity, and tolerance and responsiveness toward change and diversity in the society. The more general context of the PETE program in the secular public university is also documented in the specific objective of the program, that is, “to transform [pre-service teachers] into graduates that are able to carry out the process of English language teaching professionally for primary and secondary levels of education” (FKIP Universitas Riau, 2010, p. 9). According to the PETE curriculum in the secular university, such transformation is expected to enable graduates to possess the four competences required in the Indonesian government teacher certification program which include pedagogical competence, personal competence, professional competence, and social competence (see FKIP Universitas Riau, 2010, pp. 9-10).

Thus, it can be argued that contextual principles underlying the PETE curriculum in the secular public university include accommodation of Indonesian context of national education and development and the multi-faiths context of Indonesian society. The local and global contexts which may guide the PETE curriculum in the secular university are not explicitly found from the data collected but may have indirectly underpin the curriculum through development of pre-service teachers’ competences.

The second principle underlying the PETE curriculum is linguistic principle. Analysis of relevant documents led to an understanding that PETE curriculum in both the Islamic and secular public universities is underpinned by belief that one can best teach a second/foreign language when he or she himself/herself is proficient in and know how to learn the language. In the PETE program of the secular public university, this is reflected well in the professional competence to be developed for pre-service teachers in the secular public university (See FKIP Universitas Riau, 2010, p. 10) where, according to program objective, pre-service teachers are transformed to master as much English as possible in the hope that they can later facilitate their students to learn English. Similarly, the PETE program in the Islamic public university also requires pre-service teachers to be proficient in English so as to be able to play their role as professional English teacher. The mission of the PETE program in the Islamic public university indicated clearly that proficiency in the English language is a must in their effort to produce professional Muslim English teachers (FTK UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, 2010).

This emphasis on linguistic principle is understandable, especially with regard to the common belief in language teacher education that one needs only to know the language in order to teach language. Johnson (2009) suggested that “knowledge of formal properties of language and theories of SLA continue to be positioned as foundational knowledge for the professional preparation of L2 teachers” (p. 24). In other words, subject matter or content knowledge, how to teach it (pedagogy), and English proficiency (in the case of preparing non-native speakers as English teachers), which were typical components of second language teacher preparation of the 1970’s, continue to be dominant elements of Second Language Teacher Education programs for the preparation of non-native speaker teachers in non-English speaking countries.

Preliminary analysis of data collected also showed that the PETE curriculum in both the Islamic and Secular universities is underpinned by pedagogical principle. The intention to develop pre-service teachers’ pedagogical competence as stated in its curriculum (FKIP Universitas Riau,
2010) is a clear indication that pedagogy is an inseparable element of the PETE curriculum of the secular public university. On the other hand, the intention of the PETE program in the Islamic public university to produce graduates who are able to educate and teach students to be qualified human resources, as stated in its mission (FTK UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, 2010), is also an indication that the PETE curriculum need to be underpinned by sound mastery of pedagogical principles to teach a foreign language.

CONCLUSION

Although similarities are found in the PETE curriculum of both the Islamic and Secular public universities in terms of linguistic and pedagogical principles, differences in the contextual principles discussed above may lead to differences in how linguistic and pedagogical principles of PETE curriculum in each university is translated in its nature, content, and implementation. This is especially true because contexts may influence how the PETE curriculum is translated and experienced by pre-service teachers.

REFERENCES


