

Designing Syllabi for Higher Education: A Reflective Study of Novice Lecturer in Merauke, Papua

^{1st} Lastika Ary Prihandoko

English Literature Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Universitas Musamus Merauke, Indonesia prihandoko@unmus.ac.id

^{2nd} Natalia Manuhutu

English Literature Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Universitas Musamus Merauke, Indonesia natalia27manuhutu@gmail.com

^{3rd} Marnina

English Literature Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Universitas Musamus Merauke, Indonesia marnina@unmus.ac.id

^{4th} Margaretha Febriany Narahawarin

English Literature Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Universitas Musamus Merauke, Indonesia narahawarin_fkip@unmus.ac.id

^{5th} Sri Winarsih

English Literature Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Universitas Musamus Merauke, Indonesia sriwinarsih@unmus.ac.id

Abstract— A good syllabus will guide lecturer and students to be successful in the subject course. Thus syllabus plays an essential role in learning activities. This paper aims to present a reflective study of novice lecturer who has difficulties in creating syllabus design for several subject courses during his first semester of teaching in Papua. Seven subject course syllabuses are taken to be analyzed based on syllabus components. Meanwhile, the reflective study is taken to present detailed information on novice lecturer difficulties in creating syllabus design. Based on the analysis, the created syllabus designs fail to meet several components of the ideal syllabus. Moreover, based on reflection the lecturer has difficulties in creating subject course syllabuses due to lack of experience, lack of subject course books, lack of internet access, over teaching schedule, no professional orientation, no senior lecturer guidance, and no subject course objectives provided by faculty.

Keywords— *reflective study, syllabus design, novice lecturer*

I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian may know Merauke is located in Papua from the famous national anthem. What will come across in people minds about this place are the city in the east of Indonesia and the border to Papua New Guinea. As tourism destinations grow as well as massive infrastructures develop, it will lead the development to the island. Nowadays, the economic sector continuously develops as well as the education sector, especially in higher education. The development in the education sector that needs qualified lecturers are increased continuously.

The demand for a qualified lecturer is in contrast with its supply. Only a few lecturers who willing to be placed in Papua. Only a few people who possess master degree are willing to serve the education sector in Papua. Most of them prefer looking for a university in the west part of the Indonesian area. The result of this condition leads to an oversupply of lecturer candidate in west Indonesia.

One of lecturers' job description is preparing syllabuses for the subjects they have to teach. It will lead to a problem if the novice lecturer has inadequate experience or knowledge in syllabus design. The condition of not having a curriculum development subject in college may cause additional problems. A novice lecturer suffers not only they have inadequate competence of syllabus design, but also he needs to adapt to the new work environment.

A syllabus is having a role as guidance for the lecturer for what to do in the whole semester related to a specific subject. Syllabus operates similarly like a lighthouse tower who will guide a ship to avoid coral cluster and to reach its destination. Failing in designing a syllabus which considered as ideal syllabus will lead to confusion for a lecturer as well as the students since what should be taught and learned will be provided by an ideal syllabus by its' clear aims, content, and methodology[1].

Researches on the syllabus design have a pivotal role in fostering the competence of lecturer related to teaching in higher education. The previous study of syllabus mainly focused on the designing of the particular subject using a specific approach of syllabus design [2-7]. This study will give an account related to the syllabus studies by expanding the research using a reflective approach of syllabus analysis.

This paper aims to conduct a reflective study on the syllabus created by novice lecturer. This investigation will enhance our understanding related to the life experience of novice lecturer when he designs the syllabus. This information will provide an insight for future lecturer. In conducting the syllabus analysis, the researcher tries to use reflective study. [8] define reflection activity underlines purposeful critical analysis of knowledge and experience. This activity will lead to more profound meaning and understanding. Furthermore, reflection employs one is personal experience and emotion as an object.

Moreover, [8] add two dimensions of reflection. An iterative dimension, this process is triggered by an experience that will lead to the new understanding. Furthermore, it will provide potential and intention to behave differently to deal with future circumstance or experience. Reflections on multilevel experiences are found in the vertical dimension. On the other hand, there is a difference between surface level and deeper level. Deeper levels are more challenging to do and more limit in number because the analysis is deeper and more critical. Deeper level differs from the surface analysis that it has less analytical and tends to be more descriptive.

Notion of Syllabus

In understanding the term of the syllabus may overlapping with the term of the curriculum. Candlin in [9] defines curriculum deals with the creation of language learning, learning the purpose, experience, evaluation, and the role and relationships of lecturers and learners in general statements. Meanwhile, syllabuses tend to be more localized as lecturers and learners apply a given curriculum to their situation. In agreement with Candlin, [10] underlines curriculum' is concerned with planning, implementation, evaluation, management, and administration of education programs. While syllabus narrowly focuses on the selection and content grading.

Krahnke in [9] has proposed six types of syllabuses that can be implemented in various teaching circumstance. They are include a structural, a functional, a situational, a skill-based, a content-based, and a task-based. This present study focuses on the structural features of syllabi. In creating an ideal syllabus, the content should meet the standards which are established by institution and in-line with the curriculum. One of the ideal syllabus structural features are proposed by [11] that recommend seventeen components in a syllabus which consist of:

1. Title page
2. Table of contents
3. Instructor information
4. Letter to the students
5. Purpose of the course
6. Course description
7. Course and unit objectives
8. Resources
9. Readings
10. Course calendar
11. Course requirements
12. Evaluation
13. Grading procedures
14. How to use the syllabus
15. How to study for this course
16. Content information
17. Learning tools

Lecturer Early Career

[12] declare base on their research that being a novice lecturer is not as easy as people think. They found the high turn-over in the education field by 24% resigned in their first year, 33% resigned after three years, and 40-50% resigned after five years. Meanwhile, [13] state that in their first-year struggle the novice lecturer will be dealing with tasks related to the teaching that include creating lesson plans or syllabus, applying different teaching methods and assessing student

learning. The concern then shifted to more complicated activities include class management, students' needs, and their learning style, implying the development of knowledge structures and the maturing of pedagogical thinking. [13] add that novice lecturers will struggle to adjust within the environment during the first year in service. However, they may have limited understanding of the concept of school as an organization. In the other hand, the school environment viewed has a central factor in influencing novice lecturer's perspective about professional skills include self-analysis, collaboration, and professional development.

Moreover, [14] adds the majority of novice lecturers have the perception that soon after they graduated all they will have to do is apply what they get or learned to their first year of teaching. It can be understood that the novice lecturer will arrive with the assumption that once they have graduated, what they will have to do is apply what they have learned during their first year of teaching. So most of them arrive with excited, enthusiastic, and full of energy feeling in their new environment. They also tend to be fulfilled with high expectation as they begin to make their long desired dream comes true. On the contrary, like their first day, they will be treated like their most experienced lecturer colleagues. As they step on the grass root of teaching, they need to deal with managing the classroom, developing effective lesson plans, addressing the standards, taking roll, collaborating with colleagues as if they were professional ones. Expectation if far away from reality.

Later on, the novice lecturer will struggle to keep the balance of their act between learning to teach while they need to develop their identity that should be fit in with school culture. It leads to transition shock in which a novice lecturer has to deal with the new context that he or she seems too blind to navigate. To overcome the shock problem of novice lecturer, the institution should provide a supportive program to deal with this problem. It can be an induction program or mentoring in order to help the novice lecturers [13-15].

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data of this study collected from document analysis and reflection. The qualitative content analysis utilized the document analysis on syllabuses. Meanwhile, reflective practice is adapted to provide holistic information that has a connection with the document analysis. Seven syllabi created by novice lecturer in 2016 were taken for the document analysis. The syllabuses were English I, Introduction to Literature, Language and Logic, Sentence Structure Analysis, Psycholinguistics, Sociolinguistics, and Writing IV. The syllabi were taken from one of a public university in Papua. Furthermore, reflective practice is conducted by a lecturer, who had one year of teaching experience to obtain holistic information regarded the document analysis.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the analysis using document analysis and reflective study approach is going to be presented. The document analysis section consists of structural features analysis of syllabus in order to find out what kinds of syllabus features that missed from syllabuses created by the novice lecturer. Seven syllabuses are taken to be analyzed. The subjects of the syllabus are English I, Introduction to Literature, Language and Logic, Sentence Structure

Analysis, Psycholinguistics, Sociolinguistics, and Writing IV.

English I is a general subject which is taught in three faculties in six different departments include three public administration classes, four law classes, two system information classes, agribusiness class, agro-technology class, and water resource management class. Also, Introduction to Literature, Language and Logic, and Sentence Structure Analysis are subjects which are taught in the English Department. Meanwhile, Psycholinguistics, Sociolinguistics, and Writing IV are subjects which are taught in English Education Department.

The English I syllabus is applied similarly to disregards to be taught in six different departments. Thus the syllabuses content is similar between one to others. It should be more appropriate if the syllabuses content is deferent between each department. The syllabus should be aligned with the students' discipline. For the rest, syllabus content is different due to the different subject.

There is only a single template approved by the institution to be applied for the syllabus. It means the structural features from the syllabuses is similar. If one syllabus fails to meet specific structural features, the rest will follow. Based on structural features analysis, the syllabuses fail to meet several structural features. The analyzed syllabuses only meet five structural syllabuses features, namely course description, course and unit objectives, resources, evaluation, and grading procedures.

The structural syllabus features which cannot be found in the syllabuses are title page, table of contents, instructor information, letter to the students, purpose of the course, readings, course calendar, course requirements, how to use the syllabus, how to study for this course, content information, and learning tools.

The second section of the analysis is based on a self-reflection. The purpose of this reflection is defining the possible factor that novice lecturer is failing to create an ideal syllabus. The cause of failure in creating an ideal syllabus is related to individual experience and institution condition. The individual experience includes the lecturer's background who graduated from the English department, which has not provided pedagogical knowledge. The lecturer has zero teaching experience that will lead to a lack of experience. Meanwhile, the problems derived from the institution condition are derived from the lack of subject course books, lack of internet access, over teaching schedule, no professional orientation, no senior lecturer guidance, and no subject course objectives provided by faculty.

The fact of teaching in a developed university is insufficient teaching infrastructure. None of a book can be used as a teaching source. The lecturer has to buy or find the book by himself. Another problem arises when he tries to find books since no sufficient internet speed to obtain the desired books. The next problem arises from an institution organization condition, which treats novice lecturer as if he has plenty of experience. Instead of adapting the condition of the institution, he got 36 teaching credits. Usually, the maximum teaching credits of lecturer are 12 for each semester. It means the novice lecturer has to cover two other lecturer duties.

In the other hand, the novice has to adopt the new teaching environment without professional orientation and no senior lecturer guidance. This condition is entirely giving huge transition shock for him. The last problem that arises is related to document activity. It is no subject course objectives provided by faculty, which means he should create by himself, and due to the lack of experience, he fails to create ideal objectives.

The preparation of the syllabus must be made carefully because the syllabus has a vital role in the lecture. There is a possibility that external and internal factors influence the results of this study. Templates given as a reference in syllabus making have an essential role because if the template provided does not meet the ideal template standards, it will cause errors for those who follow the template. The syllabus should be adapted to the discipline of knowledge pursued by students, especially in the subject of English I. By relating syllabi and student disciplines, they will be accustomed to being exposed to knowledge in English. On the other hand, infrastructure and training also have an essential role in increasing the ability of lecturers to be able to make an ideal syllabus. With adequate infrastructure, lecturers will have enough material to make syllabi. Training is needed to equip lecturers' knowledge in preparing the ideal syllabus.

The results of this study are by previous studies. The preparation of an ideal syllabus presents its challenges for lecturers [16-18]. This challenge arises because the syllabus has a vital role as a medium of communication with students [19]. Syllabus has a role in building the image of lecturers [20, 21], gives students the first impression of lecturers [22, 23], and is useful as a socializing mechanism that is vital in explaining how students can succeed in certain subjects [16]. The results of this study can provide the conclusion that the preparation of syllabus is not an easy matter that requires infrastructure readiness and knowledge from the lecturer.

IV. CONCLUSION

The syllabus may fail to achieve the term of "an ideal syllabus" due to intrinsic factor that related to the structural syllabus features and the extrinsic factor derived from personal qualification and institution environment. To overcome this kind of problem, it would be appropriate if there are inductive program and mentoring. To ensure the quality of syllabus created by the lecturer, the faculty should provide evaluation toward created syllabus and provide workshop or seminars related to the syllabus creation.

REFERENCES

- [1] D. Bekithemba, A. Mufanechiya, and T. Mufanechiya, "Religious studies and indigenouse knowledge in secondary schools in Zimbabwe: Bubi district case study, Matebeleland North," *Journal of Pan African Studies*, vol. 8, pp. 75-90, 2015.
- [2] M. Betaubun, S. Madya, and Margana, "Reconceptualization of English Learning in the Border Region of the Republic of Indonesia-Papua New Guinea," *International Journal of Mechanical Engineering Technology*, vol. 9, pp. 525-530, 2018.
- [3] J. M. Bourke, "Designing a topic-based syllabus for young learners," *ELT Journal*, vol. 60, pp. 279-286, 2006.
- [4] I. Bruce, "Syllabus design for general EAP writing courses: A cognitive approach," *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, vol. 4, pp. 239-256, 2005.

- [5] B. F. Klimova, "Designing an EAP Course," *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 191, pp. 634-638, 2015.
- [6] L. V. Nguyen, "Technology-Enhanced EFL Syllabus Design and Materials Development," *English Language Teaching*, vol. 1, pp. 135-142, 2008.
- [7] S. Winarsih, M. Bawawa, M. F. Narahawarin, A. K. Hermansyah, and A. Sumarsono, "Great Archetypal Contents in A Short Literary Work: The Old Man and The Sea," in *1st International Conference on Social Sciences (ICSS 2018)*, 2018.
- [8] K. Mann, J. Gordon, and A. MacLeod, "Reflection and reflective practice in health professions education: a systematic review," *Advances in health sciences education*, vol. 14, p. 595, 2009.
- [9] M. Rahimpour, "Current trends on syllabus design in foreign language instruction," *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 2, pp. 1660-1664, 2010.
- [10] D. Nunan, "Task-based syllabus design: Selecting, grading and sequencing tasks," *MULTILINGUAL MATTERS*, pp. 55-55, 1993.
- [11] J. G. O'Brien, B. J. Millis, and M. W. Cohen, *The course syllabus: A learning-centered approach* vol. 135: John Wiley & Sons, 2009.
- [12] S. Joiner and J. Edwards, "Novice teachers: Where are they going and why don't they stay," *Journal of Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives in Education*, vol. 1, pp. 36-43, 2008.
- [13] E. Löfström and E. Eisenschmidt, "Novice teachers' perspectives on mentoring: The case of the Estonian induction year," *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 25, pp. 681-689, 2009.
- [14] T. S. Farrell, "Surviving the transition shock in the first year of teaching through reflective practice," *System*, vol. 61, pp. 12-19, 2016.
- [15] M. Marnina, "Motivasi Siswa Dan Faktor-Faktor Yang Mempengaruhi Dalam Belajar Bahasa Tata Bahasa Inggris Pada Kelas VIII SMP BP Al-Munawaroh Merauke," *MAGISTRA: Jurnal Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan*, vol. 5, pp. 039-051, 2018.
- [16] G. Sulik and J. Keys, "'Many Students Really Do Not Yet Know How to Behave!'" *The Syllabus as a Tool for Socialization*, *Teaching Sociology*, vol. 42, pp. 151-160, 2014.
- [17] B. Thompson, "The syllabus as a communication document: Constructing and presenting the syllabus," *Communication Education*, vol. 56, pp. 54-71, 2007.
- [18] Y. P. Pasaribu, Y. Buyang, I. D. Pallitin, T. Ersam, and Y. L. Nimah, "Preparation and Antioxidant Activity of Methanol Extract of *Myrmecodiarumphii* Becc," *Indian Journal of Public Health Research Development* vol. 9, 2018.
- [19] P. H. Raymark and P. A. Connor-Greene, "The syllabus quiz," *Teaching of Psychology*, vol. 29, pp. 286-288, 2002.
- [20] D. V. Habanek, "An examination of the integrity of the syllabus," *College Teaching*, vol. 53, pp. 62-64, 2005.
- [21] E. Lopez, "McKeachie's teaching tips: Strategies, research, and theory for college and university teachers," *The Review of Higher Education*, vol. 27, pp. 283-284, 2004.
- [22] D. L. Baecker, "Uncovering the rhetoric of the syllabus: The case of the missing I," *College Teaching*, vol. 46, pp. 58-62, 1998.
- [23] R. Diamond and J. Grunert, "The course syllabus: A learning-centered approach," ed: Bolton, MA: Anker, 1997.