

The Experience of Indonesian Lecturer in International Class Program

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Abstract: This research aims at investigate how the lecturers of Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta perceive their experience teaching in international class whose students are from different nationalities. The participants were taken by purposive sampling. The data were collected by semi-structured in depth repeated interview. Two lecturers were interviewed who teaching in international program currently. Phenomenological methodology was employed to form descriptive themes. The study revealed two themes relating to how lectures of Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta perceive their experience teaching in international class. (a) Heterogeneous students' background creates welcoming and intellectually stimulating atmosphere in the class (b) In-class and out class interaction foster a multicultural take and give - sharing discussion.

Keywords: *phenomenology, international class program, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta*

1 INTRODUCTION

The influx of international students coming to Indonesia have been increasing the last decade. International students contribute significant in shaping the Indonesian higher education. Cultural diversity is unavoidable as the international students, university staff and faculty members are from abroad (Gopal, 2011). During the period of 2000-2012 university enrollment in Asia alone has double in term of quantity (UNESCO, 2015). Hence, international students has become an important factor in Asia higher education. Indonesia is not an exception. New orientation of Indonesian policy in Education has allowed the arrival of more international students studying in Indonesia. Ministry of Education in Indonesia grant two scheme of scholarships for international students: BIPA Bahasa Inggris untuk Penutur Asing, a one year non degree scholar for non-Indonesian students and KNB a postgraduate full scholarship for international students. Along with the trend of international students gaining a raise in number, the faculty members face the challenge of the diversified students as they are coming from different culture and traits. The situation is urging the lecturers to be exposed to the variety in the classroom and teaching learning process. Studies on international students has shown the

international students brings impacts to the faculty members ; lecturers and teaching staff Zawacky-Richer (2015). While literature shows study on international students, the study on how the internationalization on higher education from the perspective of lecturers is rarely conducted. This paper is exploring how the lecturers perceive their experience in having international class.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

The goal of phenomenological research is to bring out the lived experiences by the person who lived the experience being investigated (van Manen, 1997). The research questions in this study were designed to explore how lecturer in Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta perceives their experience teaching international class program. For this reason, phenomenological approach is matched to the purpose of the current research.

The research questions of this study were designed to investigate how the Indonesian lecturer perceives their experience in international class program. For this reason, phenomenological approach is matched to the purpose of the current research. The goal of phenomenological research is chosen as the nature of the research questions are to bring out the lived

experiences by the person who lived the experience being investigated (van Manen, 1997).

Van Manen stated that phenomenological research started in lived experiences; the purpose is to transform the lived experience of the participants into meaning making expressions to advance our understanding regarding the phenomenon (van Manen, 1997). Accordingly, this is in line with the aim of this study that is, exploring how the Indonesian lecturer perceives their experience in international class program. Accordingly, the research used hermeneutic phenomenology as approach.

There are two important reasons why the investigation of how the Indonesian lecturer perceives their experience in international class program is timely and worthy of research. The Indonesian lecturers perspective on teaching international students has not been well explored. The second reason is grounded on the importance of understanding the multiculturalism in higher education teaching.

This research design was also appropriate because this study is exploratory in nature. There are few research on the topic being investigated focusing on a specific lecturers nationality

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

A number of emerging tentative themes appeared from the research on how the Indonesian lecturer perceive their experience teaching in international class program. This themes is noticeable throughout the transcript of participants verbatim.

The major themes derived from research on how Indonesian lecturer teaching in international program perceive their experience teaching in international class Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta are (a) Heterogenous students' background creates welcoming and intellectually stimulating atmosphere in the class (b) In-class and out class interaction foster a multicultural take and give - sharing discussion.

3.2 Discussion

Referring to the two themes emerged in the findings, there is a similiar sounding of how heterogenous students contribute to the atmosphere in the class. As Sleeter (2008) argued that the diversity in higher education eventually strengten the richness of the envirotnment in teaching and research. Diversity in international class program is a diversified challenge but the advantages at the same time as it creates more global differences that lead to a communication among the cultures.

The second theme suggest that In-class and out class interaction foster a multicultural take and give - sharing discussion. This implies how the after - class time in international class program can be beneficial for the students in terms of multicultural perspective. Through after - class time the international students can communicate the diverse culture each students have.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The study revealed two themes relating to how lectures of Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta perceive their experience teaching in international class. (a) Heterogenous students' background creates welcoming and intellectually stimulating atmosphere in the class (b) In-class and out class interaction foster a multicultural take and give - sharing discussion. This implies the variety of nationalities in the teaching learning process in the form of international class program should be encouraged. The discussion after the class is prompted to be meaningful section helping students gain more knowledge on the culture diversity among international students.

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