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PERCETAKAN

UHAMKA PRESS

AN INDEPTH STUDY OF THE POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF BILINGUAL CLASS PROGRAM AT SMA LEVEL IN LAMPUNG PROVINCE

Ujang Suparman

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Abstract

To face and to compete in globalization era, Indonesian government has tried to make some innovations in many sectors, one of which is in educational sector. Many changes have been done in education such as curriculum development, and national system of education. One of the policies in education is the planning and the implementation of Bilingual Classes which, in the near future, leads to the implementation of International Standard Schools (ISS). Lampung Province Government has tried to implement the Bilingual Classes especially in junior high school. However, in senior high school level, such program has not been initiated until 2006. Since that year, one of the senior high schools, SMAN 9, in Bandar Lampung City has started the program self-sufficiently. That is a good effort done by the school. However, there has been few reports (if any) of study about: the policy underlying the implementation of the program; the implementation of the program itself; the program for the development of the teachers; the supporting factors; as well the problems faced by the Regional Government, Diknas, school, and students. The objective of this study is to obtain a comprehensive picture about the policy and the implementation of the Bilingual Classes in the level of senior high school in Lampung Province. To collect the data, three data collecting techniques are used: interview, questionnaire, and observation. The data are analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Conclusions are drawn based on the results of the data analysis and recommendations pertaining to the improvement of program are also put forward.

Key words: educational policy, bilingual class, problems/handicaps, supporting factors, teacher development, and strategies

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of superior classes like bilingual and accelerated classes has been started throughout Indonesia since several years ago. In Lampung Province, the implementation of bilingual classes has been started since 2004 for junior high school level, whereas accelerated classes have started earlier. However, the bilingual class program has not been initiated at senior high school level until 2006. Although it is one of the biggest programs in accelerating the quality of education especially in Lampung Province, there has

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been little research (if any) reported or published pertaining to the implementation of such program especially in the Province.

Two research problems are raised in this study: (1) What is the policy underlying the implementation of the bilingual program in Lampung Province? And (2) How is the implementation of the bilingual program in SMAN 9 in Lampung Province?

Therefore, the objective of this study is to obtain a comprehensive picture about the policy and the implementation of the bilingual program which has been designed to be an *embryo* leading to an international standard school (ISS) in Lampung Province. The location of the study was SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung, one of three SMAs which have started to implement the bilingual class programs.

FRAME OF THEORY

In facing globalization era, the role of English as the most important international language cannot be avoided. The use of English as well as the teaching of it should be expanded, that is, English is taught not only as a subject but also as a medium of instruction for teaching content areas, especially Mathematics and Natural Sciences. The implementation of the use of English as a medium of instruction for content areas has been carried out for the first time at SMA level in Lampung Province at the SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. The implementation of bilingual class program at the SMAN 9 is motivated by the Law of the National Education System, that is, Article 50, (3) stating that: Central and/or Regional Government should implement at least one educational unit at all levels of education to be developed into an international standard school (SNBI - national school with an international standard).

SNBI or SBI is defined as a national school with an international standard. Such schools use the national curriculum as their basic curriculum, and it can be enriched with other curriculums as long as they are not contradictory with the state philosophy. Such definition can be formulated as: $SBI = SNP + "X"$, that is, an SBI is a national school plus X variable. The X variable here can refer to, among others, an international learning process, internationally supporting facility, internationally acknowledged graduates, and the like.

THE POLICY OF BILINGUAL CLASSES

The policy underlying the implementation of Bilingual Class Program (Depdiknas, 2006b and Ministry of National Education, 2006) at the SMAN 9

Bandar Lampung is the internal self-motivation to increase the quality of education in the province, especially in the SMA level. Based on the information from the interview with the headmaster of SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung, unlike the implementation of bilingual classes in SMP level, so far there has not been any special assignment from either the Central Government or Regional Government to implement the bilingual class program. Therefore, it is completely fully self-motivated and self-initiated by the school itself whose major purpose is to accelerate the quality of the education in SMA level nationally and, at the end, internationally. Nevertheless, the school has now been acknowledged both regionally and nationally as one of the International Standard Schools (ISS) or in Indonesian it is called *Sekolah Bertarap Internasional* (SBI), or at least, the one leading to an SSI. For example, supervisions from the Central Government (Department of National Education) have been frequently done in relation to the implementation of the bilingual classes. And the fund has also started flowing both from the Central Government and Regional Government to the school although in very limited amount (i.e., about IDR 300 million per annum from Jakarta and IDR 42 million only from the City Government).

By contrast, to implement the bilingual class program at the SMP level, the Central Government has specially assigned 31 SMPNs throughout Indonesia. This assignment was based on the qualification of each school which is considered to be deserved the honorary assignment. The basis for the implementation of bilingual class program at the SMP level is the Decree of General Director of Primary and Secondary Education No. 287/C/Kep/PM/2003, dated: 16 June 2003. One of the schools assigned is SMPN2 Bandar Lampung (see Suparman, 2006). The school, together with other 30 schools throughout Indonesia, has been programmed by the Central Government as *Sekolah Standar Nasional* (SSN) ('National Standard School') to be the embryo of SBI (*Sekolah Bertarap Internasional*) 'Internationally Standard School (ISS).'

RESEARCH DESIGN

The design of the study is qualitative descriptive. Whereas the data collecting techniques used consist of interview, questionnaire and observation. The population of the study is all students taking part in bilingual classes in SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. SMAN 9 is one of three senior high schools which have started implementing bilingual classes in Lampung Province. The sample of the research comprises year-one bilingual students at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung, whereas the other participants are the headmaster of SMAN 9 and teachers of bilingual classes.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ISS

Students Recruitment

Before the Bilingual Class Program is implemented, the prospective students are selected based on the tight and very competitive selection system.

The selection was carried out firstly for general recruitment, i.e. to recruit new students in each academic year. Based on the results of interview with the headmaster, it is known that the general selection is based on the results of tests, that is, 30 % of the scores of National Examination (UN) and 70 % of the scores of SMPN entrance test.

The newly recruited students were then ranked from top to bottom. Based on the rank-ordered students, the school then selected the first 100 students from top. Then, they were retested using Mathematics and Natural Science Tests (Biology, Physics, and Chemistry) to recruit 32 students as the perspective participants in Bilingual Class.

The students who were accepted as the participants in Bilingual Classes are those who have special high intelligent quotient, and special talent based on the special test prepared earlier.

The number of students accepted in the Bilingual Classes since the first recruitment in 2006 is 68 comprising 36 (second year) and 32 (first year) each with balanced gender.

TEACHERS RECRUITMENT

Based on the information from the headmaster, the problem is not about the students, but teachers. It is not difficult to get high quality students to be recruited for the bilingual class participants, because SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung is one of the favorite senior high school in the city. Therefore, high quality graduates from SMPs around the city registered themselves to take part in the school entrance test. Unlike recruiting the students, recruiting teachers for bilingual classes is relatively difficult. The major problem is that they are not accustomed to teaching in bilingual classes in which English as the medium of instruction for teaching content areas, that is, Mathematics, and natural sciences - Physics, Chemistry, and Biology. (See Ministry of National Education, 2006)

The process of teacher selection who would be assigned to teach in Bilingual Classes was carried out not by the Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education like in recruiting bilingual class teachers at SMP level, but it is carried out by the internal special team consisting of seven people - headmaster, and other senior teachers, by testing their English qualification. For each subject, two best teachers in English were selected out of

the available teachers. Therefore, there were eight teachers for the four subjects plus two senior teachers of English. Then they were sent to one of the English courses in the city to take part in special training without time limitation. The training was sponsored by the school itself.

Based on the information from the interview with the headmaster, it was relatively difficult to recruit the teachers. If the school recruited completely new teachers from outside the school, the existing teachers might not be responsible for the development of the bilingual classes; they might feel that they are uninvolved in the program. If they were recruited, the quality of their English for teaching the subject matter was still questionable. Therefore, the headmaster and the team decided to make use of balanced policies, that is, 50% of the teachers were recruited from the existing teachers, and another 50% were newly recruited teachers from Unila graduates. To improve the quality of their English mastery, they are sent to LIA English Course, and to improve the quality of subject matter mastery, the school has made collaboration with the local state university.

In the future, to upgrade the teachers' potential, the school cooperates with Lampung University which is then supposed to send four out of its lecturers, ideally who has had a Ph.D. qualification on Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, and Biology and who were graduated from overseas especially from English speaking countries. They will be asked to come to the school every week to guide the teachers in preparing the lesson plans, materials; preparing and making presentations, media, evaluation and the like. They come to the class at least once in a week to observe the teacher teaching, then to give comments and feedback on the teaching process of the teacher.

School's Efforts

Based on the interview with the headmaster and teachers, it is found that to accelerate the atmosphere of and to support Bilingual Class Program, the school organizes English days, however, it has not run well. During the working days, all of the participant students and the teachers of Bilingual Class Program have to use English, but it is found that the students are more capable of communicating in English than the teachers are. This is due to the fact that majority of the students take part in English courses after the class in English institutions spread throughout the city. Therefore, to enhance the English proficiency, the teachers of bilingual classes are given opportunities to take English courses outside the school, such in LIA sponsored by the school. The headmaster himself takes part in the English course. For other teachers and the academic staff, the school provides opportunities to take English course inside the school under the guidance of local English teachers after business hours.

The fund to support such program was taken from the Block Grant of the Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education *Depdiknas* Jakarta, APBD (Regional Development Budget) of City Government contribution (IDR 42 million), but the Provincial Government has not sent any contribution for the program. The Bilingual Class Program which is now under SSN (National Standard School) will be directed to be an ISS (International Standard School).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the interview conducted with the headmaster, teachers and representatives of bilingual class students, who were all registered in Semester Two, it is found that:

The *Bilingual Class* program has been conducted in three senior high schools, SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung, SMAN 1 Central Lampung, and SMAN 1 Kota Gajah for four subjects: Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. All the subjects were taught in English by eight teachers. The program has been carried out since 2006. The first group was fully self-sufficient, i.e. without any sponsorship from outside the school. Since it started in 2006, the program has not produced any graduation until 2008. The number of students for each grade was thirty six for the second year, and thirty two for the first year.

Unlike the materials for bilingual classes at SMP level, which have been specially prepared by the Directorate of Junior High School Development, The Directorate General of Management of Primary and Secondary Education, The Ministry of National Education, Jakarta, the materials for bilingual classes at SMA level were not provided. It is the bilingual-class teachers and the school team who should work hard to prepare the materials.

All students felt happy and enjoyed the learning process in the bilingual classes. According to the participants, they felt enjoyed learning in the bilingual-class program because all teachers were very helpful, considerate, tolerant, and patient. The teachers were always ready to help students at any time they need; they understood the possible difficulties the students might encounter; therefore, the atmosphere in the classroom is always pleasing, but encouraging.

All the participants reported that they underwent difficulties during the first months of their participation in the bilingual program, especially due to their lack of vocabulary. This sort of problem was not only found by the students but also by the content-area teachers, i.e., teachers of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology.

The content area teachers told the major problem was that when they were trying to explain the lesson to the students in English, they found that their

students seem to be confused. To overcome the problem, they tried to write down the key word(s) in the white board, and then the students got it.

Majority of the students (see Table 1 below) tried to overcome the language problems by taking part in English courses (e.g. in *English First (EF)* or *LIA - American Indonesian English Institution*), and the content problems by taking courses at learning guidance institutions - such *Primagama* or *Ganesha Operation (GO)*.

Content area teachers (\bar{x} teaching experience = more than 5 years) reported that they did not find any difficulty pertaining to the content area because they have taught the subject for years. Besides, they also have taken part in a number of up-grading conducted by the Regional Government on In-House Training especially on teaching methods, material preparation and presentation.

All teachers (100%) reported their biggest problem was English vocabulary; and some of them (35%) constant communication with the students in English. Most teachers (65%) reported that if they found some difficulties pertaining to vocabulary while they were teaching inside the classroom they usually asked their students without having any psychological burden with them. This happened because since the beginning the teachers had shared the same opinion with their students that what they did was something new and important for the sake of science and human resource development; they said to their students that they had mastered the content area but to express it in English was something else that should be overcome together.

Therefore, all content area teachers took English courses outside the school and to practice their English in mostly academic environment, they have English days inside the school area - three days in a week, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

The atmosphere was very relaxed and friendly. This might be the very important aspect which was only available in bilingual classes, and which might have made them successful in their learning. This was relevant to what the participant students claimed that "they enjoyed the class because the teachers were very helpful, patient, considerate, and friendly."

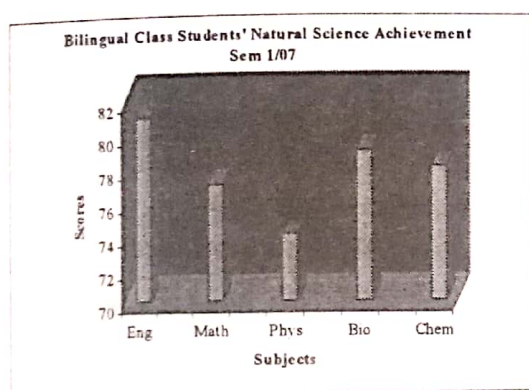
According to the teachers, for the first time, the teachers who took part in English courses in *LIA English Course* was sponsored by their schools, but later on, they were self-sponsored. This indicates that all the content area teachers were highly motivated to implement the bilingual classes and to make them more successful.

When they were asked whether they were given a special reward in any form either by the school or government they replied negatively. This seems to be unfortunate because in the long run, their high motivation which is not supported might turn low or even fade away.

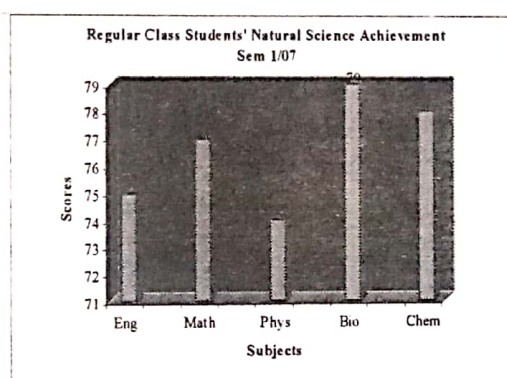
Concerning the relative success of the bilingual class students, the overall success was higher than regular classes although the materials are presented in English, (see Graph 1 below). This is true based on the teachers' report and their scores.

The success of bilingual classes in Lampung Province (which almost reaches and to some extent has reached the national standard, i.e. 75) was attributed to high motivation of both students and teachers; good cooperation between English and content area teachers; parents' support, and government facility; and in general, all stake-holders' supports.

The following graph shows the comparison of English achievement by the bilingual class and regular programs in SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung.



Graph 1a. Bilingual Class Students' Natural Science Achievement



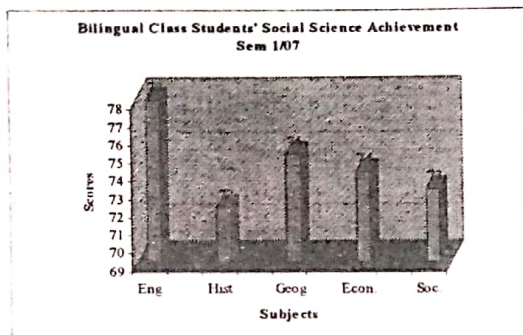
Graph 1b. Regular Class Students' Natural Science Achievement

Source: SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung Dokument 2007

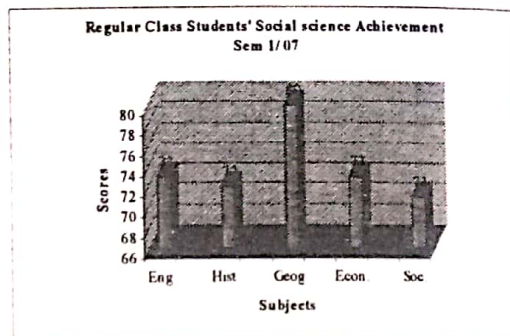
Note: Eng = English, Math = Mathematics, Phys = Physics, Bio = Biology, Chem = Chemistry
Graph 1a. and 1b. The Students' Achievement on Natural Science and English Subjects at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung.

The graphs above (Graphs 1a and b) show the students' English and natural science achievement in Semester 1. More importantly, the graphs show the difference of the students' English achievement on the Bilingual and Regular Classes. The Bilingual students' English achievement ($\bar{x} = 81$) in Semester 1 is much higher than that of the regular classes in the same semester, ($\bar{x} = 75.70$), even their English achievement is higher than the national standard, that is, 75. The bilingual-program students' English achievement is quite high, that is, more than 75. It means that the English achievement for both programs (regular and bilingual) has reached the national standard, i.e. 75. Even the students at the Bilingual Program, Year 10, have reached the national standard even higher than it. This, according to the headmaster and the researcher's observation, might be due to their learning experience at the SMAN 9, their motivation to learn, the learning atmosphere, and the support from all parties.

The following Graphs (Graphs 2a and b) show the students' English and social science achievement in Semester 1.

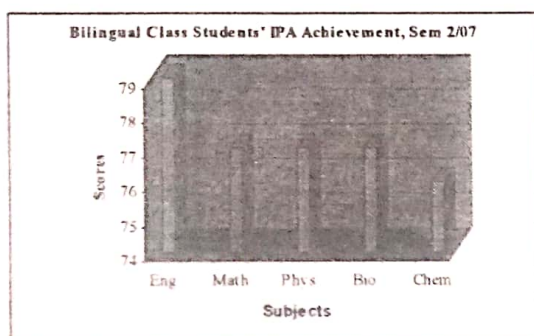


Graph 2a. Bilingual Class Students' Social Science Achievement

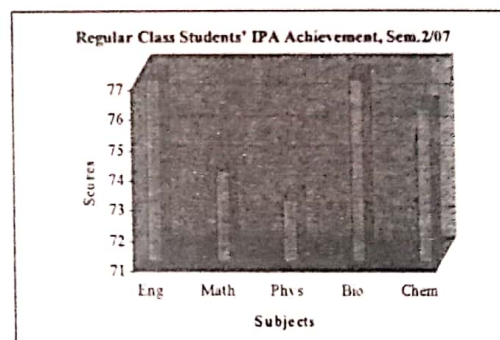


Graph 2b. Regular Class Students' Social Science Achievement

We analyze the students' achievement in English and other subjects in both natural sciences and social sciences in Semester Two, we can find that their English achievement is very high.

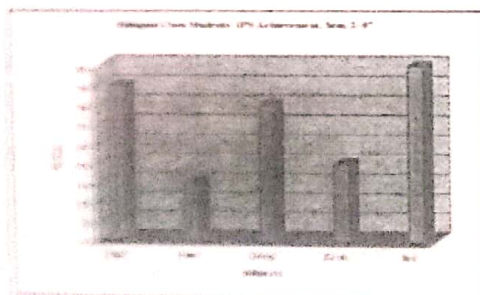


Graph 3a. Bilingual Class Students' IPA Achievement

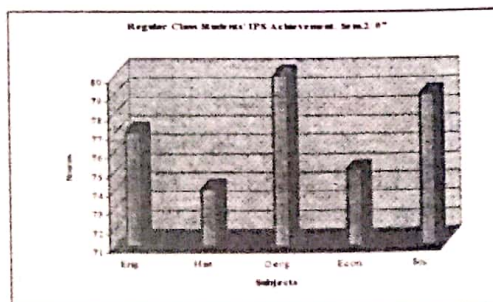


Graph 3b. Regular Class Students' IPA Achievement

As a comparison, now let's look at their achievement on IPS in Semester Two. The following graphs, Graphs 4a, and b, show their English and other subjects achievement. In this semester, their English achievement is similar, that is, quite high, and even higher than the national standard.



Graph 4a. Bilingual Class Students' IPS Achievement



Graph 4b. Regular Class Students' IPS Achievement

Based on the questionnaire distributed to the students, the following table shows the comparison of bilingual participants between those who took extra courses (English course and/or learning guidance) outside the school and those who did not.

Table 1. Comparison between the participants who take an English Course/Learning guidance and those who do not

Taking English Course		Taking Learning Guidance	
Yes	No	Yes	No
87.30 %	12.70 %	71.19 %	28.81 %

The table shows that the students' motivation to learn and to succeed in their learning is very high. Majority of the students take part in both English courses and learning guidance.

Concerning the problems that the participants encountered, the following table shows them in order of ranking.

Table 2. The problems that the participants frequently encountered

Type of problems encountered	%
a. Language	38.33
b. Teachers	18.33
c. Mathematics and science in English	16.66
d. Facility	15
e. Too much assignment	5
f. There is no problem	6.66

In addition, the following table shows the problems that the participants encountered resulting from school.

Table 3. The problems relating to school that the participants frequently encountered

Type of problems encountered	%
a. Facility	50.08
b. Too much assignment	12.90
c. Teachers	11.22
d. When having English day	6.45
e. School committee fee	4.84
f. There is no problem	14.51

Majority of the students in bilingual program come from Bandar Lampung as the following table shows.

Table 4. The origin of the participants

Coming from Bandar Lampung	From outside Bandar Lampung
80.56 %	19.44 %

The table shows that the students coming from the city outnumber those coming from the regions. This may lead us to believe that the learning facility and atmosphere in the city might be more beneficial for the learners than those in the region. This is a great challenge for the government to consider making the future of the nation better.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the results of the data analysis, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Although the Regional Government of Lampung Province has a desire to improve the quality of education in general, it does not have any real contribution on the development of the ISS program at SMA level. However, the policy of the Regional Government for improving and supporting the bilingual classes at SMP level is much clearer and more realistic, because the government supports the program financially. The regional government support for bilingual classes at SMP level is based on the policy of the Central Government with some modifications as a result of the adjustment to the local conditions. Thus, the policy for improving the bilingual classes at SMA level is not as clear cut as that of the SMP level.

The bilingual class program was implemented under the relaxed and friendly atmosphere that all participants felt highly motivated and enjoyed. It was supported by very good cooperation between English teachers and content area teachers. The content area teachers were willingly ready to spare their time and energy for taking English courses outside the school.

The English teachers were ready to involve intensively in facilitating both students and content area teachers in the program, and the headmaster gives full support to the success of the program.

All stake-holders in Lampung Province have not been hand in hand in making the bilingual class program at SMA level successful. To make the bilingual class program successful, the SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung intends to collaborate with the local state university especially with the English study program, and Mathematics and Natural Sciences Department of FKIP

Lampung University. Like Bilingual Class Program at SMP level, the Bilingual Class Program at SMA level is directed to be an International Standard School or SBI.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions above, it is recommended that:

To keep the sustainability of the bilingual classes, and to give higher responsibility to the team of bilingual classes at the school, the government (the Central and/or Regional Government) should give a special assignment and appraisal to the school such as what has been granted to the members of national coalition schools.

The content area teachers who have so far had high motivation should be given sufficient appraisal materially to make the program more successful in the future.

The content area teachers should be supported financially to take part in English courses outside the school.

The English teachers who teach in the bilingual classes (not all teachers of English teach in the bilingual classes) should be given special working appraisal to make them more motivated.

The Central Government (*Dirjen Dikdasmen*) should support the school financially by providing more grants for the implementation of the program.

Lecturers of English and MIPA should also be made more involved in the Bilingual Class Program so that there will be a better synergy between university (teacher producer) and the schools (teacher user).

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