



## PROFILE AND MODEL OF QUALITY IMPROVEMENT OF INDONESIAN LANGUAGE SUBJECT AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN INDONESIA

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The quality of the Indonesian language subject in Indonesia in general and in Banyuasin and Musi Banyuasin in particular is found to be low. Therefore, it is necessary to find out possible factors of the problem together with the alternative solutions.

**Keywords:** Indonesian language, Basic competence.

### **Introduction**

The Indonesian language is the official language of education starting from primary school up to higher learning institution in Indonesia. All subjects but English is taught by using Indonesian language. Considering the importance of the language, Indonesian language has been determined to be of main subjects from primary school up to high school. Even at university, Indonesian language is one of compulsory subject for students.

At primary school and high school, Indonesian language subject has significant portion during the week. At primary school, it is taught in 6 sessions a week (35 minutes per session). At high school, it is taught in 4 sessions (45 minutes per session).

Basically, the teaching of Indonesian language at all level of education is intended to enable the students to use the language, the four skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The four skills are described explicitly in the curriculum of Indonesian language subject, that is School-based Curriculum (Depdiknas quoted by Nurhayati, Purnomo, M.E., & Saripudin, A., 2005).

On the other hand, the process of assessment has been conducted nationally since 1985. The assessment process is call national exam. The national exam is conducted to all level of education started from primary school up to high school. The objectives of national exam are (1) to find out information on the quality of education nationally, (2) to find out the learning achievement of studetns, and (3) to get input for making improvement policy to the school. The result of national exam is considered to the passing grade of the students (Kartowagiran, 2008).

The competence of the students in Indonesian language subject seems to be unsatisfactory from year to year. Only a small number of students of primary and high school who are able to use the standard Indonesian as seen on their work at writing competition held by *Tempo* magazine. The participants were from the 27 provinces of Indonesia and it was found that most of their writings were very poor. They are poor at using spelling, choosing appropriate words, using grammar, and at writing good sentences. So that, it can be concluded that the students' competence in Indonesia is low (Chaer quoted by Nurhayati, 2009a).

In addition, various researches also indicate that the students of primary and high school are still poor in the four skills of Indonesian language, namely, listening, reading, speaking, and writing (Nurhayati, 2005; Ernalida, 2007; Nurhayati, 2007; Anis Suryani quoted by Rusilowati, 2009; Nurhayati,

2009b). The fact indicates the general description of students' competence at all levels. The problem is also similar when it is compared with high school students. The high school students competence was also low reflected the result of national exam (Yurnaldi, 2008). Looking at the result of national exam, the grade of Indonesian language subject tends to be lower than the previous years as indicated by the following table.

**Table 1.** Average Grade of National Exam Year 2006-2008.

Year	Department /Grade		
	Language	Natural Science	Social Science
2006	7,40	7,90	7,26
2007	7,08	7,56	6,95
2008	6,56	7,60	6,95

Source: Puspendik Balitbang Depdiknas dari <http://pendidikan.infogoe.com>

The low grade of national exam is also found in year 2011. About 1.786 (38,43%) senior high school students did not pass Indonesian language subject. According to Maryani (<http://edukasi.kompas.com>), the problem is caused by various factors, such as teaching and learning process, teachers' competence, and the national exam itself. Specifically, some factors should be considered in Banyuasin dan Musi Banyuasin regencies. It is true that the result of national exam for high school is quite good at each region, but some competencies are still below national average. Below is the data of National Exam from National Body of Education Standard year 2009/2010 at Banyuasin regency and Musi Banyuasin regency.

**Table 2.** Competence of Subjects with Low Mastery.

Subjects	Competence of Subjects with Low Mastery
Indonesian Language	Determining main idea, determining the main content of poetry, completing with standard words, determining correct adjective phrase to complete paragraph, and determining sentence for novel and short story criticism.

Source: Center for Educational Assessment Research and Development of National Body of Education Standards Directorate General of Higher Education.

The above table indicates that there are some still many competencies that are not mastered by the students that lead to the low quality of high school graduates. There are some factors that may cause the problem. First, the quality of teaching and learning process is poor and the schools do not facilitate the students to improve their competence. Second, the schools do not implement school based management. Third, facilities to support the learning process are not sufficient or are not used maximally. Fourth, the policy of local government, that is Banyuasin regency and Musi Banyuasin regency on quality improvement of education, does not solve the core problem (Nurhayati et.all., 2011).

The low quality of education in Indonesia (at national level) and at regional level should be handled from the internal and external aspect followed by possible solutions. At Banyuasin regency and Musi Banyuasin regency specifically, it is necessary to explore the core problems together with the factors that cause the low quality of Indonesian language subject as described previously with some alternatives for solutions.

This research is focused on the study of policy with the problem on "the dominant factor that make the quality of Indonesian language subject poor at senior high school at Banyuasin regency and Musi Banyuasin regency, based on the mastery of each topic with some solutions. The objectives of research on

profile and improving the quality of Indonesian language subject are: (1) to describe the competence of senior high school competence on each topic of Indonesian language subject; (2) to describe the influencing factor for the low mastery of students on certain topics; (3) to find out the possible solutions for improving the students competence on Indonesian language subject; and (4) to formulate a model to be implemented to solve the problem by involving relevant institutions.

**Research Method**

**Types of Research**

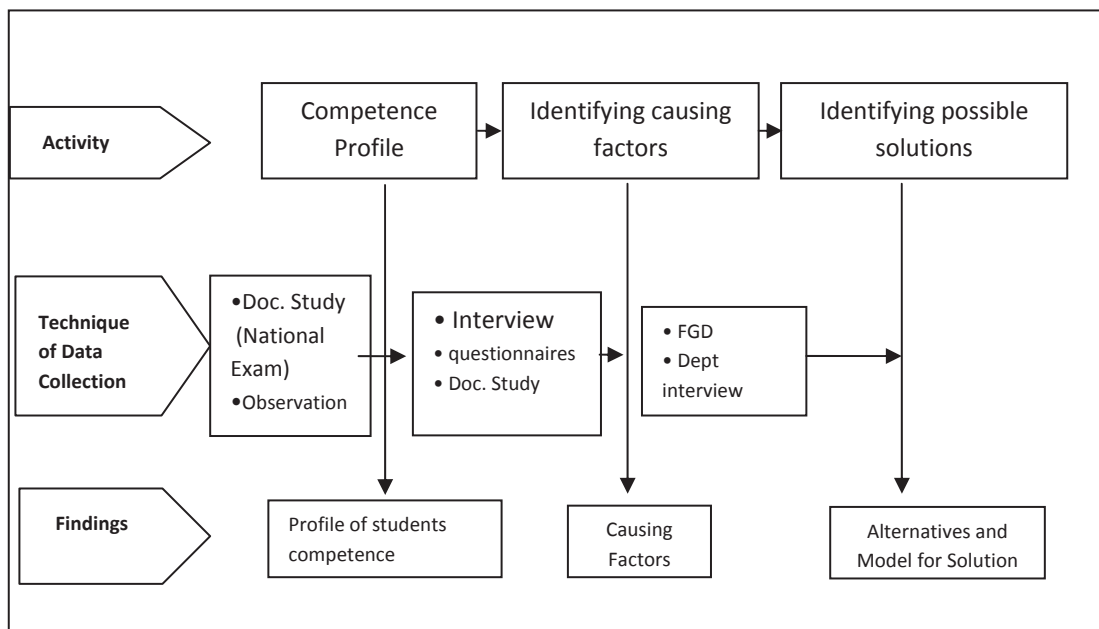
This is a policy research. The policy research is one of descriptive research. The policy research is an effort to collect information comprehensively to formulate policy. Policy research is started with the collection of data related to the profile of high school students’ basic competence on Indonesian language subject. The description of students competence is used for finding out the factors causing the low mastery of students on the intended competence followed by some alternatives for solution with final recommendation as well.

**Techniques of Data Collection and Analysis**

The technique used was document study, interview, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and questionnaires. The data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The descriptive qualitative technique is used to analyze the data based on the result of document study, interview, and FGD. On the other hand, the data collected by questionnaire were presented and described in percentage.

**Research Procedure**

The procedure of the research is as follows.



**Graph 1.** Research Procedure.

## Research Results and Discussion

### Description of Research Implementation

The questionnaires were administered to the two regencies, namely, Banyuasin Regency and Musi Banyuasin Regency on 22 September 2011 and the FGD at Banyuasin Regency was conducted on 26 September 2011 located at SMAN 1 Banyuasin III. The FGD at Musi Banyuasin Regency was conducted on 29 September 2011 located at SMAN 2 Sekayu. The relevant parties involved were the principal, vice principal, treasurer, and Indonesian language subject teachers.

The data collection, both from questionnaire and FGD was focused on finding competence profile of high school students, the factors causing the inability of students to master certain topics, and possible solutions to improve the students' competence.

### Competence Profile of Indonesian Language Subject in Banyuasin Regency and Musi Banyuasin Regency

The competence profile of Indonesian language subject in Banyuasin Regency and Musi Banyuasin Regency can be seen on the following table.

**Table 3.** Subject Competence with Low Mastery.

Subject	Competence with Low Mastery
Indonesian Language	Determining main idea of a paragraph, determining explanatory sentences that do not support the main sentence, determining the content of paragraph conclusion, determining the conclusion of information of data/graph/diagram/table, determining the objective and imagery of poetry, determining the opening sentence of application letter referring to job vacation ads, determine the sentence of reviews that state weakness/excellence according to the explanation of literary works, determining the point of view the story, decide the plot, determine fact and opinion sentences, develop paragraphs to make it coherent paragraphs, analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories/novels such as determining the character/disposition (antagonist and protagonist), determine the sentence novel or short story criticism, and determine the images, determining the conclusion of information on data/content to determine review sentence stating strength/weaknesses in accordance with the explanation of literary works, determining the point of view the story, decide the plot, determine fact and opinion sentences, develop paragraphs to make it coherent paragraphs, analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories/novels such as determining the character/disposition (antagonist and protagonist), determine the sentence novel or short story criticism, and determine the images, determining the point of view the story, deciding the plot, determining fact and opinion sentences, developing coherent paragraphs, analyzing the intrinsic elements of short stories/novels such as determining the character/disposition (antagonist and protagonist), determining the sentence novel or short story criticism, and determine the images.

Source: Center for Educational Assessment Research and Development of National Body of Education Standards Directorate General of Higher Education.

### Causing Factors

Some findings from FGD are as follows. The teacher is the main component in teaching and learning process to achieve the competence. The influencing factors in teacher component is the teacher herself. The quality aspect is influenced by the qualification of the teacher and the relevance of the educational background and the subject taught. In general, 75 % of teachers of Indonesian language subject are S1

graduates majoring in Indonesian language. However, it was found from FGD that the teachers do not have good mastery on the materials, like, how to determine the main ideas exactly and to determine the theme of the poetry.

The other important component is the strategy used by teacher. The teacher from accredited A school sometimes used strategies involving many students more in the teaching and learning process. But, the teachers from accredited B and C school and unaccredited schools still used teacher centered instruction. The exercises focusing on the performance of the skills are not conducted frequently. Eventhough the emphasis of Indonesian language subject instruction is on the aspect of language and literature, teachers spend more time on lecture or explanation of theories than asking the students to do activities to improve their performance, such as speaking and writing on various kinds of writings. On the other hand, teacher often gives homework but very seldom gives feedback on their works. In addition, in the teaching and learning process, teacher seldom uses instructional media. The common resources used by the teacher are textbooks from various publishers.

The factor of students also correlates to the low competence of the students in national exam. The students are said to have low participation in class. The students have low motivation in doing exercises from the teachers. The students (especially at afternoon session) have to help their parents in the morning. It is the fact that the area is surrounded by rubber garden and the parents have their children to work in the garden for living. As the result, they are tired to study in the afternoon.

The other influencing factor on the low competence of the students in the national exam is the factor of resources (books). The current books used at school are not good not only from the number but also from the newness of the books. With the current books, it is difficult to make the student diligent to read books. The teacher sometimes asks the students to read books in the library but not all students have opportunity to read because the number of the books available is not sufficient. In addition, most of the books are so old that they are not interested in reading them. Furthermore, new important information cannot reach the students.

Subject Teacher Support Program (STSP) does not work as expected. As the result, there is no mechanism to widespread the information from the teacher to other teachers. The programs of instructional development cannot run either.

Teachers and students state that there are some other important influencing factors that make the low competence of the students. Most of the items in the Indonesian language subject exam consist of long reading texts. As the result, the students are frustrated to read them. On the other hand, the time available is not enough to understand the texts. In addition, some other questions are confusing for the students because they are ambiguous that may have two answers.

The data collected through questionnaires and FGD indicate that all teachers focus the teaching of language and literature on the achievement of indicators stated in the syllabus. According to the syllabus used as reference (issued by Ministry of National Education, Jakarta), some of the teachers (50%) write their own lesson plan while the others take them from other sources. Half of the teachers ((50% ) conduct teaching and learning process in accordance with lesson plan while the other 50% do not. Some teachers say that there is monitoring on teaching and learning process from school principal while others say that there is monitoring from school principal on teaching and learning process. The aspects supervised by school principal are preparation, implementation, and evaluation of the instruction. However, the teachers state that the principal do not tell the teachers the findings of the supervision for improvement.

The teachers also state that they seldom use IT-based instructional media. Only teachers from Accredited A use IT-based instructional media. Some teachers state that they do not use IT –based media because they are not available at the school.

On the aspect of assessment, teachers use authentic assessment for the achievement. The teachers assess the students in accordance with indicators to be achieved. For example, if the indicators require the students to write “description”, the assessment is focused on the achievement of the indicator by assigning the students to write “description.” However, there are some teachers who do not assess based on the indicators to be achieved because do not have sufficient knowledge and competence to write assessment

manual or format especially the assessment on performance. Furthermore, teachers seldom make use of the result of assessment for instructional improvement.

### Alternative Solutions

Below is the problems found at schools and some alternative solutions.

**Table 4.** Factors Causing Low Competence of Students and the Solutions.

Causing Factors	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrequent use varied strategies</li> <li>• Infrequent use of instructional media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training on various strategies for teachers to have active involvement of students. The training should be relevant to the instructional objectives. The training should also content the use of instructional media and conducted continuously.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low competence of teachers on substantial aspects</li> <li>• Low competence of teachers on assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the teachers' competence on substantial aspect and assessment especially the ones related to the weak components.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inactive teacher forum (STSP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers forum should be reactivated.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long reading text on national exam and ambiguous answer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Items on the national exam should be based on ideal principles of test writing .</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities should be provided to support the implementation of expected instructions.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of support from parents especially of unaccredited school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be collaboration among schools, government, and parents.</li> </ul>

### Development Model of Instructional Quality Improvement

Some main problems and solutions can be stated from the previous explanation. The main problems can be further described as follows.

#### From the Teachers Aspects

##### Lack of professional competence:

Teachers do not master various competence related to the subject matter caused by the insufficient mastery of subject matter of the teachers. On the other hand, the instructional materials keep developing. In addition, teachers do not have good mastery on IT while it is badly needed to improve themselves to get information on various aspects.

##### Lack of pedagogical competence:

In general, teachers admit that they need improvement on mastery and implementation of instructional strategies/models/methods, appropriate strategy to have active involvement of students, and improvement on the use of instructional media and facilities.

### **From the Facilities Aspects**

The data collected indicate that accredited B and C schools and unaccredited schools have insufficient learning facilities. The facilities meant here are books at learning resources and language lab, facilities such as LCD and hotspot for internet to improve the instructional quality improvement leading to the improvement of students competence achievement.

### **Activating Teacher Forum**

Teacher forum of Indonesian language subject is available already but the forum does not work properly nowadays. This is really unfortunate because the forum functions as the medium to learn and share knowledge and to improve their skills related to professional and pedagogical competence.

The causing factors may lead to recommendation of development model to improve the quality of instruction leading to various improvement of students' competence.

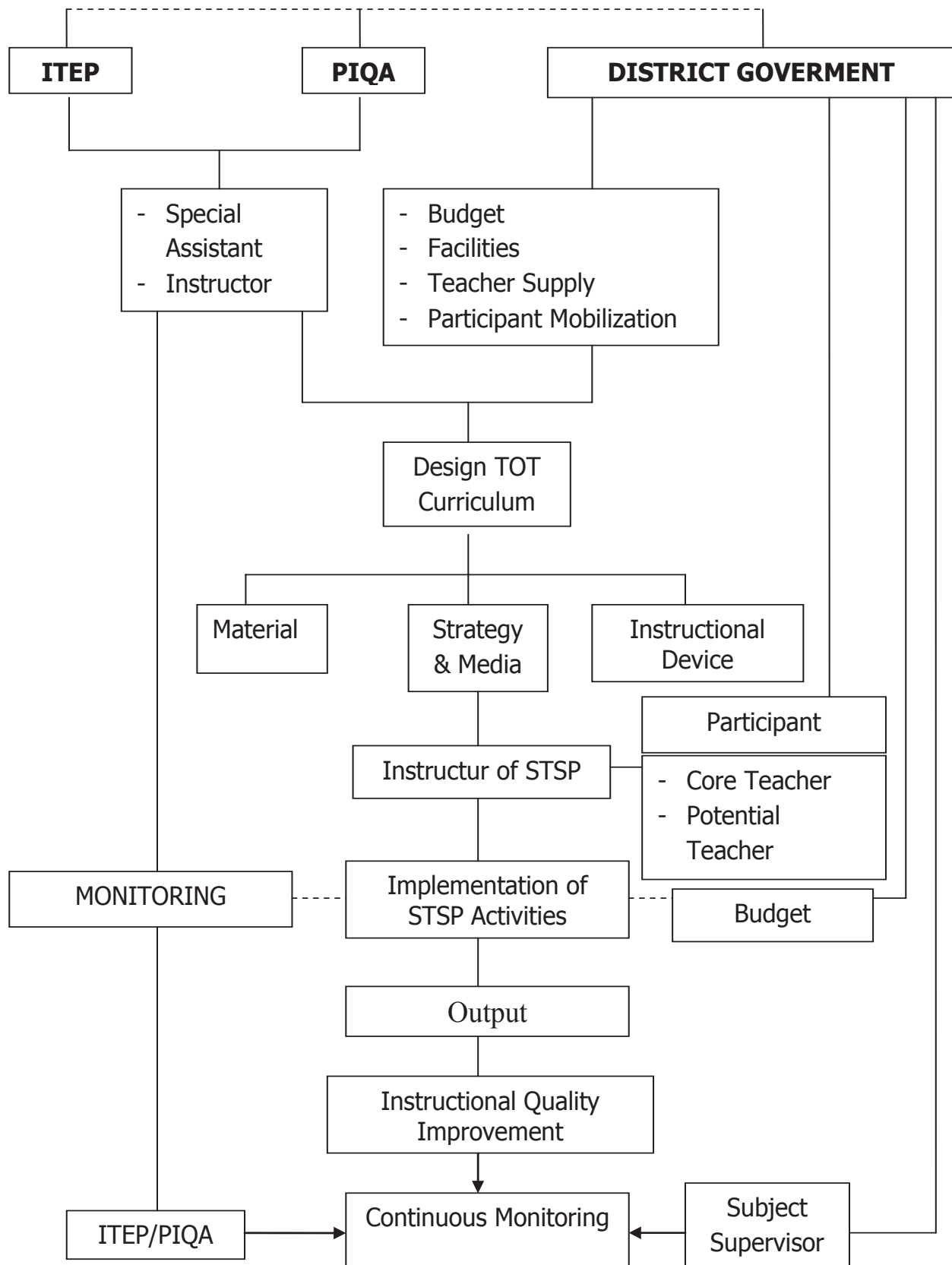
Rekomendasi yang diberikan melibatkan berbagai lembaga. Recommendations given involves various institutions. Lembaga yang secara langsung terkait dalam upaya pelaksanaan penjaminan mutu pendidikan yakni LPMP (Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan) dibantu LPTK (Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan) dan Pemda sebagai lembaga yang terkait langsung pula dalam upaya meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di daerahnya. Institutions that are directly related to the implementation of quality assurance of education is Provincial Institute for Quality Assurance (PIQA) assisted by Institutes for Teachers and Education Personnel (ITEP) and local government as the main institution to improve the quality of education in the region.

PIQA should collaborate with ITEP in terms of designing the curriculum Training of Trainers (ToT). Kurikulum ToT dalam berbagai hal yakni berkaitan dengan pengasahan kemampuan profesional guru baik menyangkut kompetensi profesional maupun kompetensi pedagogis. ToT curriculum should cover various things related to the improvement of teacher's professional skills on both professional and pedagogical competence. Selain itu, LPMP dan LPTK menyediakan tenaga ahli baik dari unsur LPTK, LPMP, dan guru inti dari setiap mata pelajaran. In addition, PIQA and ITEP are expected to provide assistants from PIQA, ITEP, and core teachers from Indonesian language subject. The assistants from PIQA, ITEP, and core teachers will be the instructors at the ToT.

Local government is the institute in charge of providing financial support for program implementation. The local government is the institute which is in charge of providing facilities at the schools of the regions. The facilities are textbooks, LCD, language labs, and hotspots. The local government is also in charge of coordinating the core or potential teachers of Indonesian language subject and supervisors as well.

The output of the ToT is the instructors of teacher forum who will be able to reactivate or empower STSP of Indonesian language subject in the district. The teacher forum will be the main forum on the improvement of material mastery (not only basic materials, material application, and material development), improvement of competence on teaching and learning process, as well as the empowerment of teachers in educational innovations.

Finally, Untuk penjaminan mutu pelaksanaan MGMP diadakan monitoring terhadap MGMP yang dilakukan bersama oleh pihak LPMP, LPTK, dan pengawas mata pelajaran. monitoring should be conducted to ensure the implementation of the quality of teacher forum in collaboration with PIQA, ITEP, and subject supervisors.



**Figure 2.** Model of Instructional Quality Improvement.



## **Conclusion and Recommendation**

### **Conclusion**

Some conclusions can be made from the previous explanation. There are some basic competencies that are not mastered by high school students in the subjects tested in the national exams. The low mastery of the students on the competencies is the representation of causing factors in the field. The causing factors can be classified into three groups. First, problems come from teachers. The teachers have low professional competency indicated by insufficient mastery of the teachers on materials taught, especially the ones related to basic competencies tested. Second, the teachers have low pedagogical competence indicated by insufficient mastery on various strategies/methods/models of teaching to encourage active involvement of students in the learning process. In addition, the teacher also has insufficient mastery on instructional media including IT, authentic assessment, and or instructional devices.

Furthermore, teacher forum does not work properly. The other influencing factor is the insufficient facilities available at schools. Therefore, it is recommended to have development model to improve the basic competence of students in Indonesian language subject tested nationally.

### **Recommendation**

The recommendation to be made in relation to the result of the study is as follows. Considering the importance of improving basic competences tested in the national exam, it is necessary for relevant institutions (PIQA, ITEP, and local government) to do various and continuous efforts. PIQA as the technical implementation unit of Ministry of National Education is in charge of conducting quality assurance and assisted by assistants from higher learning institutions in practice. Local government is important because it is in charge of quality improvement of education. The three institutions are expected to have good collaboration in the aspects of planning, implementation, and monitoring for the improvement of education quality.

### **Acknowledgement**

Sincere gratitude is due to Research Institute of Sriwijaya University, Dean of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University, Regents of Banyuasin and Musi Banyuasin who have given facilities to do this study. The gratitude also goes to school principals, vice principals, treasurers, and Indonesian language subject teachers of the two regions who have spent their time for collecting data through interview, questionnaires, and FGD. Great thanks also go to Directorate General of Higher Education Ministry of National Education and Culture who have supported this study financially. Finally, appreciation is due to research team for wonderful cooperation and collaboration that made this research possible, starting from writing proposal, writing research instruments, collecting data, describing data, and formulating the model of implementation to solve problems involving relevant institutions.

This article is summarized from the research funded by Directorate General of Higher Education Ministry of National Education and Culture with contract number 540/SP2H/PL/Dit.litabmas/VII/2011 on 29 July 2011.

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