

# APPROACHES AND EXPERIENCES OF ENGLISH TEACHINGS IN INDONESIA

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**Abstract:** The demand for learning English has increased along with the proliferation of English globally. The use of English nowadays is not only limited to international destinations but also local communication. Therefore, the trend has shifted from simply copying the style of native speakers to successful communication using English. It is happening that the rapid-developing policies of the demands, teachers as facilitators of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia must do a very significant consideration for setting to develop a survival strategy that is impossible for their colleagues who work abroad. The existence of this research is to let the readers know the experiences of EFL teachers in teaching in the reform era and to show an analysis on the real phenomena of the condition in finding the main role of the teacher in a changing context.

**Keywords:** Approach, Experience, Teachings.

**Abstrak:** Permintaan akan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris telah meningkat seiring dengan proliferasi bahasa Inggris secara global. Praktik bahasa Inggris tidak hanya terbatas pada tujuan internasional tetapi juga komunikasi lokal. Oleh karena itu, tren telah bergeser dari hanya menyalin gaya penutur asli ke komunikasi yang berhasil dengan menggunakan bahasa Inggris. Dihadapkan dengan kebijakan yang terus berubah dan tuntutan praktis, guru sebagai pengajar harus melakukan pengaturan prioritas yang sangat unik untuk mengembangkan strategi bertahan hidup yang tidak mungkin diperlukan oleh rekan-rekan mereka yang bekerja di luar negeri. Tujuan artikel ini adalah untuk membahas pengalaman guru EFL dalam mengajar bahasa Inggris di sekolah-sekolah Indonesia di era reformasi dan untuk menunjukkan analisis berdasarkan konteks situasi untuk menemukan inti peran guru dalam konteks yang berubah.

**Kata kunci:** Pendekatan, Pengalaman, Pengajaran.

## I. INTRODUCTION

People of Indonesia are involved in the countries of English as Foreign Language (EFL) tend to apply English more with their friends rather than with native speaker of English. The purpose of people in this universe who apply English intensively with international speakers is steadily rising comparatively to other language users. This is a fact that

approximately 380 million people speak in English as an international language, such fact has proven that English is now globally utilized. Moreover, English as tool of communication is also used on the different culture and linguistic inhibition. In short that the house of international using of English as communication tool is now being separated from English speaking countries communicators to the widen global society

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and the native people has changed to be the minimum among English language users as common.

As story began from Curriculum 1947 or called Study Plan 1947 This is the first curriculum since Indonesia's independence. Changes in the direction of education are more political, from the orientation of Dutch education to the national interest. At that time the principle of education was set by the Pancasila. This curriculum is called the 1947 Study Plan, and was only implemented in 1950. Because this curriculum was born when Indonesia was just independent, the education taught emphasized on the formation of the human character of an independent, sovereign, and equal nation to other nations on this earth. The focus of the 1947 Lesson Plan does not emphasize mind education, but only character education, state and community awareness.

The existence of this curriculum is a refinement of the previous curriculum, detailing each subject so it is called the Unraveled Study Plan 1952. This curriculum has been directed towards an Indonesian education system. Like every lesson connected with daily life. The syllabus of subjects clearly shows a teacher teaching a subject.

The government revised the curriculum system in 1964, named Education Plan 1964. This curriculum was characterized by the government having a

desire that the people get academic knowledge for debriefing at the elementary level. So that learning is centered on the Pancawardhana program, which is the development of moral, intelligence, emotional or artistic, skillful, and physical.

The first curriculum since the fall of Sukarno and replaced by Suharto. Are political and replace the 1964 Educational Plans that were imaged as Old Order products. This curriculum aims to form a true, strong, and healthy human Pancasila, enhance intelligence and physical skills, morals, character, and religious beliefs. The 1968 curriculum is a manifestation of a change in orientation towards the purely implementation of the 1945 Constitution.

The content of subject matter is theoretical, does not relate to factual problems in the field. The emphasis is on what material is best given to students at every level of education. The content of education is directed at activities that enhance intelligence and skills, and develop a healthy and strong physique.

The government improved the curriculum that year. This curriculum emphasizes more effective and efficient education. According to Alwasilah (2018) the Director of Kindergarten and Elementary School Development at the Ministry of National Education at the time, this curriculum was born because of the influence of the concept in the field of MBO

management (management by objective). The methods, materials and teaching objectives are detailed in the Instructional System Development Procedure (PPSI), known as unit lessons, that is, lesson plans for each unit of study.

This curriculum carries the expertise process approach. Although the priority of a process approach, but the goal remains an important factor. This curriculum is also often called the "1975 curriculum refined". Students position placed as studying subject. From observing something, grouping, to discuss, to report. This model is called Active Student Learning (CBSA).

1994 curriculum and 1999 curriculum supplement in 1994 the government updated the curriculum in an effort to integrate the previous curriculum, especially the 1975 and 1984 curriculum. However, the combination of objectives and processes had not been successful. So many criticisms come, caused by the burden of student learning is considered too heavy, from national content to local content. For example local languages, arts, regional (Competency Based Curriculum)

In 2004 the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) was launched as a substitute for the 1994 Curriculum. A competency-based education program must contain three main elements, namely the selection of appropriate competencies, specifications of evaluation indicators to

determine the success of achieving competencies, and learning development. KBK has the following characteristics, emphasizing the achievement of student competencies both individually and classically, oriented towards learning outcomes and diversity. Learning activities using approaches and methods vary, not only the teacher's source of learning, but also other learning resources that meet the educational elements.

2006 Curriculum, KTSP (Education Unit Level Curriculum) This curriculum is almost similar to the 2004 curriculum. The prominent difference lies in the authority in its preparation, which refers to the soul of the decentralized Indonesian education system. In the 2006 curriculum, the central government set competency standards and basic competencies. Teachers are required to be able to develop their own syllabus and assessment according to the conditions of the school and the region. The results of the development of all subjects are compiled into a device called the Education Unit Level Curriculum (SBC).

This curriculum is a substitute for the SBC curriculum. The 2013 curriculum has three aspects of assessment, namely aspects of knowledge, aspects of skills, and aspects of attitude and behavior. In the 2013 curriculum, especially in learning materials there are streamlined material and added material. The streamlined material is seen in

Indonesian, Social Sciences, PPKn, etc., while the material added is Mathematics (Alwasiah: 2018)

## **II. DISCUSSION**

### **A. Educational Contexts**

Among great numbers of changes, which have occurred since the reform era, which began in 1988 are these four major impactful changes: decentralization of educational management and shifting locus of control; policy on the teaching of EFL in Indonesia's schooling system; curricular changes and recommended approaches to the teaching of English and modalities for quality improvement.

#### **1. Educational Management in Indonesia**

As indicated in the preceding paragraphs, education means as reforming era has been marked with some (limited) transfer of authority from central government to regional (provincial as well as district-level) governments. As the so called regional and local governments during approximately 32 years of the New-Order never enjoyed opportunities to make a decision for their own "collective life" as a province or a district, regional governments lack the necessary capabilities to smoothly manage resources they have in concert with central government in the context cannot do its job; and almost all teachers involved in the survey are aware that LPMP offices are

not staffed with professionals and expert to do the job that the teachers never attached in the process of educational programs.

To overcome this intricate problem, Alwasilah (2018) proposes that giving and empowering the provincial government to implement quality standards of education in concert with the regional office of quality assurance (LPMP).

#### **2. EFL Policies in Indonesia's schools**

Alwasilah (2018) feels that the name of English language as a Foreign communication was announced in the beginning of 1955 and continued the use of a main subject to be taught in middle Schools contrastly in the same time, the policy to introduced that English as the main subject as an to primary began at 1990's (The teaching of English as a Foreign Language at these stages of schooling system is stood by the problems due to there is a problem of academically qualified teachers to be supportive in the implementation of the policies from the main system of curriculum.

#### **3. Recommended approaches to the teaching of EFL**

Curricular changes in Indonesia's schooling system in the reform era have been phenomenally frequent. This high systematic frequency of curricular changes has become a public concern that a dissenting voice has this mocking comment

it was happened in educational system of Indonesia, a changing of curriculum can be happened into running of the succeeding of ministry system of education of Indonesia . A new minister wants that a new system of curriculum. An academic analyst, in contrast, has the following to say: the history of EFL teaching in Indonesia seems to follow the same universal pattern of evolution, namely the use of grammar translation method, direct method, communicative language teaching, and Genre-Based Approach. Alwasilah (2018) mentioned that survey on approaches and methods of teaching are mostly mentioned by the teachers: contextual teaching and learning (CTL), namely active, innovative, creative, effective, and fun, genre-based approach (GBA), and communicative approach in K.13.

#### **4. Considerations for quality improvement**

Alwasilah (2018) feels that the studies on teacher procedures in the current reform era, most policies on educational world are intensively the hints of the following four bodies: (1) the Center for Curriculum and media of the evaluation; (2) Qualified of ensuring Body; (3) Centership for Educational people to the development; and (4) Centership for Teacher. From these four, the numbers (1) and (2) units have issued regulations with greatest effects on

the professionalism of teachers—that is, among other things, related to curriculum and learning materials, and provision of other educational resources.

#### **B. Comments**

Hamied (2014) asked what are the essential roles of teachers in an EFL class? In a recent national survey of Indonesia's teachers of Junior Secondary and Senior High Schools represented by 55 activists of TEFLIN (The Association of Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia) organization, The data led to the following conclusion: three major roles of teachers have been and will remain to be constant. First, teachers of EFL served as a model for their students to observe and learn from (87.3%; n=48). Second, EFL teachers structure learning activities so that their students learn English optimally both in class and out (76.4%; n=42); and third, teachers of EFL provide continuous and consistent supports. Therefore their students learn English independently (61.8%; n=34).

#### **C. Strategies To Survive In The System**

##### **1. Teachers as decision makers**

As Edwards (2014) has contended: no matter what teaching strategy or method is being applied, teaching staff have remained the ones who hold the control on most of the values involved in the classroom by making a series of decisions In her comprehensively

survey of the research. Meilani (2017) presented data sets which clearly indicated that confronted with pressing sets of decision-making demands during the actual teaching and learning.

## **2. The Good Teaching**

Meilan (2017) mentioned that repeated experiences with curricular changes and based on repeated confirmation about the fact that the changes in curriculum and its mandated teaching approaches, teachers of English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia's schools seem to have been conclusive in their understanding of what makes a good teaching. That is, a teaching activity is good when it leads to good scores on the part of students' learning results in the national English exam. And—in the current Indonesia's context-- English exam focuses only on reading, grammar and written expressions presented in the format of multiple-choice questions.

## **3. What strategies do the teachers take to succeed in their teaching and learning?**

Confronted with this real-life demand, the speakers of the language are left-behind by the most only one decision making on the way of sharing knowledge to their pupils on the test. This is caused as put it, scores are a direct evidence of both teachers' successful teaching and their students' successful learning. When asked about things they did not understand related to 2013 curriculum,

most of Meilani's (2017) respondents (54.76%) commented on its impracticality, and plenty of the teachers (45.24%) considered the 2013 curriculum as difficult to implement because it was not relevant to the instructional context these teachers found themselves in. While this relatively newly-mandated curriculum confused the teachers, the surrounding societal demands remained the same: students' high scores in the national exam.

## **D. Issues and Ways Forward**

To begin to sort out possible solutions to the already identified problems, this final section of the article discusses some prevailing problems to address, highlights illustrative problems associated with fragmented curricular changes, problems associated with failing socialization activities to ensure comprehensive understanding and support from implementers in the field, and proposes lessons to be drawn from this consequential set of policy changes, and ways forward for a better systemic supports for teachers' professional development. It is indicated in the preceding paragraphs the excessively frequent curricular changes that have occurred in the reform-era Indonesia's educational system have brought with them some serious and counter-productive consequences.

### **1. Problems in reforming education in Indonesia**

Relating to the issue of inconsistency in rules and regulations, Alwasilah (2018) has talked that a survey involving EFL teachers from various regions: that is, eighty-eight (88) beginning of school educators in Jakarta and two hundred main of secondary educators who live in Jakarta, West Java, and Banten provinces. The majority (59.3%) of these teachers commented that problems of government rules have led uncertainty above teachers existence. In addition, curricular reforms and their corresponding mandated instructional approaches including communicative language teaching, competency-based language teaching, Genre-Based English (GBE), KTSP (School-based Curriculum), k.13 which were instituted within the past decade were never accompanied with adjustments in the way students' learning was assessed. As a result, teachers did not reckon these curricular changes as something to take seriously. This teachers' collective attitude—as previous analyses have clearly indicated—has led teachers to teach to the test, whose foci and content coverage remain the same across educational eras. It is suggested that the previous analyses of reform cases related to curriculum of EFL in Indonesia's schooling system in the reform era, specific problems have recurred

including inconsistency of regulations issued by government to guide practice (Alwasilah 2018), rushed and fragmented curricular changes, and the way these abrupt changes are introduced to the public without the necessary systemic supports to ensure their survival in their implementation in the field.

### **2. Content of curricular changes**

In other words, the content curricular changes have encouraged EFL teachers to use the “reductionistic” exam questions as a sole guide to their day-to-day EFL instruction. According to the preceding paragraphs, learning from experiences, teachers of EFL in Indonesia's schools have developed coping strategies in response to the externally-mandated curricular changes and took a pragmatic strategy: they collect questions from previous years' national exams, and use these published sample exam questions as instructional materials so that their students can “over learn” and internalize them.

### **3. Failed socialization**

Alwasilah (2018) surveyed respondents which commented when the idea of involving students in deciding on the topics covered in the curriculum is never considered in both process of both designing and instituting the new curriculum, the resulting curriculum will create a distance from the learners—the supposedly major

beneficiary of the reform efforts. This distance, in its turn, can create the learning disengagement on the part of learners.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

Drawn these major root causes, future efforts to initiate and institute reforms ideas should be made more inclusive in their orientation and concerted in their implementation. In what follows, eight items: (1) The teachers currently working in the system should be given the positions and chances for increasing their knowledge-base and improve their technical skills to support their optimal performance in their roles as both teachers and researcher (of their own practice). (2) The Indonesian Teachers participating in the survey have admitted that the 9-day certification programs they had attended have improved their welfare (34.45%) more than improved their professionalism (23.4%) in the field of teaching year to year.

It is also recommended that in the future the certification system should be redesigned by involving local universities, the regional Educational offices and teacher professional association and program In this way, all resources available in the system

can be brought together for fruitful synergy.

(3) The connecting of content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge of the current teacher certification training has been proven solid and effective in the near future the contents of this highly needed professional training should be incorporated into regular curriculum of preservice (and inservice) teacher professional education. (4) Closer working linkages should be established among the officials of Educational professors of English and/or Language Teaching & Research to ensure continues professional development of teachers. (5) The initialed steps should be the picture to begin to establish Professional Development Schools (PDS) where more long-term mutual development is carried out to help teachers and university professors' work together in developing their respective as well as collective professional knowledge-base and technical skills in both research and instruction (Darling-Hammond 2006). (6) Central Offices of educations turn become better capable of functioning productively and independently in carrying out their own share of responsibilities in the framework of decentralized management of education.

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