The Barriers to Implementing English School Based Curriculum In Indonesia: Teachers perspective

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Eight years have passed since the current English School Based Curriculum 2006 for Junior High School in Indonesia first introduced in school, so teachers, principals and other stakeholders have had sufficient time to work with it and discover both the positive aspects and limitation in their individual context. At the time of its introduction, it represented a radical change of teacher's role. Teachers is not only the implementer but also a designer and developer of recent curriculum. This new paradigm requires the presence of qualified teachers who are able to determine their own material, teaching methods and assessment those are suitable for their students. Consequently, a teacher will have greater flexibility and accountability in transferring the curriculum into classroom level. This new double role will require a greater level of expertise in curriculum decision making. The aim of this article is twofold. First, it will t give a comprehensive review of the challenges in implementing English School Based for Senior High School 2006 from teachers perspective. It discusses the challenges that teachers hold as designer and implementer of the curriculum, and second, it will look into the importance of teacher change and commitment in succeeding the present curriculum.

Keywords: Teacher; curriculum implementation; barrier

1. Introduction

Indonesian educational system has changed from centralized education system to decentralized which marked the implementation of Competency Based Curriculum 2004, then developed to School Based Curriculum 2006. Prior curriculum including English curriculum were centralized and made in Jakarta, where the Regional and District Offices of Education's and school's role were implementer of the policy. Contrary, current curriculum is designed, developed and implemented by each school base on the content and graduate referring to national standard. This role change requires schools and teachers develop their own curriculum, adapt techniques and methods to meet the demands of the changing world and teach English more effectively in the new educational system. The policy reform is intended to increase quality of education and relevance by empowering regional district and school autonomy and capacities based on their own potentials and needs. As noted by Gross, Giacunta and Bernstein (in Snyder, Bolin & Zimwalt, 1992) innovation occurs within a context: Life and death of an innovation are not simply a matter of providing appropriate supports for the innovation and making mutual adjustments as it is being installed. Rather, life and death of an innovation depend on the unique configuration of social, historical, political and ideological factors that make up the school and its social, community context.

The success of any educational change, particularly as substantial as a curriculum change, however, largely determined by how teachers perceive it and what they do to implement it, simply because "it is the teachers who reflect on change, absorbing and manipulating new ideas and developments" (Ekiz, 2004). Teachers play key role to ditermine the success of new curriculum implementation, since they are the one to bring it in the class (Fullan,1998). Therefore, any attempts to evaluate the new program changes should certainly involve teachers who undergo these changes in their current situations, conditions and contexts.

2. The barriers in designing material

A more important shift in teachers' role resulted from this curriculum is linked with the change of the responsibility of teacher particularly in term of preparation they must do (Basikin, 2008). In the implementation of the previous curriculum, English Curriculum 1975 and 1994, teachers were provided with detailed guidelines of the materials about how they are taught, teaching methods they should apply and form of assessment that teacher should employ in the classroom. On the other hand, the present curriculum give mandate for teacher to stand on their own foot. He should be able to design and adapt the material with teaching technique, method and form of assessment. A teacher must develop his own curriculum, adapt techniques and methods to meet the demands and needs based on their own potentials. Some teacher, this new role is not only seen a promising practice but also considered as a burden by many more other teachers. The changing of the academic atmosphere to be more independent from being depend on the government guidelines provided is challenging for many teachers in the country.

From some previous studies on the implementation of English School Based Curriculum 2006 in Indonesia (Firman& Tola, 2008; Sutrisno, 2008; Suharto, 2009, Heyward, 2010; Mattarima & Abdul Rahim, 2011; Mumpuni, 2011; Wati, 2011) generally claim that it does not seem run well caused by some factors such as low teachers' teaching competence, time consuming for developing teaching materials for local needs, no detailed information in School-based curriculum needed by teachers. Accordingly, the teachers were confused and they did not understand what is meant by communicative competence (Suharto, 2009). Heyward (2009) examines (1) how teachers, principals, supervisors in translating ESBC in classroom and school in North Maluku Province (2) the impact of culture on school reform. She finds that change is dominantly on the surface level, various limitation mark in putting the national policy into local practice .The principals still wait for command from the upper level, their common statement "Yes, autonomy but wait for instruction." She also reported the crucial role of cultural values that must be improved in Education. Mumpuni (2010) studies the perception of 30 teachers of English teachers toward the School Based Curriculum implementation in Batam found that certain obstacles in the implementation of the curriculum related to the teachers' role. Such as being unable to arrange learning material that fits one teaching-learning period, unable to create various lessons task, lack of school facilities that support School Based Curriculum.

Kamil and Sheikh Ahmad (2011) explore Indonesian secondary school EFL teachers' opinion of the School Based Curriculum Development policy, and examine their practices in developing school-based EFL syllabus. Seven secondary school EFL teachers participated in this study. The study find that the participants had different opinion of School Based Curriculum Development. Some of them seemed have known the steps of syllabus development partially, while other tended to see the issue as irrelevant. Syllabus development had been mostly practiced as syllabus adaptation or adoption. In the implementation of the curriculum they were facing the problems of lack of understanding and skills in developing the syllabus, workloads and time constraints, unavailability of adequate media, and resistance to change prior practices in syllabus development. According to Mattarima and Abdul Rahim (2011), the teaching constraints of English as foreign language found in implementing English School-based Curriculum—such as constraints on identifying—learners' differences, constraints on learning materials resources, constraints on classroom activities, constraints on teaching methods and constraints on speaking assessment.

The implementation of English School Based Curriculum 2006 as asserted by Sutrisno who did research on implementation of SCBC in Jambi Province, reports that curriculum is responded unwisely by education holder. There are a lot of opinions that the new curriculum is different from previous one. This opinion created refusal and psychological rejection to the changes. It is admitted that the change of curriculum has spent a lot of time, finance and energy, and it takes a long process. Accordingly, many teachers and students are still confused in using this curriculum (2008). The development of school-based curriculum is new phenomenon for the school community in Indonesia. In the early stage of implementation faced obstacles found in a number of

schools such as the freedom of schools to create their own curriculum which is relevant with the needs of students could not be fully implemented, the change role of schools from curriculum implementer to curriculum developer has made the school community confused. The ability of school community to analyze the conditions and needs of the students and apply them in to curriculum need improvement (Firman and Tola.2008). Handayani (2009) examine whether the material of the National English Final Examination Test 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 based on content standard and match the competencies of English syllabus for Junior High School in Semarang. She found that most of the material of the National English Final Examination Test 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 match with content standard and competencies of English syllabus for Junior High School in Semarang.

Historically, since English was first taught, there have been problems in the teaching of English as foreign language in formal schooling in Indonesia. The obvious factors that contribute the ongoing problem in English teaching in Indonesia are changing curriculum and approaches, the large class and teachers with poor English, (Nur,2000; Darmowijoyo,2000;.Alwasilah, 2001 and Yuwono,2005). According to Mustafa,2001, the other reasons for the problems are: (1) limited time allocated for teaching English, (2) students have no enough time to actually learn to speak English in class because the teacher is more concerned to teach the grammar and syntax, (3) the absence of good authentic learning materials, and (4) the absence the social uses of English outside the classroom.

Adnan (2006) said that the quality of education in Indonesia is generally low. Specifically, the English teaching in Indonesia has been considered by failure (Kickpatrik,2007). The failure of English teaching in indonesia as asserted by Bladford is affected by the low teacher qualification and welfare, large classroom and students motivation (2007). The others few previous studies of school and classroom reform in Indonesia (such as Werf et al, 2000;Semiawan,2001; Bjork, 2003 and Utomo, 2005) generally highlight a lack of success in changing current practices and reform in Indonesia is fail to achieve a deep-level change in the classroom. This reality has been repeatedly in the history of reform effort in Indonesia over the last twenty or more years and teacher is commonly inclination to be blamed for this failure (Heyward,2009).

In implementing English school based curriculum 2006, teacher is expected to adjust material, techniques and methods in his classroom because he is regarded knowing environment, condition, real and concrete situation of his students. To bring this task into practice requires greater creativity, flexibility, expertise and broad knowledge to translate the curriculum document in the classroom level. This shfting role is a challenge for English cteacher and make most of them feel worried because they have to run their practice off with old paradigm (Mattarima and Abdul Rahim, 2011). The low competency of English teacher also revealed by Wati that a large amount of English teachers might not be sufficiently prepared to teach English well (2011). It means that they find it hard to design, develop and implement their own curriculum while they have followed some training of curriculum development done by government. This problems are not only experienced by new teacher but also by veteran teacher.

3. Teacher Change and Commitment in Implementing Curriculum

It is believed that teacher has central role in implementing new curriculum. Teachers are the grass-root implementer of a curriculum, they are the only staff directly face the learners every day and they cannot be substituted with other type of instructional material in carrying out a program in the classroom level. The quality of teachers is the most important factor in improving the quality of education. Research shows that what teachers know and what they are able to do has a significant impact on the academic performance of their students. As Barber and Mourshed (2007) note that teacher determine the quality of education and the quality of an education system cannot go above the quality of its teachers . That is why, teacher should be the first consideration to succeed new curriculum implementation..

Curriculum change isn't easy (Fullan, 2001). It is a complex process and need time to accomplish. Almost any teachers can provide a list of reason and argumentation why it won't happen. They can describe the challenge of implementation ranging from instructional until managerial problem. Each teacher experience different kind of change in their routine while implementing innovation. Theoretically, they must understand the conceptual basis of the change and how to apply it in the classroom. Factually, it is often found that there are many teachers do not understand the innovation. As consequences, they do not know their role in the implementation, what to do and how to adapt with the change. Fullan (2001a) stress that in the change process, the most complicated stage is change implementation. People must have basic understanding in order to be able to apply innovation. Further, he conclude that the complexity of change require more effort from each innovation participant in learning new things and challenge including the risk of power.

Teachers' skill has crucial role in the change process as emphasized by Fullan (1997) that to become expert in the dynamic of change, educators – administrators and alike – must become skilled change agents with moral purpose, educators will make a difference in the lives of students from all backgrounds, and by so doing help produce greater capacity in society to cope with change. As 8 teachers were at a core of schools, teaching and learning and of any change that might be made, as Fullan (2001) notes that educational change depend on what teacher do and think-it is as simple and complex as that.

Teacher change, specifically teacher change in their attitudes regarding reformation, has been considered essential in ensuring successful curriculum implementation in the classroom. Hargreaves (1989) stated that change in curriculum is not affected without some concomitant change in the teacher ". Teacher change is not only entirely influenced by an individually determined and psychological phenomena but the social contexts where they work also shape the teacher change (Richardson and Placier, 2001). Carless (1999a) said that teacher's attitude are originated primarily from: (1) their own experience as a learner, (2) their professional training, (3) their teaching experience, (4) their interaction with colleagues, and (5) the society, cultural values and norms where they live. Although teacher's attitude is crucial in promoting successful innovation but they are very often resistant to change. According to Waugh and Puch (1987), the obstacle to change is likely happened if the innovation is not compatible with the existing attitudes.

A school should develop a deep understanding and accommodating of the change among teachers to succeed the implementation of innovation (Hord,1990). Further, she said that the innovation should be suitable and well communicated with the intended user perception toward the innovation, their roles, expected outcome and how the innovation is best implemented.

Successful change as Fullan and Miles (1992) argued could be achieved through seven orientation and combining between thinking and action of those involved in the change process: (a) change is learning loaded with uncertainty, even the successful reformation thing before they go right they might go wrong; (b) change is journey not a blueprint. Because in complex social change, rational planning models do not work. Blueprint of change is not needed. Rather, a guide journey is needed to succeed the change; (c) problems are our friends. People will come up with creative solution if they immerse themselves in school problem; (d) change is resource hungry. Because change characterizes developing solution to complex problem, studying and acquiring new skill and coming to new insight; (e) change requires the power to manage it; (f) change is systemic. It must not only emphasize on structure, policies and regulation but also emphasize on cultural issue of the system; (g) all large-scale change is implemented locally. It can be successful if every teachers, principal, parents, student implement the change.

Hord (1986) and Wood (1989) state that the successful of change can only be reached through effective staff development program which enable innovation user to gain necessary knowledge and ability for the process of implementation. They consider professional development is crucial in guiding innovation toward successful implementation.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation;

From the previous discussion, it can be concluded that firstly the introduction of English School Based Curriculum has not reached all teacher especially in the remote area and as a result they cannot make change. Second, English subject teacher are not prepared well to face their new role as designer and implementer of present curriculum and new paradigm of language teaching. Third, it need long time for teacher to change from the old paradigm and adapt themselves to new role. Fourth, the school facilities has not been already to support the activities to succeed the implementation of current curriculum.

Some recommendations are suggested to solve the problem in implementing curriculum are as follows:

- 1. In introducing new curriculum, teacher should be the first consideration whether they have understood the new policy or no.
- 2. Teacher should empower English Subject Teacher Forum (MGMP) to improve their knowledge and skills, to share ideas for improvement, to share problem in daily teaching practice and solve it, to build collaboration with other teacher to create conducive and effective teaching and learning English.
- 3. The government should have systematic in service teacher training to empower teachers' knowledge and skill. It can also improve teachers' professionalism.
- 4. The stakeholder in education should facilitate and work together to provide school facilities that can support teaching and learning process.

5. References

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