

ICLEI 2015-90 Iskandar Iskandar

Teachers' Attitudes towards the Implementation of the National Standards in School-Based EFL Curriculum in South Sulawesi Primary Schools in Indonesia

Iskandar Iskandar

PhD student at School of Education, Curtin University, Australia; EFL Lecturer at Universitas Negeri Makassar in Indonesia

4/37 Leonard Street, Victoria Park, WA 6100

Corresponding Author: iskandar@student.curtin.edu.au

ABSTRACT

This research signifies primary EFL teachers' viewpoints on the implementation of the National Standards (NS) into their School-Based EFL Curriculum (KTSP) in primary schools in South Sulawesi Province in Indonesia, through interviews with eleven individuals. Teachers' attitudes towards the NS varied. Most teachers expressed their fidelity to the NS, some preferring adaptation to their own specific contexts, and a few others to using other resources. Some teachers were critical about the inadequate time allocation for EFL teaching in classrooms, and a number of them relied on textbooks as their curriculum.

Keywords: attitudes; fidelity; adaptation; incompatibility; textbook-reliance

Introduction

The introduction of English in the early age of schooling has become more common in this globalized world. The notion that English is required for societies to be competitive has become a pressure for the governments to articulate an early primary school English program (Baldauf, Kaplan, Kamwangamalu & Bryant, 2011). This notion is in line with the theoretical proposition postulated by some educators (e.g. Piaget, 1973; Krashen, 1973; Long, 1988), believing that the earlier a child learns a target language, the better her/his opportunity in acquiring a high proficiency in that language.

The increasing demands of parents and the community who see English as the key to their children's educational success have become another pressure to the policy of introducing English in primary school curricula (Baldauf, Kaplan, Kamwangamalu & Bryant, 2011). This is also the case of Indonesia (Hawanti, 2014). They insist that the schools have to teach English regardless of the shortage of EFL teachers at schools. Such parental pressure is dominant in shaping the schools' decision to adopt English in their curriculum beside the perception that the adoption of English would increase their schools' prestige (Suherdi & Kurniawan, 2005). Almost no consideration has been taken into account whether primary school students really need English and whether they are interested in learning it (Jamilah, 2008; cited in Hawanti, 2014).

Schools located in cities and suburban areas relatively do not encounter so many problems since they have at least one EFL teacher. On the other hand, rural schools mostly lack EFL teachers. Hu (2005) saw that non English background teacher is immediate solution but in long term run it is arguable. As examples, homeroom teachers, who are mostly not trained to teach EFL, have to work extra hard how to teach this subject when they are assigned to do so. With regard to teachers, Yuwono and Harbon (2010) described two main problems faced in the teaching of English in primary schools. First, most teachers do not have English educational background. Second,

those who have English educational background were not actually prepared to teach EFL in primary schools during their teacher training in colleges or universities. They were trained to teach EFL in secondary schools and/or universities.

Apart from the shortage of EFL teachers, curriculum is another crucial factor in Indonesian primary EFL context. Since 1994 the national government has allowed the introduction of English lesson to primary school students starting from year four if it is deemed necessary, provided that qualified teachers, instructional materials, as well as other resources are available. In 1994 curriculum, English was placed as one of Local Content (LC) subjects. However, no official English curriculum was made for primary schools during this period.

In 2003, the national government has shifted curriculum policy from centralized to decentralized following the issue of Law Number 20, 2003 which portrayed the new education system (Suderadjat, 2004), realizing the fact that Indonesia is such a big nation consisting of hundreds of regions with different sociocultural background. The effectuation of this policy marked the emergence of competency-based curriculum known as the 'Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi' or KBK in 2004 which emphasized the *performance-based outcomes* for each educational unit from primary to high schools in the form of National Standards. This approach requires "excessive demand for flexible and independent learning" (Marcelino, 2008, p. 58).

A school-based curriculum known as the 'Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan' (KTSP) was launched in 2006 as the revision of the KBK curriculum. Central to this curriculum is the autonomy of schools and teachers (Depdiknas, 2006); therefore the national government does not provide a national curriculum. To avoid schools from implementing curriculum in an *ad hoc* manner, the national government then provides curriculum frameworks in the form of National Standards (NS) comprising Content Standards, Process Standards, Graduate Competency Standards, Teacher and Educative Staff Standards, Facility Standards, Educational Management Standards, Funding Standards, and Assessment and Evaluation Standards (Depdiknas, 2006). Of these eight National Standards, Content Standards, Process Standards, and Graduate Competency Standards become the main curriculum frameworks for teachers in designing their school level curriculum. In addition to these three standards as curriculum frameworks, Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan (BSNP) or the National Board for Educational Standard, on behalf of the government, provides National Guidelines for Curriculum Implementation as teachers' guide.

These frameworks need to be comprehended by the teachers prior to constructing their own school-based curriculum. Ideally, the school-based curriculum is to be developed by the schools along with local school committee by referring to these frameworks. In practice however, local school committee are hardly involved in this particular enterprise. What happens is that the school assigns teachers to develop the draft of their curriculum based on the lesson they teach. The draft is then signed and stamped by the principal and the local school committee to officially use afterwards. Therefore, teachers are 'the men behind the gun', and become the chiefs in the implementation of curriculum policy at school level.

To put in analogy, the KTSP policy assigns teachers to write a composition where the frameworks have been provided in the paper. Although they use the same frameworks, presumably teachers will produce different results of composition depending on their ability to develop the frameworks to produce a sounding composition. To some extent, there may happen that some teachers may not adhere to the frameworks, and would rather choose blank paper to write down their own composition. From this analogy, it can be seen that besides their understanding of the

NS, teachers' attitude is another crucial factor that determine the success or the failure of curriculum implementation. There is a need to study to what extent they use the frameworks as their guideline in their school curriculum implementation.

The Context of the Study

The context of this study was the implementation of the NS in primary schools in South Sulawesi province of Indonesia. This province is of 34 provinces in Indonesia. It consists of 21 regencies and three cities with Makassar city as the capital of the province. Data from the Census in 2010 shows that the total population of the province was 8,032,551 people (Statistik, 2010). Most primary schools are situated in rural areas. With such conditions in the province, there has been inequality for people in accessing information and education. People in urban and suburban areas presumably have benefited more from various types of development, whereas those who live in rural and remote areas will get less. Due to problems of delivery, for example, teachers in remote have less equipment compared with teachers in urban or suburban areas. They cannot easily get textbooks, curriculum frameworks, curriculum guidelines and other types of equipment needed in the teaching and learning process. Another problem is that teachers teaching in less privileged areas rarely get visits from their supervisors due to their remoteness, and for this and many other reasons they rarely have chances to attend teacher training.

Although the NS has been used since 2006, a study conducted by Indonesian Curriculum Research Centre suggested that it has not been implemented as intended in school based curriculum (Puskur, 2007). The purpose of the study was to monitor the implementation of the KTSP in primary and secondary schools across the nation. It revealed that most of the schools involved had not implemented KTSP effectively. Some factors identified to be the hindrances are unequal distribution of information about the KTSP, inconsistency of information about the KTSP, lack of teachers' understanding, lack of teaching and learning resources, and lack of appropriate training. However, the study generalized the findings without looking at particular areas or subject which might have effectively implemented the KTSP; therefore it was suggested that small-scale study to be undertaken to provide in-depth information about the implementation of the KTSP.

Some other studies have been conducted with regard to the implementation of the NS in various types and levels of schools at local setting (e.g. Pujilestari, 2009; Ruhana & Yuliana, 2010; Zuhri, Karomani & Suyanto, 2014) revealed that there was still much to be done to improve the implementation, despite some successful attempts in implementing the NS. In addition, all studies were conducted at Secondary School level, yet none have been conducted at primary school level so far. This study therefore; sought to provide insights into the implementation of the NS at primary school level, and conducted at different part of the nation, in this case, in South Sulawesi Province in Indonesia. The focus of the study was to find out teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of the NS in school-based EFL curriculum.

Literature Review

It is commonly perceived that when a policy has been legislated, and the guidelines have been completed, the process of this policy is essentially accomplished. However, Fullan (1982) reminds us that time spent on the efforts of implementing the policy may take three times longer than the time spent in the initiation of the implementation plan. Further, Ornstein and Hunkins (2004) noted that curriculum will remain as a plan unless it is implemented by teachers with real students in real

classrooms. Planning a curriculum is undeniably important, but it will be meaningless unless teachers are aware of the product and have what it needs to implement it.

The relationship between plan and reality is not always in harmony. For example, Gorsuch's (2000) study in Japan found that while the policy endorsed the development of students' communicative competence and emphasis on four macro skills in learning English, teachers, on the other hand, emphasised accuracy, memorization, and the use of written mode. In a similar vein, Wang (2002) also detected that there is a contradiction between the new ELT textbooks in Taiwan that offers the implementation of communicative language teaching (CLT) with EFL teachers who maintain grammar-translation teaching practices.

It has been long recognized in literature that there are several factors that can affect the implementation of a change, and must be taken into account by anyone attempting to introduce any innovation in the educational context. Teachers' attitude is one factor (Ghaith & Yaghi, 1997; Kennedy & Kennedy, 1996; Markee, 1993). Changes need some sorts of attitudinal change on the teachers' part. If teachers' attitudes are incompatible with an innovation, it is likely that they will be resistant to that innovation (Brown, 1980; Haney, Czerniak, & Lumpe, 1996; Levitt, 2001). In other words, successful changes in curriculum and its implementation need teachers' wholehearted cooperation and supports. Teachers' attitude is, therefore, significant with respect to the implementation of a curriculum.

Teachers are not passive recipients of an innovation. They accept innovative ideas once they have judged them and are convinced of their effectiveness in terms of their compatibility with their classroom. If an innovation is acceptable and eventually to be used in classrooms, they must have been judged by teachers as being practical or feasible. The practicality or the feasibility can refer to time, resources, teachers' perceptions of their students' needs, and teachers' teaching styles (Kennedy, 1988; Holliday, 1994).

Snyder, Bolin and Zumwalt (1992) identified three perspectives in relation to curriculum implementation: the fidelity perspective, the mutual adaptation perspective, and curriculum enactment perspective. The former two perspectives view the curriculum as an entity produced by experts or specialists to be implemented by teachers through instruction. Fidelity perspective, for example, is a very structured approach in which teachers are given specific instructions about how to teach a unit or a course, and that their role is merely as passive receiver who will be trained to transmit the content of the curriculum package to their students (Marsh, 1991; cited in Marsh & Morris, 1991). Mutual adaptation perspective sees that although teachers are given instruction about how to implement the innovation, adjustments can be made possible to the innovation itself. In other words, implementation should involve a compromise between curriculum developers and teachers as implementers (MacDonald & Walker, 1976). The latter perspective, the curriculum enactment perspective, views that curriculum is formulated through "the evolving constructs of teachers and students" (Snyder, Bolin & Zumwalt, 1992, p. 404). Syllabuses and teaching materials provided either by the government or other external institutions are considered as tools that students and teachers use as they engage in the enacted experience of the classroom.

In the Indonesian context, KTSP, which is today's curriculum, is in line with the concept of curriculum enactment. The national government merely sets the curriculum framework in the form of National Standards, and leaves the other stages to the enterprise of the teachers. This implies that in designing curriculum programs, including teaching materials, teachers are expected to provide an improved local curriculum and determine themselves what teaching materials suit their students.

However, in practice, very often teachers rely on commercial textbooks. For example, Faridi's study on the development of context-based English learning resources for elementary schools in Central Java, Indonesia, revealed that teachers rely on textbooks as their primary teaching resources (Faridi, 2010, p.25).

There are at least two factors why teachers might rely on commercial textbooks: practical and ideological factors (Richards, 1993, p.3). The most obvious reasons for the widespread use of textbooks are practical ones. Using textbooks means time and cost benefits to teachers and schools. If teachers are not allowed to use textbooks, they will need additional training in the preparation of materials. Ideologically, the use of commercial textbooks is based on the view that the improvement of quality of teaching will come about through the use of instructional materials that are based on findings of current theory and research. Ornstein (1994) characterized good textbooks as having many desirable features, such as being well organized, coherent, unified, relatively up-to-date, accurate, and relatively unbiased (Ornstein, 1994, p. 70). He added that good textbooks are usually accompanied by teachers' manuals, test items, study guides, and activity guides. Shutes and Petersen (1994) also observed that textbooks are "so comprehensive in content, so appealing in the number and nature of instructional aids that come with them, and so filled with guidance in their teacher edition..."(Shutes & Petersen, 1994, p. 2).

A number of studies have demonstrated on the powerful influence that teachers may have on the implementation of curriculum. Therefore, it indicates that, in general, teachers do not implement curricula in their classroom in the same way that these curricula were assigned to be implemented. For example, Clark and Elmore (1981) reported that teachers adapt curricula to fit their knowledge, priorities, and unique classroom settings while Brophy and Good (1974) reported that teachers influence curriculum implementation by deciding which topics and activities are appropriate for their students. These studies suggest that teacher perceptions and beliefs play critical role in the process of curriculum implementation. Teacher perceptions may lead to the hindrance of the effectiveness of curriculum implementation. Brown and McIntyre (1993) believe that ignoring teachers' belief in the process of curriculum development may cause a failure in its implementation. Later studies done showed that teachers engaged in two important design practices: they critique curriculum materials by identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and they make adaptations to compensate for deficiencies (Grossman and Thompson, 2008; Schneider and Krajcik, 2002).

Karavas-Doukas (1995) in a study of factors affecting the implementation of an EFL innovation in Greek public secondary schools; identified that teachers' attitudes towards the innovation, their perception on the training they attended, and their belief in the impracticality of the innovation are among factors that hindered the implementation of innovation. Teachers' failure to deal with the demands of innovation as a result of their incompatibility with the innovation, and the failure of the innovation to accommodate the realities in the classroom were found to be important causes of teachers' resistance to the innovation (Karavas-Doukas, 1995, p. 65-66).

Bjork (2009) who studied local implementation of Japan's Integrated Studies (IS) reform, found that Japanese teachers had the capacity necessary to attain the plans of Japanese Ministry of Education for the IS since they spent extensive hours to conduct research on instructional methodology and refining their teaching strategies. However, he also found that the majority of Japanese teachers were skeptical about the proposed change. Some teachers were trying to merge their old approaches with the new ones advocated by the IS; some saw that IS investigations had the potential to encourage students' motivation, yet, lacking in quantitative evidence of students' learning, they

were uncertain about the advantages of those activities; others rejected IS because the considered it wasted their time. These perceptions diluted their commitment to the reform; therefore they revised policy guidelines to fit their own objectives for students, or they adhered to the guidelines at a surface level only (p. 40).

Sofou and Tsafos (2010) in their study on preschool teachers' understanding of the National Preschool Curriculum (NPC) in Greece concluded that preschool teachers in Greece view the curriculum as open and flexible enough to be adapted to the children's needs and interests and the teachers' work contexts. Most of the teachers viewed that this curriculum was appropriate for preschool education because it was child-centered. They observed that the NPC guides and supports their work, that it defines the objectives of preschool education and that it establishes a common framework of guiding principles for enhancing communication between teachers and with parents (p. 418).

By contrast, Fang and Garland (2013) in their ethnographic study on the implementation of the New English Curriculum (NEC) for secondary schools in China found that teachers felt distant from the NEC guidance due to its abstractness and the theoretical nature of the guidance provided. The study also revealed that teachers preferred to talk about new textbook rather the curriculum guidance as they viewed the change of textbook to be the most influential impact of curriculum change (p. 57). In addition, it was the textbook that teachers had to follow in their daily teaching activities; therefore, they considered the textbook more relevant which made them less concerned in knowing the NEC guidance (Fang, 2011).

An exploratory case study conducted in Vietnam by Nguyen (2011) on the implementation of primary English language education policy suggested that teacher supply, methods, materials, training, and professional development remained unresolved issues that hindered the implementation of the new English language education policy. The study revealed that there were incongruities between the government's policies and what happened in practice. Teaching practices in schools were still in sharp contrast to the recommended methodology found in the new curriculum policy. The study also found out that such gaps were a result of the lack of changes in teacher training and teachers' belief in teaching English. Most primary English teachers had received secondary level English training (p. 244-245).

In a similar vein, Kwarteng (2013) in his descriptive study on the degree of teachers' fidelity in implementing the 2007 Education Reforms in Ghana found that teachers were hampered in implementing the curriculum as planned; therefore the degree of fidelity of its implementation was not promising. One of factors impeding it was administrative challenges. Kwarteng found that although teachers were faithful in using the recommended time schedules, they maintained that the school environment and students' backgrounds affected the extent of curriculum implementation. Teachers also suffered from a lack of necessary supporting materials. They found it difficult to get copies of the teachers' handbook that were to accompany syllabus. In terms of the clarity of the reform, more teachers found it unclear (p. 150-153).

A study regarding how teachers perceive new curriculum reform was conducted by Bantwini (2010) in a school district in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa revealed that teachers were lack of understanding of the mandated curriculum, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS). Most teachers found the RNCS not clear to them, and insisted the government to help explain it because they felt it was not their responsibility to do the reading of the curriculum document on their own. They also saw that the new curriculum was a burden causing their work overloaded. Consequently, some teachers were not implementing the reformed curriculum. The

study also revealed that there was a lack of classroom support from the district personnel on mastering the RNCS, and lack of professional development for teachers (p. 85-89).

The reviewed studies above prove that teachers' attitudes contribute to the implementation of change. According to Kennedy and Kennedy (1996, p. 351), the implementation of change in classrooms requires changes in both teacher and student behaviour. Teachers' attitudes play a part in this behaviour. Young and Lee (1984) attested that, "...teachers' attitudes are a crucial variable in a dynamic of EFL curriculum innovation; without affecting a change in teachers' attitudes any systematic innovation in the curriculum...will not have a significant effect on what goes on elsewhere" (Young & Lee, 1984, p.184).

Teachers' behaviour in classroom is clearly affected by their attitudes (Carless, 1998). When their attitudes are compatible with a proposed innovation, the implementation of the innovation is likely to harvest a positive result. However, this positive climate can also be extinguished by the lack of support for the innovation; either support from the government, the principal, colleagues, or communities.

Ultimately, teachers determine the fate of a curriculum innovation (Ball, 1994). Although other factors may contribute to the success or failure of its implementation, it is the teachers' practice of teaching that will influence the learning taking place. Teachers' view about curriculum regulates their practice, and will affect how they decide the content of curriculum (Kable, 2001).

Methods

This study employed an ethnographic interviewing technique (Bauman & Adair, 1992) to collect data from the respondents. Data about teachers' interactions, behaviours, and beliefs were expected to emerge naturally from within their own personal and cultural context. The nature of this kind of interview is that it is an unstructured, nondirective interview. However, tentative interview questions were used to steer the flow of information toward the topic of the study. In these interviews, the respondent's role was the expert. This role was employed to encourage respondents to provide descriptive data as dense as possible. The researcher treated respondents' language as data. This is in line with Spradley's (1979) notion that language is a tool for communicating and constructing reality.

The interviews were conducted in English language; however, the participants were encouraged to use their national language, Bahasa Indonesia, if they found difficulty expressing certain ideas in English. The reason behind this was that the researcher wanted to create an environment which was nonthreatening, so that the participants would be able to express themselves as freely as possible. Data collected from the interview were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were then coded, and grouped into categories by employing thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998).

Eleven teachers participated in the study. For ethical reasons, the identity of the teachers is presented by using pseudonyms. They were Ratna, Lisa, Jeffry, Ismail, Marlina, Hermin, Nurwahidah, Febrina, Fatimah, Ikbal, and Aisyah. With the exception of Lisa who holds Diploma 2 Degree in Primary Teacher Education, all others hold Bachelor Degree in English Education. The interviewed teachers' educational background was not specifically prepared for teaching EFL in primary schools, but for secondary ones, therefore they need special training on primary EFL teaching. Jeffry, Marlina, Hermin, Nurwahidah, Febrina, and Ikbal have got this special training, while other five teachers were untrained yet when the study was undertaken.

Findings

Data presentation will be summarized based on the emerging themes which have been categorized into: (1) teachers' attitudes towards adhering to the NS, (2) teachers' attitudes towards adapting the NS, (3) teachers' incompatibility with the NS, (4) teachers' attitudes towards the feasibility of time allocation, and (5) teachers' reliance on textbooks

Teachers' Attitudes towards Adhering to the NS

Marlina declared "I construct my curriculum based on government curriculum," to show her adherence to the NS. Ratna said that she adhered to the NS because it helps teachers make teaching plan. "So far I think it is very good because it can help us to make a preparation before teaching. She confirmed that she used the framework as the guideline instead of textbooks. Commercial textbooks contain syllabuses and lesson plans that teachers can use. "The guideline is not from the textbook but from the framework," she added.

Lisa stated that she learned how to set all her teaching directions from the government's framework provided. "I learn how to make program of semester, and planning of teaching which is provided from syllabus that the government have given". She maintained that the framework provided reliable for her to develop her teaching plan. "Good enough I think; where it helps me to make a plan of teaching". To her opinion, the framework 'is very satisfactory'

Jeffry declared that he developed his school curriculum by referring to the NS. He said, "I construct this curriculum ... according to the National Standard." He emphasised that it is a must for teachers to adhere to the Process Standard and Content Standard. He saw the NS as luminous. He said that, "I think this is informative because the basic standard is very clear for the teachers".

Hermin, too, believed that the framework is informative enough to be guideline. In a similar vein, Nurwahidah showed her adherence to the NS by affirming that the framework is reliable as a parameter for creating a school curriculum. "In my opinion, I think that's good because they try to facilitate...or to be the guideline," she said.

According to Febrina, the framework is the foundation for constructing school-level curriculum; therefore teachers have to refer to it. She stated that "We must back to the basic of the government." She further added that the framework is good enough.

When asked a question as to whether the framework is informative or not, Ikbal said "To my point of view, yes it is." Therefore, he constructed his school curriculum based on the NS. "...I make my school curriculum based on these National Standards." Aisyah herself saw that nothing wrong with the curriculum framework provided by the government.

Teachers' Attitudes towards Adapting the NS

Some teachers saw that they have to adapt the NS. Ismail, for instance, attested that although teachers are supposed to refer to the government's framework, they should try to incorporate their own curriculum with the National Government's framework. He said that "We should try to make a combination between the teacher and the government itself". He explained that he arranges relevant teaching materials to the subject matter recommended in the framework. "I prepare other material that is so easy to understand without leaving the theme of the subject or the book.

Marlina stated that she constructs her school curriculum based on the government's curriculum, but she admitted that she occasionally makes some additions. "Sometimes I add by myself." Though she was not sure herself, she thought that the

framework still needed to be revised. "I think it must be completed again, maybe," she said. In a similar vein, Hermin also said that she uses the NS, but she made some amendments to make it suitable with her students and her classroom situation. "In the classroom I improve them to be suitable with the student and the condition in the classroom."

Nurwahidah saw that the NS is supportive as a parameter, but she makes some distinctions in her own school curriculum. "I think we are really helped by the curriculum provided by the government; it can be our guideline, but we make it quite different." Though she found the framework quite illuminating, she thought that it is necessary for teachers to amend it to make it operational. She commented "...informative enough; it is okay, but we need more to modify." Febrina agreed, saying that the framework is informative, but teachers need to develop it.

Ikbal makes his adaptation of the NS by lowering the level of difficulty of the teaching objectives. He used the term 'degradation of the objectives' for this adaptation. "We do a kind of degradation of the objectives," he explained. To Aisyah, it is incumbent upon teachers to make some adjustments to the framework to make it appropriate for their teaching. "What our task then as a teacher is, how we adapt, or how we modify this curriculum that can be more contextual to our teaching." To her, what actually matters is how teachers innovate to adjust the framework. "The problem then is how we use our creativity to make modification with the guideline." She made every attempt in amending the framework to produce a profound school curriculum. "The framework is too general, so I try to make more meaningful," she concluded.

Teachers' Incompatibility with the NS

Teachers demonstrated their incompatibility with the NS with various reactions. Ratna saw the framework as dissatisfying. "It is not enough satisfactory," she commented. Ismail claimed he understands his students better than the government does; therefore he knows what the students need. "I really understand what kind of materials my students need." Instead of relying on the government's framework, he said he used other teaching and learning resources. "I use other resources." He complained that the government made the 'curriculum' without considering the availability of teaching resources needed for its implementation in classroom. "The government prepare... like material but the content of the book is nothing, because they don't prepare special equipment for them," he said. For instance, the textbooks promote more listening materials, but the government does not take into account the provision of laboratory equipment needed for the teaching of listening. "Most of the books contain listening materials, but there is no equipment; how to do this?" he criticized. Ratna articulated her perplexity when dealing with the NS, particularly when focusing on some competences. "Sometimes we are confused what have to do...to focus on some competence because it is not complete, it is just a framework." Therefore, she did not merely refer to the handbook provided by the government, but she also considered what her students really need. "Well, beside I refer to the handbook, I also consider the students' need," she commented.

Lisa declared that she develops her school curriculum by learning from her peers, in this case, more experienced teachers instead of relying on the government's framework. "I learn from the teacher who has a long teaching experience," she stated. Fatimah admitted that she often gets problems dealing with the NS; therefore she does not base her school curriculum on the NS. "Well, to tell you the truth, I don't really construct my own school-level curriculum based on the standard," she remarked.

Teachers' Attitudes towards the Feasibility of Time Allocation

Four out of eleven of the interviewed teachers paid special attention to the time allocation set in the NS. Ismail, for example, maintained that with only a two-hour lesson per week, time setting looks implausible for him. "Time setting is not really logical for me," he said. He disagreed with the time allocation set by the National Government. Hermin herself experienced problems dealing with limited time. She said, "I have problem in the time, limited, limited time." She compensated for her limited time by deducting the time for post activities in her teaching process. Ikbal asserted that time allocation really matters for teachers in classroom. In contrast, Nurwahidah working in a 'quite' independent private school claimed that English is taught six hours every single day instead of two hours a week. "The government only gives two hours, but we give six hours every day for English," she explained.

Teachers' Reliance on Textbooks

Instead of referring to the NS for constructing their school curriculum, some teachers preferred to rely on commercial textbooks. Febrina, for instance, said that she uses textbook as her only teaching resource. "Just textbook," she said. She never constructs her own school curriculum. She asserted that the textbook is very comprehensive, and the attached syllabus is appropriate for classroom. "I only take the book and then it's very complete. There is activity there and then I think the syllabus is very good to use in the class."

Fatimah said that she, too, preferred to rely on textbooks since most of them have supplementary teaching devices that make her teaching much easier. "Most of the textbooks published have already set syllabus," she said. Like Fatimah, Aisyah, too, saw that textbooks contain teaching devices. "There is a textbook and then you know that in the textbook there is a syllabus and then the lesson plan," she explained.

To some extent, textbooks are the only teaching resources available to certain teachers and schools. For example, Aisyah commented, "I am lack of resources, so maybe one of the resources is textbook, you know, stuck to the textbook." In addition to relying on the textbook, Lisa claimed she occasionally uses internet resources in her teaching as she stated "Sometimes I get the resource from the book, internet, yep like that." Ikbal perceived textbook as another choice. "Textbook is my second curriculum," he remarked.

Discussion

Teachers' adherence to a curriculum has been much discussed in the literature (e.g. Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992; Graves, 2008; Pence, Justice, & Wiggins, 2008; O'Donnell, 2008). The term 'fidelity' has been widely used with regard to the degree of teachers' faithfulness to curriculum, in particular in the dimension of a centralized curriculum perspective. 'Fidelity' is the extent to which an innovation is implemented as planned. Through this perspective, if problems occurred in the implementation of curriculum, "the fault is seen to be with teachers because they were not faithful to the curriculum, not with the curriculum and those who designed it" (Graves, 2008).

As previously described, Indonesia has been undergoing reform in curriculum development from a centralized to decentralized approach. With this system, the national government no longer provides a fully prescribed national curriculum. Instead, they set national standards as curriculum frameworks for teachers. There is no obligation for teachers to put the frameworks into practical use in accordance with what have been set up in the frameworks since they allow changes with regard to the needs

and the potentials of schools (Depdiknas, 2006). However, it was evident from the interviews that the majority of teachers adhered to the NS. Their adherence was partly due to the clarity of the frameworks. They perceived them as luminous and satisfactory, inconsistent with Ghanaian teachers who negated the clarity of their curriculum reform (Kwarteng, 2013), Chinese teachers who saw the NEC Guidance as being abstract (Fang & Garland, 2013), and teachers in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa who saw the RNCS unclear and need more explanation from the government (Bantwini, 2010). Ikbal and Febrina, two of the teachers interviewed, even argued that as a foundation it is a must for the teachers to adhere to the NS, indicating that teachers have no alternative except to be faithful to the frameworks.

The interviews also revealed that despite teachers' adherence to the NS, some saw that adaptation of it was necessary to make it easier to implement. These teachers perceived the NS as a framework only; therefore it cannot be taken for granted in the implementation. With this perception, adaptation is unavoidable, yet it does not mean that they turned away from the NS. Practices of adaptation varied, ranging from moderating the expected competencies recommended in the Graduate Competency Standards to putting some distinctive features into their KTSP. Despite these diverse adaptation practices, all seemed to attempt to contextualize the NS to be operational in its implementation. For example, Ikbal lowered the level of difficulty of his teaching objectives. Aisyah amended the Framework in her KTSP to make it more contextual. These practices are consistent with Grossman's and Thompson's (2008), and Schneider's and Krajcik's (2002) study; that teachers make adaptations to compensate for deficiencies of the intended curriculum. These practices are also consistent with Bjork's (2009) study who found that teachers revised the guidelines to fit their own objectives for students.

When an innovation is incompatible with teachers' attitudes some form of resistance or negotiation of the innovation is likely to occur (Young & Lee, 1987; Waugh & Punch, 1987). This view suggests that rather than attempting to change teachers' attitudes, curriculum innovators should take into account the norms within a given society where the teachers are performing their roles, and consequently develop a curriculum around those norms.

Some teachers in the interviews expressed opposition towards the NS. The case of Ismail was an instance. He claimed he understood his students better, and that he knew what to do to meet their needs. He said he did not use the government's framework and textbooks and used other resources instead. Brophy and Good (1974) has earlier suggested this kind of decision may be taken by teachers because they know what topics and activities are appropriate for their students than what the curriculum framework might have assigned to be used. However, Ismail's complaints did not address the frameworks' and textbooks' contents. Rather, he complained about the unavailability of school facilities which he considered to be insufficient for the implementation of the recommended competencies in the framework. He found the description of the competencies confusing. The issue of incomplete description of competencies appears to have led some teachers to turn away from the framework and to develop their own school curriculum from other sources. Learning from peers, particularly more experienced ones, was one attempt to deal with this kind of situation. Ismail's opposition to the national framework maintains what Karavas-Doukas (1995) described as the incompatibility of the innovation, hence it affects its implementation in the field. This case of Ismail was earlier evident in Nguyen's (2011) study in Vietnam who revealed incongruities between the government's policy and teachers' practice.

The Content Standards of the NS (Depdiknas, 2006) designate a two-hour learning time for LC. It means that when English is chosen as the subject for LC in their schools, EFL teachers only have two hours to teach English per week. Teachers disagreed with this limited time. They considered this policy as implausible and not feasible since time is one of determinant factor of the feasibility of curriculum program (Kennedy, 1988; Holliday, 1994). Compensating for this circumstance, Hermin, for example, sometimes withdrew some activities in her teaching processes. Meanwhile, Nurwahidah's statement that she taught English for six hours a day in her school remains problematic since it leaves a question on how school accommodates all other subjects in the curriculum.

In terms of textbook, Ornstein (1994) found that teachers' reliance on textbook was usually due to the fact that they were poorly prepared in subject matter. It was evident from the interviews that some teachers were relying on using commercial textbooks rather than developing their own school curriculum, consistent with Faridi's (2010) study. These teachers have seemingly defined the textbooks as their curriculum. Ikbal's term 'textbook is my second curriculum' exemplified some of the teachers' attitudes towards textbooks. For these teachers, the textbooks with their supplementary teaching devices such as syllabuses and lesson plans are consistent with Shutes and Petersen (1994) and Ornstein's characterization of good textbooks (Ornstein, 1994). Another reason was that in some schools, textbooks are the only teaching resources available. With no choice offered, textbooks has become a *de facto* curriculum for the teachers, and eventually turns into what has been defined by Woodward and Elliot (1990) as 'virtual national curricula' (p. 146).

Concluding Remarks

Though the majority of teachers interviewed maintained their fidelity to the NS, some others suggested that it needs adaptation or modification. A few others indicated their incompatibility with the NS. Two different positions demonstrated the teachers' fidelity. First, some posited the clarity of the NS which they used for their curriculum development. Some others saw no choice except to adhere to it, perceiving the NS as the underpinning for their constructed curriculum. Teachers who perceived the NS was adaptable saw that it needs to be contextualized in the KTSP implementation. Meanwhile, teachers who felt incompatibility with it were mainly concerned that the government had failed to take into account and provide them with the facilities and resources they needed for the curriculum implementation. These teachers also maintained that there was an inadequate description of the competencies for students to achieve. The issue of time was also evident. Most teachers interviewed were critical of the time allocated for primary EFL in the NS. With only one two-hour lesson per week, teachers perceived it as insufficient, and that they could not optimize their teaching delivery.

Co-existing with teachers' fidelity, adaptability, and incompatibility with the NS was the teachers' reliance on textbooks, as evidenced in the interviews. Teachers relied on textbooks for two different reasons. First, textbooks are usually supplemented with a syllabus and lesson plans, therefore they are ready for immediate use in classroom. Second, to some teachers, a textbook is the only teaching resource available at school; therefore it was adopted as the school 'curriculum'.

References

- Baldauf Jr, R. B., Kaplan, R. B., Kamwangamalu, N., & Bryant, P. (2011). Success or failure of primary second/foreign language programmes in Asia: what do the data tell us?. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 12(2), 309-323.
- Ball, S. (1994). *Educational reform. A critical and post-structural approach*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Bantwini, B.D. (2010). How teachers perceive the new curriculum reform: Lessons from a school district in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*. 30, 83-90
- Bauman, L.J., & Adair E.G. (1992). The use of ethnographic interviewing to inform questionnaire construction. *Health Education Quarterly*, 19 (1), 9-23.
- Bjork, C. (2009). Local implementation of Japan's Integrated Studies reform: a preliminary analysis of efforts to decentralise the curriculum. *Comparative Education*, 45(1), 23-44.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Brophy J.E. & Good, T.L. (1974). *Teacher-student relationships: causes and consequences*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Brown, S., & McIntyre, D. (1993). *Making sense of teaching*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Brown, M. A. (1980). Attitudes and social categories: complementary explanations of innovation-adoption behavior. *Environment and Planning A*, 12(2), 175-186
- Carless, D. (1998). A case study of curriculum implementation in Hong Kong. *System*, 26(3), 353-368.
- Clark, C. M., & Elmore, J. L. (1981). Transforming Curriculum in Mathematics, Science, and Writing: A Case Study of Teacher Yearly Planning. (Report No. IRT-RS-99). Washington DC: National Institute of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED205500)
- Depdiknas. (2006). *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional nomor 22 tahun 2006 tentang Standar Isi* [the decree of minister of national education no.22, 2006 on content standard]. Jakarta: Depdiknas.
- Fang, X. & P. Garland (2013). Teachers and the new curriculum: An ethnographic study in a Chinese school. *Education as Change* 17(1), 53-62.
- Faridi, A. (2010). The development of context-based English learning resources for elementary schools in Central Java. *Excellence in Higher Education* 1(1&2), 23-30.
- Fullan, M. (1982). *The Meaning of Educational Change*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Press.
- Ghaith, G., & Yaghi, H. (1997). Relationships among experience, teacher efficacy, and attitudes toward the implementation of instructional innovation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 13(4), 451-458.
- Gorsuch, G. J. (2000). EFL educational policies and educational cultures: Influences on teachers' approval of communicative activities. *TESOL Quarterly* 34(4), 675-710.
- Graves, K. (2008). The language curriculum: A social contextual perspective. *Language Teaching* 41(02), 147-181.
- Grossman, P. & Thompson, C. (2008). Learning from curriculum materials: Scaffold for new teachers? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24, 2014-2026.

- Haney, J. J., Czerniak, C. M., & Lumpe, A. T. (1996). Teacher beliefs and intentions regarding the implementation of science education reform strands. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 33(9), 971-993.
- Hawanti, S. (2014). Implementing Indonesia's English language teaching policy in primary schools: The role of teachers' knowledge and beliefs. *International Journal of Pedagogies & Learning*, 9(2), 162-170.
- Holliday, A. R. (1994). *Appropriate methodology and social context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hu, G. (2005). English language education in China: Policies, progress, and problems. *Language Policy*, 4(1), 5-24.
- Kable, E. (2001). Making sense of a new curriculum text within competing discourses and complex contexts. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 2(3), 321-336.
- Karavas-Doukas, E. (1995). Teacher identified factors affecting the implementation of an EFL innovation in Greek public secondary schools. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 8(1), 53-68.
- Kennedy, C. & J. Kennedy (1996). Teacher attitudes and change implementation. *System* 24(3), 351-360.
- Kennedy, C. (1988). Evaluation of the management of change in ELT projects. *Applied Linguistics*, 9(4), 329-342.
- Krashen, S. D. (1973). Lateralization, language learning, and the critical period: Some new evidence. *Language learning*, 23(1), 63-74.
- Kwarteng, J. T. (2013). The degree of fidelity of the 2007 Education Reform implementation. *Journal of Arts and Humanities* 2(1), 149-154.
- Levitt, K. (2001). An analysis of elementary teachers' beliefs regarding the teaching and learning of science. *Science Education*, 86(1), 1-22.
- Long, M. H. (1988). Instructed interlanguage development. *Issues in second language acquisition: Multiple perspectives*, 115-141.
- MacDonald, B. & Walker, R. (1976). *Changing the Curriculum*. London: Open Books.
- Marcellino, M. (2008). English Language Teaching in Indonesia: A Continuous Challenge in Education and Cultural Diversity. *TEFLIN Journal: A publication on the teaching and learning of English*, 19(1), 57-68.
- Marsh, C. J., & Morris, P. *Curriculum Development in East Asia / Edited by Colin Marsh and Paul Morris*. London: London : Falmer, 1991. Print.
- Nguyen, H. T. M. (2011). Primary English language education policy in Vietnam: Insights from implementation. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 12(2), 225-249.
- O'Donnell, C. L. (2008). Defining, conceptualizing, and measuring fidelity of implementation and its relationship to outcomes in K-12 curriculum intervention research. *Review of Educational Research* 78(1), 33-84.
- Ornstein, A. C., & Hunkins, F. P. (2004). *Curriculum: Foundations, principals and issues* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- (1994). The Textbook-Driven Curriculum. *Peabody Journal of Education* 69(3), 70-85.
- Pence, K. L., Justice, L. M., & Wiggins, A. K. (2008). Preschool teachers' fidelity in implementing a comprehensive language-rich curriculum. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 39(3), 329-341.
- Piaget, J. (1973). *To understand is to invent*. Grossman Pubs.
- Puskur. (2007). *Laporan hasil pemantauan pelaksanaan Standar Isi dan Standar Kompetensi kelulusan [A report on monitoring findings on the implementation*

- of Content Standard and Graduate Competency Standard*]. Jakarta: Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan, Depdiknas [Research and Development Board, Department of National Education].
- Richards, J.C. (1993). Beyond the text book: The role of commercial materials in language teaching. *RELC Journal*, 24(1), 1-14.
- Ruhana, F., & Yuliana, Y. (2013). Implementasi Kebijakan Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan. *JIANA (Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Negara)*, 10(02), 141-153
- Schneider, R.M. & Krajcik, J. (2002). Supporting science teacher learning: The role of educative curriculum materials. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 13 (3), 221-245.
- Shutes, R. & S. Petersen (1994). Seven reasons why textbooks cannot make a curriculum. *NASSP Bulletin* 78(565), 11-20.
- Snyder, J., Bolin, F., & Zumwalt, K. (1992). Curriculum implementation. *Handbook of Research on Curriculum*, 40(4), 402-435.
- Sofou, E., & Tsafos, V. (2010). Preschool teachers' understandings of the national preschool curriculum in Greece. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 37(5), 411-420.
- Spradley, J. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Statistik, B.P. (2010). *Badan Pusat Statistik: Data Hasil Sensus Penduduk 2010 di Propinsi Sulawesi Selatan*. Available at <http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site?id=7300000000&wilayah=Sulawesi-Selatan>. [Accessed on July 5, 2013]
- Suderadjat, H. (2004). *Implementasi kurikulum berbasis kompetensi (KBK): Pembaharuan pendidikan dalam Undang-Undang Sisdiknas 2003*. Cipta Cekas Grafika.
- Suherdi, D. & Kurniawan, E. (2005). *Teaching-Learning Processes in Multilingual Context: A Detailed Picture of Two Different English Classrooms in Urban Elementary Schools*. Paper presented at the 53rd TEFLIN International Conference. Yogyakarta Indonesia.
- Wang, C., (2002). Innovative teaching in foreign language contexts. In: Savignon, S. (Ed.), *Interpreting Communicative Language Teaching*. (pp. 131–153), Yale University Press, New Haven.
- Waugh, R. F., & Punch, K. F. (1987). Teacher receptivity to systemwide change in the implementation stage. *Review of Educational Research*, 57(3), 237-254.
- Young, R. & Lee, S. (1984). EFL curriculum innovation and teacher attitudes. In P. Larson, E. Judd and D. Messerschmitt (eds.). *On TESOL '84* (pp.184-194). TESOL.
- Yuwono, G. I., & Harbon, L. (2010). English Teacher Professionalism and Professional Development: Some Common Issues in Indonesia. *Asian EFL Journal*, 12(3), 145-163.
- Zuhri, A., Karomani, K., & Suyanto, E. (2014). Implementasi KTSP dalam pembelajaran bahasa dan sastra Indonesia di SMP. *J-SIMBOL (Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pembelajarannya)*, 1(2), [abstract]