
The Implementation of EFL Curriculum in Indonesia: A Literature Review

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Abstract

This study is a literature review about how the EFL curriculum should be implemented in Indonesia. It draws the data from some resources in articles journal and books that related on curriculum. The finding of this research shows that the EFL curriculum gives three benefits that teachers and students can take from the implementation of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Curriculum. Firstly, it should promote students independent learning. The students capable to look for new knowledge that facilitate by teacher. Second, it should stimulate students to be creative learners. Students may be able to do their works or projects well by their own creativity. Third, teachers should have capability to maximize their ability and creativity in designing classroom activity that allow students to be active and creative learners. This ability can create good atmosphere in teaching learning activity. Besides, teacher should think a step ahead from the students for making a good classroom engagement and students will feel enthusiastic for the lesson which facilitated by the teacher. The finding suggests some recommendations for policy maker in relation to EFL curriculum implementation in Indonesia. It is important for the government to improve teachers' pre-existing knowledge of integrated skills. Besides, the teachers should also be trained to develop appropriate sources of the materials to enhance the skills integration teaching. Thus, the activity in the classroom will be in line with the materials taught.

Keywords: EFL Curriculum, Indonesia

Introduction

Nowadays, Indonesia is conducting two curriculums, they are: K-13 and Merdeka curriculum. Merdeka curriculum has been implemented for 2,500 schools and K-13 for the other schools in Indonesia. In 2014, Indonesia had been implemented 2013 curriculum in schools and it had been implemented from elementary schools to senior high schools' level. According to Kemendikbud (2013), previous curriculum still has some weaknesses. Students learnt many subjects and materials. It was also beyond the level of students' cognitive development. In term of competency, the curriculum was not fully based on competency that fit with national education purpose. Some competences needed by students were not accommodated in the previous curriculum. It is also poor toward the social change of nowadays. Soft skill and hard skill are two aspects that should be applied in implementing the 2013 curriculum. Both aspects include attitude, skill, and knowledge competence.

During two years of the implementation, 2013 curriculum become the hottest issue in Indonesia. Even the implementation is done gradually in all of the schools in Indonesia, researchers and practitioners immediately conducted studies on the issue by different focus in order to understand the concept and the implementation of 2013 curriculum. It aims at giving any recommendation to government for the betterment of the curriculum. The concept of 2013 curriculum is studied by some researchers. Shafa (2014) explains that "the philosophy of 2013 curriculum is linier to the principal of constructivism theory". The knowledge is constructed meaningfully by learners (Jadallah as cited in Sulfasyah, 2013). Tantra (2014) examines the shift paradigm in 2013 curriculum which has changed from "students have

knowledge because they are taught by a teacher” to “students have curiosity to get knowledge by themselves”. Fadlillah (2014) says that there are five objectives of the 2013 Curriculum, they are: (1) improve the quality of education by balancing hard skills and soft skills through attitudes, skills and knowledge in order to face global challenges; (2) forming and enhancing productive, creative, and innovative human resources as capital for nation-building; (3) lighten teaching staff in delivering material and preparing teaching administration; (4) increase the participation of the central and regional governments and the community in a balanced way in determining and controlling quality in implementing the curriculum; (5) increasing healthy competition between educational units regarding the quality of education to be achieved because schools are given the flexibility to develop the 2013 Curriculum in accordance with the conditions of the educational unit. The book that used in the 2013 curriculum is not appropriate for teacher and student (Sarosa, 2014; Rumahlatu et.al., 2016).

Moreover, according to Zaim (2016) teachers got difficulties in implementing scientific approach which have some steps as a standard of implementation such as: observing, questioning, experimenting, associating, and communicating in learning process. The most problems that usually faced are observing and questioning. It is difficult for teacher to ask students to think critically, analytically, and comprehensively. In addition, students are also difficult to make questions in English due to limited of vocabulary mastery. In term of evaluation, Bentri et. al. (2015) concludes that the teachers still have problem with self-assessment and peer-assessment. It is same with assessment of psychomotor aspect that is needed to be increased. In term of cognitive aspect, the teachers’ ability is in implementing authentic assessment is in a good level. Rukmini & Saputri (2017) found that in the junior high school in Indonesia, the implementation authentic assessment did not run well. It is complex and consumes much time to do it. They become much more focus on assessment instead of focus on teaching. There are some results in the previous research that explained similar result with this preliminary research in several cases. Based on the interviews, in applying the steps of scientific approach and authentic assessment, most of teachers faced difficulties.

There are some studies that have been conducted and explained the difficulties the implementation of 2013 curriculum (see e.g. Ahmad, 2014; Sundayana, 2015; Kusumastuti, at. al., 2016; Rumahlatu et. al., 2016; Atmarizon, 2016). However, very little research has been undertaken to take the benefits from the implementation of 2013 curriculum. It is needed to maximize the strength found in its implementation for the betterment of EFL teaching and learning practices using 2013 curriculum. This qualitative exploration was starting from the investigation about language skills integration as the key of standard process in teaching EFL using 2013 curriculum. This study was intended to find out what benefits teachers and students can take from the implementation of EFL 2013 curriculum in an Indonesian school.

After the inauguration of Nadiem Makarim on October 23, 2019, as Minister of Education and Culture of Indonesia, Nadiem Makarim has made several policies and various superior programs related to education in Indonesia. One of the highlights is the Sekolah Penggerak. This program has been launched by the Minister of Education and Culture on February 1, 2021, as implemented Merdeka curriculum. This program has been started in the 2021/2222 school year in 2,500 schools spread across 34 provinces and 111 regencies/cities. This program is still being implemented in stages and still requires structured assistance to schools that have passed to become driving schools. However, this program has become a topic of discussion among researchers and education observers. While the Ministry of Education and Culture created this program as a form of educational reform that focuses on cultural transformation, because according to (Nadim, 2020), school culture should not only focus on administrative approaches, it must also be able to be oriented towards innovation and child-focused learning, with The resulting graduate expectations are in accordance with the Pancasila student profile. This Program will later become the gateway to a curriculum that is oriented to the needs of students with the suitability of the student's character and the characteristics of the school environment in Indonesia. According to Angga et al. (2022) the curriculum functions as an adjustment, integration, differentiation, preparation, selection, and diagnostic. This makes the curriculum as one of the main and very important components in the educational process.

There are five interrelated and inseparable interventions in the program of Sekolah Penggerak, namely: 1) Consultative and asymmetric mentoring partnership program between the Ministry of Education and Culture and local governments where the Ministry of Education and Culture provides assistance in the implementation of Driving Schools 2) Strengthening School Human Resources, Strengthening School Principals, School Supervisors, Supervisors, and teachers through intensive one-to-one training and mentoring programs with expert trainers provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture. 3) Learning with a new paradigm. Learning that is oriented towards strengthening competence and character development in accordance with Pancasila values, through learning activities inside and outside the classroom. 4) Data-based planning School-based management planning based on School self-reflection. 5) Digitizing Schools The use of various digital platforms aims to reduce complexity, increase efficiency, add inspiration, and a customized approach.

Based on the explanation above, it arises two questions, they are 1) How should the implementation of EFL curriculum? And 2) How implemented both Curriculum for EFL? Both questions above is answered by studying literature in this study.

Literature Reviews

EFL teaching in Indonesia

Foreign language learning in Indonesia has been implemented for long time. It has been implemented since the colonial era (such as Dutch as the colonial language, as well as English and German). It has taught for certain schools for descendants of Dutch nobles and children. Inevitably, mastery of foreign languages among natives during the Dutch colonial period became a sign of high or respectable "social class" in society. This situation can be proven by English lesson that given in the playgroups or kindergartens. Likewise at the elementary school level.

Although based on Permendiknas number 26 of 2006, English is taught at the junior high school level. At the secondary school to tertiary level, English seems to be an absolute necessity, side by side with other subjects such as Indonesian and Mathematics. The background that forms the basis for the implementation of foreign language learning at various levels of education can be described as follows. First, most science and technology in any field is written in English or other foreign languages, so that mastery of English or other foreign languages will provide a way for the Indonesian people to absorb scientific developments or disseminate knowledge that is developing in Indonesia. Second, today's modern society has become a world society that is no longer divided by distance or time thanks to advances in information technology and transportation. The world community develops into a global society without boundaries. Mastery of foreign languages will be the door so that the Indonesian people can interact in a global society. This aspect of globalization is one of the reasons why English and other foreign languages need to be taught in schools.

Since English is deleted for elementary school, now, English subject as a formal subject for Junior High School level. There are some standards that have been changed by Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) in implementation of 2013 curriculum for EFL, they are: delete the English subject for elementary school, reduce the English teaching hours for senior high school, reduce the contents materials, limit the discussion topics, add grammar points, integration of language skills, and reduce teachers' duties in material and curriculum development (Putra, 2014).

Scientific standard is used in implementation 2013 curriculum, and it is known as scientific approach. The scientific approach includes some aspects, such as observing, questioning, exploring and experimenting, associating and analyzing and communicating. This scientific approach will invite teacher to design good classroom management in order to get meaningful classroom activity that engage the students more active in the process of learning (Sarosa, 2014; Nur and Madkur, 2014; Wahyudin, 2015).

The Implementation of 2013 Curriculum for EFL Teaching

The common thing that is found in the implementation of the 2013 curriculum is a change in the old paradigm to a new paradigm in active learning. As educators, teachers tend to think of themselves as a

source of knowledge. Learning begins with an introduction to the topic and the teacher continues by explaining from beginning to end. Thus, changing the paradigm is the main key to implementing the 2013 curriculum so that implementation can run according to the philosophy of the 2013 curriculum on active learning, student-centered, critical thinking, and growing creative power in terms of knowledge.

In case of 2013 curriculum, very limited literature that explicitly explains how language skills are integrated during teaching and learning process. As Zaim (2017) states that for step scientific approach, in the learning activity for EFL students, the teacher should give every student opportunity to speak, listen, read, and write in English. Thus, it is quite fair to say in implementing scientific approach for 2013 curriculum, English skill should be taught integrated as a standard of learning process (Wahyudin, 2015; Zaim 2017).

The origin of scientific approach is found on the science field. Wahyudin (2015) defined scientific method is concept consisted of several steps that intended to examine a current phenomenon in field of science by acquiring new knowledge or correcting and integrating previous knowledge. It has never been used by other country for implementing scientific approach for teaching of second or foreign language. It can be concluded that Indonesia is the first country which impement scientific approach to ELT (Estuarso, 2015).

Based on the explanation above, the 2013 Curriculum is very much in line with current developments. It is hoped that many students will give birth to the latest breakthroughs that are useful for the country and the nation by actively utilizing their competencies. Thus, teachers who are the key to education also need to develop active education patterns. Teachers need to switch from teacher-centered to student-centered. After that, a scientific approach can be used in learning, especially in learning English. Therefore, there are five steps of the scientific approach that should be concerned: observing, questioning, experimenting, associating, and communicating. Greetings of success to the world of education and let us as educators participate actively in educating the nation's next generation.

Roles of Teachers and Students in EFL Context

The learning process is also a social process involving interpersonal interactions, lecturers with students, students with students, also with members of the community. Students in listening learning require exposure to a variety of languages and teach them to develop their listening skills as contained in the applicable curriculum. The ideal dosage is to create conditions and situations that allow students to form meaning from exposure to the language through a learning process that facilitates them to find learning strategies that best suit their own basic abilities. Related to the nature of learning as a form of social process, the learning process should ideally be able to develop cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions or hard skills and soft skills in an integrated manner to become life skills, provisions for communicating, socializing, and developing in society. The description above is in line with what was written by Maslow (in Anita Lie 2007: 5) that the learning process needs to develop students' competencies and abilities.

The status of learning English in Indonesia is learning English as a foreign language or EFL. EFL interactions in this context, the largest use of English by students occurs in class, whereas in daily life in society there are few or no opportunities to use the target language at all. Learning English as a foreign language in general and learning listening in particular is often seen as more difficult due to the lack of contextual exposure to English. Related to the important role of the learning environment as a provider of exposure to language, the classroom atmosphere needs to be planned and built by teacher to give the students get opportunity in interaction each other. The teacher should be concerned the students' activity in the teaching learning process (Biggs and Moore, 1993; Shuel's, 1986). Besides, Harmer (2002) also says that the students will achieve their ability, creative, and have a high commitment to things that match their interests if students are fully involved in learning.

The Definition and Policy of Merdeka Curriculum

Merdeka Curriculum is part of a new policy set by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbud RI). According to Nadiem, that curriculum policies related to independent learning must be carried out early breakthrough to educators before it is conveyed or applied to students. In addition, Nadiem also said related to the competence of teachers at any level, learning will not occur without the translation process of existing basic competencies and closely related to the curriculum. In the future, that the learning system will also have a different nuance, namely that previously learning always used the classroom, then a different atmosphere such as learning outside the classroom will be tried to be realized in this Merdeka learning curriculum. In addition, the emphasis of the learning process is more emphasized on the formation of student character, this is applied by the way educators and students are able to communicate well through teaching and learning activities with discussion methods that do not make students psychologically afraid. However, the application of learning like this still does not forget how to achieve the competencies that should be obtained. Therefore, that the merdeka curriculum is related to how an educator is able to deliver subject matter by linking it to the formation of the character of students. In addition, related to the implementation of a learning system that emphasizes the formation of student character, the form of assessment that occurs is not only limited to determining in a ranking, in which the merdeka curriculum policy emphasizes the talents and intelligence of each student. This is because students have different abilities in their respective fields.

Methods

This study is literature review which collected some article journals and books. They are related to the implementation of EFL Curriculum, especially in Indonesia, for both curriculum (2013 curriculum and merdeka curriculum). The data from this study consists of 29 resources. Nineteen data from article journals and the other from books. To analyze the data, the researcher used qualitative analysis from the articles and books that have been read, analyze, classified and conclude. The theme is found, then, organized into the smaller number of sub-themes. This step also known as data reduction. The interpretation of the data was concluded from the comparison of the findings with the literature or theories.

Results and Discussion

Based on the finding classified into three emergent themes. The first theme was relating to the implementation of 2013 curriculum and merdeka curriculum that required for Promoting independent learners. Second theme discussed about the implementation of 2013 curriculum and merdeka curriculum that is Encouraging students' creativity. And the third theme was about Maximizing teachers' creativity in the implementation of 2013 curriculum and merdeka curriculum. These three themes were considered as benefits that both teachers and students can take from the implementation of the newest curriculum in Indonesian EFL teaching context.

Promoting Independent Learners

Based on literature review above, the Curriculum 13 trains the students to construct the knowledge full of meaningfulness (Jadallah cited in Sulfasyah, 2013; shafa, 2014; Hariana, 2015). It became the teacher only as facilitator in the activity of teaching and learning process in the class. Prior knowledge should be constructed by giving chance for students to explore first, and continued by constructing meaning from listening, reading, writing, speaking, and experience of the students it-self (Kaufman, 2004; tantra, 2014). It can be hard to change without change it first. Nowadays, the current curriculum expects to bring the students can get curiosity of what they learnt then previous curriculum. It should be concerned by teacher to change their role of teaching in the class. Not only active in the class but also the teacher should be facilitator in the activity teaching learning process in the class in order can produce active learners.

Encouraging Students' Creativity

Related to the independent learners, especially to English language teaching, following steps in scientific approach aims at giving chance for learners to be active and creative. Without the students' contribution, there will no skills to be developed in integrated-skills teaching using curriculum. Ogalo (2005) mentioned that students should give their ideas during pair/group discussions. They were also hoped to ask questions and answer questions, show interest and effort, take part and be responsible, and keep their motivation to learn, in this case is English. It is all needed in order to encourage students to be active learners so teaching might be student-centered. Indeed, as facilitator, teacher can provide various teaching activities that enhance the students' creativity and fully engage them in the meaningful activity. For example, the teacher allowed and supported students to be as creative as they can. Learners were engaged to make project with their group. Beside project, there was also role play. Here, students were firstly stimulated by listening the story and then they were asked to make a script, then they presented it. Problem based learning is another activity that stressed on the students' centered. The students worked with their group member, they were discussed and conveyed their ideas. Those all models appropriate to be implemented, in this case is in EFL classroom. Besides, these models allow the integration of language skills in teaching and learning process (Ogalo, 2005). In short, by her creativity, she was able to guide students to become creative and independent learners.

Maximizing Teachers' Creativity

In case of skills-integrated approach, a good teacher recognizes the importance of integrating discrete language skills to be integrated in teaching and learning process (Pico, 2014). Here the teacher should firstly understand the concept of being creative to design activity which is real life situation so student can use the four English skills as suggested in K13 and merdeka curriculum. It is proved that using skills-integrated approach creates a dynamic and exciting classroom environment as suggested in K13 and merdeka curriculum. Now, the teacher's role is helping the learners to deal with the skills integration process. Their role in skills integration process is crucial because they must be able to organize students into different groups and/or pairs, monitor students' involvement in skills learning process, advice students, participate in students group/pair discussion, if it is necessary, and so on (Oxford, 2001; Djibiti, 2008). They are also responsible to plan, implement and evaluate appropriate strategies which reflect integrated-skills teaching (Djibiti, 2008). Additionally, Oxford (2001) mentioned that teacher have to be able to consider the various ways that promote the integrated teaching of language skills that could enhance the performance in multiple skills. It can be the selection of appropriate activities to be carried out in the class or choose the topic/theme based on the students' interest and need. To relate it to the previous theme, indeed, English teachers should be creative teachers, in which they have to be able in designing, choosing, implementing and evaluating the best method/activity/materials that allow the integration of language skills in teaching and learning process as suggested in K13 and merdeka curriculum

Implications for Merdeka Curriculum

There are several aspects than become the benefits of K-13 curriculum such as: Promoting independent learners, encouraging students' creativity, and Maximizing teachers' creativity. Those aspects is also applied in merdeka curriculum which the activity of teaching and learning is not only focused on the classroom but also it happened out of classroom. So, the experience of learning is not only happened in the class but also out of the classroom. It means that te students can learn from their environment or social life because they have to build their soul become independent learner. Independent learner will easy to analyze their interest and talent. Besides, they have to capable for integrating what they have learnt in te school to their environment. When the learner can integrate that, it means that the learners have had creativity in learning.

However, the teacher should have creativity to formulate that in the process of teaching learning activity. The creativity should motivate and trains the student use their critical thinking in the process of learning. Besides, every teaching learning activity must cultivate the character of students. Based on the goal of merdeka curriculum, every student should have Pancasila character. Not only the way in teaching but also using technology in the process of teaching and learning for the students should be had by the teacher. Besides, there is a big difference between merdeka curriculum and K13 curriculum, it is different. Merdeka curriculum put every student is different so the material that should be given different with others. It depends on the needs for each of students. But K 13 put all students have the same needs so, the material that given by teacher is the same for all students.

Conclusion

Since scientific approach plays a great role as standard of teaching and learning process in K13 and merdeka curriculum, the teachers tend to do any classroom activities based on the steps in scientific approach. It is found that following steps in scientific approach aims at giving chance for learners to be active and creative. Through these steps, Students will actively ask questions and answer questions. They will also show their interest and effort, to take part and be responsible, and keep their motivation to learn. Furthermore, it requires students to solve problems, find everything for themselves, and apply their ideas in creative way. Teacher on the other hand should encourage them to be active learners by facilitating and monitoring them. As facilitator, teacher can provide various teaching activities that enhance the students' creativity and fully engage them in the meaningful activity.

This research suggests two recommendations for the policy makers in order to deal with the issue. Firstly, scientific approach is the standard of learning process in 2013 curriculum and merdeka curriculum. English teaching, therefore, allow for language skills integration. For teachers, it is important to know the activities that allow students to integrate language skill in teaching and learning process. For adequate teachers' theoretical knowledge and their implementation of integrated-skills teaching using 2013 curriculum and merdeka curriculum, there should be adequate training on the practical aspects of integrated-skills teaching. There must be an explicit direction to the teachers to apply language skills integration as suggested in 2013 curriculum and merdeka curriculum. The adequate training is needed in order to bridge the gap between teachers' pre-existing knowledge and their practical implication. Teachers should know what and how the sufficient teaching techniques that enhance integration to develop the four English skills based on the standard of learning process using 2013 curriculum.

Secondly, developing material is important to the teacher if it is considered difficult to be understood by the students. It is important to be analyzed deeper whether the books provided by government fully integrate the four skills of English. If not, the teachers should be trained to search and find other appropriate sources of the materials that enhance the skills integration. This is in line with the theory that suggested when teacher cannot find suitable material to their students. They have to be able to create materials by their own according to their students' academic, cognitive, need, and interest. So far, the teacher had been struggling to deal with the supplementary of teaching materials that can be added the main source of teaching materials.

Besides, in merdeka curriculum will make the teacher hard work in preparing material. It will make the teacher difficult to prepare it because each student is different. The teacher should dominate the materials and always enrich their knowledge about material and technology for helping and making easy in delivering the goal of learning.

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