

## **THE ENGLISH TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM 2013**

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### **Abstract**

Curriculum is a foundation for carrying out teaching and learning activities in schools. It takes role in an education system. Indeed, the teacher's involvement has pivotal rules to the curriculum development that their understanding to curriculum becomes necessary. This study aims to review the teachers' understanding of the English Curriculum on Curriculum 2013 as the Indonesian current curriculum issue. The participants of this study are two English teachers of Vocational High School and Junior High School. The data are assembled through semi-structure interview. The result has implied that the teachers' understanding to the English Curriculum 2013 is

good enough and they have been implementing it consistently to the regulation although they have to deal with some constraint. Each of the teachers proposes different idea about Curriculum 2013 but still a positive perception.

**Keywords:** Teachers' understanding, Curriculum 2013

## **A. Introduction**

Curriculum is closely related to the educators. It can be said that the heart of a school is in its curriculum. Thus, when the curriculum is managed and implemented as the regulation stated, the purposes (vision and mission) will be achieved as the school planned before. Ideally, curriculum should have a plan, objectives, learning experience, learning activities, and learning outcomes. Every country has their own curriculum characters. Indonesia, nowadays has applied Curriculum 2013. Rohiyatussakinah (2020) says that 2013 Curriculum has been implemented in Indonesia since 2014-2015 by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic Indonesia. The purpose of this curriculum is exclusively to build the students' creative thinking.

Johnson in Alsubaie, (2016) says that developing a curriculum, in other hand, can be challenging, therefore the involvement of all stakeholders, exclusively the individuals who are beyond to student instruction, are essential to the successful of curriculum development and revision. Darsih (2017) stated that teachers as one of the curriculum stakeholders are able to have the opportunity to use the current sources well for the achievement maximally at their best with their taking part and awareness on curriculum orientation. In this case, the teachers' involvement in the implementation and

knowledge of curriculum orientation would determine the achievement of the goals on the curriculum itself. Thus, as regards to Curriculum 2013, the English subject becomes exist due to the main issue is to conceive students' creative thinking on learning language.

By means of the above facts, this study is to reveal the English teachers' understanding of English Curriculum in Curriculum 2013. To know the teachers' understanding, it acquires an interview to the two English teachers as sample. The first is an English teacher of a Private Vocational High School in Purwokerto and the other is an English teacher of a State Junior High School in Banyumas. This study would like to answer whether the teacher understands the curriculum, implement it consistently, and their perspective to the current curriculum.

## **B. Literature Review**

It is essential to pay close attention to some theories regarding to the study. Some experts have delivered their ideas into what curriculum exactly means.

### **1. Curriculum**

The education curriculum is a foundation for carrying out teaching and learning activities in schools. The curriculum itself is an education system consisting of a set of subjects that must be taught. The subjects will be explained starting from the objectives, materials, methods, evaluation, and learning resources used. Richards (2001: 204) states that curriculum is subject to ongoing review and renewal. There is ongoing interest in identifying improvements in all aspects of the curriculum.

Then, Tanner (1980) defined curriculum as “the planned and guided learning experiences and intended outcomes, formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experiences under the auspices of the school, for the learners’ continuous and wilful growth in personal social competence”. While Schubert (1987) defines curriculum as the contents of a subject, concepts and tasks to be acquired, planned activities, the desired learning outcomes and experiences, product of culture and an agenda to reform society and Pratt (1980) defines curriculum as a written document that systematically describes goals planned, objectives, content, learning activities, evaluation procedures and so forth.

Curriculum is that which is taught in school, a set of subjects, content, a programme of studies, a set of materials, sequence of courses, a set of performance objectives, a course of study, everything that goes on within a school, everything that is planned by school personnel, that which is taught both inside and outside of school directed by the school, a series of experiences undergone by learners in school that which an individual learner experiences as a result of schooling (Oliva, 1982: 5).

## 2. Curriculum Implementation

There are many models of curriculum development, namely the Tyler model, the Taba model and the Saylor & Alexander model. Each of these models is named after their originator. The three models reveal both similarities and differences. All models outline a sequence of steps to be taken in curriculum development. Interestingly, the Taba model emphasises the role

of teachers in curriculum development while the Tyler model focuses on the two screens objectives to pass through.

Implementing the curriculum is the most crucial and sometimes the most difficult phase of the curriculum development process. Implementation is an interaction between those who have created the programme and those who are charged to deliver it. According to Ornstein and Hunkins (1998: 257-270); (a) implementation requires educators to *shift* from the current programme which they are familiar with to the new or modified programme; (b) implementation involves *changes* in the knowledge, actions and attitudes of people; (c) implementation can be seen as a process of *professional development* and growth involving ongoing interactions, feedback and assistance; (d) implementation is a process of *clarification* whereby individuals and groups come to understand and practice a change in attitudes and behaviours; often involving using new resources; (e) implementation involves change which requires *effort* and will produce a certain amount of *anxiety* and to minimize these, it is useful to organise implementation into manageable events and to set achievable goals; and (f) implementation requires a *supportive atmosphere* in which there is trust and open communication between administrators, teachers educators, and where risk-taking is encouraged.

Even though large sums of money are spent on implementing new curriculum, several of these efforts have failed. According to Sarason (1990) in Saefurrohman, "The main reason for the failure is the lack of understanding of the culture of the school by both experts outside the school system

and educators in the system.” Successful implementation of curriculum requires understanding the power relationships, the traditions, the roles and responsibilities of individuals in the school system.

Implementors (whether they be teachers, principals, district education officers) should be well-versed with the contents of the curriculum. They must be clear of the purpose, the nature, and the real and potential benefits of the innovation.

Below are some topics to be addressed in designing professional development opportunities for teachers who are implementing a new programme according to Ornstein and Hunkins(1998); Sowell(2000); Ben-Peretz(1990) in Saefurrohman:

a. Programme Philosophy

It is important for teachers to understand both the philosophy behind the programme as well as how the new programme may impact students, parents, administrators and other stakeholders.

b. Content

Teachers may find the curriculum introduces content with which they are unfamiliar, which they have not taught in a while, or is familiar but presented in an unfamiliar way. For example, using a problem-solving approach rather than a topical approach.

c. Pedagogy

Teachers need opportunities to become familiar with the new programme’s pedagogical approach. They may need to work on particular teaching skills emphasised in the new programme, such as teaching of values, or

perhaps to become familiar with a tool such as the internet.

d. Components of the Programme

Teachers will need opportunities to learn about the components of the new programme early in the implementation phase. For example, the new programme might place greater emphasis on school-based assessment while teachers are more accustomed to national or centralised assessment.

3. Curriculum 2013

The curriculum which is occurred in Indonesia now is Curriculum 2013 (Kurikulum 2013). It is released in 2013 and become the National Curriculum in this country. The Curriculum 2013 is the curriculum used in Indonesia Education System. It has three aspects of assessment, namely cognitive, skill (pshycomotoric), and affective (behaviour/attitude).

The Curriculum 2013 is an integrated curriculum. It is a curriculum model which can integrate skill, themes, concepts, and topics within single disciplines, across several disciplines and within and across learners.

The Curriculum 2013 is prepared to produce a generation who is ready to face the future challenge. Therefore, it is arranged to anticipate the development for the future. The main point of the curriculum heads for the students have more ability in observing, questioning (interviewing), reasoning, and communicating or presenting what they have obtained or understood after learning the subjects.

Hopefully, through this approach the students have better competence on affective,

psychomotoric and cognitive. They will be more creative, innovative, and productive, so they can be successful in facing many problems and challenges for their better future.

The teaching-learning at a school is organized interactively, inspiringly, exciting, challenging, motivate the students to participate actively. It also gives more spaces for their initiative, creativity, and independence agree with their talent, interest, physical and psychological development. Hence, every school must carry out the plan, the process and the assessment of teaching-learning to increase the efficiency and the effectiveness of the graduates competence achievement.

The plan of teaching-learning is designed in the form of syllabus and lesson plan referred to the content standard. It consists of the arrangement of a lesson plan, preparation of the media, the learning sources, the assessment instrument and the teaching-learning scenario. To design the syllabus and lesson plan, the teacher must adapt the approach used.

English as a subject in the *Curriculum 2013* organizes the following criteria (Wamendik, 2014):

1. The material taught emphasizes the language competence as the communication tool to express idea and knowledge.
2. The students is accustomed to read and understand a text, summarize it, then retell it with their own language.
3. The students is accustomed to arrange text systematically, logic, and effective through some practises on arranging a text.
4. The students is introduced with some appropriate structural texts so they are not

confused in arranging text. It is appropriate with the situation and condition: who, what and where.

5. The students is accustomed to express their idea and knowlegde with convincing language.

### **C. Method of Investigation**

This is qualitative case study in which data was collected through semi-structure interviews. According to Wang (2018) a qualitative study searches personal views, experiences, responses, perceptions, concepts, and pearls of wisdom and define the context in detail. Furthermore, case studies analyze, evaluate and describe the real-life, difficult lively and opening behavior of events, human relationships and other factors because contexts are unusual and lively (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison; 2011: 289). Richard & Schmidt (2002: 64) proposed a case study as “the intensive study of an aspect of behavior, either at one period in time or over a long period of time.” Regarding to the perspective, thus the writers chose understanding as the aspect in this study.

The research context is the teachers understanding to the English curriculum in Curriculum 2013. The participants of this study are two English teachers, firstly is an English teacher of a Private Vocational High School in Purwokerto and another one was an English teacher of a State Junior High School in Banyumas.

In this study, the data is collected through semi-structured interviews to the participants. However, the interviews are conducted via voice note due to current stay-distance rule. The interview is conducted in English. Then the voice notes are transcribed by word (verbatim). To ensure the validity of the data, the

participants are requested to read the transcriptions via whatsapp. Golafshani (2003) describes that the validity is a requirement for a research on some kinds of qualifying check or measure. He added it is used to decrease the bias and enhance the honesty of the writers. Transcriptions can provide important details and important verbatim record of the interview.

After that the data in the transcription is analyzed inductively. Creswell (2014) stated “This inductive process illustrates working back and forth between the themes and the database until the writers have established a comprehensive set of themes.” This analysis was conducted mostly with thinking power. It serves the way depend a lot on mind. In this case the transcriptions were served based on themes regarding to each questions.

In order to make the analysis easy, the data was divided into some themes based on the questions. The writers used alphabets A and B to indicate the participants. Thus the code TA for teacher A, and TB for teacher B. The theme was done since it’s needed in qualitative approach to help the writers analyze and categorize the data in order to identify similar information.

#### **D. Findings and Discussion**

In this study, the writers revealed some findings so to make them better understanding; this section has been presented by using some themes based on the questions in the interview.

Table 1. The Result of Interview with TA and TB about Curriculum 2013

NO	THEME	TA	TB
1	The definition of curriculum	Curriculum is the general guidance	Curriculum is a set of plan and

and English Curriculum.	<p>that regulates the learning and teaching process in a certain institution like school or course. There are some known English curricula which are used by language courses in Indonesia. For example CEFR that is mostly used in America and other countries like Algeria. It's different from Indonesia's curriculum with Curriculum 2013. CEFR has levels with different criteria for each. While Curriculum 2013 doesn't specifically emphasize the level for English subject.</p>	<p>rules about purposes, content, sources of subjects and also the way to use as a guidance for the implementation of teaching-learning activity to achieve certain education goals. Meanwhile, English curriculum is a set of a plan and rules about purpose, content, sources of English subject and also the way to use as a guidance for the implementation of English teaching-learning activity to achieve the goals.</p>
2. How to implement the Curriculum.	<p>I hardly follow the rules and guidances from the ministry of education. Since the real situation in the school often different from the ideal concept that Curriculum 2013 proposed.</p>	<p>It is appropriate with the lesson plan have made.</p>

3.	Perspective about the current curriculum and the problems	Personally, I think the current curriculum is too troublesome. There are too much papers that should be written by the teacher. And it's too ideal to be implemented in the real situation especially in rural area. The example of the troublesome is the need to use scientific approach. Teacher must use this approach with its methods, but the reality sometimes use conversational methods.	Good enough, There is social and spiritual competence except knowledge competence and skill. It also provides literacy activity and character education for the students.
4.	The preparation to the English class activities regarding the Curriculum 2013	I usually write the lesson plan and browse some authentic materials like video to support the main material/text book.	Preparing the lesson plan completely with the materials and the assessment.
5.	Documents to complete the needs of teaching-learning activities	Usually teachers in the school prepare the documents like syllabus, lesson plan, and others before the semester begins	Academic Calendar, Yearly Program, Semester Program, The details of efective time, Subject mapping,

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			the Minimum passing grade criteria, Lesson plan, and Syllabus
6.	To ensure the understanding about Curriculum 2013 and the implementation	My understanding might not be perfect.	I do
7.	Implementation in the English class	<p>First, I usually ask the students to read a text like dialogue from the textbook, then let them ask some difficult words. And then in a group, they will answer questions regarding the text. After that, they share their answer and I help them correct and make the conclusion.</p> <p>Next, I show them some videos from YouTube dealing with the topic. I let them watch first, then I pause the video on a certain part then explain in my own words. And then compare the explanation from the video with</p>	<p>1. Plan Arranging a lesson plan agree with the basic competence which is consist of teaching-learning activity, Learning material (for regular, remedial and enrichment), Scientific approach, Teaching-learning Model such as Discovery learning, and Methods like explanation, discussion, and assignment Preparing the sources, activities for the students, and instrument for assessment.</p>

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<p>the one in the textbook. I usually show them videos as another example of the text.</p>	<p>2. Teaching-learning Activity The activity is carry out appropriate with the lesson plan have made. The teacher record the observation form in the process of teaching-learning activity.</p>
<p>When the students need to learn certain grammar, I usually ask them to look at the example in the dialogue and then I explain the concept. When they've understood, I ask them to write one or two sentences in the white board.</p>	<p>3. Assessment There are three kinds of assessment i.e. knowledge, skill and attitude.</p>
<p>Last, I ask them to do the exercise from the textbook in a group or individually, if the time is up, then it becomes homework.</p>	<p>4. Follow-up Activity After the teacher analyze the assessment, the teacher will hold a remedial for the students who get below the minimum passing grade criteria. The enrichment is given to those who reach at or more than minimum passing grade criteria.</p>

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Based on the table, in general both of the teachers understand about curriculum, however they propose different idea. The point of view is still in the area of the right curriculum perception.

For teacher A, curriculum is the general guidance that regulates the learning and teaching process in a certain institution like school or course. In other words curriculum as the process of teaching-learning activity. It is a curriculum dimension which directly faces with the reality at school (Grundy, 1987; Goodlad & Su 1992). Additionally, the English Curriculum in Indonesia in Curriculum 2013 is not like the one that applied in some other countries. Some countries like America and Algeria mostly use CEFR as their English curriculum (Kennedy, 2019). Although this system is also used by language courses in Indonesia. She stated that CEFR has levels with different criteria for each. While Curriculum 2013 does not specifically emphasize the level for English subject.

Responding to the curriculum implementation, the teacher states that she hardly follow the rules and guidances from the ministry of education. Since the real situation in the school often different from the ideal concept that Curriculum 2013 proposed.

According to her personally, the current curriculum is too troublesome. There are too much papers that should be written by the teacher. And it's too ideal to be implemented in the real situation especially in rural area. The example of the troublesome is the need to use scientific approach. Teacher must use this approach with its methods, but the reality sometimes use conversational methods.

As the preparation for the English class, she usually writes the lesson plan and browse some authentic materials like video to support the main material/text book. On the other hand teachers in the

school usually prepare the documents like syllabus, lesson plan, and others before the semester begins.

She feels that her understanding might not perfect due to the cases she often meets in her classes. However she always does the best for any of her activity in classroom. By implementing the scientific approach, the teacher begin the class by involving the students observe text, video or any other media to stimulate the curiosity. Making them in some groups to work with some matters dealing with the base competence, exercises, texts in order to accustomed to them have collaboration in a team. After having discussion among the students, the teacher asks them to present their work. In this case the teacher takes apart as a supervisor when the students find some problems such grammar or vocabulary. According to her, implant a concept of grammar is important as long as a part or include into the topic of teaching and learning activity.

Teacher B argues that Curriculum is a set of plan and rules about purposes, content, sources of subjects and also the way to use as a guidance for the implementation of teaching-learning activity to achieve certain education goals. In this case, curriculum is as a written plan of teaching-learning (education documents). As a written plan, curriculum has a certain format (Prat, 1980). Meanwhile, English curriculum is a set of a plan and rules about purpose, content, sources of English subject and also the way to use as a guidance for the implementation of English teaching-learning activity to achieve the goals. In this case, he doesn't have any difficulty in understanding the Curriculum 2013 and feels sure with his perception.

Talking about implementation, it is appropriate with the lesson plan have made. Preparing the lesson

plan completely with the materials and the assessment before the teaching-learning begins. Some documents are also managed such as academic calendar, yearly program, each semester program, the details of effective time, subject mapping, the minimum passing grade criteria, the lesson plan, and the syllabus.

According to him the current curriculum is good enough, there is social and spiritual competence except knowledge competence and skill. It also provides literacy activity and character education for the students.

The teacher describe the implementation by explaining the classroom activities from the preparation up to the follow up activity after some assessments. His activities in class refer to what he creates in his lesson plan and he also implement the scientific approach which is proposed in the Curriculum 2013. Planning the assessment with affective, knowledge and skill assessment accurately and analyzing the result in order to know which students complete in learning the base competence, which the students need remedial or enrichment.

As a matter of fact both English teachers have carry out most of the Curriculum 2013 proposed. Preparing all the documents needed for teaching-learning and applying them in teaching-learning process in their class. Basically their understanding on English curriculum of the Curriculum 2013 is quite good although they sometimes feel hesitate with their interpretation and find some difficulties in implementing it. It is because they are sometimes lack of keeping student centred (as one special characteristic of the Curriculum 2013) in class. For certain situation, the teachers still give explanation for pattern, structural problems or language features.

Some perspectives propose the concept and theory

of curriculum as a reference of curriculum definition. Curriculum as an idea. It is an ideal, desire, expectation or goal which is thought about what is the best to be achieved in an education (Hasan, 1991), policy (Schubert, 1986), theory (Bickman, 1987); and also Curriculum as the product of learning (output, outcome, benefit, impact). The curriculum dimension as the activities (implementation) is the teacher plan aspect. In this case, a teacher develop the curriculum as a written plan and activity (lesson plan) (Schubert, 1987; Tanner, 1980).

This description determines what the students will aquire. So the students' outcome is determined by the curriculum experienced, not by the curriculum as a written plan.

## **E. Conclusion**

Curriculum is an essential part in teaching-learning activity. The proper curriculum implementation will bring the proper process of teaching-learning and it can achieve the best education purpose for the students. In addition, there is also a curriculum strategy which is closely related to the teaching-learning process. It is about how it can be (the strategy), the method, or the activity in order to the teaching-learning is going on effectively and efficiently. So the students acquire a learning experience to achieve the goals.

It is necessary for the English teachers in this country having good understanding of the Curriculum 2013 particularly for English subject. Moreover, they have to implement it well in the teaching-learning plan until the assessment consistently as the Curriculum 2013 has proposed.

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