

ENGLISH TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

In effort to be a developed country in the one hundred years of Indonesians' independence, Indonesia must have good education to create better Indonesia golden generations. One way to do so, Indonesia must improve its teacher's quality including English teachers. There are not many articles discussing English teachers' development strategies and this article aims to analyse the strategies which are planned by Indonesian's government to develop English teachers' quality. Through library research method, it is found there are at least six strategies to develop English teachers like preparing teacher candidate, carrying out a strict teacher recruitment, providing ongoing teachers professional development, improving teachers' prosperity, providing teachers with advanced technology mastery, and Improving education curriculum.

Key words: English teacher profession, development strategies.

A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a good wish to be a developed country in the year 2045 and it is in line with Indonesian Independence for 100 years. In this time, Indonesia will hopefully have smart, productive, innovative, peaceful generation in high civilization. Indonesia is also predicted to be the 8th powerful country in the world and become one of the 7 countries with the biggest economy in the world. To make this dream come true, Indonesia must have good human resources and these human resources must be generated from good education. This is the right time for education to play a role in creating Indonesia's golden generation. One field which must be developed in Indonesia is English language Teaching (ELT) because at future Indonesia needs many individuals who can communicate internationally in

this globalized world. To develop this field, there is high demand of high-quality English teachers who are creative, innovative, and inspiring in designing good learning activities for realizing Indonesian Gold Generation Year 2045. English teachers are the key to success of human resources that are not only productive but also superior and religious (Darman, 2017; Hardiyanto, 2020; Permatasari & Tandiyuk, 2023).

However, some data reveal that the achievements of Indonesia are not satisfying enough. United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) mentioned on the year 2007 the development index of Indonesian was only 0.728 and its rank was only at 107 from 177 countries in the world. This information is absolutely unhappy to hear. Another data, the low competitiveness of Indonesians can

be seen from World Economic Forum report in the same year of 2007-2008 that Indonesia was only on position of 54 from 131 countries. The rank was still far compared from other ASEAN countries where Singapore was in position 7 and Malaysia 21 (Geiger, 2011; Molnar & Leshner, 2008). According to the Education for All Global Monitoring Report released by UNESCO in 2011, high school dropout rates have led to low development index rankings. Indonesia is ranked 69th out of 127 countries in the Education Development Index. Meanwhile, according to the Department of Education and Culture, four children drop out of school every minute (Adiningsih et al., n.d.).

Related to English, Indonesia ranked at 80th position of 188 countries with score 468 in the low proficiency band according to the 2024 EF EPI based on data from tested population for 2.1 million test takers in 2023. This decreased from last year and below the global average score of 477. In ASEAN, Indonesia ranks lower than Singapore; Malaysia; and Viet Nam but just slightly above Myanmar and Thailand. Sixty per cent of countries scored lower on the 2024 EF EPI than in 2023, which saw an increase in overall English proficiency from the previous year.

The unhappy data above indicate that our education is not successful yet and one factor that is often blamed is the quality of English teachers because English teachers are agents which directly involves in Indonesian human resources production and they are considered as the party which is responsible in human resources development. If our education results are not really satisfying, so English teachers' qualities are questionable. Based on the information from some literatures, Indonesian English teachers' qualities are not adequate enough. According to Kartadinata (2009) from 2.78 million teachers in Indonesia, only 1.7 million who have gotten bachelor degree. In other words, majority of them does not have

bachelor degree as minimum requirement and 70% of them are elementary teachers.

(Lailatussaadah, 2015) and (Almurtadho et al., 2021) mentioned seven indicators which sign the poor performance of English teachers in the performance of primary teaching (teaching) such as:

- (a) poor understanding of learning strategies,
- (b) poor skill in classroom management,
- (c) poor ability to conduct and utilize classroom action research,
- (d) low motivation to perform,
- (e) poor discipline,
- (f) low commitment to the profession,
- (g) and poor time management skills.

An interview which was done by (Nugroho et al., 2022) to know the reason why Indonesian teacher qualities are still worrying because of several factors as follows:

- (1) Many English teachers are lazy. It can be seen in the class where many English teachers are only sitting in their chairs in teaching process and they are also reluctant to write their own items in evaluation and only depend on the ones from text book. This laziness can be triggered by several factors such as low-paid salary, low commitment, headmaster low control, etc.
- (2) The lack of teacher learning community activities. Teacher learning community or *kelompok kerja guru* (KKG) is considered as ideal place for teacher to increase their competences. However, research findings show it does not function optimally where English teachers' sharing, activities, interactions, and media use are not implemented maximally.
- (3) Enjoying in comfortable zone. This zone can be translated as there is no effort of teacher to try something new

such as continuing education and this reluctance will result in static education quality.

Some data above have revealed a fact that our English teachers' competence must be improved because English teachers have very strategic and crucial roles to jack up Indonesian education quality. Teacher is precious profession where this position cannot be replaced by any sophisticated tool. According to Indonesian constitution no. 14 year 2005, teacher is a profession that demands skill, expertise, and competence which are in accordance to quality and norm standard. To meet the requirements of the constitution, government and English teachers have to work hand in hand. However, this endeavour is not easy to do because it can take a long-time process and a lot fund. To have adequate and professional English teachers, so Indonesian government has formulated the following strategies to have qualified English teachers.

B. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE INDONESIAN ENGLISH TEACHERS' QUALITY

First, preparing teacher candidate or pre-service education. Before becoming English teachers, senior high school alumni can take test to be accepted as teacher students at the Teacher Training Colleges (LPTK) which spread out around Indonesia (Rokhman et al., 2017; Widiati & Hayati, 2015). In this colleges, they will learn everything related to pedagogy knowledges such as curriculum, instructional design, teaching practice, research, etc. After studying around four years or more, they can finish their study and will receive certificate of completion. However, it does not mean these fresh graduates can instantly become English teachers, instead they have to continue their studies for professional teacher or *Pendidikan Profesi Guru* (PPG) that will run for 12 months or it is equivalent to 36-40 credit hours. In this one-year programme, they will attend theoretical and

practical training. In addition, they must fulfil teaching practice in school with some activities such as planning, delivering lessons, assessing students' works, and reflecting their teachings.

Second, carrying out a strict teacher recruitment. In selecting teacher who will work in Indonesian schools from kindergartens to senior high schools, Indonesian government has required the teacher candidates to have several conditions. The English teachers must hold a bachelor degree in their own respective major (S1/D4), in other words, someone who has not had this degree cannot apply to become a teacher. other requirements, they must pass the certification programme and the test of teacher before becoming government teacher status and this test is held by government every year. Someone who fails the test can take another one next year (Huang & Fillaili, 2022).

Third, providing ongoing Indonesian English teachers professional development. English teachers' quality is not only determined by their academic degrees but they need additional education, training, seminar that can upgrade their professionalism (Yuwono & Harbon, 2010). Professionalism derives from the word profession which means a job that needs expertise obtained through special education and training. In other words, professional job is a job which can be done by someone who get special preparation, not by anyone. According to Said (2020) there are some characteristics of professional job such as having specific education, having recognition from community, having profession organization, for example; PGRI, and having ethical codes as foundation to do tasks and responsibility. Because English teachers have all above characteristics, teachers can be stated as a professional job.

Furthermore, Wasono (2019) explains that to be a professional teacher, at least these five things must be required as follows:

- a. Have a commitment to the student and his learning process.
- b. Master in depth the materials / subjects taught and how to teach them to the pupil.
- c. Be responsible for monitoring the student's learning outcomes through various methods of evaluation.
- d. Be able to think systematically about what he does and learn from his experience.
- e. Be a part of the learning community in his professional environment.

To do their jobs professionally, English teachers need competence. Competence is defined as knowledges, skills, and good attitudes owned by someone through a profession education. According to Teacher and lecturer constitution no. 14 year 2005, a teacher must have at least four competences consisting of; personality competence, pedagogic competence, professional competence, and social competence (Rusilowati & Wahyudi, 2020). Personality competence contains several characteristics such as honest, mature, wise, helpful of a teacher and he or she must be a good example for students. Pedagogic competence is the ability to design and to conduct teaching-learning process. Besides, to evaluate the result of teaching and learning. Professional competence is the ability of a teacher to master the materials of teaching or the subject matter widely and deeply. In addition, this competence covers course curriculum material and its methodology. The last, social competence which is the ability of a teacher to communicate and to interact to students, other English teachers, students' parents and community.

Daharti et al. (2013) mentioned there are at least four programmes which can be utilized to upgrade teacher professionalism such as:

- (1) Pre-Service Education is an effort to recruit the candidates of English teacher by looking at the quality and morale. These candidates of teacher will study at the Teacher Training Colleges (LPTK) around Indonesia and they will study generally at bachelor level which will last around four years.
- (2) In-Service Education is further education at higher level such as master and doctoral degrees in English language teaching (ELT) or related fields at universities scattered around Indonesia. In continuing their studies, teacher can fund with their own money or by scholarship provided by government. The purpose of this further education is to equip teacher with new knowledges and skills from new educational science developments and it is important to do so that teacher can be prevented to be left from cutting edge advancements. However, these master and doctoral degrees are not mandatory and the advantages of next education are only for enhance their qualification and job prospects.
- (3) In-Service Training is some activities such as trainings, workshop, seminars, courses, discussion, and upgrading. These activities can be done both at internal and external institution and can assist their teaching skills and knowledge.
- (4) On-Service Training is activities which are done through routine meetings among the English teachers to maintain relationship, spirit, and friendship of professionalism. One way is by joining association of English language education study programmes (APSPBI). This organization has commitment to enhance quality of English education in Indonesia.

Fourth, improving English teachers' prosperity. Teacher can do their job effectively if they have good welfare, so they can think and do their duties without thinking too much on their economy condition. Before, Indonesian English

teachers were really poorly paid but since decade of 2000, Indonesian government has worked hard to improve Indonesian In-service English teachers' income by giving not only monthly salary but also certification allowance (Bismo et al., 2024).

To get this certification, there are some conditions that they have to fulfil; (1) They hold bachelor degree, (2) they have been In-service for at least five year, (3) The English teachers who do not have bachelor degree are permitted to join the certification if they are 50 years old and in service more than 20 years or IV-a in job rank. The English teachers who have master and doctoral degree and at least IV-b in job rank can get certification automatically. The education and training for certification are intended to polish English teachers' mastery of subject matter materials, designing lesson plan, teaching methodology and teaching practice. The English teachers who pass the education will be awarded the certification of professional English teachers and get registration number to obtain incentive for their professional status. In-Service teacher certification is implemented through portfolio documents and education.

Certification is a fresh wind for English teachers, because with the existence of a certificate of educators, the government provides certification allowance of one time the basic salary, it is expected by giving such allowance can improve the performance of English teachers in a better direction so that student performance increases as well. Thus, if teacher performance and teacher professionalism increase, it can be further assured that the quality of education in Indonesia will improve too.

Depdiknas (2002:6) formulated the objectives of teacher certification to:

(1) determine the teacher's competence in carrying out the duties as a learning agent and realize national educational goals,

(2) improve the process and quality of educational outcomes,

(3) improve the dignity of English teachers,

(4) improve teacher professionalism,

(5) improve teacher well-being". A good teacher's performance will make an optimal contribution to the achievement of national educational goals, for which the teacher is required to carry out his duties with responsibility towards the learning process.

Teacher performance is the result of the quality and quantity of work that a teacher wants to in performing his duties according to his responsibilities as a teacher, in other words the teacher must be as much as possible to do his job without knowing the word surrender in the performance of his duty. Performance is also understood as an achievement that is seen as the success of a person's work, but the accomplishment is not related to the number of championships that the teacher has acquired but the success that one of them appears to be from a learning process of teaching. The success of the teacher's performance is also determined by the work and abilities of a person in the field. Job success is also related to one's job satisfaction.

Fifth, providing English teachers with advanced technology know-how. In addition, because we live in industry 4.0 and 5.0, so teacher students must be completed with technologies of teaching-learning and how those technologies are used in teaching and to facilitate learning (Jusuf, 2005). One way to achieve this is by incorporating technological applications into the assignments and activities given to aspiring English teachers. The techniques and procedures used to educate and learn are what we mean when we talk about technologies, particularly those related to learning and teaching. It is how we educate and how we learn. Both the instruments and the teaching design we employ are

included. In education, technology encompasses not just hardware, software, and networks, but also processes such as instructional design. To incorporate new technology into the curriculum, educators will need to choose suitable software, create fresh lesson plans, figure out a few practical issues, and provide appropriate ways to grade student work., instructional methodologies, organizational architecture, and learning management systems. A vast array of hardware, software, and technical tools used in classrooms to enhance learning are included in education technology. Among the educational technologies used by schools include computers, CD-ROMs, the internet, email, television monitors, video equipment, and satellite systems for remote learning.

According to Tuma (2021) Education technology is classified into four primary uses, namely; tutorial, exploratory, application, and communication.

1. Expository learning, practice, and demonstration are all part of the tutorial use. Computer-assisted instruction, intelligent computer-assisted instruction, tutoring systems, instructional television, and drill-and-practice software are a few examples.
2. To assist students in learning information, knowledge, facts, concepts, or procedures, exploration applications may encourage guided discovery or discovery methods. Micro worlds, CD-ROM encyclopaedias, hypermedia stacks, network search tools, and microcomputer-based laboratories are a few examples.
3. Students benefit from application uses by having tools to make writing assignments and data analysis easier, among other uses. Software for word processing and spreadsheets, database management systems, graphic design, desktop publishing, hypermedia, network search tools, and equipment for

recording and editing videotapes are a few examples

4. Uses of communication involve the exchange of information and messages between educators and students via networks and other technology. A few instances are interactive distant education via cable connections, computers and modems, satellite systems, and e-mail.

Sixth, Improving English education curriculum. In Indonesia, there is an opinion which says, new minister, new curriculum. It means when Indonesia gets new minister of education, so the new minister will change Indonesia education curriculum with the new one. This action actually has triggered the confusion among Indonesian English teachers because they have not mastered or understood completely one curriculum and then they have to learn the newest one. Since its independence, Indonesian has changed its curriculum for 13 times. It started from the simple curriculum at beginning of Indonesia's Independence to the latest one which is called *Kurikulum Merdeka* (independence Curriculum). Whatever the curriculum which is applied by Indonesian government, the curriculum will promote the students' abilities of cognitive, affective, and skill. The government needs to adjust the developments of those abilities to the developments in society such as technology, environment, human resources and regional potency in every region in Indonesia (Nurisman & Hidayat, 2025). Eventually, every improvement of curriculum, the target is to promote students' ability to speak English confidently in order that they can participate actively in global society.

C. CONCLUSION

To achieve the goal of Indonesian gold generation at second resurrection or 100 years of Indonesia independence in which Indonesian will have been a modern

and prosperous country and have the same level with other developed countries such USA, Japan, Germany, UK. Indonesia must have good quality of human resources and this human power only can be reached if it has a good education system. A qualified education must be generated from Indonesia English teachers as the primary agent to make the wish come true and to carry out their duties well, the English teachers have to be in good condition and well-supported. To promote Indonesia English teachers' professionalism, the government has worked very hard by employing some strategies such as educating Indonesian young generations to be professional English teachers, giving better welfare, providing teaching facilities, improving education curriculum, etc.

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