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A Retrospective Case Study of EFL Instruction in Elementary Schools: A Critical Language Policy Perspective

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The growing global popularity of English for young learners (EYL) teaching is the embodiment of the spread of English as the world's lingua franca. The rapidity of the EYL expansion also occurs in Indonesia despite the blurred policy to implement it. The present study was conducted to explore the current practices of EYL teaching in Indonesian elementary schools after the national curriculum reforms. The selected municipality that represented the setting of the study was the second populous city in Indonesia, where a wide selection of schools was located. Data were collected using questionnaires administered to 184 school principals and 178 EYL teachers and analyzed through the use of simple descriptive statistics. Regardless of the absence of Government support, the findings revealed that most of the elementary schools in the research site offered English. A varied implementation of English teaching from one school to another was ascertained in terms of English position in the school curriculum, its frequency per week, the teaching resources and the learning materials, and the teacher to teach the subject. The schools reported that the shift in the foreign language policy had invited challenges in implementing the instructions relating to the funding and the teaching guidelines. In response to these encounters, this study recaps three focal points as recommendations to policymakers and related stakeholders to review the current policy of EYL instruction by considering the need for teaching guidelines and the status of the teachers administratively, as well as their access to professional advancement.

Keywords: English for young learners (EYL), foreign language policy, curriculum reform, teacher professional development

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Introduction

Believed to be one of the major investments in the increasingly globalized world, early second/foreign language learning has been implemented in various non-English-speaking countries (Lee & Winke, 2018; McKay, 2006; Wang, 2008; Zein, 2017a, 2017b), including Indonesia. Besides leading to higher levels of proficiency as the impact of Critical Period Hypothesis that promotes the younger, the better (Benigno & De Jong, 2016; de Bot, 2014; Lenneberg, 1967; Penfield & Robert, 1959), a rich literature has lent support by claiming that parents' beliefs and expectations that having English ability open avenues to their children's better education and employment opportunities fortify the implementation of early English learning (Benigno & De Jong, 2016; Enever & Moon, 2009; Garton, Copland, & Burns, 2011; Gimenez, 2009; Roothooft, 2017). Accordingly, research into the area of early English learning from both pedagogical perspective and policy has begun to grow across the globe in order to find out the well-constructed recommendations for effective English teaching for young learners (Lestariyana & Widodo 2018; Sulistiyo et al., 2019; Widodo, 2016; Yim, 2016).

In the Indonesian context, the status of English as a subject in the elementary school curriculum is still debatable since it was firstly introduced in 1994 (Hawanti, 2014; Sulistiyo et al., 2019; Zein, 2017b). The bottom-up policy on English teaching at the primary level that this country employs allows schools to decide whether to conduct English teaching or not by considering the points, such as the demand from the parents and community, as well as the readiness of the teacher and teaching resources (Alwasilah, 2013). As a result, the implementation of teaching English to young learners (TEYL) is varied in terms of its status in the school curriculum, the time allocation per meeting, and the grade level to start the subject. Johnstone (2019) further explains that the bottom-up approach beneficially offers greater local autonomy. However, it may create diversity, which may lead to inequalities.

Another consequence of the bottom-up policy is that the Central Government only provides the guidelines for English teaching conducted at the secondary level and give the authority to elementary schools to develop their own English curriculum if the English teaching is to be conducted. In fact, this brings challenges in the implementation as not all teachers are capable of developing curriculum, syllabuses, and teaching materials (Zein, 2017a), especially with the absence of school supports. In a similar vein, teacher education programs offered in Indonesian higher education institutions do not support the student teachers expecting to embark on the elementary English teaching profession. The two-credit elective course is considered not enough to prepare them for foreign language teaching to young learners. It demands related skills, like having the ability to understand who children are, how they learn, and how to use the materials to teach foreign language so that the learning objectives can be achieved as well as the students learning motivation can be reinforced (Musthafa, 2010; Zein, 2015, 2016, 2017a).

The position of English subject in elementary education is considered to be more weakening and blurred after a drastic shift occurred in the national curriculum that indirectly affected the TEYL policy. The current implemented curriculum, the 2013 Curriculum, does not include this subject as the compulsory nor the local content subject. Previous studies (Meisani & Musthafa, 2019; Purnama, 2014; Sepyanda, 2017; Zein, 2017b) claim that the Government is intended to put more concern on the local language reinforcement and character building for elementary school students by encouraging schools to allocate more time for local language learning. As a result, English education at this level is seconded to give circular space for our homegrown languages (Alwasilah, 2012; Hamied, 2013; Zein, 2017b). At the provincial level, each Regional Government lends support by issuing the regulation related to ethnic language that students in that region have to learn as the local content subject.

Concerning the many waves of the policy promoted changes in foreign language teaching in Indonesia, this present study is aimed at reflecting upon what these might mean for the teaching English for young learners (TEYL) practices in Indonesian schooling, specifically for the work of teachers. It began with a survey on the current implementation of TEYL, how the schools place the subject in the curriculum, the English curriculum that the schools carry out, and the teachers of English that the schools assign to teach the subject. The survey results lead to an in-depth investigation of the challenges the schools face in

carrying out the instructions under the current English language teaching policy and how they cope with the encounters leads to the discussion of the evident recommendations for English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching practices in Indonesian elementary schools. The findings of the research are expected to give a valuable contribution to a better understanding of what is going on in the English teaching and learning practices at the primary level and to give research-based information to policymakers at the national, regional, and school levels so that teaching English in elementary schools can be improved.

English as a Subject in the Primary Education Curriculum

From the first curriculum that was implemented in Indonesia until today, English as a foreign language (EFL) was offered as an elective subject in the elementary school based on Decree No. 060/U/1993 (Alwasilah, 2013; Sadtono, 2007; Zein, 2017b). The bottom-up policy towards English education at the primary level allows the schools to offer English as a local content to students of Grade 4 forwards under these conditions: 1) there is a demand from the nearby society for English teaching and learning, and 2) the school is ready to conduct English teaching activities as it has the qualified teachers and the teaching and learning facilities to support the lesson. The status of English as a local content subject remained the same until 2012. After a drastic shift in the national curriculum, which affected the English teaching at the primary level, the status has become more uncertain (Arif, 2015; Zein, 2017b). The contents of the subject in Group A and B, as managed in the Regulation of Minister of Education and Culture Number 57 the Year 2014 about 2013 Curriculum for Elementary education, might clarify that English is not included in both subject groups.

Based on the current implemented elementary school curriculum, there are three groups of subjects that students learn at school. Group A consists of six main subjects, namely Religion, Civic Education, Indonesian Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. These subjects are mandatory, and the guidelines are officially provided by the Central Government. They are given in order to develop students' attitudes, knowledge, and skill competencies. Group B involves Arts and Physical Education as compulsory local content subjects. Similar to the subjects in the previous group, the ones in this group are also given to enhance students' attitudes, knowledge, and skill competencies, specifically in relation to social, culture, and art. Although the Central Government officially prepares the teaching guidelines, the Local Government and the school are allowed to add the additional contents which exist as the local potency. The third group belongs to the supplementary subjects in which the schools add as the local content subjects. In respect to this, students in a different region may study different local content subjects because the strength and culture of each area are different from each other (Maryono, 2016; Supeni, 2017; Regulation of Minister of Education and Culture Number 57 the Year 2014 about 2013 Curriculum for Elementary Education).

The regional government rules that organize the local content subjects students compulsorily learn at school tacitly explain it. The governor of East Java, one of the Indonesian provinces, issued the regulation, which places Javanese and Madurese language as the local content taught at school in East Java (Governor Regulation Number 19 the Year 2014). Sundanese language, Cirebon language, and Malayu Betawi language are taught as the local content subjects in West Java based on the Governor Regulation Number 69 the Year 2013. Similar to the two mentioned regions, Bali has Balinese language, Balinese literature and writing to be officially put in the school curriculum as the local content subjects according to Governor Regulation Number 20 the Year 2013. The Government's serious efforts in preserving our indigenous languages can be seen from the regulations in three Indonesian provinces above.

Based on another ministerial regulation, the Regulation of Ministry of Education and Culture Number 79 the Year 2014 about Local Content Subject in the 2013 Curriculum, specifically Clause 3, it is known that there are four principles that a school needs to base its curriculum on when developing the local content teaching plan. They are 1) appropriateness with the learners' development, 2) competency, 3) flexibility in the type and form of the activity as well as the time to conduct it, and 4) its contribution to

the national and global world. The local content itself can be in the field of arts and culture, handicraft, sports and health, and language.

The Regulation of Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic Indonesia Number 62 the Year 2014 about extracurricular activities in elementary and secondary school states that school can offer two kinds of extracurricular activities: the mandatory extracurricular subject, which is scout (Prianto, 2016; Sugiono et at., 2018), and the elective extracurricular subject which is given based on the students' talents and interests. Thus, where is the position of English in the elementary education curriculum? The last-mentioned regulation seems to give sharper postulation that English is an optional subject that an elementary school can offer if the students, in this case, the parents who take part in deciding on what subjects their children need to study at school (Singleton & Pfenninger, 2019) request for it. Moreover, in the first clause of the regulation, it is written that extracurricular subjects may be given before or after the intra and co-curricular subject hours. In Indonesian schools, English Club, traditional dance, theatre, and sports are among the extracurricular activities that students usually have at school (Sugiono et al., 2018).

Methodology

This study draws upon a qualitative case study research method proposed by McLeskey et al. (2014) and Merriam (2009) to investigate how elementary schools respond to the current policy related to teaching English as a foreign language in elementary schools. Besides describing the research design, this section covers the access to the research setting, the participants, the data collection, and the ways to collect them, and the data analysis.

Access to Research Setting

Given the sheer size of Indonesia, it was unfeasible to collect information on elementary schools in all regions. Alternatively, a case study was employed to construct stereotypes of schools. A municipality in East Java, one of the provinces in Indonesia, was chosen for its wide selection of schools. As the context of this study was English for young learners, the targeted participants for the survey were all elementary schools located in this second biggest city in the province. As many as 274 elementary schools were documented to be based in this municipality that is administratively divided into five sub-districts. These schools were various in terms of the type (public and private) and the accreditation rank (Rank A, B, and C). In order to access the schools and obtain the data needed, research approvals from the Local Government were required as a part of the series of ethical issues in conducting research. The figure below displays the steps undertaken to access the research setting and collect the data.
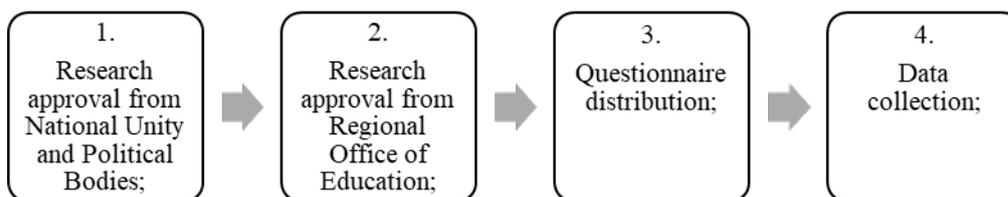

Figure 1. Access to research setting.

Participants of the Study

This study involved all elementary schools in the research site (N = 274). These schools were under the supervision of the Regional Office of Education in the city. The school principals and the English teachers in the schools were all recruited for a questionnaire survey. A total of 184 questionnaires filled

out by the school principals, and 178 questionnaires answered by English teachers were analyzed after excluding questionnaires with incomplete responses. All schools that participated in the study were the ones that had complete grade levels, as some reported that they were new schools so that not all of the grade levels were available.

Of the total participants from the school principals, female principals who filled out the questionnaire surpassed the male principals—there were 98 female principals (53.3%), and the rest (46.7%) were males. They were the principals of 37 private schools (20.1%) and 147 public schools (79.9%). More than half of the total respondents graduated from the master's degree (S-2) with a percentage of 53.8%. Two principals (1.1%) informed that they had pursued Doctoral Degree, and the rest (45.1%) were the graduates of bachelor's degree (S-1). Another information captured from the principal's questionnaire exposed that more than half of all the respondents (57.9%) were schools with Accreditation Rank A, which was the best of all. One-third of them (38.8%) were ranked B, and only six schools (3.4%) were ranked C. Dealing with the participants from the English teachers, 150 respondents (84.3%) were females and 28 others (15.7%) were males. The youngest of the respondents was a teacher aged 22, while the oldest was 50 years old. The rest varied within those range of age, but most of them were at the age of 30s.

Data Collection and Analysis

After the approval of the National Unity and Political Bodies and Regional Office of Education to conduct the study in the research site, data collection took place for around three months. Two sets of questionnaires were constructed to gather the empirical data of how many elementary schools in the research site conduct English teaching and how they translated the English language curriculum into practices. The details are presented in the following sub-section.

The questionnaires which are presented in the Indonesian language were distributed in three ways. First, the researcher came to schools located in Sub-district 1 and met the headmasters and the English teachers to give the questionnaires by herself. Second, two enumerators were assigned to help distribute the paper in Sub-district 4 and Sub-district 5. Third, the Coordinator of Principals of Elementary School in the research site, who was also a school Principal of one of the elementary schools in Sub-district 2, gave a hand to help distribute the questionnaires schools located in Sub-district 2 and 3. It took around three months to distribute and receive the questionnaires back. The figure below displays the phases of the questionnaire distribution.
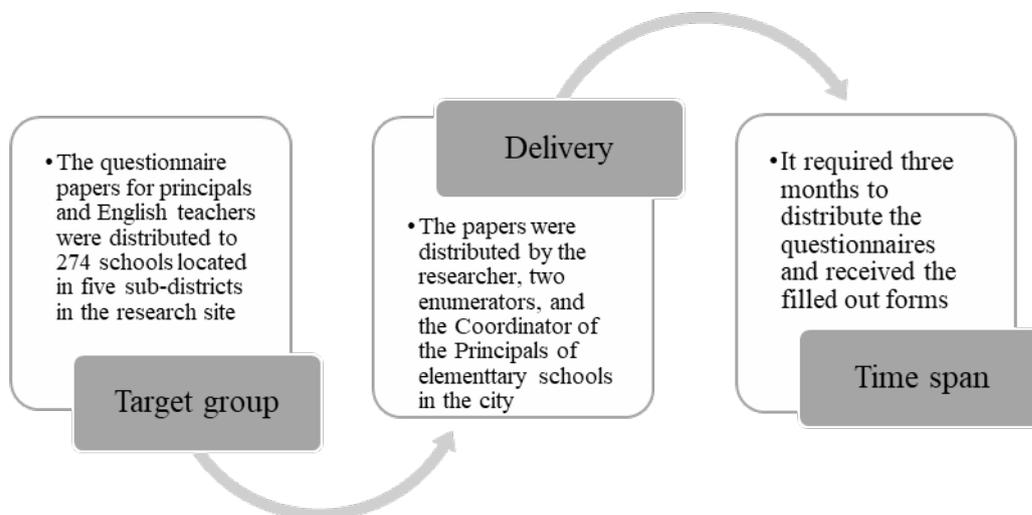

Figure 2. Questionnaire distribution.

Questionnaire for school principals

The questionnaire for school principals was made and distributed to all of the participating schools to capture the English instructions that the schools carried out. It covered four significant themes that involved the school's data, principal's data, the school English language curriculum, and the principals' comments towards the English instruction at their school. Table 1 displays the details of the questionnaire.

TABLE 1
Structure and Themes of Principal's Questionnaire

Structure	Content
Theme One	School's Data
	Name of the school;
	Address;
	Type of school;
	Accreditation rank
Theme Two	Principal's Data
	Name;
	Gender;
	Age;
	Length of occupation as principal;
	Educational background;
	Phone number & email address
Theme Three	School's English Language Curriculum
	The availability of an English subject;
	Rationale and objectives of English teaching;
	Grades that receive English subject;
	The frequency of English subject per week;
	Length of time of the English subject;
	Status of English subject
Theme Four	Suggestions and comments

The third theme sought to discover how the schools responded to the current education policy in relation to the English teaching practices at the primary level. The last theme was meant to reveal the school principals' suggestions and criticism about English education at their schools and nationwide. Their voices were critical for TEYL improvements as they are vital stakeholders as well as the policymakers who take part in determining the success of the instructions.

Questionnaire for English teachers

The questionnaire made for the English teachers covered three major themes that included the teacher's data, English teaching experiences, and suggestions and comments. The data gathered from the first theme revealed teachers' educational background. The second theme asked for the teachers' English teaching experiences, the in-service training they participated in, and the teaching practices they were conducting. Similar to the other questionnaire, the last theme of the teacher questionnaire also contained an open question asking the teachers' comments and wishes towards TEYL. Their opinions and views are vital as they are believed to be the key to the implementation of TEYL policies. The two elements attached to them, their prior education, and any advanced professional learning they have participated in, are essential to efficaciously bridging the policy-practice gap (Garton & Copland, 2019). The details are presented in the table below.

TABLE 2
Structure and Themes of Teacher's Questionnaire

Structure	Content
Theme One	Personal Particular
	Name;
	Gender;
	Age;
	Academic qualifications;
	Length of teaching experience;
Theme Two	English Teaching
	Sources used for teaching;
	Other responsibility besides teaching English;
	Professional development;
Theme Three	Suggestions and comments

After receiving the paper-based questionnaires that were filled out by the principals and the English teachers, the answers were inputted in the Google Form. Google Form was chosen as it provides a response sheet that loads and displays data in diagrams and graphics so that trends can be easily seen (Cyber Acoustics, 2017). Dealing with the last theme that asked for comments and criticism, the process involved identifying themes with relevance specific to the research focus, the research questions, and context (Roberts et al., 2019). The quotations presented in the findings were translated by the researchers as the questionnaires were administered in the Indonesian language.

Findings

The current study was undertaken to investigate the implementation of English for young learners (EYL) teaching in a selected Indonesian municipality. Elicited from the questionnaires administered to elementary school principals and English teachers, this report is broadly segmented into three sections to enunciate the existing TEYL practices and policy to develop the quality of early English education. The three foci underscore the critical parts of this paper are: 1) the current implementation of TEYL in Indonesian schooling after the drastic shift of national policy occurred, 2) the challenges that the schools faced in implementing TEYL, and 3) recommendations for policymakers concerning English language education in primary schooling.

The Current Implementation of TEYL

The data collected from the questionnaire that the school headmasters answered proved that many elementary schools in Indonesia still offered English as a subject despite the absence of government support. As many as 168 (92.8%) out of 184 schools that returned the questionnaire admitted that they conducted English teaching. Sub-themes below elaborate on the data analysis that exposes the reasons underpinning the current practices of EFL teaching and learning for young learners, the English curriculum that the schools carried out, and the profile of the English teachers.

The rationale and objectives to offer English instructions

From the gathered data, the following seven points are outlined to be the background motives of English teaching implementation. The translated quotations taken from the principals' responses are also given.

1) The status of English as a foreign language and an international language;

Most of the responses showed that the power of English as a means of global communication had been taken into account by the stakeholders in the education field by introducing English as a foreign language at the primary level. Below are the quotations taken from the principals' responses.

- *To equip students with knowledge and skills of English as an international means of communication;*
- *To develop basic oral communication skills as a way to prepare the students for global competitiveness;*
- *To accommodate students' talent and interest in foreign language learning;*
- *To enrich students' English knowledge for future career and technology development*

2) School's identity;

Giving an English subject is also intended to attract students to study at a particular school as not all of the schools provide the subject. Thus, it becomes one of the benefits that a student can have if the school conducts English teaching. The quotations are as follows.

- *It is the school branding. We offer English as a subject to attract students in the region to study here.*
- *English is included in our school curriculum as a local and global based life skill education.*
- *It is one of our featured curricula.*
- *Based on the school vision and mission, we provide English as part of our programs as a leading school that we integrate into the local culture and environment to prepare our graduates for the global workforce.*

3) Request from parents and society;

Some schools consider the demand from society, especially parents, as a part of the school committee in designing the school programs. Parents and society's request for the implementation of English teaching has then encouraged the school to conduct the lesson, as reflected in the translated quotation below.

- *The parents' demands are the base of our extracurricular curriculum design. As requested, we provide the students with English in order to develop their competencies in English as an international language.*
- *English teaching and learning activity has been a need, a demand, and a requirement for further study.*

4) Efforts to equip the graduates with English for higher-level education;

As explained before that English is a compulsory subject at the secondary school level, many elementary schools decide to give the subject in order to equip their graduates with basic knowledge of English so that they would be more ready for English subjects at a higher level of education. The quotations below support the reason.

- *To introduce basic English and to prepare the students for secondary school study;*

- *To teach English as a subject, we integrate the Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) lesson with English as a medium of instruction so that the students become more prepared for their English lessons in secondary school.*
- *The English learning provisions are meant to prepare the students for a higher level of study and universal competitiveness.*

5) The requirement to join Olympiad;

Olympiads are the events where schools compete for regional, national, or even international achievement. The Olympiad of Science or other subjects in the level of primary school is commonly used English as a medium of instruction. Moreover, the participating school should attach students' English scores when joining the competition, as reported in the quotations below.

- *To prepare the students for joining Olympiads as English is used as the medium of instruction in the competitions;*
- *Students' English achievements in Grade 4 and 5 become one of the determining points in the Science Olympiad*

6) Policy

Some schools base the implementation of English teaching on the Government Regulations. Below are the quotations related to it.

- *Decree Number 20, the Year 2003 about the National Education System recommends that schools develop the students' potency by equipping them with skills and knowledge for higher education level;*
- *Ministerial Regulation of Education and Culture Number 62 the Year 2014 about extracurricular activities in the elementary and secondary schools allows schools to offer English as one of the extracurriculars*

7) This city as one of the tourist destinations;

As one of the largest cities in Indonesia, the research site has the potentials to become one of the most visited regions by both domestic and international tourists. To provide students with basic skills of English will benefit them to live in this city as echoed in the following quotations.

- *To provide students with basic skills of English is essential as they live in one of the most visited cities by both domestic and international tourists.*
- *It is a practical need in society, specifically for students' future careers, as this is one of the tourist destinations.*

The English curriculum at school

The data concerning the English subject curriculum begins with the investigation of the grade level in which the school begins to offer the subject. It is followed by information about the frequency, time allotted for the subject per week, and the position of English as a subject in the school curriculum. The findings show that most of the schools, 141 out of 168 (82%), gave the English subject from the first year of elementary education. However, some did it from the higher grade. The details are presented in the figure below.
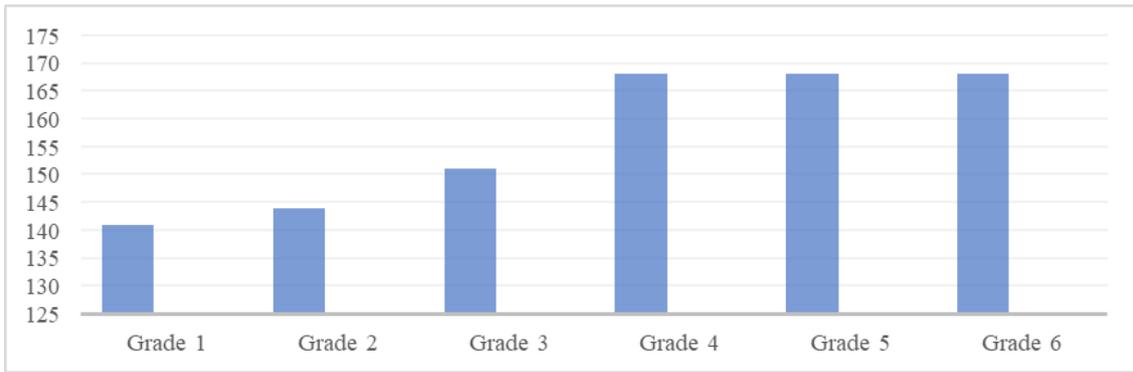
Figure 3. Grades to start the English teaching and learning.

From the picture above, it can be seen that not all of the schools started the English lesson from the first grade. Nevertheless, the number typically increased as the grade level arise. The figure illustrates that the students in Grade 4 onward in all of the participating schools learned English as a subject at school.

The next points discovered through the questionnaires were the frequency and the length of time of English teaching and learning at school. Although the findings show diverse data, the dominant number of schools had an English subject once a week for 2 x 35 minutes. Besides, although the number was not significant, it was found that there were 15 schools offered the subject two times a week. One school informed that English was given once a week but for 3 x 35 minutes for higher graders. These schools were typically private ones in which they had more authority to design the curriculum by themselves. The data can be seen from the figure below.
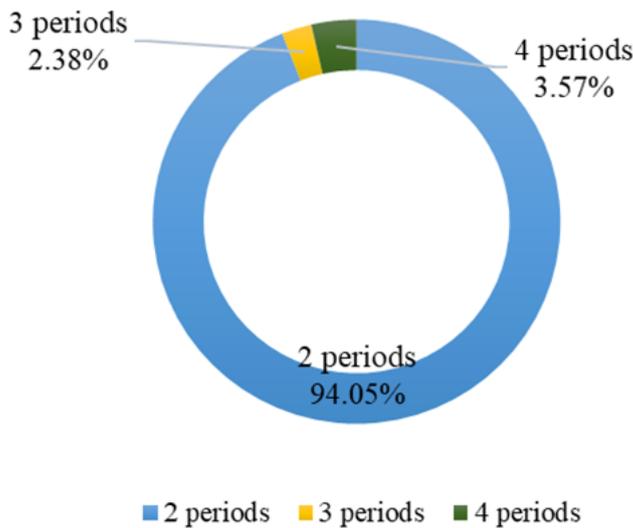

Figure 4. The length of English session per meeting.

Another point of attention is the place of English subject in the school curriculum. Referring to the related regulations that deal with the implementation of English teaching practices elaborated in the previous section, the fact from the field shows that each school might have different interpretations of the current English language policies that can be seen from how it placed English subject in the school curriculum. The graphic below shows how the schools put English as a subject in the curriculum.
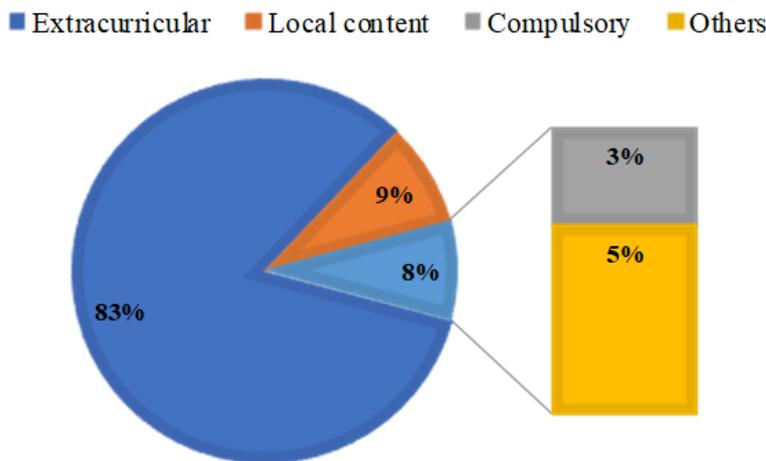
Figure 5. The place of English subject in the school curriculum.

The data from the figure above indicate that most of the elementary schools in this selected municipality carried out English instruction as extracurricular activities. To be specific, this group was dominated by public schools. This finding is in line with the information given by the Head of Elementary Education Division in the local Regional Office of Education that the schools in this city had put English as an extracurricular subject since the 2013 Curriculum did not include it in the list of local content subjects anymore. This is reinforced by the regional regulation that mentioned two local languages as the mandatory local content subjects. Some schools, although not significant in number (9%), kept the subject as the local content. The others informed that English was a mandatory subject (3%) and school content subject (5%). Supplementary data obtained through informal interviews with some schools' principals revealed that although the status of English was shifted to become extracurricular, its implementation was not different from when it was a local content subject. It was given in the school hours as a non-elective subject for students, and tests of English were given in the middle and final term, similar to the compulsory and local content subject.

The English for young learners (EYL) teachers

As one of the fundamental principles in English language teaching, the existence of teachers is essential to determine the success of the teaching practices (Rich, 2019; Westbrook et al., 2013; Zein, 2017a). Their educational background, the professional development they participated in, the duties they had besides teaching, and their number within a school may affect their pedagogical knowledge and teaching skills.

From the six-option-question that asked about the teacher's educational background, very exquisite data were discovered that most of the respondents (46.07%) graduated from S-1 in English Education, followed by the ones who graduated from S-1 in English (Literature/Linguistics) (22.47%). The specific number of teacher's education qualification can be seen in the table below.

TABLE 3
Teachers' Educational Backgrounds

No	Education Qualification	Number	Percentage
1	S-1 in English Education	82	46.02%
2	S-1 in English (Literature/Linguistics)	40	22.49%
3	S-1 in Elementary School Teacher Education	27	15.19%
4	S-1 in other major	13	7.31%
5	S-2	2	1.13%
6	Others	14	7.88%
	TOTAL	178	100%

From the table above, it can be known that almost half of the total respondents were S-1 in English Education graduates. Almost a quarter of the participants reported that they studied English major, specifically English linguistics and literature. It was common to know that some others graduated from S-1 in Elementary School Teacher Education as this was a compulsory qualification for teaching in the elementary school. Even, two respondents who had graduated from other major reported that they took S-1 in Elementary School Teacher Education after teaching for some years in the elementary school. Next, teachers who answered number six, 'Others', were the ones who graduated from Diploma III Program (Associate Degree), and some others had not yet finished their study in the university.

The teachers' other responsibilities besides teaching English are the next points to describe. These points were explored as they affected teachers' quality of teaching, as Merritt (2017) posits that teachers require substantial planning time to select effective strategies, design lessons, prepare teaching materials, and collaborate with other teachers. From the total respondents, 125 teachers responded that they had extra jobs besides being English teachers. The jobs were heterogeneous, but most of them were homeroom teachers. Others were librarians, administration staff, extracurricular teachers, and teachers of other subjects, like Javanese, ICT, Religion, Arts, Indonesian Language, and Social Studies. Besides these additional responsibilities, almost a quarter of the total participants informed that they were also English teachers in other elementary or secondary schools. The table below summarizes the teachers' additional responsibility besides teaching English.

Table 4
Teachers' Duties besides Teaching English

No	Responsibility	Number	Percentage
1	Homeroom teacher	50	28.09%
2	Teacher of other subjects	22	12.36%
3	Administration staff/librarian	40	22.47%
4	Extracurricular teacher	13	7.30%
5.	English teachers at other schools	39	21.91%
6.	No answer	14	7.87%
	TOTAL	178	100%

Due to these extra duties, teachers' roles become more demanding as not only do they focus on English teaching, but they are also demanded to fulfill other tasks given by the school. Additional information that was gathered from interviews with principals further revealed that after the 2013 Curriculum was implemented, the teacher's English teaching load was even not admitted. A public school that conducted English teaching should allocate budget by itself to pay the English teachers' salaries as extracurricular instructors. As explained before, this indirectly burdened the schools so that some considered the alternatives—assigning homeroom teachers to teach English or excluding the subject from the curriculum. Other data discovered through the questionnaire is how the teachers managed their classes in terms of the books and other resources they used for teaching EYL. As the current guidelines were no longer available, many of the teachers, especially the ones taught in the public schools, admitted that they used the former teaching sources as the teaching roadmap. Not a few of them even informed that the previous guidelines still could accommodate the students' English learning. The syllabus, the handbooks, the workbooks, and even question sheets for quizzes and tests used when School-Based Curriculum (the nationally implemented curriculum before the 2013 Curriculum) was implemented were still useable. However, many reported that they supported those preceding materials with the updated ones taken from online sources, like YouTube, BBC Learn English Kids, and other e-resources. The data is displayed in the figure below.
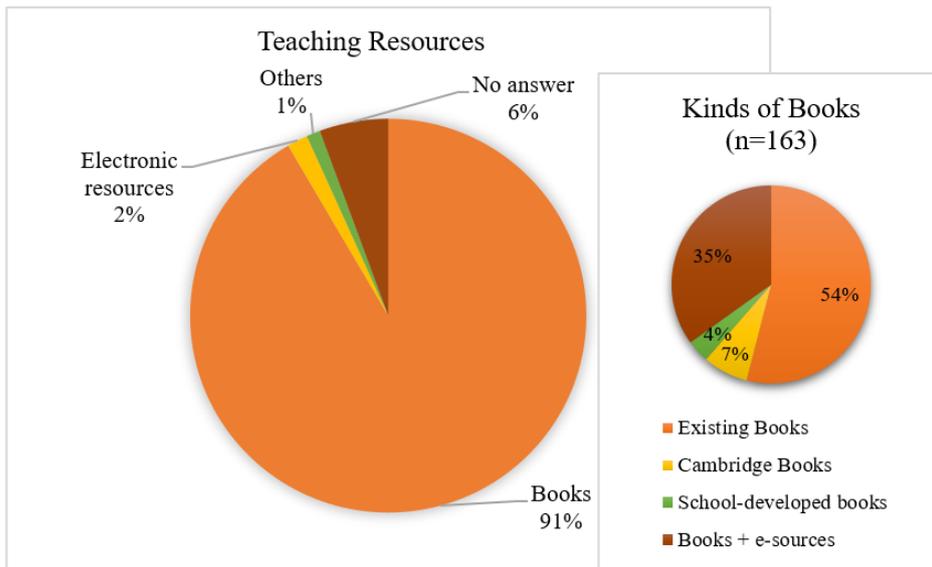
Figure 6. English teaching resources.

On the other hand, some other schools, particularly the best accredited private schools, reported that as they carry on particular curricula, like Cambridge and school-developed curriculum, they tended to have up-to-date resources based on the requirements of the curriculum. Thus, the data on the teaching resources that the teacher respondents used are then categorized into three groups: 1) existing teaching resources used when the prior curriculum was implemented, like handbook and workbook provided by the Local Government, 2) teaching resources for carrying Cambridge curriculum, 3) school-modified teaching resources, and 4) teaching resources taken from online sources.

As teacher education (TED) covers both pre-service and in-service training that teachers have participated in, not only was teachers' educational background investigated, but their experiences in joining educational training during their teaching career were also seen. The table below displays the data.

TABLE 7
English Teachers' Professional Development Experiences

No	Responsibility	Number	Percentage
1	English teaching related workshop	31	17.42%
2	Other theme workshops	32	17.98%
3	Never attended any workshop	86	48.31%
4	No answer	29	16.29%
	TOTAL	178	100%

The open-ended question was administered to reveal more information about teacher training that respondents had. From the data, it is known that almost half of the total respondents, which was the dominant percentage, never attended any workshop, training, or professional development while being teachers. Though, some answered that they joined ELT-related seminars, such as Pearson Workshop, Mentari Teacher Training, IELTS workshop, and Teacher Conferences, other EYL-related workshops. The number was similar to the group who participated in the non-ELT-themed ones, like the 2013 Curriculum Workshops, Training for Librarians, International Cross Culture Conference, and the 21st Century Education Conference. Some of the teachers who responded attending workshops further explained that the training or workshops they attended were not financially supported by the schools where they taught EYL—some teachers stated that they funded themselves, and others mentioned that they got support from the secondary schools they worked for.

The challenges in the TEYL implementation

Besides revealing the abovementioned reasons, the questionnaires also excavated the challenges that the schools faced in implementing TEYL. A few schools decided not to offer the subject due to these encounters. They were summarized into three points as follows.

1) Policy

The current policies related to English language teaching at the primary level has invited various interpretations. Due to the shift, some schools had interpreted that they should allocate more time for the local language learning. Some others transformed the status of English from local content to extracurricular as recommended by the Regional Government that the local language reinforcement be fostered for young learners' local language character building.

2) Fund

The current policy on TEYL also affected the financial support from the Central and Local Governments, especially for English teachers in elementary school. They were not legally admitted as a teacher of English subject as the subject was no longer available in Educational Primary Data of Elementary and Secondary Education. Thus, many of them were assigned to teach other subjects or be the homeroom teacher to still receive the salary. Furthermore, when a school decided to hire a teacher of English, it should allocate a budget to pay the teacher. Consequently, some schools decided to assign the available teacher to teach English to minimize the school expenses, or if it was not possible, the school excluded the subject by perforce.

3) Curriculum

As national guidelines were no longer available, it was a challenge for the schools to develop the English curriculum by themselves. The assigned teachers were the ones who usually prepared English curriculum documents, like syllabi, textbooks, and workbooks, and test papers by themselves. Instead of developing the teaching materials, many of them depend on the available published textbooks and workbooks and rely upon the existing materials used in the previous curriculum era. Due to this reason, some schools preferred excluding English subjects from the curriculum.

Recommendations for Policymakers Concerning TEYL

Referring to the current practices of TEYL and the challenges elaborated above, this section highlights the school principals' and teachers' aspirations in EFL instruction at the primary level that cover two core issues: 1) the demand for including English as the local content subject in the curriculum and 2) the need for teacher professional development. The descriptions are presented below.

Re-installment of English in the elementary school curriculum

There was a high demand from the field that English be placed in the local content subject group as it used to be. From the school principals' perspective, it was known that the request was initially related to two major issues as follows.

1) The provisions of the teaching guidelines

Due to the exclusion of English from the group of local content subjects, schools had to prepare the teaching guidelines if the English lesson was still to be offered. The teachers were usually assigned to prepare the documents, such as syllabi, textbooks, and test materials. However, not all of them are capable of developing the materials, as reported in Table 3, that these teachers were from various educational backgrounds. Consequently, the dominant number of participating teachers (see Figure 6) informed that they preferred teaching with the existing materials used in the previous curriculum to creating new materials. The data in Table 4 lends support by showing that the participating teachers consisted of homeroom teachers, school administration staff, and teachers of other subjects besides English. Only a few of them focused on English teaching. In other words, they had other working loads in addition to teaching English, which potentially took their time from preparing the English teaching needs.

2) The status of the English teachers

The changes in the English teaching curriculum in elementary schools also affected the position of the teachers. As described to be one of the challenges, the existence of English teachers indirectly burdened the schools (especially in public school) if they only worked for teaching English. As a result, many public schools assigned additional duties to the teachers so that they could allocate funds for the teachers taken from school operational assistance funds they received from the Government.

Vocational advancement for EYL teachers

As shown in Table 7, not many in-service teachers gained access to additional training. Lesser than a quarter of the total participants reported that they joined workshops to enhance their English teaching knowledge and skills. Almost half of them confirmed that they never attended any activities to develop their teaching career. In addition to the expectancy of the teaching guidelines provisions, teachers' voices towards the needs of the enhancement programs were reflected in the following quotations taken from the teachers' responses.

- *I don't find any difficulties with our materials. What we need is teaching guidelines to clarify the learning objectives. All teachers should know how to teach and what to reach in their English classes.*
- *Teaching students to produce good writing is my biggest problem because I feel that my writing skills are weak. We don't have clear teaching guidelines on how to teach English using the curriculum that our school carries out. So, every teacher has a different way of delivering the materials. I don't think the framework that we have and the books that we use are enough. We need more guidelines. I guess I do need more.*
- *Even though the materials we use for years are the same, I think we need to upgrade the lesson plan to update the theme. Maybe it is generally the same, but we still need to upgrade some parts.*
- *In my opinion, teaching at the primary level is the hardest. In elementary school, we need to have proper classroom management; we need to have positive attitudes too. We need to learn more about classroom management in young learners' classrooms.*
- *The problem is not about the teaching materials; it is about how to teach the materials to the students, how to design proper lesson plans to deliver engaging classroom activities and to accommodate the kinds of students' needs. We need time to prepare the lesson by considering students' differences in any factors such as English language ability, English learning motivation.*

Discussion

The data from the field show that almost all the participating schools (92.8%) offer English. The status of English as a global means of communication has encouraged the schools to keep English as a subject, although the current foreign language policies do not support it. Dealing with this, Kuchah (2019), Graddol (2006), and Nunan (2003) lend support by positing that it is the universal spread of the English language that has a considerable inspiration on language education policies and practices. In its implementation, many schools have English teaching as an extracurricular activity, which is obligatory for all students, some others keep it as a local content subject, and few put it in the group of school content subjects. Another result of the bottom-policy is that each school also has different time allotment and grade level to start English teaching. Many schools start from the first-grade level, but not a few of them begin later from the second, third, or fourth grade. Concerning the length of time and frequency of English learning, some schools admit that they allocate two to three times a week for the lesson. However, a significant number of schools have a modest amount of time (Johnstone, 2019) or once a week for 2 x 35 minutes for English. This case is similar to what occurs across the world that the share of instruction time dedicated to English as a foreign language is still quite modest (Eurydice, 2017).

The results disclosed that the EYL teachers' educational backgrounds are very positive. Almost half of the respondents (46.02%) pursued English Education in their undergraduate study. This encouraging result is opposing Rohqim's (2013), which was undergone in the same setting. His finding concluded that the EYL teachers in this area did not qualify for TEYL. In the present study, the data show a constructive response that there are more and more schools that begin to be aware of the vital role of English teachers and their education as the critical variables influencing the teaching quality and students' success in attaining learning outcomes. According to Richards (2008) and Rich (2019), fueling the demand of competent teachers in order to be able to provide practical approaches of TEYL reflects the rapid expansion and reform of English language instruction worldwide.

In contrast, teachers' participation in advanced training is in line with Zein's (2016) that highlights the problems Indonesian teachers faced to gain access to professional development programs. It has been approved that teachers are the school variable that influences the most student achievement (Musset, 2010; OECD, 2005). Concerning this, the present study agrees with Zein (2017a, 2017b) and Butler (2005) who posit that EYL teachers should be given adequate training on properly integrating language skills to help them learn how to be creative in their approach and understand children's differential psychology in order to design methodological courses aimed to foster child-friendly pedagogy. Schools also aspire that concrete steps are taken by the policymakers and related stakeholders to ensure access to quality pre- and in-service EYL teacher education initiatives that meet teacher needs. Finally, re-putting English as a local content subject in the elementary school curriculum is believed to be able to shed light on the TEYL practices.

Conclusion

Despite its unclear policy, EFL instruction in the research site has been widespread. Seven reasons are found to underpin the school decisions to keep English in the curriculum. They are the status of English as an international language, the school identity, society demand, provisions to basic English skills and knowledge for higher-level education, requirements for joining the competitions, policy recommendation, and the research site potency as a tourism city. In its implementation, English is put as an extracurricular subject in most of the schools that offer it. Given the modest amount of time, the teachers dominantly use the existing materials carried out in the previous curriculum and supplement them with resources taken online. Although a positive finding reveals that half of the total schools hire English teachers who have an English Education background, most of the teachers are lack of professional development to enhance their teaching skills and knowledge. In response to the challenges in funding and pedagogy, to review the

current status of English as a subject in elementary schooling is vital for better implementation of English teaching to young learners.

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