Exploring Teacher's Perspective of the Implementation of KTSP Curriculum in One of Junior High Schools in Bandung

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Abstract: Evaluating curriculum implementation is suggested by many experts to gain information from which challenges that hamper the achievement of learning goals can be immediately handled. Accordingly, this study investigated curriculum implementation of KTSP (school-based curriculum) in one of junior high schools in Bandung under a qualitative research design especially a case study by means of teacher's interview. The data were analyzed through categorization and description. The results indicate that the respondent is allowed to explore and define the curriculum herself. Among four curriculum activities, selecting materials is the most challenging task in curriculum implementation as she mostly utilizes internet-based sources and powerpoint slides which consume much time of preparation. To overcome this challenge some suggestions are provided to give her more insights in developing learning materials.

1 INTRODUCTION

Evaluation has been justified beneficial in providing information of the achievement of a program's goal. Curriculum which serves as an educational program requires such evaluation which is of curriculum activities alongside with its planning and implementation (Richards, 2001, pp. 1). Unfortunately, constant monitoring of curriculum is rarely achieved consistently at school level (Print, 1993, p. 219).

Accordingly, this present study tries to figure out the implementation of a curriculum in one of junior high schools in Bandung. In other words, this study investigated how documented curriculum, known as official curriculum, serves as basic guideline for teachers to govern teaching and learning process, also known as operational curriculum.

After the documented curriculum put into action, then this operational curriculum should have gone under cautious evaluation to detect problems raised during the implementation of the curriculum, afterward viable suggestions to cope up with them can be decided (Kemendikbud, 2012). It is also argued that periodic evaluation should then be done in order to see how teachers implement the curriculum and how successfully it has achieved the objectives of the teaching of English (Putra, 2014). In larger scale, evaluation is a powerful means of improving the quality of education (Agrawal, 2004).

The curriculum in focus is KTSP or school-based curriculum. In its implementation, each school through teachers gets an authority to develop its own curriculum (Suratno, 2014). KTSP is worth investigating as it opens multi-interpretation in real practice (Diknas, 2012, in Sahiruddin, 2013)

The study covers evaluation of four main components of curriculum; learning goal formulation, content and material selection, and evaluation design to determine students' learning achievement. Cautious evaluation of the implemented curriculum is useful to detect problems raised during the implementation of the curriculum, afterward viable suggestions to cope up with them can be decided (Kemendikbud, 2012). It is also argued that periodic evaluation should be done in order to see how teachers implement the curriculum and how successfully it has achieved the objectives of the teaching of English (Putra, 2014). In larger scale, evaluation is a powerful means of improving the quality of education (Agrawal, 2004).

To reveal the objective stated earlier, this research is guided by the following research questions:

1. How is English curriculum implemented in one of junior high school in Bandung?
2. What are the challenges during the implementation of curriculum?

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To know what effects a curriculum brings to the teaching practice will be very beneficial for educators to make educational decisions to be later on implemented as the response toward the drawbacks identified. By having this activity continuously taken place, the betterment for our education system will not be lasted as a dream.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In any model of curriculum whether rational/objective models, cyclical models, or dynamic/interaction models (Print, 1993, p. 61), the evaluation stage is always included. By doing this activity, problems raised during the implementation of the curriculum can be detected, afterward viable suggestions to cope up with them can be decided (Kemendikbud, 2012).

As well, it is due to the fact that the curriculum for many times does not suit to the needs of the students (Yürekli, 2012) and calls for a change or at least revision should be taken place. Moreover, to evaluate the curriculum is significant in order to update the methodology utilized, the content and other curriculum features (Al-Jardani, 2011, in Al-Jardani, 2012).

Continual monitoring and the provision of substantive feedback entail a great call as it reports the direction for needed changes (Print, 1993, p. 219). The willingness and ability of developers to accommodate changes to their curriculum will lead to the success of a curriculum's implementation (Print, 1993, p. 218).

The concept of curriculum evaluation is what Posner (1992) addressed as curriculum analysis. Having acknowledged about the concept of curriculum evaluation or curriculum analysis, another question may come up regarding what to analyze. Curriculum analysis can range from an analysis of a single curriculum document- for example, a teacher guide- to a research project, including library searches and extensive interview with curriculum project leaders (Posner, 1992, p. 33

Thus, in this research curriculum evaluation as well curriculum analysis refer to the same idea that it is an attempt to examine the curriculum focusing on a particular or some aspects of it, such as how components of a curriculum are structured and arranged, how the curriculum is used in the classroom, and how teachers use the curriculum in their teaching. Also, its main purpose is to provide information of such aspects on which making decision and judgment are depended upon.

Previous research shows many curriculums have been investigated to gain the benefits of curriculum evaluation as discussed in previous section of this paper. Presented below are three research reports of three different curriculums in different contexts.

A research accomplished by Karabulut and Fodrey (2010) set the curriculum of online master of education in Iowa State University as the object of curriculum analysis. Thethe curriculum was analyzed by using Posner's curriculum analysis framework. It was found that the target audience of the curriculum is prospective students who are interested in pursuing an online degree. Students are required to take pre-defined courses and offered to choose courses freely. Students are also given a help from faculty members if they have any problems during the online learning.

The purpose of this program is professional development where students are expected get some improvement in their technical skills, effective technology integration, and acquisition of job skills. On the other hand, lack of teacher training in online teaching is considered to be a disadvantage of this program. Thus, it is suggested more faculty members are involved in this program after getting trained and given adequate resources to create a supportive online learning environment.

Yürekli (2012) conducted a research analyzing the curriculum renewal in EAP context for freshman in Faculty of Computer Sciences at a university in Turkey. The research seeks academic skills needed by students and identify the relevant teaching method which will be beeficial to help students perceive their needs. The result shows that students need to learn the four language skills as well as vocabulary which is specifically related to the subject they are majoring in. Also, they are hoped to be able to use English for functional purposes.

To get those objectives, some teaching methodologies are suggested to employ such as integrated skills teaching, in which the four language skills are learned simultanously; content-based and task-base instruction, which make student interact with content in a meaningful and purposeful way; integration of vocabulary and grammar as the most basic units in language.

Another research with respect to curriculum analysis was undertaken by Sahiruddin (2013). His work emphasized on the implementation of the 2013 curriculum and related issues regarding its influence to the teaching and learning process. The 2013 curriculum is the response of limitation of 2006's curriculum such as a number of subjects learned, it is not competency-based in practice, competency does not reflect domain of knowledge, skills, and affective

behaviour, the equilibrium of developing soft skills and hard skills, teacher-oriented learning, neglected process-based and product-based assessment, and multiinterpretation.

Yet, some constraints are detected in the implementation of the newest curriculum. First of all regarding the disseminating the information of the curriculum inclusing the content and recommended teaching techniques. Second one related to the idea of student-centered classroom since in Indonesia context teacher-centeredness has been happening for a very long time. Lastly, in respect to textbook uniformity which represents only certain culture. It becomes a problem since Indonesian students' varied sociocultural background. Eventhough the research provides very relevant issues happened in Indonesian context as the 2013 curriculum is implemented, unfortunately, the researcher does not provide any feasible recommendation to overcome those problems.

Regarding this paper, curriculum analysis is intended to gather teacher's perspective toward the implementation of KTSP curriculum in one of junior high schools in Bandung. Particularly, this research explores how curriculum is broken down into learning goal, how it frames the contents, how the contents can be explored through materials, and how the learning achievement is assessed. Consequently, actual problems can be identified therefore feasible solution will be determined.

3 METHOD

3.1 Research Design

As the research is intended to describe the implementation of curriculum at schools, thus, qualitative descriptive approach corresponds well to the objective of this research. Descriptive study is used to describe condition, phenomenon, event, activity, and so on in which the result will be explained in the form of report (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012).

3.2 Respondent

An English teacher is purposely chosen as the respondent of this research based on criteria as follows: (1) having at least one-year experience of implementing KTSP (school-based curriculum); (2) directly involved in all curriculum implementation activities; and (3) having a great devotion to the betterment of the implementation of the curriculum in her own classes.

3.3 Instrumentation

The data are gathered through teacher's interview which serves as empirical data of how English teaching is carried out in the classroom. The respondent was asked several open-ended questions as follows:

1. What do you expect your students will be able to do after learning English?
2. Why do you think so?
3. What contents do you cover in your teaching?
4. Why do you select those contents?
5. What are teaching media you use in your class?
6. Why do you provide such media?
7. How your students' learning achievement is assessed?
8. Why do you assess such assessment?
9. What are challenges of each curriculum activity (formulating learning goal, selecting content and material, and designing evaluation system)?
10. How do you overcome those challenges?

3.4 Procedure

Before deciding the respondent, a preliminary survey was conducted by asking three English teachers about their involvement in curriculum activities. Then, the respondent was chosen based on the criteria set in advance. Later, the interview was carried out on Friday, 29 of April 2016 and lasted for about 30 minutes. The interviews covered ten questions as presented in the previous subsection.

3.5 Data analysis

The analysis of the interview focuses on five aspects in implementing the curriculum which are learning goal formulation (question number 1, 2), contents selection (question number 3, 4), materials selection (question number 5, 6), evaluation system (question number 7, 8), and challenges in carrying out each process (question number 9, 10). Simply speaking, the analysis will be going through three steps: data reduction through coding, checking hypotheses and theories, and description (Malik and Hamied, 2016).

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section reports the data gained from the interview along with the analysis related to relevant theories regarding four elements of curriculum analysis: (a) learning goal formulation; (a) contents selection; (c) materials selection; and (d) evaluation system.

a) Learning goal formulation

The respondent believes that her teaching is intended to train students' listening and speaking skills as the teachers believe that a language is learned not only to understand its system and its elements. However, she does not expect the students to have native-like listening and speaking skills but rather expecting the students to able to maintain simple conversation in English with each other. This goal is in accordance what is called as mutual intelligibility meaning that students understand what their interlocutor says and they can communicate with each other (Kirkpatrick, 2015).

However, she argues that the rational for formulating that learning goal which does not put emphasize on written texts is because students will learn more about texts in the next grade (grade 8th and 9th). Also, the respondent contends that by being able to speak English students will be more confident to participate in learning. By actively participate in learning students will be able construct more information as they are listening and speaking simultaneously.

In regard to the challenge in formulating the learning goal, the respondent does not mention any. The head master of the school gives each teacher freedom to create his/her own learning goal. Nonetheless, even the teacher is given freedom to govern her own learning goal she cannot simply ignore the recent view of English language teaching that the recent trend of research and practice in English language teaching has been retaining on skill integration oriented (Brown, 2001, p. 232).

Also, the instruction has to address a range of L2 skills simultaneously, all of which are requisite in communication (Hinkel, 2006). As they are used to utilizing their four language skills in the classroom, they are hoped to be able to be good English language users in their future personal and professional life.

b) Contents selection

As the teacher believes that learning a language is best through practice producing the target language, the contents are intentionally selected to aid students rehearsing the target language production such as language expressions which emphasize more on meaning than on form. Even so, the teacher does not necessarily neglect reading and writing sessions at all. She includes the contents from which students can practice their reading and writing skills too for instance writing a movie review after reading some of the examples of it.

She selects the contents among those which are stated in the KTSP document by considering which can more accommodating students to practice their speaking skills, which will be more interesting to them, and which is neither too challenging nor too easy. By bearing those criteria in mind, she does not find any significant hurdles in selecting the contents.

c) Materials selection

The respondent revealed that students do not have particular textbooks. She further added that students will get easily bored when they work on the same textbook during the whole lesson. Moreover, since the learning goal focuses to build students' ability to communicate in English so it is considered best to provide students with audio material which can offer the example of target language spoken by its native speakers. Providing students with a variety of authentic use of language in texts and talks will help them to get the opportunity to discover the context of target language culture (Putra, 2014).

Nonetheless, a challenge is identified as the teacher, sometimes, feels frustrated when she does not have enough time to search materials from internet sources as well prepare the powerpoint slides. Because, to her, the learning process will not be well delivered without any support from those technology features. Also, when she does not have topic to talk about, she asks for help from another English teacher to give her some suggestions. Materials selection is indeed the most difficult activity in implementing the curriculum for the respondent.

d) Evaluation system

Evaluation is universally accepted as an integral part of teaching and learning (Agrawal, 2004). It provides not only information of students' achievement but it also tells the quality of the program. Those benefits cannot be attended nicely unless the evaluation is well-prepared and well-designed.

To evaluate students' achievement, the teacher prefers test-based evaluation and performance-based evaluation which is consistent with the score ranging from 0-100. She conducts 2-3 tests excluding mid – term exam and final exam. If she gets a plenty of time, the tests will cover both receptive and productive skills assessment. But, when the time is limited she tends to conduct only written tests.

Whereas, KTSP suggests the evaluation should promotes the following aspects (Kemendikbud,

2006): (1) mastery learning, (2) authentic assessment (measuring affectiv, psychomotor, and cognitive aspects through product and process-oriented assessment), (3) continuity, (4) apply criterion-referenced scoring in which students' scores are compared to the standard score set in advance, and (5) use several techniques to evaluate learning achievement.

This evaluation concept proposed by the government is identical with the concept of authentic-holistic-integrative approach to assess students' competence suggested by Suherdi (2012). Authentic concerns with assessment in or near to natural real setting, for instance, measuring students speaking skill through presentation in which students will produce oral language. Holistic deals with being comprehensive, it includes measuring students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor behavior. Meanwhile, integrative means incorporate both a set formative assessments and summative assessment. By having comprehensive assessment approach presented above, it is expected students' learning progress will be better catered and relevant decisions can be made.

5 CONCLUSION

Curriculum as the map of how the teaching and learning activity is going to be carried out calls for careful treatment before and during its implementation. Teachers ought to take some times to analyze and comprehend the intention of a curriculum being and or going to be implemented with other teachers or curriculum experts. By having curriculum analysis before its implementation, teachers may avoid bad impact of its weaknesses. While during its implementation, when some restraints of the curriculum are recognized, teachers will try to find ways to fix them and make some changes and modification in line with their beliefs, without neglecting the standards set by the government. Analyzing curriculum is one of means to know what makes a good teaching and learning.

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