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ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
EDUCATION AT  
SECONDARY LEVEL

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## ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION AT SECONDARY LEVEL

*Emi Emilia*

### Introduction

Indonesia has had a long commitment to teaching English at all levels of education, especially at the secondary level, and there are many reasons why Indonesia needs to develop effective programs for the teaching of English. Some of the reasons have to do with the status of English in the modern world and its significance for trade and commerce, economic development, tourism, and intergovernmental communications of many kinds, and the role of English in a great deal of scholarship and research in areas as broad as science and technology (see Chapters 4 and 5, this volume, for discussions on policy and discourse of English, respectively). In the newest curriculum of English (the Emancipated Curriculum, 2024), it is said that:

English is a language used globally in different aspects such as education, business, trade, science, law, tourism, international relations, health, and technology. English capability is expected to give students opportunities to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds. With English mastery, students will have bigger opportunities to interact using different text types. From this interaction, they will gain knowledge, and learn different skills, and behavior needed to live in the diverse global culture.

(Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, Technology, and Higher Education, 2024a,b; see also a similar statement in the Competency-Based Curriculum, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001)

Important evidence of the significance of English in Indonesia is the decision of the Congress of *Bahasa Indonesia* VII in Jakarta in 1998. The decision of the congress, section *Follow Up* regarding *English as a Foreign Language*, states:

The improvement of English skills is an inseparable part of the development of human resources in the globalization era. Therefore, the availability and use of facilities

and educational technology that can support the acquisition of the target language (English) need to be accorded a special importance.

(Erdina, 2001, p. 2, as cited in Emilia, 2005, p. 3)

The research jointly conducted by SEAQIL and Indonesia University of Education (UPI) in 2021–2022 on language policy in ASEAN countries also reveals that English has a strong position in Indonesia and all ASEAN countries and is a compulsory subject at schools with legal backing (SEAQIL, 2023). Although the English language is often associated with colonialism and imperialism (Phillipson, 1992, as cited in Zein & Stroupe, 2017, p. 194), it has become the driving force for globalization with influences that have crossed the linguistic sphere and even permeated the economic, political, cultural, ideological, and religious arenas. English, it is said, is being used as a lingua franca for international and intra-national communication among people with different national, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds, especially in the ASEAN Plus Three Forum (Zein & Stroupe, 2017, p. 194; see also Hamied, 2013; Zein et al., 2020).

It is also said that English has been a subject in Indonesian education since the colonization of the Dutch, but the teaching of English was abolished by the Japanese colonials, and the removal of English education was also part of the revision of the education system that was already organized by the Dutch (Komaria, 1998). The aim of teaching English was to provide students with a “working knowledge of English”, based on the Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 096/1967, which is still valid now (Zein et al., 2020) (see Chapter 2, this volume, on the history of English language education in Indonesia).

Since independence, English has been the first foreign language taught in Indonesia, ahead of Arabic, French, and German (Hamied & Musthafa, 2019; Zein et al., 2020, p. 4) and began to be a compulsory subject in secondary schools since the beginning of the New Order regime (1967–1998) through the Presidential Decree No. 28/1990 (Zein et al., 2020). Since then, according to Zein et al. (2020), English has been made compulsory in Junior, Senior, and Vocational Schools in the Ministry of Education and Culture and in the *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (Islamic Junior High School) and *Madrasah Aliyah* (Islamic Senior High school) under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Several foreign institutions, such as Ford Foundation, AUSAID, NZAID, The British Council, and AMINEF, as reported by Zein et al. (2020), have played a role in the development of English education in Indonesia (see, for example, Riyanti, 2013; Mukminin, 2016, who did research on English teachers and the teaching of English with the scholarship from AMINEF, and activities by AMINEF on digital literacy in English teaching in [www.aminef.or.id/digital-literacies-english-language-learning-demak-central-java/](http://www.aminef.or.id/digital-literacies-english-language-learning-demak-central-java/) with teachers in Demak). These foreign institutions have helped in different aspects of the development of the teaching of English, including research, teacher professional development, and the provision of teaching materials.

Although English has been an important subject in Indonesian secondary education for a long time, little has been known about the journey of English in secondary education, particularly in relation to policy, research on pedagogical innovations, and teacher professional development. Thus, to fill in the gap, this chapter presents some discussion of the journey of English teaching policies based on the English curriculum in secondary schools (junior, senior, and vocational) (grades 7–9) and senior (grades 10–12) high and vocational schools from independence (1945) until the Emancipated Curriculum was released in 2024. Then the chapter presents the results of a review of themes of research on the teaching of

English in secondary schools, especially in the last 20 years, including the application of approaches to teaching English, especially SFL GBA and project-based learning, the use of technology, the 21st-century skills, the teaching of English in vocational school, and pre-service and in-service English teacher professional development. Finally, the chapter will present conclusions and further direction.

### **Policy Developments**

As mentioned above, since independence in 1945 English has been a compulsory subject in secondary schools (beginning grade 7); and since 1990, it has been a compulsory and first foreign language taught in all types of secondary schools (Nababan, 1991, p. 120; as cited in Zein et al., 2020, p. 4). In vocational schools, the government, through the Directorate General for Vocational Secondary Schools, the Department of National Education in 2002 (SMUnet, April 5, 2002, cited in Emilia, 2005) has enacted a TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) program. The aim of the teaching of English in vocational schools, especially since the implementation of the 2004 Competency-Based Curriculum is the same as that for general secondary schools, that is, to enable students to use English in different text types, oral and written, and multimodal, in line with the context of situation and context of culture, and to communicate orally and in written form equivalent to B1 based on CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

The journey of English education policy in secondary schools in Indonesia can be seen in Table 29.1, summarized from Kasihani (2000), Emilia (2005), Sukyadi (2013), Zein et al. (2020), Alfariy (2021), Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, Technology, and Higher Education (2024a).

Table 29.1 shows several points. First, the English curriculum has changed 13 times now. However, the focus does not necessarily change from one curriculum to another. From the Competency-Based Curriculum in 2004 until the Emancipated Curriculum in 2024, for example, the focus remained the same: on enhancing students' ability to use English in different text types, in different contexts of situation, and in different contexts of culture.

Second, since the first curriculum, in junior high schools (grades 7–9), English has been taught consistently in four teaching periods per week, the second highest number of teaching periods after the main subjects such as Mathematics, *Bahasa Indonesia*, Science, and Social Science. However, in senior high schools and vocational schools, the number of teaching periods fluctuated, and this especially can be seen from the reduction of teaching hours from 4 hours to 2 hours per week in the 2013 Curriculum. This is considered a big problem in implementing the curriculum by teachers, as reported by Rasyid et al. (2024):

The bigger problem is that English instruction has been reduced from a minimum of 4 hours per week to barely 2 hours since the 2013 curriculum was implemented. There is not much time. ... No matter how talented a person is, the results will not be the best if there is not enough time to study English (Teacher 8).

(Rasyid et al. 2024, p. 12)

This policy is actually contradictory to the target of the long-term education development program, which emphasizes the importance of English capacity and Law No. 24 of the Year 2009 on language, state emblem, and national anthem, one main message of which is to master foreign languages.

Table 29.1 Journey of English curriculum development for Indonesian secondary schools from independence to the present

Year	English curriculum used	Features	Class hours/week		
			Junior	Senior	Vocational
1945–1950	Formal education could not be carried out smoothly due to political situation.	No significant features.	4	3-4	2
1954	<i>Kurikulum Gaya Lama</i> (an Old Style Curriculum)	The instructional objective was not clear; English was taught four hours a week; using the grammar translation method.	4	3-4	2
1962	<i>Kurikulum gaya baru</i> (a New Style Curriculum)	Accompanied by the teaching materials called “The Salatiga Materials” for junior high schools; The materials used an audio-lingual approach, in line with the popularity of the approach in the 1960s and the 1970s in other parts of the world.	4	3-4	2
1968	The revised New Style Curriculum, called <i>Kurikulum gaya baru yang disempurnakan</i> (Perfected New Style Curriculum).	Still advocating the audio lingual method; Accompanied by the teaching materials for senior high schools, called <i>English for the SLTA</i> (high schools).	4	3-4	2
1975	The 1975 curriculum, based on the decree of the minister of education No.008-E/U/1975	Better than previous ones, having clearer instructional objectives; Still advocating the audio-lingual method.	4	3-7	2
1984	The 1984 curriculum (based on the amendment of the 1975 curriculum)	Emphasising students’ active learning; Using a communicative approach, which was considered the best approach to teaching English, as it is even up until now?	4	3-7	2
1994	The 1994 curriculum (based on the revised 1984 curriculum, referring to the input and the results of a nation-wide research on students’ learning mastery)	Still advocating a communicative approach. Character Education has been included in the teaching of English.	4	4-6	2
2001	The Competence-Based curriculum	Developing English using target competences, though a close reading shows it is similar to the one it replaced. Critical thinking as part of character building was emphasized.	4	4-6	2
2004	The 2004 curriculum was released	A big shift from traditional approach to functional approach to teaching English, involving systemic functional linguistics genre-based approach (SFL GBA), aiming to enable students to use English in different text types relevant to the context of situation and context of culture. Character building, especially critical thinking, was still emphasized.	4	4-6	2

(Continued)

Table 29.1 (Continued)

Year	English curriculum used	Features	Class hours/week		
			Junior	Senior	Vocational
2006	The School Curriculum	The curriculum was created by each school depending on the need of the students and the society around the school, still based on SFL GBA. Critical thinking was still emphasized.	4	4-5	2
2013	The 2013 Curriculum	A big change: the reduction of English teaching hours in senior high schools. Still based on SFL GBA. The government provided a syllabus, Standard of Competence and Basic Competence to help teachers implement the curriculum in the classroom. Other approaches such as task-based, problem-based, project-based approaches, and scientific approach were recommended. The 21 <sup>st</sup> century skills, including critical thinking, and character building were emphasized. The use of technology started to be recommended in the curriculum.	4	2	2
2022	Prototype of The Emancipated Curriculum	Still based on SFL GBA, focusing on enabling students to use English in different text types, adopted voluntarily by more than 300,000 schools since 2022. This initiative forms part of the government's education transformation plan and aims to improve the quality of education provisioning to all students, as well as accord teachers with more agency to structure and design their teaching plans based on their context and students' needs.	4	2	2
2024	The Emancipated Curriculum ( <i>Kurikulum Merdeka</i> )	The Curriculum set the goal of the teaching of English stipulated in "Learning Objective", still based on SFL GBA, aiming to enable students to use English in different text types in six language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, presenting. Multimodal texts are involved. The Pancasila student profiles, including: having noble morals, global diversity awareness, independent, collaborative, think critically, and creative, are emphasised.	4	3	3

Source: After Kasihani, 2000; Emilia, 2005; Alfariy, 2021; Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, and Higher Education, 2024a.

Although the teaching time has been increased to three hours in the Emancipated Curriculum, this amount of time for learning English is still insufficient and should be increased again, to 4 hours, 5 hours, or even 6 hours, as it was in the previous curriculum.

Third, since the *Kurikulum Gaya Lama* (Old Style Curriculum), English education in Indonesian secondary schools has been in line with the development of English teaching around the globe, seen from the approach used and the emphasis of 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, and literacy development. The reference to CEFR in the Emancipated Curriculum is also in line with the policy of English teaching in other countries. The implementation of SFL GBA, focusing on texts, is also in line with the development of SFL theory as discussed in Mathiessen et al. (2022). According to McCabe (2022, p. 150), SFL is appealing to those who have embarked upon the endeavor and recognize that much more is involved than learning lexical, phonological, and grammatical rules as we negotiate our identities within the culture of the new linguistic system. McCabe adds that little can be found in the literature on the impact of SFL on foreign language teaching, compared with the fact that it is fully theorized with its robust model of language. The curriculum development, with the aim relevant to the student's needs, the society's needs, and the current linguistic theory, coincides with the suggestion from Tyler (2013), the father of the theory of curriculum development, in his book *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*, that the source for the goal of a curriculum should be attained from the students, the society, and the subject specialist. The focus on texts goes with the argument from Halliday and Mathiessen (2014, p. 3) that "when people speak and write, they produce text, and text is what listeners and readers engage with and interpret".

Fourth, the inclusion of viewing and presenting in the Emancipated Curriculum is aligned with the development of technology and literacy in the new media age, when texts are not only written and spoken but also visual and multimodal when the reading path of visual text is different from that of written one (Kress, 2003). This is also relevant to the capacity needed in PISA (Program of International Students Assessment), which uses different text types and multimodal texts. This curriculum, if understood well by teachers, will enable Indonesian students to improve their achievement in PISA, especially reading.

Apart from the curriculum-related policies, the contemporary condition of Indonesian society also affects the teaching of English. Critical thinking, a new "buzzword" since the commencement of the Reform era, which started with the retirement of President Soeharto on May 21, 1998, is now seen as an important part of building a much more critical and independent community of people in Indonesia, as stated in the Education Development Program for the year 2000–2004 on General Problems, paragraph six, that one of the problems in the national education is that "the culture of critical thinking is not yet socialized" (Department of National Education, 2001). Finally, the release of the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 23 the Year 2015 on *penumbuhan budi pekerti* (nurturing moral or character) has also affected the research and teaching of English, which has been expected to help improve students' literacy capacity. (see Sari, 2018; Aunurrahman, 2018 on research about character education in teaching language).

### **Key Themes**

This section examines key themes in recent studies of teaching English in secondary schools in Indonesia. The first part will present current issues related to pedagogical innovations, and the second will discuss pre-service and in-service teacher professional development programs.

***Pedagogical Innovations***

In line with the policy of English education presented above, the themes of research on pedagogical innovations in English education at secondary schools in Indonesia reviewed in this section include the implementation of English teaching methods, including SFL GBA, which has been the basis of the English curriculum since 2004, project-based learning (PjBL), translanguaging, the use of technology, the development of 21st-century skills, especially critical thinking, the literacy program, and English in vocational schools. Challenges regarding each theme will also be presented.

First, regarding English teaching methodology, SFL or SFL GBA-related topics have been popular since 2004, and since 2013 PjBL and translanguaging have also gained interest from researchers, especially students at universities, for example, in the institution where the writer is teaching. The number of research on SFL GBA, PjBL, and translanguaging can be seen in Table 29.2.

The studies on SFL GBA reported by the students show that SFL GBA can help students learn to use English in different language skills and text types (to mention a few: Retno, 2022 on teaching writing a Discussion text; Tarigan, 2023 on Explanation text; Zukhrufy, 2019 and Nurani, 2024 on writing Narrative text; Pujianto et al., 2014 on Report text; Hikmawan, 2024 on teaching speaking procedure texts on traditional games; Retno, 2024a on the implementation of a genre-based approach to nurturing students' critical thinking; Herman, 2024 on Recounting text; and Meilani, 2024 on teaching reading different text types for national examination). Although the focus is on one skill, the teaching-learning process involves all language skills in integration (see Chapter 18, this volume). Some research focuses on the analysis or assessment of students' texts using SFL (see Fitriani, 2024; Ningsih, 2024); analysis of textbooks in terms of gender representation seen from SFL perspectives (Emilia et al., 2017; Emilia & Martin, 2023), multimodal text in an English textbook for junior high school published by the government (Jauhara, 2018). Other approaches and strategies, such as PjBL (e.g., Dharmayanti & Joni, 2021; Sartika et al., 2022) and translanguaging (e.g., Ridwan, 2022) are reported to be effective in teaching English, helping students to be engaged in the teaching-learning process. English teachers also had a positive perception of the implementation of PjBL and translanguaging.

However, other current studies also report some critical issues on SFL GBA, PjBL, and translanguaging. Critical issues on SFL GBA and the implementation of the curriculum, as reported by Nadjib and Triastuti (2023), Sukyadi (2013), Tartila et al. (2013), Syafitri (2016), Agung (2019) are actually the same as those in the early stage of its implementation in Indonesia, that is to do with teachers' lack of understanding and "malpractice" of SFL GBA and the curriculum. Similar challenges are also reported in implementing PjBL, among

*Table 29.2* Number of research on SFL GBA, PjBL, translanguaging in one English education study program in Indonesia from 2023–2024

<i>Program and Year 2023–2024 (August)</i>	<i>SFL or SFL GBA-related topic</i>	<i>PjBL</i>	<i>Translanguaging</i>
Undergraduate (2020–2024)	15	4	4
Master (2019–2024)	41	8	2
Doctoral (2020–2024)	6	1	2

others to do with teachers' lack of knowledge about PjBl and inadequate time implementing PjBL, which causes difficulty for teachers to do authentic assessments (see Sartika et al., 2022).

It is said that appropriate implementation of an approach should be accompanied by sufficient knowledge about the concepts and the ability to apply the approach in teaching practices. Teachers should be trained about approaches to teaching English and the implementation of the curriculum. It is thus recommended that teachers need to have training on the curriculum and the implementation of the English curriculum in Indonesia (see Setiawan, 2021). However, the number of English teachers in Indonesia, based on the data from the Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel in 2023 (personal conversation with a resource person), is about 203,000. It is apparently difficult to solely rely on the Ministry of Education to train this huge number of teachers. One way to improve English teaching at schools is to eliminate mismatches between university and school expectations with regard to English language teaching and learning (Riyani, 2013). Riyani recommends that Indonesian policymakers narrow the gap between university and school teaching practice through consistency of communication in order to nurture pre-service teachers' identity development, especially with their English teaching capacity.

Second, pedagogical innovation can be seen in the use of technology in English teaching (see also Chapter 26, this volume). This theme has been discussed in seminars organized by universities or government institutions (e.g., AISOFOLL-Annual International Symposium of Foreign Languages by SEAQIL, 2023). A lot of research shows the benefit of technology to help teachers teach and students learn with a better result and smoother processes and to promote independent learning (see Nasrulloh, 2019; Rintaningrum 2023; Riska et al. 2024; Santosa & Banjar, 2024; Yuliarti, 2021). Yuliarti (2021) implemented SFL GBA and Grammarly in the teaching of writing hortatory exposition text, and reported that students had a positive attitude in learning writing hortatory exposition text by integrating Grammarly through SFL GBA. Moreover, Nasrulloh (2019), involving five pre-service and in-service teachers, respectively, also reports that the teachers believe that technological interventions can make the work much easier in teaching and learning activities. Moreover, Rintaningrum (2023) reports the benefits of integrating technology in English language learning, including the ability of learners to do some coding, practice online quizzes or tests, and improve the speed of answering questions.

Other research is about the use of ChatGPT (e.g., Dwina, 2024) and the Metaverse (e.g., Dewi, 2024b). Dwina (2024) reports the potential for combining ChatGPT and mind mapping as teaching tools and students find it easier to start writing after using ChatGPT, which can offer real-time assistance with idea generation. Dewi (2024b) reports on the use of Metaverse-innovative pedagogical potentials of the virtual realms, a virtual space that promises to redefine the teaching and learning provided in the physical spaces. Moreover, Purnama et al. (2023) did a longitudinal study on the evaluation of the long-term effects of using AI-based automated learning systems in improving English content understanding at the secondary level. Finally, Rahayu (2022) involved 102 English teachers and 164 students at Junior High School in Bandung during the Covid pandemic. Using a questionnaire, Rahayu reported that the teachers responded positively to teaching online during the pandemic. The framework of perception used in the study is based on TAM (Technology Acceptance Model), which covers perceived usefulness, ease of use, behavior intention, and system use. The results show that teachers and students perceived online learning positively.

Researchers have also raised some issues regarding the use of technology, including the rapid changes in technology development, the number of classes taught, class size, cost,

time, age, facilities, and teachers' ability to use technology and different applications to teach English.

Third, turning to the teaching of critical thinking, several studies have been conducted to find out students' (Affandi et al., 2021; Pardede, 2019) and teachers' critical thinking capacity (Devianty & Wilson, 2019; Gandana et al., 2021), including those in vocational schools (Pujati et al., 2024). Pujati et al. (2024) analyzed critical thinking skills in English learning materials in three vocational schools in Jakarta. Moreover, Defianty and Wilson (2022) focused their study on teachers' competence in fostering critical thinking through questioning (see Chapter 7, this volume, on curriculum and critical literacy).

All research reports reviewed indicate the importance of critical thinking development, and efforts should be made to develop students' critical thinking skills (see, for example, Afandi et al., 2021). Pardede (2019) advocates the use of fiction, especially novels, to develop students' critical thinking for two main reasons. First, like other literary works, a novel is allegorical. It has a literal meaning and implied meaning, which is beyond the surface. To get the appropriate meaning, the reader should reflect, infer, analyze, and synthesize the presented information. By doing these, according to Pardede, the reader has practiced CT skills. Secondly, Pardede also argues that novels are closely related to life; they are even about life. The nature of novels that they are close to life also facilitates students to promote the ability to make a decision, which is one of the major features of CT. All research reports indicate the needs for enhancing teachers' ability to teach critical thinking in the teaching of English.

Fourth, regarding the teaching of English in vocational school, there is an issue that has often times been raised by researchers in vocational schools (see Latifah et al., 2022 on marketing study programs; Natsir et al., 2022 on machinery engineering; Choji, 2017 on the teaching of English in engineering school in a vocational school in Sidoarjo). This has to do with the teaching materials for vocational schools, which are the same as those for general schools. Regarding this, Latifah et al. (2022) state that the government regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 29 of 1990 concerning secondary education (Chapter I general provisions, article 1 (3)) implies that the development of students' skills in vocational education should focus on the specific field. Students must encounter texts that are relevant to their professional knowledge and skills (see Chapter 15, this volume, on teaching reading).

### *Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Education Program*

Table 29.1 shows that the curriculum of English has experienced changes many times with the aim of achieving better student results in learning English. Unfortunately, it appears that despite a lot of research which has shown significant improvement in students' English ability in different language skills, in many cases, the changes in the curriculum have not been followed by the changes in the classroom. "The changes in the curriculum will be accepted only if the teachers act as the main agents in the changes of the curriculum through their critical analysis and contemplation of their own performance to achieve the expected mastery of English" (Sudjana, 2000, p. 38; see also Jon et al., 2021). Sudjana (2000) goes on to maintain that to better the teaching of English in secondary schools, what is needed is not only an amendment of the curriculum, but more importantly, the promotion of the teachers' competence in order that they can teach more creatively and innovatively, and can, for example, change a boring, but useful class, into a useful and interesting one (p. 38).

To enhance the quality of teachers, teachers need effective and quality teacher professional development programs (see Part IV, Chapters 22–27, this volume, on teacher education). However, teacher professional development, as mentioned by Averina and Kuswandono (2023), is still underrepresented. Averina and Kuswandono (2023) and Emilia et al. (2023) report that teacher professional development is really important to help enhance teachers' efficacy, to better their classroom practices, and also to improve their students' learning outcomes. This supports previous research in teacher professional development, as reported in Darling-Hammond et al. (2017).

Research on pre-service and in-service teacher professional programs can be seen in Eddraoui et al. (2023), Nasrullah (2019), Latifah et al. (2022), Leoneto et al. (2020), Puteri and Fatimah (2021), and Tuttyandari (2022). These writers saw different aspects of teacher professionalism, but they emphasized the important role of teachers to help succeed in the teaching-learning process and, thus, the significance of teacher professional development. In addition, Mukminin (2016), funded by AMINEF, did research on student teachers' motives to become a teacher by choosing teacher education programs in the US and other countries as a policy lesson for Indonesian Teacher Education. Data were collected through doing meta-analysis of previous studies from the US (1928–2016) and other countries (1934–2016), comprising 32 studies from the US and 83 studies from other countries. The findings of this study revealed that student teachers' interpretations of their motives for embarking on a journey to become a teacher were various and unique. Although altruistic motives seemed to be predominant, the kinds of motives for their career choice were likely to involve interaction among altruistic, intrinsic, and extrinsic motives across participants quantitatively and qualitatively.

Moreover, Putri and Fatimah (2021) examined the performance of pre-service and in-service English teachers based on teachers' self-assessment, involving 45 in-service teachers and 11 pre-service English teachers in a university in West Sumatera. It was found that PPG Program at Padang State University has improved the teaching performance of English teachers (Putri & Fatimah, 2021, p. 315). The findings in this study are in contrast to the results of the previous research conducted by Safitri (2020), which states that there are a lot of incompetent teachers who do not acquire academic qualifications or the ability to achieve national education goals, and there are many other obstacles as well. One of the factors inhibiting the performance of certified teachers is elderly teachers who find it difficult to utilize technologies, facilities, and infrastructure. Moreover, the research conducted by Siswandari and Susilaningsih (2013) found that: 1) only 37% of certified teachers can deliver material clearly. The ability to use learning media and technology, the ability to follow science and technology developments and learning innovations, as well as continuous professional development need to be improved; 2) discussions between colleagues who teach the same subject are the most desirable efforts to maintain professionalism; 3) certified teachers have not shown a significant improvement in the quality of classroom learning. It is indicated by, among other things, the lack of ability to explain the material and utilizing technology (25% agreed for being inadequate). Approximately 20% of teachers stated that they did not pay attention to their students. In comparison, this study found that there were 80% of English teachers who acquired good skills in using media and technology, explained the material well, and there were 63% of teachers who were very good at paying attention to students' abilities in learning.

Tutyandari (2022) did research involving 106 final-year pre-service teachers in Yogyakarta on their preparedness for teaching, including preparedness to promote student learning,

understand learners, teach critical thinking, develop instructional leadership, use technology, and overall preparedness. The study shows that, in general, the respondents have a medium level of perceived preparedness to enhance students' learning with the means ranging from 3.83 to 4.34 in a six-point Likert scale. The top three teaching skills that the participants feel more prepared for are understanding students' diversity in learning with a mean of 4.34, connecting lessons to real life with a mean of 4.32, and doing self-evaluation and reflection on their class performance with a mean of 4.31. The bottom three teaching abilities that the participants feel less prepared for relate to teaching strategies to deal with different purposes, with a mean of 4.00; teaching strategies for students' diversity, with a mean of 3.98; and students' independent assessment, with a mean of 3.83 (Tutyandari, 2022, pp. 376–378).

In line with the condition above, the government, through the Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel released a regulation specifically for English teachers in Indonesia, aiming to enhance English teachers' competence based on the Regulation of The Directorate General of Teacher and Education Personnel Number 1668/B.B1/ HK.03.01/ 2024 (Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnels, 2024; Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, Technology, and Higher Education, 2024b) about the technical guidance of English teacher competence development for teachers of English in primary and secondary schools. It is said in the regulation that the technical guidance aims to be a guide for the Directorate General, the units practicing the policy, the Education Office at provincial and district levels, education units at primary and secondary levels, teachers of English, and stakeholders relevant to the organization of English teacher competence development. It is also said in Article 3 of the regulation that it is important to develop English teachers' competence at primary, junior, senior secondary, and vocational schools, and the enhancement of English teachers' competence is carried out in three main modes: online, face-to-face, and blended learning (i.e., online and face-to-face) through the learning management system.

It is also stated in the rationale of the regulation that teachers have a very important position in national education. It is also said that based on the result of an assessment by Education First EPI (EF English Proficiency Index, 2023, see also Valentina, 2017), an organization focusing on the global English competence index, Indonesia ranked 79 out of 113 countries in the world and ranked 13 of 23 in Asian countries, with a score of 473. This gain is equal to B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which shows English competence categorized low proficiency. CEFR is an international standard which describes reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Research on analysis of secondary data on national examination by the Centre for Education Policy Study, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, Technology and Higher Education, reveals that for the last five years, English competence among Junior High School students decreased. Moreover, based on research on the competence of English teachers by the Centre for Education Policy Study, English teachers' competence needs to be paid attention to. Based on the standard of CEFR, the English competence of 75% of Junior high schools, 71% of senior high schools, and 78% of vocational schools is still below B2, and 80% of teachers in primary schools are still below B1. This indicates the need for English teachers' competence enhancement (see Chapter 11, this volume, on English teachers' proficiency frameworks).

It is said that one strategy to improve students' English competence is through the teaching of English in formal education. Through an appropriate method, the teaching can be organized at an early age, so there are many opportunities to be successful (see Chapter 28, this volume, on English at the primary level). The program has been designed and organized by the Ministry

of Education and Culture as a measure to enhance the quality of English learning through the enhancement of English teachers' competence. This program is aimed at teachers at the primary and secondary levels. Based on the CEFR standard, for the primary level, the teachers are expected to achieve B1 level and B2 for teachers in Junior High, Senior High, and Vocational Schools. Teachers with English competence below B2 will attend competency enhancement in Level A1 and A2 on English proficiency. Teachers with English competence at B1 and B2 will attend the enhancement program on English pedagogical competence.

One model of TPD that has been found successful in many ways is the model of TPD, as reported by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), called effective teacher professional development program. This program was effective in helping teachers teach PISA-like reading. This was evidenced in the research by Rahmawati (2024) which indicates that three participants of the training were interviewed and said that the training was really useful, beyond expectations. The teachers could write a test of PISA-like reading, select, modify, and create texts for reading lessons, and assess students' answers. The results of the training have been reported in a book entitled *Belajar dan Mengajar Membaca untuk PISA* (Learning and Teaching Reading for PISA) (Emilia et al., 2023).

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed English language education in secondary schools in Indonesia. Based on the discussion in the previous sections, some conclusions can be drawn. First, the reduction of teaching hours in senior high schools since the 2013 curriculum has been reported as a big problem for the development of English teaching in Indonesia. With the introduction of the new *Kurikulum Merdeka*, the teaching of English, especially the number of hours in senior high school, should be increased again to 4 or 5 hours per week to help students gain improved English proficiency. Second, studies have highlighted the importance of developing distinct materials in vocational schools, different from those at junior or senior high schools. This is important given that two types of schools have different purposes of communication, hence requiring different text types and different contexts of situation and culture (see Chapter 9, this volume, on coursebooks and culture). Third, studies reviewed here have also shown that teachers do not fully understand the concepts that underpin the new curriculum, how to apply it in the classroom, and the process and stages of the teaching-learning activity. They need teacher professional development which is effective and can help them to teach better, resulting in better students' achievement. Various programs, such as the program of *Pengembangan Profesi Guru* (PPG) [Teacher Professional Development] and other professional development programs specifically for English teachers, released by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, and Higher Education in 2024 based on the Regulation of the Director General of Teachers and Education Personnels Number 1668/B.B1/ HK.03.01/2024 are important schemes to help develop teachers' capacity. It is expected that these programs could bring about the enhancement of secondary English teachers' competence (see Part IV, Chapters 22–27, this volume, on teacher education).

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