



## EFL Teacher's Assumptions and Role in Designing the New Curriculum

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v10i9.4944>

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### **Abstract**

Curriculum is a component in education that serves as a guide in carrying out learning both in the order of educational units and classes. However, teachers are at the forefront of the implementation of education in Indonesia. so that the teacher and the curriculum are things that are related to one another. The success of implementing a curriculum depends on the teachers who teach in schools. The aims of this study were to display EFL teachers' roles and assumption in designing the new curriculum. The type of research used in this study is qualitative research was carried out by using a set of instruments, i.e. online questionnaire with 15 participants (male and female) from several schools and several backgrounds. Some of them come from public schools and some others come from private schools. The location of the schools is also varied. Some are located in rural areas and some are in urban areas. The participants were chosen randomly from different school in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. From the results of data analysis that has been done, it is found that teachers actually have roles and assumption in designing the new curriculum. The reduced role of the teacher is a big potential in efforts to optimize learning activities. The government, educational units, and teachers have the opportunity to improve the quality of education, especially in the learning setting through two things. First, increasing teacher competence. Second, optimizing the teacher's role in learning, namely as a learning resource, facilitator, manager, demonstrator, mentor, motivator, and evaluator. Because after all ideally the curriculum will not be meaningful if it is not supported by the teacher's ability to implement it.

**Keywords:** *EFL Teachers; Teachers' Role and Assumption; New Curriculum Design*

### **Introduction**

Teachers are at the forefront of the implementation of education in Indonesia. The success of education is in the hands of the teacher. Teachers are individuals who deal directly with students in class in learning and have an important role to make students of good quality academically, expertise, emotional maturity, moral and spiritual (Faridah, 2013).<sup>1</sup> To take these responsibilities, the government's support and efforts are needed through important steps or policies such as the preparation and establishment of a curriculum. Curriculum serves as the foundation of education, providing a framework for organizing and delivering content, skills, and knowledge to students. It is determining how teaching and learning conducted in educational institutions, so that it can be said that the curriculum is closely related to the quality of education, although the curriculum is not the only factor that influences the quality of education (Nuraini, 2020).

The curriculum is the starting point for achieving success in education, as well as describing how the quality of education develops. As is the case with the development of science and technology, the curriculum has also undergone several changes in order to be able to adapt to the times. The first curriculum created after Indonesia's independence was the 1947 Lesson Plan. Then changes began to become the 1975 Curriculum, 1984 Curriculum, 1994 Curriculum, 2004 Competency-Based Curriculum, 2006 Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP), 2013 Curriculum, and the last one is the currently implemented curriculum that is independent curriculum.<sup>3</sup> The characteristics and vision and mission of each curriculum were different and had different abilities and strengths.

However, changes and determination of the curriculum in Indonesia are the authority of the Indonesian Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology. In other hand, there is no interference from the principal, teachers, or other external factors that need to be considered in preparing the curriculum. The curriculum change plan requires a teacher who is ready to implement it in the field. Education is currently facing a major problem with the competence of its teachers. This is the impact of the previous education policy which recruited teachers at random so that educational institutions were filled with incompetent people (Rizali, Sidi, dkk, 2009:13). Thus, it is not impossible if this becomes a challenge for teachers in adjusting and implementing each curriculum in the learning process. If the curriculum standards are not in accordance with the readiness and abilities of teachers and students, then this will no longer be a challenge but a problem in implementing it.

For instance, in implementing 2013 curriculum, difficulties were found in; applying the steps of the scientific approach but students are passive in the classroom and it is difficult to measure something abstract like the aspects of spirituality and attitude (Yulia, 2017). It is become more complex when it comes to the implementation stage of Merdeka curriculum. several obstacles such as the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum program seems forced that not all teachers welcomed the socialization of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. It also lacks of competence of human resources in schools. This is because the teachers who have participated in socialization and training only use the Merdeka Mengajar platform. The teachers just install the application without any followup (Sunarni & Karyono, 2023). Those problems occur because there is a mismatch between teacher readiness and competency with the applicable curriculum standards. Because teachers ultimately have to implement the curriculum, they also have to know first the purpose of changing the curriculum and what needs to be changed.

Furthermore, they will automatically be able to adjust and anticipate the upcoming problems that might occur. Involving teachers in the design of the curriculum can be highly beneficial and effective. Teachers possess first-hand experience and insight into the needs and abilities of their students, which makes their involvement crucial in creating a curriculum that aligns with the specific goals and requirements of the educational institution. To overcome this case, this research was aimed to investigate how the views of teachers would be if they were given the opportunity to contribute to compiling the curriculum.

## **Method**

Qualitative research was carried out by using a set of instruments, i.e. online questionnaire with 15 participants (male and female) from several schools and several backgrounds. Some of them come from public schools and some others come from private schools. The location of the schools is also varied. Some are located in rural area and some are in urban area. The participants were chosen randomly from different schools in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. The online questionnaire consists of some questions investigating about EFL teachers' role and assumption in designing the new curriculum. The questions required close-ended answers (in scales) and open-ended answers in short paragraph. Having the questionnaire administered to the participants, online interview was arranged in order to confirm information gained from the questionnaire.

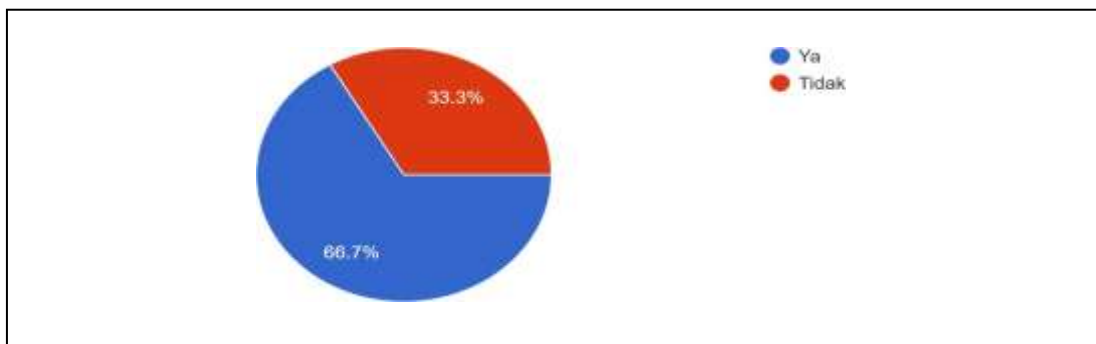
## Finding and Discussion

### 1. EFL Teacher's Assumptions in New Curriculum Design

In the following, the researchers present a table showing the results of filling out the questionnaire by choosing 2 options, namely "Yes" and "No", where if the participant choose "Yes" then it means that the assumption is felt by the teacher and if they choose "No" it means that the teacher does not feel the assumption and this is the table that shows results related to the roles and assumption of EFL teacher toward the designing of new curriculum.

No	Questions	Yes	No
<b>Teachers' Assumption</b>			
1	The preparation of the curriculum is based on overall consideration by looking at the conditions and circumstances of students at school	66.7 %	33.3 %
2	The curriculum compiled by the government is in accordance with the conditions and needs of students in all schools	33.3 %	66.7 %
3	The teacher has succeeded in carrying out learning in accordance with the applicable curriculum	66.7 %	33.3 %
4	Curriculum content is still too dense indicated by the number of lessons and a lot of extensive material and its difficulty is beyond degree child age development.	66.7 %	33.3 %
5	The curriculum is fully competency-based according to the demands of the function and goals of national education	100%	0%
6	The curriculum is not yet sensitive and responsive to social changes that occur at the local, national and global levels.	66.7 %	33.3 %
7	Assessment standards do not yet lead to competency-based assessments (attitudes, skills and knowledge) and do not strictly require regular remediation.	100%	0%

Furthermore, we also present a sample of the raw form of the questionnaire filled out by EFL teachers from various schools in the form of a pie chart where there are 2 pictures that distinguish the Yes and No answer options from the assumptions listed in each questionnaire. The questionnaire that we include is the first assumption where 66.7% of EFL teachers agree by choosing Yes, which means that they feel this assumption, while the remaining 33.3% of teachers choose no, which means that some of the EFL teachers who filled out this questionnaire do not feel this assumption.



Picture 1: Teachers' assumption about the preparation of the curriculum is based on overall consideration by looking at the conditions and circumstances of students at school

## 2. Interview of Teachers' Role

Teacher 1:

The form of contribution that can be made by the teacher in compiling the curriculum is *“that the teacher dares to teach students according to the needs of students because students have different levels of understanding”*

My advice as a teacher for the curriculum in the future if I am given the opportunity to participate in the preparation of the curriculum is *“to apply cross-interest subjects according to student expertise and the teacher continues to help students hone them”*

Teacher 2:

The form of contribution that can be made by the teacher in compiling the curriculum is *“Provide advice according to conditions at school”*

My advice as a teacher for the curriculum in the future if I am given the opportunity to participate in the preparation of the curriculum is *“please adjust to the conditions at school”*

Teacher 3:

The form of contribution that can be made by the teacher in compiling the curriculum is *“Immediately handle to complete files which have been determined by orders such as RPP, prosen, Prota, etc”*.

Advice as a teacher for the curriculum in the future if they are given the opportunity to participate in the preparation of the curriculum is *“My suggestion is that the curriculum in the future is more inclined for students to do more practice after the material is finished per chapter. To know the ability/response of each student”*.

Teachers' involvement in designing curricula has not received serious attention from the government, although the problem teachers faced in implementing each curriculum is being heard. Based on the questionnaire, most do not agree with the formulation of a curriculum based on overall consideration by looking at the conditions and circumstances of students at school. Due to the fact that many teachers have difficulty adjusting the learning system of the curriculum to the conditions of their students. This is because some teachers think that the learning system in certain curricula is too high for them, students and the existing facilities and infrastructure.

Other results also show that the curriculum is not yet sensitive and responsive to social changes that occur at the local, national and global levels. Most of the teachers also agree that the assessment standards do not yet lead to competency-based assessments (attitudes, skills and knowledge) and do not strictly require regular remediation. One possible reason because teachers do not have room to determine curriculum content or determine curriculum targets. The role of the teacher is limited to carrying out the curriculum that has been prepared. All contents of the curriculum including goals, materials, strategies, media, learning resources, evaluation, time, and all of its components have been determined by the curriculum developer. The teacher only acts as a technical staff trying to carry out what is stated in the curriculum document (Faridah, 2013).

This result is in line with research conducted by Federica Castro in 2020 about Teachers' Voices and Curricular Change: A Critical View. The previous study was based on the critical theory of teachers' voice, participation and involvement, in designing new English curriculum that had been conducted by researcher. So, this research had been central issue from Abudu & Mensah in 2016; Bao, 2016; Carl,

2005; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Gozali, Claassen Thrush, Soto-Peña, Whang, & Luschei, 2017. The problem was teachers were not taken account and the the institution tend to neglect their voices. Initially, teachers complained about not understanding the reasons for a change, they did not understand clearly what was expected from them in this new curriculum. when it came to the implementation stage, the team had to deal with teachers' feelings of fear, uncertainty, anxiety and insecurity about their capabilities to meet the challenges of a completely new way of teaching English as a foreign language.

While the present research, the researcher was investigated teacher's view on the curriculum and they contribution if they were got opportunities to design curriculum. The results obtained in the current study indicate that there are several aspects that have not been considered in the preparation of the curriculum. And the fact that teachers and students have difficulty implementing and adapting their abilities to the applicable curriculum standards. Teachers also convey the contribution they will make if they participate in the preparation of the curriculum. Once teachers contribute to designing a curriculum paper, they can provide valuable input and expertise in several key areas.

First, Teachers are familiar with a wide range of instructional resources, textbooks, digital tools, and supplementary materials. They can recommend specific resources that support the curriculum content and objectives to produce materials which are valid and feasible in view of both teaching practice and the intended curriculum. Second, Teachers understand the diverse needs, abilities, and learning styles of their students. They can contribute by suggesting strategies to differentiate instruction and make the curriculum accessible to all learners. Teachers have experience in assessing student learning and progress. They can provide insights into appropriate assessment methods, tools, and formats that align with the curriculum.

The process of (re-) designed provides opportunities for teachers to reflect on the curriculum starting from their personal knowledge and beliefs, their practice, and their goals for student learning (Parke & Coble, 1997). By actively involving teachers in curriculum design, their contributions can help create a curriculum that is well-rounded, engaging, and effective in meeting the educational goals of the institution and the needs of the students.

## ***Conclusion***

The curriculum is the implementation guideline learning activities to achieve educational goals for educational units and teachers. Until now, Indonesia has experienced several curriculum changes starting from lesson plan, decomposed lesson plan, elementary school education plan, elementary school curriculum, Development School Pilot Project Curriculum (PPSP), 1984 curriculum, 1994 curriculum, 1997 curriculum, KBK, and KTSP, 2013 Curriculum (K-13) This change shows education dynamic in Indonesia. In the 2022/2023 school year, the government has again launched a new curriculum called the Merdeka Curriculum. there has been a big change, especially from the role of the teacher who is the executor, so that in its preparation it is also necessary to consider the teacher's suggestions given based on the experience they got while implementing the previous curriculum.

The reduced role of the teacher is a big potential in efforts to optimize learning activities. The government, educational units, and teachers have the opportunity to improve the quality of education, especially in the learning setting through two things. First, increasing teacher competence. Second, optimizing the teacher's role in learning, namely as a learning resource, facilitator, manager, demonstrator, mentor, motivator, and evaluator. Because after all ideally the curriculum will not be meaningful if it is not supported by the teacher's ability to implement it.

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