Indonesian English Teachers' Narratives on Adapting to Curriculum Change

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ABSTRACT

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Curriculum change has occurred multiple times in Indonesia. The latest curriculum change to Kurikulum Merdeka (Emancipated Curriculum) posed some challenges and difficulties among teachers because they were required to implement the curriculum and any policies from the central government in a relatively short time. The present study aims to describe how two Indonesian EFL teachers adapted to such curriculum change. Two English teachers with over a decade of experience were involved. One taught at a vocational high school in a rural area, focusing on practical English. The other taught at an urban school, emphasizing academic English. To collect the narratives, semi-structured interviews were conducted. Thematic analysis with predefined themes based on Fullan's theoretical framework was applied to point out unique data patterns that would shed some light on how the two participants adjusted themselves and their practices in response to changes in curricular policies. This study will examine how teachers adapted to rapid curricular changes in Indonesia, including the challenges they faced, the support they received, and the strategies they employed, such as the utilization of online resources like YouTube.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Educational curriculum constantly changes because it must adapt to any trends developments in teaching and learning as well as global challenges and needs. In Indonesia, this is particularly evident in English language education, where the recent implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has significantly reshaped the landscape. This reform, with its emphasis on student-centered learning and project-based approaches, offers both opportunities and challenges for English language teachers. While the curriculum aims to foster critical thinking, creativity, and global competence, it also demands significant adaptation from teachers. This includes navigating increased workloads, adopting new pedagogical approaches, and engaging in ongoing professional development. As a result, English language teachers in Indonesia are facing a complex interplay of factors, including the shift from traditional, teacher-centered methods to more student-centered approaches, as advocated by experts like Richards and Rodgers (2014). This transition requires teachers to move beyond a focus on grammar and vocabulary to prioritize the development of students' communicative skills, enabling them to thrive in the interconnected global world.

There are two important, related aspects to any major curriculum change: the change that occurs in the curriculum, and the change that needs to occur in the minds of the various people

affected by the curriculum (Macalister & Nation, 2019). Teachers and students are the most affected by the curriculum shifts that have taken place because they are the main actors in carrying out the curriculum. That way stakeholders should pay attention to the impact that arises, especially on teachers, in making modifications to the curriculum.

Curriculum changes can have impacts on teachers in various aspects depending on the concept of curriculum changes that occur, such as teachers' feelings and their beliefs. Many teachers felt pressured and worried about the management of change and the current assessment systems as well as they are worried about their own English proficiency because the new curriculum demands higher English skills in students (Wang, 2007). Some teachers are able to accept change and some are difficult to accept it as it is contrary to their teaching beliefs (Troudi & Alwan, 2010). Curriculum changes require the stakeholders to organize training so that the implementation of the changes that happen can be carried out optimally by teachers. But in reality, there are still many stakeholders who ignore this where the training was held in one day and many of the teachers were dissatisfied with it (GovenderGovender, 2018).

Curriculum refers to the overall plan or design for a course and how the content of a course is transformed into a blueprint for teaching and learning which enables achieving the desired learning outcomes (Richards, 2013). The curriculum takes content and shapes it into a plan for how to conduct effective teaching and learning. It is a map of how to achieve the outputs of students' intended performance (Wiggins & Mctighe, 2005). Thus, Curriculum is a plan that is designed for selecting, presenting, and teaching the content of a course in order to achieve some predetermined outcomes or objectives. This plan also includes evaluation procedures that measure the extent to which the course has helped learners to reach the intended objectives or learning outcomes.

On the other hand, change may come about either because it is imposed on us (by natural events or deliberate reform) or because either the stakeholder and the teacher voluntarily participate in or even initiate change when they find dissatisfaction, inconsistency, or intolerability in their current situation (Fullan, 2001). That way curriculum changes must be carried out in an appropriate way so that changes can be accepted and recipients of changes can carry out the changes that occur. There are several aspects that will increase the likelihood of a change being successfully introduced, namely Steps in Introducing Change, Seeing the Need for Change, Deciding on the Size of the Change, Realistic Change, Teachers Belief, Using a Variety of Change Strategies, Innovation, Management and Long-Term Support (Nation & Macalister, 2010).

The previous couple of decades have seen a change in the curriculum for teaching English as a foreign language as a result of revolutionary and evolutionary developments in pedagogy, psychology, and technology. There have been many previous studies discussing teacher adaptation to curriculum changes in EFL countries, such as research conducted by Thao & Mai, (2022) investigating EFL high-school teachers' responses to ELT pedagogical reforms in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam. Through a mixed-method approach, the researchers found that teachers generally accepted these reforms, with a strong emphasis on factors like students' learning outcomes influencing their willingness to change teaching practices. The study highlighted the role of internal and external factors in shaping teachers' responses, with self-efficacy playing a significant but potentially limited role in driving change. Time constraints emerged as a critical barrier to teachers' positive responses to reform initiatives, underscoring the importance of adequate time for learning, training, and reflection. Still in Vietnam, there is another research conducted by Dimmock (2021) which found that the adaptation process to curriculum reform relies on internal resources such as in-house professional development and

building school culture to complement external provisions for effective implementation of reforms. He underscores the significance of internal resources, school culture, and professional development in driving changes in teaching and learning within schools.

Besides Vietnam, similar research can also be found in UAE (Troudi & Alwan, 2010), Iran (Rahimi & Alavi, 2017), South Africa (GovenderGovender, 2018), China (Liu & Wang, 2020), Turkey (Gelmez-Burakgazi, 2020), and Costa Rica (Vargas Solís et al., 2023). Most of the findings from these studies are varied, as there are teachers who view curriculum changes as something positive as well as the impacts and challenges faced by diverse stakeholders, from education policy makers to teachers, regarding changes and also there are problems in implementing these changes. According to Wang, (2007), teachers have expressed significant internal and external requirements when it comes to handling the curriculum. Internal requirements encompass a thorough comprehension of the updated English curriculum and the necessity to enhance their own language skills. Otherwise, teachers have also voiced external needs such as the demand for support from the public, school administration, principals, parents, and students in relation to the new curriculum. Additionally, they have emphasized the importance of organizing talks, seminars, and training sessions focused on the implementation of the updated curriculum.

In the Indonesian context, the education system has undergone significant transformation with the introduction of the Merdeka Curriculum. While this reform promises greater flexibility and autonomy for teachers, its implementation has presented numerous challenges, particularly for educators in rural areas. Previous research has explored teacher perceptions (Abduh et al., 2022), beliefs (Puspitasari et al., 2020), and challenges (Sakkir et al., 2021) associated with curriculum changes. However, a deeper understanding of the specific strategies teachers employ to adapt to these changes, especially within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, remains elusive. As Pak et al. (2020) argue, curriculum changes often pose challenges, particularly when teachers lack adequate support. In the case of the Merdeka Curriculum, these challenges are exacerbated for rural teachers who may face limitations in terms of access to resources, technology, and professional development opportunities (Jasrial, 2023). While previous studies have touched on challenges and perceptions of curriculum changes, there is a need for more in-depth research on the specific strategies teachers employ to adapt to these changes. In consequence, the objective of this research is to learn about how curricular change impacted teachers as well as how they utilized and navigated any available resources to deal with the challenges, especially investigating how teachers collaborate with colleagues and deal with online materials.

B. METHOD

The participants of this study are two high school English teachers from Majalengka and Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Sari (pseudonym) was an English teacher with an undergraduate degree on English language education. She had taught for 25 years at various levels of education in Indonesia, from kindergarten to secondary level, and she had undergone four curriculum changes. At the time this study was conducted, Sari was teaching English at a vocational school in Majalengka. The school where Sari teaches is oriented towards applied English, preparing students for direct employment upon graduation. Ayu, the other participant, was an English teacher with 26 years of teaching experience and had undergone five curriculum changes. She had a master's degree in English language education, and she was teaching English at a state Islamic high school in Yogyakarta. Ayu's school focuses more on preparing students for higher education by emphasizing academic English. The two teachers were selected as research participants

because of their significant experience in dealing with at least four curriculum changes in Indonesia. This experience makes them relevant sources of information to explore the challenges and adaptation processes associated with curriculum change, which is the main focus of this study. In addition, their involvement in various trainings related to the implementation of different curricula provides insight into how emerging issues are addressed through various approaches and solutions. Furthermore, the two teachers teach in two different types of educational institutions, creating diverse adaptation contexts. This variety of conditions is expected to enrich the data obtained, providing a broader perspective on how teachers navigate curriculum change.

The data for this study were gathered through an in-depth interview examining Indonesian EFL teachers' experiences of curriculum change. The interview lasted one hour and was conducted face-to-face just once for each teacher. The interviewer and the resource person's question and answer session was audio recorded with the participant's permission during the interview. This study used the construct of "Educational Change" developed by Michael Fullan (2004). This theory has a main focus on genuine change. It is a change that, whether it is something we want or not, is a significant and impactful personal and collective experience that involves conflicting feelings and a lack of clarity. The authors chose this theory because it was suitable for this research from several aspects, namely the involvement of teachers and stakeholders, use of resources, and alteration of beliefs.

Fullan's theory highlights the importance of involving teachers and other stakeholders in educational change. This research examines how teachers engage in training, seek resources, and collaborate with their colleagues. Fullan's theory also includes resource utilization and the importance of continuous learning in dealing with change. This research touches on how teachers use resources to overcome curriculum challenges. In addition, Fullan describes that change can involve changing beliefs or views. This research discusses the impact of curriculum changes on teachers' teaching beliefs. This theory has three main components, namely the possible use of new or revised materials (instructional resources such as curriculum materials, standards, or technologies), the possible use of new teaching approaches (i.e., new pedagogies, especially learning partnerships with students), and the possible alteration of beliefs (e.g., pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying particular new policies or programs) which are reduced to 8 interview questions. The first two questions are general questions to open and bridge to the context, namely "How long have you been teaching and how many times have you experienced curriculum changes?" and "Which curriculum is the most challenging and the most impactful? Why?".

The first component of this theory is reduced to two questions, namely "What challenges do you face in dealing with curriculum changes? How did you overcome the difficulties associated with it?" and "How do you utilize and navigate any available resources to deal with the challenges?". Then the second component was reduced to three questions, namely "How many times have you participated in any professional development workshops or training related to curriculum changes? How have they helped you in adapting to the new curriculum?", "How do you collaborate with colleagues or engage in professional learning communities to navigate and adapt to curriculum changes?", and "What is an example of a successful adaptation you made when implementing a new curriculum?". Finally, the third component was reduced to one question, namely "How does curricular change impact your beliefs in teaching?".

The acquired data has been analyzed using thematic analysis by categorizing the responses into multiple significant aspects. The researchers thoroughly reviewed, transcribed, and explained the information clearly and accurately. The researchers used Braun & Clarke (2006)

thematic analysis method, which detects, analyzes, and reports patterns (themes) within the data, providing a detailed and organized overview. Thematic analysis aims to identify noteworthy or intriguing themes in the data, which are then used to discuss findings or convey information about specific issues. Braun & Clarke (2006) distinguish between semantic and latent themes. Semantic themes capture the explicit meaning of participants' words, while latent themes delve deeper into underlying concepts, assumptions, and ideologies that shape the semantic content. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), the analytical process involves six steps:

(1) familiarizing oneself with the data; (2) generating initial codes; (3) searching for themes; (4) reviewing themes; (5) defining themes; and (6) writing up (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Researchers aim to provide data analyzed at the sentiment level and further refined to the latent level, as per Braun and Clarke's framework. This approach allows researchers to consolidate different themes and gather similar data into a primary cluster based on their findings. After reading it extensively, in-depth, and several times, the researchers tried to transcribe and explain the information as clearly and precisely as possible, as well as to describe the data acquired from the results of interviews with the participants. The data were systematically segmented and coded, resulting in six primary codes: confusion, convenience, struggle, annoying, overcoming, and collaboration. Each code was analyzed for its alignment with Fullan's components: use of new resources, teaching approaches, and belief changes. To assess the trustworthiness of the utilized research instrument, the authors employed the peer debriefing method. The rationale for selecting this method stems from its practicality and the avoidance of arduous scheduling negotiations with external parties. The individuals solicited by the authors for debriefing were English Language Education students from the 2021 cohort who had previously participated in the VietTESOL international conference.

Following a thorough discussion process, the credibility result indicated an 84% similarity, with a breakdown of 16 identical points out of a total of 19 points subjected to comparison. Discrepancies emerged in the interpretation of components within the research construct for the remaining 3 points. For instance, in the statement, "I have felt that the curriculum has changed several times, but actually the essence of the material is the same. I see the essence of the material is the same, especially in English. The current Merdeka curriculum has the same learning method as the 2004 curriculum, so it's a genre-based approach." The authors categorized this under component 1, whereas the comparator categorized it under component 3. The final status of these discrepant points was considered as supplementary, resulting in two components being integrated within one point. This integration occurred because these two components could still be categorized within the same point. The same phenomenon also occurred with two other points. In addition to peer debriefing, member checking was employed by sharing the transcribed data with the participants to confirm the accuracy of the recorded information.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research will be divided into 4 aspects, which are the rapid changes in the curriculum in Indonesia, training and administration that burden teachers, teachers' collaboration, and the use of Youtube as a resource and access to information about curriculum changes.

1. Experiences with multiple changes of curriculum in Indonesia

Curriculum changes have a different impact on each teacher. This is due to differences in background and place of teaching of the teachers that the researchers interviewed. The biggest challenge teachers face is that the curriculum often changes. In Indonesia itself, changing the

Minister would also change the applicable curriculum. Some of the curricula that have been implemented in Indonesia are the 1994 Curriculum, the 2004 Curriculum (KBK, Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi), the 2006 Curriculum (KTSP, Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan), and the 2013 Curriculum (KURTILAS, Kurikulum Dua Ribu Tiga Belas). The newest curriculum implemented in Indonesia is the Merdeka Curriculum. This curriculum came into effect when the Minister of Education changed in 2019. He replaced the curriculum that had been implemented previously by the previous minister of education. *"The challenge is adaptation, changing ministers then changing curricula. What's hotter (new) is the Merdeka curriculum because it's still 2 years here (in this school). But do not rule out later that there will be changes, next year there will also be changes, because usually the above is different, different ministries of education have different curricula, because sometimes they also want to have an identity in their current era, who is confused? Yes, we (teachers) are the executors below."* (Sari).

Sari expresses concern over the rapid pace of curriculum changes in Indonesia, fearing that it will negatively impact teacher performance. She believes that instead of focusing on students, teachers are forced to constantly adapt to new curricula. Sari urges education stakeholders in Indonesia to carefully consider the implications of curriculum changes, emphasizing that the process is not immediate and affects various factors, particularly teachers who are responsible for implementing the curriculum. She highlights the uncertainty and confusion felt by educators due to the differing priorities and objectives of different ministries of education. This uncertainty poses challenges for teachers in maintaining consistency and coherence in their teaching methods. *"For vocational school, the one that has the most effect on students is KTSP first. Because when we study at vocational high schools, we focus more on speaking, how to greet guests, how to offer help or suggestions, and how to continue to suggest opinions. So in fact, vocational school students are better than they used to be. Now (the Merdeka Curriculum) is equated with ordinary high school, we study descriptive texts, narrative texts."* (Sari).

Sari also suggests that vocational school is more suitable for the implementation of KTSP compared to the Merdeka Curriculum because the English language material at vocational schools at KTSP places more emphasis on communicative learning, whereas in the Merdeka Curriculum the material is the same as high school, such as learning many types of texts, so it does not meet what students need. This indicates that KTSP prioritized real-world communication and interpersonal skills. However, this is different from Ayu where she is not too concerned about the curriculum changes that have occurred because, according to her, the material delivered is the same, whereas only the methods used are different. *"If I look at it (feels about curriculum changes) this way, I'm a civil servant, I follow the government, so I'll just do what they want, but I already know the basics, right? Listen, you already know that. So no matter which curriculum, the material is the same, everything is the same. Oh it turns out the material is the same, but later you are told to use a different method. So for me it's the same (curriculum change). For me there was no significant impact because what I faced was students who wanted to use any teaching method they would quickly understand. Additionally, I don't teach compulsory English subjects but advanced English, so that students who attend those who really like English, it becomes even more comfortable to teach it."* (Ayu).

Because Ayu is a civil servant, she just follows stakeholder policies and feels fine. Her personal opinion also does not matter what curriculum applies because the material taught is the same but through different methods. She perceives the impact of curriculum changes on their teaching as minimal, particularly because she feels confident in her ability to teach and believes that students can adapt to different teaching methods. One of Ayu's strategies for adapting to

various changes in the curriculum is that she has implemented a method of teaching text type material using a genre-based approach. According to her, whatever the curriculum in force, the genre-based approach will always be a mecca for teaching text types so that it will be easy to adapt to changes that occur. She also teaches students who already like English, therefore she and her students do not experience significant difficulties in implementing curriculum changes.

2. The Burden of Administration

The second impact felt by teachers is the training provided by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, but this training takes up teacher teaching time which will cause teachers not teaching in class and make students fall behind on material targets. On the other hand, the new curriculum requires teachers with greater administrative burdens than the previous curriculum, hence could sometimes cause teachers to prepare more on administrative works than focusing on arranging the learning process in class. *"All curricula have their own impact even though the newest one is the Merdeka Curriculum, they say it's independent, but after being implemented for 2 years it actually makes the teacher not focus on teaching, but instead on administration. But I'm sure it's also the same from the previous curricula. Maybe it's because it's still new, so there must be a lot that needs to be implemented. What's really impactful is the current one, the Merdeka curriculum, because not everyone understands it, not everyone can listen, like to understand what the change from syllabus to ATP is, how to do it. Sometimes it becomes a challenge for new and old teachers to understand something new."* (Sari).

In the new curriculum, the Merdeka Curriculum, many term changes in administration have occurred causing confusion for old and new teachers to comprehend the administrative changes. For example, the teacher was confused about changing the term "syllabus" in the old curriculum to the term "Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran (ATP, or Learning Objective)" in the new curriculum. This puzzles the teachers, especially older ones, to arrange works in administration. Especially for the administration of the newest curriculum, the administrative format provided by stakeholders is in digital; this is different from previous curricula which still used paperworks. *"So before that (in 2004 curriculum), there were no laptops and the use of computers was still rare, so I made the administration written on paper, but there was already a format, so the instructional goal was written in there, so just fill out. Well, the format didn't disappear, I saved it, so my administration followed that one. But now it's paperless, because I'm an old person, I accidentally deleted administrative data. I also sometimes forget where to put the data. It's different when it's printed, it's different from today's young people who might be better at this."* (Ayu).

Teachers who have been teaching for a long time have low mastery of the newest technology, thereby often making mistakes. The speaker reflects on their transition from paper-based administration to digital methods, showcasing their adaptation to technological advancements. However, they also acknowledge challenges associated with this transition, such as accidental deletion of data and difficulties in navigating digital systems. The latest curriculum in Indonesia needs to provide assistance, therefore teachers who have taught for a long time can adapt to curriculum changes. The challenges experienced by teachers, such as rapid curriculum changes and administrative burdens, are not isolated issues. These aspects are interlinked and cumulatively impact their ability to deliver quality education. To navigate these challenges, teachers often rely on collaboration and the use of online resources, as discussed in the following sections.

3.   Collaboration with Other Teachers

Due to the rapid changes in the curriculum in Indonesia, teachers are required to quickly utilize the available resources in order to adapt to the new curriculum. One of the resources that is the main reference is the curriculum training program from Indonesian education stakeholders, then the training is developed by the Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran (MGMP, or Teachers Working Group) in their respective regions. Although sometimes there are problems that cause the delivery of information is not optimal due to the lack of movement from the working group itself as happened with Sari. *"The training was limited, but there was an acquaintance who was the facilitator, so I just asked around that way. In Majalengka, there are not enough English activities in the MGMP, so it is less active. It's like when we asked for an example module, it was difficult, there wasn't any. There are only a few training exercises, but we have to actively search, such as searching on YouTube, on the internet, we search for it ourselves. Even though the training is in our account (the teacher's account at the Ministry of Education and Culture), we are limited in time. If we participate in training several times, someone will definitely be sacrificed. Student right? We don't teach in class. Students will be happy if the teacher is not in, but they are left behind. Our target material will not be reached by the students."* (Sari).

Sari complained about the lack of socialization activities for curriculum changes by the English Teachers Working Group in the area where he taught, causing teachers to lack access to information. Another problem that arises is also the amount of training that takes up teaching time making students fall behind from the target material. It is better if education stakeholders in Indonesia consider the time to conduct training. This is different from Ayu whose working group where he teaches is active in his movement so that he conveys a lot about curriculum changes to teachers. *"So every time there is a change of curriculum, change of handbooks, right there is DIKLAT (Education and Training), then we are trained at the MGMP. The Merdeka Curriculum in this school started last year, while in other schools it started this year. In other schools, maybe the information is limited and the enthusiasm to welcome something new is a bit lacking, but for us here there is no problem. The MGMP is active in providing access to the latest information and often holds gatherings like yesterday when UII invited an English teacher on Monday, and on Tuesday our MGMP also held a meeting."* (Ayu).

The issue of disseminating access to information is a common concern, including education stakeholders in Indonesia because they have to ensure that MGMPs in various regions in Indonesia convey what is told by the center, don't not relying wholly on the working group, as there must be a control process that is carried out. Disparities exist between different MGMPs, with those in larger urban centers exhibiting higher levels of activity and effectiveness in disseminating information regarding curriculum changes compared to MGMPs in smaller cities. Active MGMPs in big cities often provide more comprehensive support and resources, leading to smoother transitions for teachers as they adapt to new curricula. This discrepancy underscores the need for greater attention to be directed towards enhancing the engagement and capabilities of MGMPs in smaller cities, ensuring that all educators have access to the necessary support and information to effectively implement curriculum changes. Apart from fellow subject teachers in MGMP, other collaborations are also carried out between subject teachers. In addition, one of the advantages of the Merdeka Curriculum is that teachers are free to collaborate with anyone to get learning designs that are tailored to the needs of the classes they teach. This is also the case with these two teachers, they both collaborate with other subject teachers to make learning more enjoyable and to adapt to the interests of the students they teach. *"We usually share with other*

teachers, collaborate in teaching, there are machine teachers and English teachers. So students are familiar with the basic vocabulary in the workshop, and others." (Sari).

Sari collaborates with the machine teacher in compiling learning materials by introducing basic vocabularies that her students will encounter when they work later. This really adapts to the needs of the students, where they can quickly become familiar with the objects around them. This also accelerates their understanding in mastering English language skills because the methods applied by this teacher are very communicative. *"If the material is about sports, you can collaborate with a sports teacher."* (Ayu). Ayu also collaborates with other subject teachers to teach in class. She formulated learning materials when there is a sports theme, such as compiling what vocabulary students need to know related to physical health. After compiling the material, she will look for suitable and fun activities for each material. This makes learning not monotonous and makes it easier for teachers to adapt to the curriculum because it makes it easier for them to determine methods and activities for learning materials.

4. The use of online resources to deal with curriculum changes

The Merdeka Curriculum frees up teachers in using reference teaching materials. They can get it from various books or even the internet according to the teacher's needs. One of the resources that teachers use to adapt to changing curricula is the use of cyberspace. Sari and Ayu both respectively use YouTube as a medium to study curriculum changes apart from the training held. *"Apart from training, I also look for other information on YouTube. To teach according to the Merdeka curriculum, I looked for it on YouTube. Frankly, I imitate the examples too. Oh, here's how (to teach in a new curriculum). So it (searching for information) doesn't have to be in class (training), if the material is about sports, you can collaborate with a sports teacher. I searched for an example on youtube of that. I also searched about what is the problem with the Merdeka curriculum even though the principal has already shared it."* (Ayu).

Ayu seeks information about curriculum changes and learning materials through Youtube, in addition to the training provided by the government and MGMP. She can flexibly search for something according to what her class needs. Sometimes she also uses the observe, imitate, and modify strategy in applying the examples she finds on Youtube. Moreover, the information provided in various trainings is often incomplete, so she has to look for other sources to get a better understanding. In addition to relying on MGMP for information, Sari supplements her resources by utilizing platforms like YouTube when encountering challenges in accessing necessary information. Living outside a major urban center, Sari faces the reality of limited access to comprehensive support systems like MGMP. Therefore, she takes proactive measures to seek out the information she requires, demonstrating resourcefulness and adaptability in navigating the educational landscape. *"In Majalengka, there are not enough English teachers in the MGMP, so it is less active. It's like when we asked for an example module, it was difficult, there wasn't any. There are only a few trainings, but we have to actively seek, such as searching on YouTube, on the internet, we search for it ourselves."* (Sari)

This shows the difficulties teachers like Sari face, especially those outside big cities where there isn't much help available like MGMP. Sari looks for information herself, using YouTube when she needs to. Sari's experience underscores the necessity for concerted efforts to strengthen support structures and facilitate greater collaboration and information-sharing within the education sector to empower educators and enhance the quality of teaching and learning outcomes. In addition, the reason teachers use YouTube as an additional platform alongside PMM (Platform Merdeka Mengajar) provided by the government is due to YouTube's inherent

effectiveness. While PMM is a valuable resource, it often consumes a significant portion of the teachers' time that could otherwise be spent on classroom instruction. On the other hand, YouTube offers a more flexible and efficient way for teachers to access educational content. This allows them to maximize their teaching time and enhance the overall learning experience for their students. The Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on teacher autonomy extends to finding resources. EFL teachers like Sari and Ayu leverage YouTube to go beyond official training. YouTube's strength lies in its accessibility and diverse content. They can find explanations of the curriculum, observe engaging teaching methods for specific topics like sports, and fill in knowledge gaps from incomplete training materials. This flexibility and wealth of information make YouTube a valuable tool for EFL teachers adapting to the evolving educational landscape.

5. Discussion

Previous research on curriculum changes in EFL contexts has explored various aspects, including teacher perceptions, challenges faced by stakeholders, and teacher needs for internal development and external support (e.g., Wang, 2007; GovenderGovender, 2018). The findings of this study resonate with these broader themes. Teachers like Sari and Ayu experience the burden of adaptation and the need for additional support. This study broadens the scope of EFL teacher generalization in Indonesia by focusing on two EFL teachers on the island of Java, expanding on previous research that was limited to North Sumatra. The results of this research are also similar to research conducted by Adnan & Prihananto (2022) where there is a gap between rural and urban areas which influences the implementation of curriculum changes. For instance, the disparities between Sari and Ayu's experiences can be explained by their distinct geographical and institutional contexts. Sari, teaching in a smaller city, faces challenges due to the limited support provided by the MGMP. In contrast, Ayu, situated in an urban environment, benefits from a more active and supportive teacher community.

Based on the findings previously presented, there are four main things that are highlighted in this research. The first two points, namely the rapid changes in the curriculum in Indonesia as well as training and administration that burden teachers, are the effects of curriculum changes felt by teachers. Every change must have an effect, according to Fullan (2001) effective change processes shape and reshape good ideas, as they build capacity and ownership among participants so that if you have a good idea and a poor process it will go nowhere. Fullan's theory emphasizes the importance of gradual and inclusive change processes, which is voiced in Sari's concern over the rapid curriculum changes. Her statement that curriculum modifications often occur without adequate preparation aligns with Fullan's argument that effective change processes require sufficient capacity building among stakeholders. Therefore, the execution carried out by the government in implementing the new curriculum must go through a good process in which the welfare of teachers must be considered because they are practitioners who make the curriculum work.

Then the last two points, namely teachers' collaboration and the use of YouTube as a resource, are ways for teachers to overcome and adapt to curriculum changes. Wallace & Louden (1994) emphasized that collaboration in teaching offers a slower and more powerful path towards educational change. This is also supported by research from Davison (2006) which shows that collaborating teachers may benefit from more action oriented teacher research with built-in opportunities for critical reflection and discussion of different views and perceptions of the nature of learning and teaching. The points above strongly support the need for professional development assistance for teachers to adapt, as Pak et al. (2020) emphasized the need for

professional development that goes beyond technical training to support teachers in adapting curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students.

However, this research also identifies a unique aspect - the rise of YouTube as a valuable educational resource. This finding is in line with Yang et al. (2024) who found that the use of YouTube for professional development could strengthen teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards professional practices. This trend underscores the increasing importance of online platforms and the role of teacher autonomy in managing curriculum changes. As teachers seek efficient and accessible tools to enhance their teaching, YouTube provides a flexible and readily available option for educational content. This shift is particularly significant in contexts where official support and resources may be inconsistent or inadequate. Teachers' reliance on YouTube demonstrates their proactive approach to overcoming challenges and ensuring that they can still deliver quality education despite the variability in formal support systems.

The points discussed are relevant to Fullan's three main elements regarding implementing any new program or policy in educational change. These points strengthen Fullan's elements because they demonstrate the critical role of effective change processes and the adoption of new teaching approaches. Fullan also suggests that significant changes can lead teachers to question and potentially modify their existing beliefs about teaching. While the study doesn't go deeply into belief changes, Sari's questioning of the rapid curriculum changes hints at this potential impact. The constant adaptation required by frequent curriculum shifts might cause teachers to re-evaluate their assumptions about curriculum stability and the effectiveness of specific teaching methods in such a dynamic environment. Fullan's framework also underscores three critical elements in implementing change: the need for a clear vision, sufficient resources, and stakeholder engagement. This study shows that when stakeholders are not fully involved and resources are inconsistent, it makes the challenges faced by teachers even harder. These challenges mainly come from how curriculum changes are carried out, with rapid changes and heavy workloads making it hard for teachers to adjust and provide good-quality education. As previously explained, the first two points highlight the challenges teachers face due to the way the curriculum changes are implemented. The rapid changes and excessive workload make it difficult for teachers to effectively adapt and deliver quality education. Then, the next two points represent coping mechanisms teachers use to overcome the difficulties caused by rapid changes. Essentially, the challenges caused by the rapid changes push teachers to find alternative ways to keep up and adapt to the current situation.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The purpose of this research was to explore how EFL teachers in Indonesia adapt to curriculum changes, focusing on their experiences, challenges, and use of resources. By conducting in-depth interviews with two experienced teachers, the study identified four key findings: (1) the rapid pace of curriculum changes creates significant challenges for teachers, including workload and time constraints; (2) inconsistent resources hinder teachers' ability to effectively implement changes; (3) teachers rely on self-directed learning and peer collaboration as coping strategies; and (4) technology, particularly online resources, plays a vital role in their adaptation process. Despite these valuable insights, the study has limitations. The small sample size of two teachers restricts the representativeness of the findings and may not capture the diversity of EFL teachers' experiences across Indonesia. This limitation suggests that the results should be interpreted with caution, as they may not fully reflect the challenges or strategies of teachers in different regions or with varying levels of experience.

To address these limitations, future research should consider expanding the sample size to include teachers from diverse geographical areas and backgrounds, such as those with varying levels of teaching experience or differing access to resources. Specifically, it is recommended to include teachers from Indonesia's 3T *(tertinggal, terdepan, terluar)* regions, as the limited availability of resources and infrastructure in these areas often makes curriculum adaptation significantly more challenging compared to better-supported regions like Java or Sumatra. By focusing on these underserved areas, future studies could uncover unique strategies used by teachers in resource-scarce environments and provide valuable insights for policymakers to design more equitable support systems. Additionally, longitudinal studies could offer a deeper understanding of how teachers' strategies evolve over time and during multiple curriculum reforms. This study also offers recommendations for policymakers to provide ongoing professional development and consistent support for teachers to better equip them for curriculum changes. Besides, a thorough and critical evaluation of the previous curriculum's implementation across Indonesia is essential before any hasty decisions about curriculum changes are made. In summary, EFL teachers are encouraged to embrace collaboration and leverage available resources, such as the internet and peer networks, to overcome challenges during the adaptation process.

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