

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This ultimate chapter presents the conclusions and generates the implications for future research on TEYL.

5.1 Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from the present study involve three major points guided by the research questions framed in the study, which are related to each other. They include the profile of English teaching in the selected municipality in Indonesia, the factors that contribute to students' English learning outcomes, and how the elements best support the pedagogical EYL practices.

Despite its blurred policy, the teaching of English as a foreign language at the primary level in the research site has been widespread. With regard to time allocation for English teaching at school, the modest time approach is likely to remain dominant. 'Modest time' seems to be the most feasible option for English course at the primary education level in the 2013 Curriculum in which the subject is given under no-policy—the school initiates the implementation of the English teaching by considering all of its potentials to conduct the program. To this respect, the officialization of English education at the primary level is crucial as the official status of English in the education field will open avenues to provide and maintain an adequate supply of effective TEYL practices which needs a substantial investment of funds.

The findings of the second research question convince that school, as well as teacher, is the key to the implementation of TEYL. Referring to the bottom-up policy carried out for TEYL, the quality of school should contribute to determining the success of the implementation of English education. Therefore, the study discovers that school accreditation and teacher education affect students' English proficiency levels. It leads to the conclusion that the higher the rank of the accreditation, the better the quality of the teachers and facilities, and thus the better

the implementation of the school program, including the English teaching and learning activities.

Concerning the statement that under appropriate conditions, an early start can be beneficial (Garton and Copland, 2019; Johnson, 2019), the findings of the present study reveal that with the support of the other two vital stakeholders, the parents and the university, the school is able to give opportunities to the teachers to have access to professional development and enhance their EYL teaching skills and knowledge. The three selected excellent schools participating in this study are the exemplary Professional Development Schools. For the teachers, the mutual partnerships that are built between the schools and the local universities open the avenues to professional development opportunities to enhance their knowledge and teaching skills and to be able to deliver the instructions effectively. Teachers' positive attitudes towards the training they participated in, then, position them in the best frame of mind to be able to construct the communicative teaching and learning process and enact the pitched curriculum. As quoted from Westbrook et al. (2013), "teachers' use of communicative strategies encourages the pedagogic practices that are interactive in nature, and is more likely to impact on student learning outcomes and hence be effective" (p.1). This study also concludes that teachers should at least meet the Level B1 in the CEFR to be able to conduct communicative EYL teaching. Teacher's self-initiated professional development turns out to be another enabling factor that elevates teachers' pedagogy.

Finally, the findings of this explanatory study support the conclusion of the previous studies (Singleton and Pfenninger 2019; Rixon, 2013) that early English learning has currently been established as the norm where educational structures have been created to accommodate it. It brings benefits when it is conducted under appropriate conditions, among which are the ones implemented by the English teachers in the three selected excellent schools presented in this study.

5.2 Implications

The findings of the present research generate three main points of impact addressing the teachers' pedagogical EYL practices and their interlinked elements. They are support from the related stakeholders, teacher's self-initiated professional development (PD), and the English curriculum.

The findings of the present study have provided some important insights into effective TEYL practices which are closely related to the quality of school and EYL teacher education provision. The rapidly growing and complex TEYL workforce which have been elaborated in the study also signal some of the contextual constraints that can diminish the quality and likely impact of these initiatives, such as the role of the higher education institution, the access for teacher professional development, and the provision of teaching guidelines. More research into these complicating factors alongside work on the impact of school quality is important in identifying appropriate forms of effective TEYL at a local level and understanding teacher investment in these.

At a practical level, to improve the quality of EYL teacher education going forward, more attention must be paid to improving the expertise of TEYL teacher educators who play a crucial role in determining the quality of the support that teachers receive. Besides, as discussed above, more attention also needs to be paid to the development and application of a systematic strategy for the evaluation of EYL teacher education provision to establish its efficacy and quality.

As the English teaching at the primary level is carried out based on the bottom-up policy, the central government does not provide the EYL teaching guidelines. Nevertheless, the need to give teachers access to training aligned to curriculum, specific pedagogy, and tailored to teachers' existing knowledge, practices, and context facilitated by the school is vital. The professional development the teachers receive enables them to construct teacher manuals and scripted lesson plans in order to deliver promoted pedagogy and help learners achieve the expected outcomes. Schools should also accommodate regular follow-up support in the classroom and teacher peer support as parts of the provisions for teacher learning.

University is another related stakeholder that is responsible for establishing teachers' needs, specifically to provide the pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher training. This research calls attention to better mechanism and procedures to verify the effectiveness of TEYLTED by including three following aspects: 1) the language—knowledge of and fluency in English, 2) the teaching process—knowledge of children's foreign language learning and suitable teaching

strategies, and 3) the learner—knowledge of the different cognitive, affective, and psychomotor phases children journey through. The programs which involve these three aspects will not only guarantee that content is relevant and beneficial to teachers but will also support their engagement with TEYLTED initiatives and increase the impact of this on their classroom practice. In practice, both of the pre-service programs and in-service training should be delivered in ways that 1) reveal the interconnection between theory and practice, 2) involve teachers' preceding experience and knowledge, and 3) assist teachers to develop action plans for future practice. As teacher learning is an ongoing and lifelong nature, it is essential to employ the pedagogical approaches that equip teachers with the ability to continue developing over and beyond any formal input sessions that they obtain. The findings of the study, therefore, suggests the proliferation of school-university partnerships or Professional Development School (PDS) (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Levine, 1992; Holmes, 1990; Goodland, 1990; Holmes, 1986) as not only do the programs sustainably give the in-service teachers opportunities to high-quality professional development provisions, but they also bring benefits to education stakeholders such as teacher candidates, school principals, students, university faculty, and communities.

Besides the progressive supports from schools, parents, and university elaborated above, teachers' self-initiated professional development that the second implication deals with, is evidenced to help teachers build teaching culture and values and enable them to conduct effective teaching strategies and practices. Teachers' self-initiated professional development has enhanced their teaching practices. Compared to the other English teachers in School A1 and A2, the teacher in School A3 is the one who obtains the least access to professional development. It is her self-initiation to elevate the knowledge and teaching skills that positively brings impact to her teaching practices so that she is capable of delivering the effective pedagogy like the other teacher participants who gain more access to professional development.

Teachers' active involvement in the learning process, such as guiding students to understand the lesson content through constructive feedback, proper assessment, and good relationships are proved to work well to encourage students' participation.

These strategies are reflected into the teaching practices which are undertaken by the teachers in the three selected excellent schools, among those are asking and following up questions to trigger students questioning, the appropriate use of L1 to give access to lesson content and activate verbal interaction and frequent use of instructional aids and relevant learning materials beyond the textbook to enrich resources. The findings of the present study also suggest that teachers promote English learning by having students work with various objects individually and in groups and explore spaces other than the classroom. Teachers should also regard the students' characteristics, like their background, prior knowledge, and local examples to make lesson content relevant and meaningful.

The third implication deals with the English curriculum that the school carries out. To provide effective language learning, the stakeholders should consider the conditions for English as a second language learning for young learners. There should be a clear position of English subject in the school curriculum as it determines the teacher and teaching resources. The current implementation of TEYL shows that the blurred policy has put EYL practitioners under challenging environments and conditions. Not only does the status of English subject determine the teaching resources, teaching facilities, and the assessment methods, but it also affects the status of the teacher administratively, which indirectly takes hold of the amount of salary they get from teaching English. Thus, besides the school, both the central and local governments also need to review the policy of TEYL.

Another issue related to the curriculum is the length of time the subject is given. As time is one of the most valuable pedagogical resources, the results of the study indicate that schools have to consider the allocation of hours for English learning. While it is difficult to increase the English time allotment and to provide more intense periods, the content and language integrated learning (CLIL) can be very advantageous. CLIL can be done by subject content teachers and employs English as a medium of instruction. As not all subject teachers in Indonesian schools can use English for communication, the school should be responsible for equipping the teachers with training to develop their English language skills. Schools should also encourage parents to take part in their children's English educational attainment. Their involvement in children's learning at home and

encouragement that motivates children's education at school can help enhance students' engagement and optimum academic achievement.

5.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

This study, however, is subject to several restrictions. Three major limitations that could be addressed in future research include the limited access to data, the related empirical studies, and methodological limitation.

As this study involved observing English classes in the intensity of time, not all schools agreed to give access to classroom observation. Although a consent letter was delivered and detail information about the classroom observation was informed before, one of the three selected schools could not continue providing access to observe the class more than two meetings. Because of this, the researcher had to start from the first stage in choosing the participating school for the substitute.

Another access problem was the data collection process during classroom observations. As the teaching and learning process that occurred in the classroom were focal to capture how pedagogical EYL practices were conducted, all the activities, interactions, and conversations should be well documented. To capture all the intended data, a video recorder, voice recorder, and camera were used. However, not all teachers agreed to be recorded during the lesson. The teacher from School A2 firmly rejected to be recorded using the video recorder. He also did not allow the researcher to take photos of the classroom activities, although the school had permitted to do so. The only tool that the researcher used to collect data in this class was the voice recorder. As a result, making the transcript of this class was very challenging as the class was always noisy, and the only data to support the voice recordings were the filed notes.

The second shortcoming was related to methodology, specifically the related empirical studies on measuring young learners' English proficiency levels and investigating the effective pedagogical EYL practices. The prior research studies form the basis of the literature review and help lay a foundation for understanding the research problem investigated in the present study (USC Libraries, 2020). The related previous studies were mostly undertaken in other countries, which may have different characteristics from the research setting, Indonesia. The ones found in the Indonesian setting were mostly conceptual papers

which contain the synthesis of knowledge from previous studies rather than the empirical data.

The limitation also dealt with the selected design of the research. The explanatory design employed in the study required a lengthy amount of time for executing the two phases. The researcher should accomplish both of the quantitative stages to identify the schools that offered English and to finally select three participating schools for further qualitative research representing the model schools in which effective EYL pedagogical practices were conducted. As the population of the study consisted of 274 schools located in five sub-districts in the city, the distribution of questionnaires for the survey became one of the challenges in the data collection process. Many schools returned the paper late after the deadline so that it brought impact to the execution of the following steps of the research. Not only was selecting the participants time consuming, but gaining approval from the related stakeholders, such as the Regional Office of Education in the city and the local National Unity and Political Bodies, also took considerable time.

Given the circumstances, although the present study has administered both quantitative and qualitative research design, future research studies could fruitfully combine the models to capture the baseline and post-tests measuring both teacher and student attainment as a result of an intervention. Besides prioritizing teachers' understanding through focus group discussions and interviews, students' perspectives and experiences of English lessons they receive at school and how students' social economic and cultural backgrounds affect pedagogy should also be captured in detail. Finally, more research targeted on how universities can accommodate the Professional Development Schools (PDS) program and help schools enhance high-quality professional development for the teachers would fill a major gap as not many elementary schools have the privilege to have the partnerships with higher education institutions.

Finally, echoing previous publications (Zein, 2017b; Diallo & Liddicoat, 2014; Liddicoat, 2014), the findings of the current research suggest that the appointed policymakers articulate a clear, systematic and coherent pedagogy in foreign language-in-education. To be specific, officialization of English in elementary schooling is crucial as the official status of English in the education

field fortifies its roles as a means to the country's socio-economic development goals. This initial investment in access policy helps broaden the functions of English as a global language in the local context, which affects other aspects, such as the various community inheritance, as well as national and native languages prevailing at the society level. Further, it opens the avenues to embrace related stakeholders in TEYL to ensure that English instruction in primary education is well-supported in terms of the funding, curriculum, teaching facilities and resources.