

**English Language Teaching in Decentralised Indonesia: Voices from
the Less Privileged Schools**

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1. Introduction

With the release of Regional Autonomy laws in 1999, Indonesia, which had been a centralised country for decades, started its decentralisation reform. The laws give broader autonomy to local governments and schools to manage their educational service provisions, including in the area of English language education. English is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia and is a compulsory subject in secondary schools. However, the teaching of English in many areas and schools, particularly in isolated areas and resource-poor schools, is still far from perfect. Therefore, linking decentralisation policy at the school level (or as commonly known as the school-based management) and the schools' English language programs, as well as examining the impacts of the policy on the not-too-privileged English classrooms, will be an important research area to explore.

The paper aims to give brief descriptions of the teaching of English in the era of school autonomy in such schools from the perspectives of the principals and English language teachers. It is based on a 10-week research fieldwork conducted in Salatiga municipality in July to August 2005, as part of research higher degree study at the University of Sydney. In-depth interview was the main method used in gathering the data from 6 secondary schools. Those schools are non-government schools. Two of the schools visited are classified as resource-poor, two considered as moderately poor, and the other two are relatively resource-rich. This paper will only focus on data gathered at the first two schools.

2. Education decentralisation in Indonesia

In the era of globalisation, decentralisation reform has become a new trend in policy direction, a trend which also occurs in education. Rezai-Rashti (2003), one among many other scholars, has noted that education systems in many nations have been experiencing changes such as decentralisation. Reforms in educational management, governance, assessment procedures and standardisation are very common nowadays, and involve cuts to education budgets, decentralisation, or even privatisation of education. Education reform is inevitable as it happens at a global level, and it does bring significant and direct impacts at the school level.

The government of Indonesia has followed the decentralisation trend by releasing the Regional Autonomy Laws in 1999. As of January 1st, 2001, under Laws number 22 and 25, all regions were to be autonomous. Those laws provide the framework for political and fiscal devolution of powers from central government to local governments, particularly to the districts and municipalities (Satriyo, Abidin, KUSDARYANTO, & BULOSAN, 2003). Consequently, regions must therefore lessen their dependency upon the central government by encouraging the participation of the local people and by developing their own resources.

Following the release of the Regional Autonomy Laws, the Department of Education in Indonesia also released a guideline for implementing decentralisation at the school level (school-based management). Such management gives broader authority to schools to run their schools and to work more actively with their communities, but at the same time it also requires more leadership, professionalism, initiatives, innovation, and creativity from principals and teachers (<http://www.depdiknas.go.id>). Education policy-makers in Indonesia believe that decentralisation at the school level could lead to improvements, such as better school performance, greater school autonomy, better match between the services delivered and the students' needs, greater parental and community involvement, and greater participation in decision-making (Depdiknas, 2003). The consequences of decentralisation at school level are not hard to discern. Schools, particularly public schools, are now to be responsible for the provision and financing of more training for their teacher development as well as more facilities and resources (<http://pakem.org/mbs.html>).

Caldwell and Spinks (1988) refer to school-based management as “the self-managing school” and define such a school as “one for which there has been

significant and consistent decentralisation to the school level of authority to make decision related to the allocation of resources” (p.5). With school-based management, the authority of education governance is redistributed down to the school level and thus the roles of the education stakeholders i.e. principals, teachers, parents, local community, and business links and sponsorship (Levacic, 1995) become crucial.

Rodriguez and Slate (2005) sum up five major themes with regard to the school-based management reform. The first theme is called the vision building; i.e. the future goals desired by those involved in the organisation. The second theme, evolutionary planning, suggests that dynamic strategies are needed in the implementation process in order for the reform to continue to be effective. Empowerment as the third theme includes, among other things, active participation in decision-making, professional autonomy, professional development opportunities, as well as a sense of self-efficacy. This third theme leads to the fourth one, the so-called staff development. The last theme is related to problem solving and monitoring. Those five themes, therefore, become the schools’ responsibilities. In addition, when schools are given autonomy, they will be responsible for areas which they have never before been responsible for, e.g. staff recruitment, budgeting, and fund raising. Such responsibilities mean that decentralisation in education, instead of a being good reform, actually brings the central pressure down to school levels (Welch, 1996).

In Indonesia, school-based management direction has indeed brought reforms and changes in education given the country’s long history of centralised bureaucracy system – a system that has resulted in a culture of dependence among education bureaucrats and practitioners (Syafi’i, 2005). Thus, the successful implementations of decentralisation at the school level should be continuously questioned and even challenged. For schools with professional and qualified principals and teachers, strong financial support from parents and community, and good network with business links and sponsorship, there will be no problems implementing the school-based management. However, schools which lack support will find it hard to cope with the reform.

While the school-based management is mostly aimed at public schools across the country, it also affects non-government schools in one way or another. Such schools usually operate under religious institutions or other non-governmental organisations, and have dedicated themselves to provide education service to their

communities, but which have often escaped the government's attention because they have always been considered financially autonomous.

3. English language education in Indonesia

How English was chosen as the main foreign language taught in secondary school has a long history. During the period of the country's independence in 1945, education escaped the central government's attention, including foreign language education. In 1950, Indonesia's political situation was relatively more stable and steady and thus the government was also ready to choose a foreign language to be taught in schools. Even though many people were more familiar with Dutch, English was eventually selected as the first foreign language because Dutch was considered as the language of the colonialist and because it did not have the international status of English (Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Nur, 2003).

Since it was first taught, there have been problems in the teaching of English as a foreign language. The changing of curriculum and approaches (Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Nur, 2003) along with the changing of the Minister of Education was not uncommon. The big class sizes and teachers with poor mastery of English are two obvious factors that contribute to the ongoing problems in ELT in Indonesia (Dardjowidjojo, 2000). Other reasons for the problems are: (1) limited time allocated for teaching English, (2) students do not have enough time to actually learn to speak English in class because the teacher is more concerned to teach the grammar and syntax, (3) the absence of good and authentic learning materials, and (4) the absence of the social uses of English outside the classroom (Musthafa, 2001).

Foreign language education in Indonesia, particularly the teaching of English, seems to be always problematic, before and after the decentralisation era. The continually-revised curriculum does not seem to take into serious considerations factors such as suitable qualifications for teachers, time availability, numbers of students, or available resources and facilities, nor does it provide strategies and alternatives should problems related to English language education occur. What really happens in English classrooms in the less-privileged schools nowadays, is not addressed either in the curriculum guidelines.

4. Recent curriculum

Recent curriculum in English language education in Indonesia focuses only on the teaching of English at junior and high school levels as English is not compulsory at elementary level. The curriculum adopts so-called communicative competence as its model of competence (Depdiknas, 2003).

Communicative competence itself can be summarised as skills needed for communication, which consists of four important components. Those components are: grammatical/linguistic competence, sociocultural competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Celce-Murcia, Dornyei & Thurrell, 1995; Beale, 2002). In line with the concept of communicative competence, the following factors should therefore be present in an English language classroom:

- Fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). This implies that the teacher him/herself should be a fluent English speaker.
- Students are expected to interact with other students in order to communicate in the target language (Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Freeman, 2000). This implies that the tasks should include pair and group work, and that activities like role plays, language games and problem-solving tasks are encouraged.
- Students should be given enough opportunities to get to know the authentic language (Freeman, 2000). Therefore, authentic materials are important in an English classroom.
- The role of the teacher is that of a facilitator in communication (Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Freeman, 2000). It implies that the amount of teacher talking time should not be a barrier for students for using the target language (McDonough & Shaw, 1993).
- The role of students' native language should be minimal (Freeman, 2000). English should be used most of the time.
- Non-technical and technical media are important tools for language learning and teaching, particularly for carrying out language tasks (Brinton, 2001). Non-technical media include: blackboards, posters, maps, pictures, or photos. Technical media include: tape recorder, CD/Video/DVD player, or overhead projector.

With regard to English teachers, Ur (2002) adds that they should be professional in the sense that:

- They should actively join conferences locally, nationally, and internationally.
- They should have appropriate training and should be committed to their job.
- They should be autonomous and be responsible for maintaining their professional standards.
- They should not only be able to speak the language but should also be able to explain how and why the language works the way it does.

Whether or not English teaching and English teachers in Indonesia have met the 'ideals' as stated above, remain a question. What is stated and expected in the recent curriculum document might be implemented differently in the real English classrooms due to many unexpected factors, such as limited resources, facilities, and funding, and unqualified teachers. The virtues behind so-called communicative competence as recommended by Richards and Rodgers (1986), McDonough and Shaw (1993), Freeman (2000), or Brinton (2001) to name a few, are still too difficult to be implemented in many English classrooms in Indonesia, let alone in less-privileged schools. In the era of educational decentralisation in which schools are forced to be more autonomous and independent, the condition could be worse.

5. Findings from less privileged schools

I visited six non-government schools in order to gather data to answer my research questions in mid 2005. Two of the schools are classified as resource-poor, two considered as moderate, and the other two are relatively resource-rich. I interviewed the principals and English teachers to find out to what extent has school-based management practice affected the teaching of English in their schools. As stated earlier in the introduction part of this paper, I will only focus on the first two schools.

I conducted in-depth interviews with those principals and teachers. In particular, I wanted to find out the following:

1. How principals and teachers perceive the concept of school-based management in relation with their schools' conditions.

2. What the expected behaviours of those principals and teachers are in terms of leading, managing, and supporting the schools, particularly with regard to English language teaching practices.
3. What the actual responses of those principals and teachers are
4. Under the school-based management direction, what strategies those principals and teachers are using or have been using to implement best language teaching practices in their schools

School-based management impacts on public schools, particularly in Indonesia whose previous system was always centralised. However, for non-public schools, this new direction in education also affects them, particularly because the government still conducts a standardised national examination. While in the past the competition among schools was not so high, today's school autonomy forces schools to always perform better than others. With such a competition, public and non-public schools now have to be able to perform better and offer better service for their customers, for the sake of further school promotion. Schools are often forced to be 'selfish' as well.

In the era of autonomy, schools have to compete to get as many students as possible by achieving good results in the national evaluation and by promoting some 'plus point' programs, one of which is by offering their improved English language programs. Unlike in the past when schools in one district used to have a kind of sharing and networking spirit, nowadays they are reluctant to uncover what their programs are as this virtuous act could backfire if other schools decide to imitate or adopt them.

Popular public schools in Salatiga for example, were the pilot project schools for the school-based management reform and got a lot of funding. It was originally hoped that after the pilot project finished, they would share their experience with other schools in town. However, it turned out that they were reluctant to do so and other schools, particularly non-government schools, often had to seek information from other sources (Ms. TT, interview, August 16th, 2005).

For schools with limited resources, it is therefore very difficult to compete with their more privileged counterparts because they simply do not have the funding to do so. This is also the case of the two schools that I visited last August.

5.1. Findings from School A

School A is a senior secondary school, run by a non-religious institution. It was founded in 1955 by former university students from Salatiga who studied in Jogjakarta. They founded the educational organisation in order to help provide educational service in their hometown. It used to be quite a large and popular school in Salatiga Municipality. However, over the past years, the school's reputation and enrolment have declined drastically. In fact, the school is likely to be at the point of closure as the latest enrolment was only 8 students. At present, there are 61 students and 19 teachers in total.

The school is led by a female principal (Ms. TT) who has been in the position for 8 years, and who was a vice principal for 14 years. She actually wants to resign but no one wants to take her position. There is only one English teacher (Mr. SR) whose status for the past 20 years has always been a part-timer. This is because he is not suitably qualified as an English teacher. It is his experience as a cruise steward that gave him the job. Moreover, he owns a mechanic business and despite his interest in teaching, he knows exactly that a teacher salary will not be enough.

5.1.1. Voice from Principal TT

Ms. TT feels that the present policy in education is good as more authority is now devolved at the school level. Schools become more independent and are challenged to achieve better quality. However, she admits that without qualified human resources, adequate facilities and funding, it is hard to do so.

“As a concept, school-based management is promising. However, in practice, there are many obstacles. Without good resources and facilities, school autonomy is difficult to realise. And for a small school like ours, it becomes more difficult nowadays. As a result, we cannot select our new intakes – we will accept whoever enrolls despite his/her marks...Within a few years, the quality of our graduates will be declining and they won't be able to compete with graduates from other schools” (Ms. TT, interview, August 16th)

With the present direction of school management, Ms. TT realises that a school principal should also be able to act as a good manager. This is an area which she admits she lacks of, and therefore she decided to upgrade herself by doing a Master's degree in education management, but only to realise that such an effort is to no avail:

“I decided to do my Master's degree in education management because I know I 'm not a good manager, and by doing so I hope I can better manage this school. I've been doing my study for the last couple of years but now I don't have the desire to finish my degree

because the conditions of my school actually get worse. What's the point of studying then?"
(Ms. TT, interview, August 16th)

As a principal of a small school, Ms. TT has done her best. She has been actively trying to find opportunities and funding offered and informed by the Education Board of Salatiga Municipality. Unfortunately, her school often does not qualify to get the funding or other assistance due to its small number of students:

"I'd been sending proposals to the Education Board to seek assistance but they never replied. I finally decided to see the head of the board personally and asked why. He said that my school was too small to receive funding - there should be at least 180 students; I have less than that!" (Ms. TT, interview, August 16th)

With regard to English language programs in her school, Ms. TT is concerned with the absence of a full-timer. This has been the situation in her school for more than 15 years. Her school was like a 'stepping stone' for fresh graduates who needed some teaching experience before applying for public servant positions. As for the present teacher, although she is quite happy with his dedication and performance, she still hopes that Mr. SR would like to continue his study so that he qualifies as an English teacher:

"...I really wish that Mr. SR could continue his study. But he keeps saying that he is too old to study - let the younger ones do so. The problem is, he is the only teacher in our school, there's no younger teacher..." (Ms. TT, interview, August 16th)

Although English is seen as being important since it is one of the 3 compulsory subjects assessed nationally, Ms. TT admits that English language programs have not run smoothly due to the low quality of the students. Whatever efforts or programs offered by the school, there seems to be little cooperation from the students. This is another problem besides the absence of a suitably qualified full-time teacher and limited facilities. When asked about her strategies, Ms. TT simply answered that she would keep motivating her students to learn the language. She would also try to upgrade the facilities step by step, while at the same time trying to find more help from other schools, as well as opportunities and funding from the local government, alumni, or business people. As most of the students come from low socio-economic backgrounds, it is unlikely to seek more financial support from the parents.

5.1.2 Voice from English Teacher SR

School A's English teacher, Mr. SR, is a middle-aged man who once worked as a steward in a cruise ship for five years. He completed a foreign language college and

actually attended the English Department at the Faculty of Teacher's Training but did not finish his study because of conflicts with some lecturers in the department. He has been teaching English for around 25 years. It was his love of the language that made him a teacher. Unfortunately, due to his qualification, he could only be a part-time teacher. Apart from that, he owns his business and does not really want to get involved and trapped in the school system:

“... I don't really want to be a full-timer. I want to be a free man. Although I love teaching English, I don't think a full-time position is suitable for me. Besides, I'm not qualified to be a teacher and now I'm too old to study...” (Mr. SR, interview, August 15th)

With regard to decentralisation direction nowadays, Mr. SR feels that he has more responsibilities. He further acknowledges that a centralised system is probably better for a school like his as with the latter system, teachers just need to follow the curriculum exactly as it is. Moreover, expected goals are usually already stated clearly and are in details:

“With decentralisation, we don't know what's happening outside our school or what the expectations are. This makes it difficult for me. I can simply hope that when my students graduate, they can have the same level of competencies as students from other schools. But I don't know what other schools' programs are like. So how can I compare them? In the past at least the government gave us detailed guidelines so I knew exactly what to do and how to do it, and I knew it as well that other schools would do more or less the same...” (Mr. SR, interview, August 15th)

Interestingly, Mr. SR admits that he does not really make any changes despite the current reform. He admits that he still uses what he refers to as ‘the old methods of teaching and teaching English’, i.e. Chalk and Talk and Grammar Translation Method. This is mainly due to the low quality of his students; whatever the changes are, they will not work if students are still not motivated or interested in the language. He also attributes the students' low socio-economic background as another factor that contributes to his reluctance to change:

“... no matter what I do or how enthusiastic I am in teaching, it's difficult to apply here as students who enrol in this school are those who are rejected from other schools due to their low grades. They came here because they couldn't go anywhere else. So you can imagine their motivation! ... Also, most of them are not from some rich families. They cannot afford to buy good textbooks. In fact, they don't even want to spend 3,000 rupiah to photocopy materials. The school and I often have to pay. That's why I can't be too idealistic – I have to be realistic” (Mr. SR, interview, August 15th)

The only significant change that he made in his class was by giving more listening practice for the students. This is because listening is now one of the competencies tested in the national examination. His proposal to buy a new tape recorder was

therefore approved by the school as the school cannot yet afford to build a proper language lab.

Like his principal, Mr. SR knows his weaknesses and has done his best to improve the English language programs. He does not mind learning from teachers from other schools, for example. However, Mr. SR feels that he has been singled out by other teachers; he is never invited to their regular meeting:

“There is this regular meeting for all English teachers in Salatiga. It is supposed to be coordinated by public schools’ teachers. But I don’t know why I never got the invitation. Or maybe they didn’t invite me because this is only a small school and it contributes nothing for them. That’s why I don’t really know what’s happening outside my school...” (Mr. SR, interview, August 15th)

With the absence of good facilities to support English language programs in his school, Mr. SR has tried to apply the best strategies as possible, those that suit his school’s poor conditions. He has been actively upgrading his books and other teaching materials – all at his own cost. He also optimises the facilities and resources available, no matter how limited they are. As well he makes simple teaching media from existing materials, such as unused magazines, newspapers, and his personal belongings that he got from overseas when he was a cruise steward. As for the textbook, he does not have a choice but to use the one supplied by the local government despite its low in quality:

“The textbook supplied by the local government is actually useless. They said it was designed based on the latest curriculum, but when I looked at it carefully, the contents were the same as those in the old textbook. They just recycled it and changed the cover. Moreover, they didn’t supply us with guidelines or other supplementary materials. But I have to use the book because it’s free...” (Mr. SR, interview, August 15th)

5.2. Findings from School B

School B is a junior secondary school. It belongs to a Christian organisation founded by a synod in Java. The school was originally a dormitory aimed for Christian youngsters from remote villages who were sent by their village churches to the city to receive informal education in business and economics. The initial goal was for those youngsters to return to their villages to help build and serve their communities. As the organisation got bigger, the dormitory developed into a junior secondary vocational school. In the later development, the government only acknowledged a vocational school at a higher level, and thus it was transformed into a

senior vocational school. Not long after that the organisation founded a general junior secondary school, now known as School B.

Like School A, School B also suffers from low quality and enrolment. In addition, the later school is also undergoing a leadership crisis, in which the former principal's accountability was questioned, while the present school leader does not share similar visions with the people in the 'higher places' of the organisation (Mr. WT, interview, August 23rd). The school has 98 students in total, 7 full-time teachers and 8 part-timers.

5.2.1. Voice from Principal WT

Mr. WT, the present principal, should have been retired in 2004 but because of the crisis in the school, he decided to take the principal job. Mr. WT was actually a full-time teacher at the vocational school, not at the secondary school, and he is really concerned with the school's declining condition:

"I'm concerned with the school's condition and as a Christian, I have some sort of moral responsibility to do something. That's why I volunteered to take the principal job. I want to use the rest of my pension time to help fix the school..." (Mr. WT, interview, August 23rd)

With the country's reforms in education, Mr. WT personally thinks that schools have good opportunities to improve as long as they are backed up with satisfying resources, particularly human resources. In terms of management and administrative matters, school-based management does not really influence private schools as they have always been mostly independent. The effect, according to Mr. WT, is with regard to the recent national curriculum and how teachers should creatively develop and interpret the curriculum guidelines in class. Unfortunately, this is something that his school lacks:

"I see that one of the advantages of the recent development is that schools can develop themselves in accordance with their conditions. What I mean by conditions here are the conditions of the students, teachers, and facilities. This is good actually. But most students in my school are slow learners. Sadly to say, the teachers are no difference – they are reluctant to improve. Also, the facilities are very basic. So this school cannot be compared with those with better resources..." (Mr. WT, interview, August 23rd)

Mr. WT perceives English as a very important subject, particularly because it is one of the three compulsory subjects examined nationally. Therefore, reasonably good English language programs are crucial for schools nowadays. Such programs have

been unstable in his school due to the lack of human resources, the absence of satisfying facilities, as well as messy school management left by the previous leader:

“The school’s management has been so messy. Teachers are left with unclear status and job insecurity. This should have been handled by the former principal. We don’t have permanent English teachers – in fact, we never did. We almost hired one, but she left because of personal problems. Then we got another one, but he was a full-time minister and he had other responsibilities in his church. He also left but he recommended his friend whose major is in English language teaching. But this new teacher didn’t perform well. Many of my students failed in the last exam. The absence of a permanent teacher indeed distracts our teaching and learning process...” (Mr. WT, interview, August 23rd)

Because of this problem, Mr. WT’s actual response was to personally approach the former teacher, Mr. KR, to return to the school to teach. Mr. KR eventually agreed. Upon his return, Mr. WT sees that the programs start to run better and more smoothly.

With limited facilities and resources, Mr. WT has tried his best effort to improve English language programs in his school. One of his strategies is by means of personal approach. He will talk personally to each teacher and he will listen to them. He conducts a weekly meeting for input and supervision purposes. Moreover, Mr. WT will visit each class regularly and have discussions with students regarding the importance of English. He is not hesitant either to pay a visit to his problematic students and talk personally to the parents. This is probably one of the advantages of having few students:

“The students here are different. They came to our school because they were rejected elsewhere. Christian teachings tell us that we cannot reject them and we have to accept and love them, no matter how bad they are. That’s why I keep telling my teachers to always be patient and understanding. By being patient, students will like them and if they like their teachers, they will like the subjects too... I also like visit each class and speak to students about how important English is... I will also visit someone’s home and talk to the parents if I have to” (Mr. WT, interview, August 23rd)

Another strategy used by Mr. WT is by building good relationships with churches in the city. This strategy has proven effective in terms of finding English teachers. Apart from that, Mr. WT and the present English teacher are planning to organise the so-called wall magazine program to stimulate students’ interest in reading.

5.2.2. Voice from English Teacher KR

The English teacher of School B, Mr. KR, is a full-time youth minister who received a two-year diploma degree in Tourism Industry. Mr. KR took the teaching job after the former principal desperately approached churches in Salatiga to help him

find an English teacher. Mr. KR has been teaching at School B for around two years. During his first year, he was paid only by his church. Now the school pays him – although very little – and he decides to return the money that he receives from his church. Like Mr. WT, this young teacher is willing to ‘carry the cross’ because of his Christian belief to serve others. He is supposed to be a part-timer but his teaching loads are as heavy as those of a full-time teacher. As a new educator, he is not really aware of so-called educational reforms or policy directions:

“I’m not sure what happened in this school before. It’s always been like this since I first came...” (Mr. KR, interview, August 18th)

Despite his enthusiasm and eagerness, as a new teacher in a resource-poor school he admits that he was overwhelmed at first. Like Mr. SR in School A, he, too, finds it hard when it comes to dealing with the low quality of students:

“I actually have so many teaching ideas in my head, particularly after the training that I attended. I want to do this and that to make interesting lessons... Now I realise that I cannot be too idealistic because the school doesn’t have enough facilities. But the main problem is actually the students. Most of them are slow learners and not motivated to study, let alone learning a foreign language...” (Mr. KR, interview, August 18th)

He feels that English teachers are demanded to be creative and ready to become an all-rounder. So far, Mr. KR has used his personal belongings and connections to support the language teaching practices to meet the required standards of the curriculum, e.g. buying more English materials and textbooks using his money, carrying his own tape recorder to class for listening practice, or borrowing and adapting syllabus from teachers from other schools. While he can now cope with the unavailability of facilities for English language programs, Mr. KR is still very much concerned with the absence of a senior teacher or a supervisor to whom he can consult:

“... I have to teach, find appropriate materials and develop them, assess the students, do all the photocopy stuff, etc. I don’t mind doing that. But the worse thing is, I don’t know if what I’m doing is good or bad, or right or wrong, because no one supervises me nor do I have valuable inputs from an expert. Moreover, teaching is not my only full-time job so I find it difficult to improve due to time constraint...” (Mr. KR, interview, August 18th)

Mr. KR has indeed exercised his autonomy with regard to English language programs in the school. All decisions are completely his; the principal simply reminds him the importance for the students to perform well in the national examination. Yet he sometimes still feels sorry that he cannot do much more because of his limitations. Two strategies that he is planning at the moment are by trying to activate a wall

magazine program in order to stimulate students' general interest in reading and by planning collaboration and networking with other schools; at least he wants to pay informal visits to other schools and see how those schools they run their English classes.

“I am aware of my weaknesses and limitations and so I need some inputs from outside. That will be good for me. Frankly speaking, sometimes I don't know what else to do in class. I want to do different things but I have no idea...” (Mr. KR, interview, August 18th)

6. Final Remarks

English language programs have become more important in today's Indonesian schooling because of the process of globalisation. To respond to the challenges and reforms that globalisation has brought schools will have to continuously upgrade their English teaching practices. School-based management, as one of the reforms, does have good intentions. However, for schools which do not have sufficient financial and material support from their stakeholders, like School A and School B, such a management reform could lead to a new burden. Those less-privileged schools will not be able to compete with the more privileged ones in terms of offering good language programs for their students. Lesser quality programs mean schools cannot do much in terms of promoting themselves to the community. No promotion leads to fewer and unselected intake. Fewer intake means less and less funding, while unselected intake will lead to the low quality of students, which will then create other problems in relation with English language programs. It is like being trapped in a vicious cycle where there is no end.

Since this is still an early stage of my data analysis, I can only briefly summarise that principals and English teachers in resource-poor schools have to maximise whatever resources and facilities available in the school, while at the same time trying to find opportunities and funding offered by the government or possibly other stakeholders. They also have to build better networking with other schools, successful alumni, religious institutions, universities, and other non-government organisations, particularly if parents and/or communities are not reliable stakeholders (as often the case in less-privileged schools in Indonesia).

One of the quickest and probably most realistic remedies for those schools is by building a good relationship with the nearest university since universities in Indonesia have three main duties, i.e. teaching, researching, and serving their

community. Apparently, not too many schools are either aware or well informed about this fact and thus are often reluctant to seek professional assistance from a higher education institution - School A and School B have not used this opportunity either. This, of course, will be another significant study to explore.

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