Designing Communicative Competence-Based English as a Foreign Language Curriculum Development in Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the implementation and design of English language curriculum development based on communicative competence in integrated Islamic primary schools. The data was taken from interviews, observation, and documentation techniques. The findings indicated that other parties, including the Olympic and competition procurement institutions, were involved in the development of the English language curriculum. English language teachers construct lesson plans under the supervision of the principal, guaranteeing fair execution. The Language Festival is a new design for developing communicative competence at the elementary school level through mentoring subject teachers as well as support from the school and parents. It is designed to demonstrate the richness and diversity of language and instruct and enlighten individuals interested in languages and cultures about the languages spoken worldwide. This kind of external institution involvement is important to increase students' enthusiasm in primary school. The challenges include adapting face-to-face and remote curriculums, internet networks, and school manual content. They are solved by maintaining qualifying time allotments, partnering with language experts, leveraging asynchronous media, updating handbooks, and training for teachers.

Introduction

The impact of curriculum changes raises several issues for educational institutions. It also affects teachers' conditions at all educational unit levels. Learners are like test subjects, constantly exposed to curriculum policy changes that may be confusing to them and, therefore, pose a challenge of adaptation. On the other hand, teachers are also confused about

how to adapt to the emergence of a new curriculum. Many educators are interested in knowing how well children are performing in relation to year group standards so that they can make decisions about how to change their teaching methods and improve student learning. The Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) assessment framework (Stecker et al., 2005) has proved effective in monitoring progress in reading, mathematics, and early literacy (McMaster et al., 2011).

Curriculum design is one of the essential components of improving higher education. In particular, curriculum development and curriculum design are two broad families that make up the distinct academic field of curriculum design. The former identifies and describes the components of a curriculum, while the latter explains how well these components are applied and implemented. When one considers higher education's aims, purposes, and functions in contemporary society, it becomes clear that curriculum reform is necessary. This needs to be managed logically and properly (Dehghani et al., 2011).

Based on Law Number 20 of 2003 as the base of education policy in Indonesia, it is hoped that the development of individual qualities as the nation's future generation can be realized. Quality people are those who possess a high moral code rooted in piety and faith in Allah the Almighty, as well as qualities such as intelligence, independence, creativity, democracy, and a sense of responsibility.

The authority to improve the curriculum is carried out from centralization to decentralization. Decentralization is the authority given to education units to carry out curriculum development. Centralization is the involvement of the central government authority in curriculum development in all lines, levels, and types of education programs to realize the national education goals through Law No. 2 of 1989.

As education management is only carried out at the macro level, Indonesia's efforts to improve the quality of education have been less successful (Suryosubroto, 2009). The application of macro rules is conditional and adapted to the level of problems of each educational unit. The existence of basic education in Indonesia is a very urgent matter within the framework of national education. According to the World Competitiveness Report in 2015, Indonesia's basic education is ranked at level 57 compared to other countries. As a result, changes need to be made by reorienting the management and implementation of education, starting with the creation of curricula for basic education (Rohiat, 2010). The national education curriculum has been restructured to focus on civic education topics such as the history of the nation, the importance of love for the homeland, national defense, and character education. Nevertheless, character education accounts for 70 percent of basic education based on some of these factors. Articles 37 and 38 of Law No. 20 of 2003 provide the basic guidelines for the design of the curriculum. Three factors are taken into consideration when selecting educational content: a) the philosophy, ideology, beliefs, and attitudes of the community; b) the time available; and c) the usefulness and needs analysis of the content (Ysh, 2012).

One of the schools at the basic education level that can make a breakthrough in improving the quality of education through curriculum development is the Integrated Islamic School (*Sekolah Islam Terpadu/SIT*). From a conceptual standpoint, the SIT's operations represent the accumulation of the civilizational process, the transmission and advancement of Islamic teachings, Islamic culture, and Islamic civilization from one generation to the next. According to the meaning of the word "integrated" in SIT, Islam is strengthened (tawhid), i.e., Islam is complete and comprehensive in all facets of life, not only at the formal level of the school but also demonstrated in elements of everyday life.

In terms of curriculum, the curriculum of the Ministry of National Education continues to serve as the primary source of information for the Integrated Islamic School. Nevertheless, Islamic principles continue to serve as the cornerstone of the educational curriculum. In addition, this curriculum is based on a modern methodology and offers the following advantages (Robingatin, 2015).

Some past research has been conducted by focusing on elementary school curricula, integrated Islamic schools, and curriculum development. A study called "Curriculum Development Model for the Islamic Religious Education Study Programme" was conducted by Hanifiyah (2011). Curriculum construction is the area where this study and others are similar. The two studies discussed how to create a curriculum in light of Indonesia's lack of an Islamic education curriculum. The difference lies in the study locations and references. While this study includes an English language curriculum found in basic education institutions, the curriculum used as a reference in this study is a study program in a higher education institution.

The results of research entitled "Elementary School Curriculum Reform in Turkey" outline the implementation of the new primary school curriculum, categorize its advantages and disadvantages, and suggest new strategies for parents, teachers, students, and policymakers (Koc et al., 2007). The area of overlap between these two subjects is curriculum design in primary schools. However, the specifications for the English language curriculum have a distinct focus that is not evident in this study.

Furthermore, the results and conversations with this study indicate parallels in how the Integrated Islamic School Network Curriculum is implemented in Integrated Islamic Middle Schools (Nurdiaman, 2015; Robingatin, 2015; Suyatno, 2013).

These findings showed that Islamic beliefs were embedded in the integrated Islamic school network *(JSIT, Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu) or* curriculum at integrated Islamic schools through local content, other programs, and subject matter. Supporting elements include the moral and financial responsibility of parents, the education system, and a religion-based social environment that constantly monitors and evaluates them. The inhibiting factors are human resources, which do not understand JSIT and inadequate infrastructure. Teachers' understanding of the 2006 curriculum in SIT was strong, with good involvement in curriculum development. The JSIT curriculum showed good quality standards, and subject characteristics provided insight into curriculum development. Islamic education in Indonesia is undergoing adjustments due to Islamic-based institutions like Islamic boarding schools, integrated Islamic schools, and madrasas. These schools emphasize teaching religious and moral values, as well as modern and higher education and are rapidly spreading.

While much prior research has been conducted on many areas of curriculum building at the primary and integrated Islamic school levels, there needs to be more literature regarding the specific integration of Islamic themes in primary school settings. Existing research has not fully addressed the critical confluence of designing communicative skills and the particular environment of integrated Islamic education.

The curriculum structure used in integrated Islamic schools includes general subjects, religion, and local content. The local content consists of Aqidah Akhlak, Qur'an Hadith, Fiqh, Tareqh, Arabic, English, Tahfidz, Tahsin, and Computers. As part of the local content, English is also taught in grades one to six. The material is provided to each educational unit under the Integrated Islamic Network. Pantura's (North Coast of Java Island, Indonesia) Islamic schools are part of the Integrated Islamic Network. Therefore, the curriculum used is naturally different in character and implementation.

In the local content curriculum at two integrated Islamic elementary schools (*Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu/SDIT*) English language materials characterize the two schools to develop students' language skills. Each grade level has a different emphasis on learning English adapted to the level of development of their skills. The materials are taught by using textbooks that have been determined by the school. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the differences between the designs of English curriculum development in two integrated Islamic elementary schools, the design, and implementation of a communicative competence-based English curriculum, as well as the barriers and solutions in the development of English language curriculum based on communicative competence in integrated Islamic primary schools.

Method

This study used a descriptive qualitative method. The data collected is written or illustrated, so it is not focused on numbers. The data is explained after analysis, making it easy for others to understand. As the research is carried out in natural conditions (natural environment), this research method is often referred to as natural methods.

The theory used is Cece Mulcia's theory of communication competence. Cece Murcia's theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and teaching communicative competence, highlighting the complexity and multifaceted nature of effective language use by encompassing a wide range of skills and knowledge areas.

The research takes place in two SDITs that are members of the Integrated Islamic Network (JSIT). The researchers assume that the two educational institutions have the same curriculum characteristics, namely that they are based on the Integrated Islamic School Network. In addition, English is included in the local content category in the schools but is prioritized in terms of learning and curriculum development.

The data sources used in this research were obtained from various sources, such as primary data from headmasters, public relations teachers, and English teachers. Secondary data are all sources related to communicative competence and English curriculum development. These were collected through observation, interviews, and document review. Triangulation of data sources and methods was used to validate the data.

Results

Implementation and Design of English Curriculum Development Based on Communicative Competence in Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools.

The study focuses on English Language Teaching through the integrated Islamic school's program, which is a school that integrates English language skills into its curriculum. The program aims to improve students' English language skills by integrating English language content in an engaging and relevant way.

The research was conducted on two sample schools as representative representations of schools with good English language standards. It found that English language skills were integrated into the learning process without causing a lack of fluency.

The curriculum was developed through the supervision of teachers and the use of online resources such as Microsoft Teams and WhatsApp groups. The study also highlighted the importance of the curriculum in developing students' knowledge in the fields of technology, English, and language skills. There was a need for a balance between the Ministry of Culture and Education curriculum, which is more theoretical, and the JSIT curriculum, which is

younger. The importance of using multimedia tools was in line with voice conferences, videos, and YouTube for teaching English. The school also used students' worksheets as learning resources to teach English to students who were new to the subject.

The study also highlighted the importance of the Islamic education system in the SIT program, which emphasizes the integration of Islam into the curriculum. The "Terpadu" concept in SIT is seen as an integral part of Islam rather than a partial one. In conclusion, English language skills integrate into the curriculum and promote a balance between academic and personal development.

Obstacles and Solutions for Developing a Communicative Competence–Based English Curriculum at an Integrated Islamic Primary School

The development of an English language curriculum based on communicative competence has several challenges. The teacher's role is to provide a balance between teaching English and ensuring that the lesson plan is balanced. The teacher's intensity with other teachers and the use of social media, such as video conferences and WhatsApp groups, is crucial. However, they must adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of the students while ensuring effective language learning.

The curriculum should be adaptable to the needs of the students, including time management, communication skills, and the ability to communicate with others. It should also be inclusive and prioritize the development of English language skills. Its development process includes a variety of programs every semester and is evaluated through various assessments. The teacher's role is to ensure that the students are well-prepared for the English language course, including materials, vocabulary, and teaching methods.

Discussion

The Communicative Curriculum Urgency in English Language Learning

Whether identifying as applied linguists, applied sociolinguists, or language teachers, the concept of communicative competence is crucial for anyone working in applied fields. It sets out requirements - the goals to be achieved and the methods required to achieve them - that have significantly influenced recent developments in language teaching (e.g., communicative language teaching), Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research (e.g., communicative strategies), curriculum and materials planning (e.g., English for Specific Purposes (ESP)), and in applied discourse analysis (e.g., text coherence). The best way to describe communicative competence is as a set of shared rituals, scripts, or schemas, in addition to a variety of skills as demonstrated by oral and written performance (or, of course, differences in reading and listening; native speakers differ greatly in these areas) (Davies, 1989).

Language learning is framed by the communicative curriculum as learning how to communicate as part of a particular sociocultural group. Consequently, the social norms that govern the form and behavior of language in groups are at the heart of the language learning process. The individual participant brings prior knowledge of the meaning of each communicative event to each communicative event and a prior understanding of how that meaning can be realized through the rules of language form and behavior. From a communicative perspective, a language teaching program will specify its objectives in terms of a particular target repertoire. Different curricula will ideally choose their own repertoire from a collection of communicative acts based on a sociolinguistic study of the target context (Breen & Candlin, 1980).

The Basic Concept of Curriculum and its Development

Quoting Mulkhan (1993), the word 'curriculum' comes from the Greek word 'curir', meaning 'runner', while the word 'curere' refers to the distance the runner has to cover. Thus, based on the above linguistic meaning, in the context of curriculum education, it can be understood as an 'educational circle', which can be interpreted as the involvement of teachers and students in educational interactions (circle of interaction) (Muzayyin, 2004).

The curriculum refers to a course or program's academic lessons and material. Although the term "curriculum" is frequently used in dictionaries to refer to a school's courses, it is rarely used in educational contexts. The curriculum refers to the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn, which includes the learning standards or learning objectives that they are expected to meet; the units and learnings that teachers teach; the assignments and projects that students are assigned; the books, materials, videos, presentations, and readings used in a course; and the tests, assessments, and other methods used to evaluate students (Curriculum Definition, www.edglossary.org).

The curriculum is more than just printed material. It is not enough to read the printed text when studying the curriculum; you also need to understand and take note of what happens in school, including pupil relationships, classroom activities, and the learning environment (Muzayyin, 2004). In a narrow sense, it is explained that the curriculum is a set of techniques used as a basis for designing and managing subject matter and content and for carrying out learning activities in schools. It includes content/materials, organization, and strategy.

From the various definitions above, it can be concluded that there is a learning design that contains several subjects, which are systematically arranged as a basis or reference for educators and educational institutions in guiding students towards goals that are cooled through the accumulation of knowledge for the formation of a complete human being.

The success of a curriculum requires a fairly long process. Several approaches must be passed in achieving curriculum success (Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development, 2009), including an instrumental approach (the instrumental strategy highlights the need for a methodical design procedure), a communicative approach (the communicative strategy highlights the significance of relational tactics), artistic approach (the creative approach highlights the designer's originality) pragmatic approach (the pragmatic approach focuses on the usefulness of educational materials in real-world situations).

Accordingly, communicative competence could be presented as an approach related to the targets in the development of a curriculum. Despite the exclusion of other approaches, the existence of the communicative approach is instrumental in the development of language curriculum design.

Basic Principles of Curriculum Development

In implementing the curriculum, the curriculum script is not only a reading book but needs implementation and development. Common misconceptions include the following, for example (Jenkins, 1983). It includes a textbook or list of subjects to be taught and assessed to a student and constitutes the curriculum; the syllabus serves as the curriculum, and once it is completed, the teacher's job is essentially done; experts from outside the school should produce the curriculum, and teachers should use it as intended; the curriculum outlines what should be taught, how it should be taught, and what kinds of activities should be given to the students; the final test should not depend on the curriculum; it should be the other way around; the curriculum accurately reflects what the teacher teaches and what she wishes for her students to learn; the best way to teach the material is through lectures.

Curriculum development is the process of designing and organizing the lessons that will be taught in the coming academic year (Wolven, 2013). Curriculum development can be interpreted as an activity that produces a curriculum that includes (1) the process of linking one component to another to produce a better curriculum and or (2) activities of preparation (design), implementation, assessment, and improvement of the curriculum.

The job of curriculum development is to research, organize, and prepare the instructional strategies and resources used in the classroom to produce the desired results. According to Wiles and Bondi (2011), the seven main processes of curricular development, as described by Taba (1962), are the diagnosis of needs, formulation of objectives, selection of content, organization of content, selection of learning experiences, organization of learning experiences, and determination of what to evaluate and means of doing it.

Teachers and librarians have access to a wide range of curriculum development tools, both physical and digital, free and paid for. Although there are many resources for both teachers and librarians, the number of resources for librarians outnumbered that of the teachers. As information literacy is incorporated into more institutions' curriculum development materials for teachers and school curricula, additional resources for librarians may become available in the coming years. However, most current curriculum development tools excel in authority, accuracy, scope, and usability for educators and librarians (Wolven, 2013).

The development strategy emphasizes the content aspect as a step in improving or updating. Factors that encourage reform include (a) Demands to reaffirm the moral and cultural values of the community. (b) Changes in the philosophical basis of knowledge structures, and (c) demand that the curriculum should be work-oriented.

Several aspects must be considered in curriculum development, namely (Hamalik, 2002), the purpose of philosophy and national education as the basis for formulating institutional goals is the basis for formulating the curriculum objectives of an educational unit, sociocultural and religious conditions prevailing in society, the development of students refers to their characteristics and development, environmental situation, including; interpersonal environment, cultural environment, living environment (bio ecology), and natural environment (geo ecology), development needs, which include; economic aspects, people's welfare, law, defense and security, the development of science and technology through the value system, the social culture, and the national culture.

There are some general principles in curriculum development (Sukmadinata, 2009): The first principle is relevance, the second principle is flexibility, the third principle is continuity, and the fourth principle is practicality. Thus, the curriculum has four core aspects: educational objectives, content, learning experiences, and assessments.

The 2013 curriculum is one of the curricula implemented after the *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan (KTSP)*/School-based Curriculum. The results of the development and evaluation of the KTSP curriculum, as well as the 2013 curriculum, are implemented. The 2013 curriculum emphasizes competence based on knowledge, attitudes, and skills. This curriculum change is a public policy that has gone through quite long stages, ranging from formulation, agenda-setting, policy formulation, legitimacy, implementation, and policy evaluation. Of course, changing and improving the curriculum is an urgent matter as a step to improving the quality of education. The curriculum must be adaptable to the needs of the students and to the development of information technology.

The Department for Education wanted Curriculum 2013 to be simplified to address growing concerns that the curriculum was overcrowded (particularly in primary schools); it

focused on helping students to become independent learners with the ability to think critically, communicate effectively, work in teams and develop an entrepreneurial mindset; addressed concerns that students were not receiving enough face-to-face teaching time; and increased the amount of time students spent in school.

In 2020, the Ministry of Education offered an Emergency Curriculum solution that simplified the revised 2013 Curriculum for use during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, the ministry again offered the Merdeka Curriculum, whose implementation aims to make it easier for schools to adjust the characteristics of their students. English in primary schools is the subject of choice through this offer.

The Urgency of English Language in Schools, Barriers and Solutions in the Development of English Language Curriculum

The development of an English language curriculum based on communicative competence faces several obstacles, including the weighty material in JSIT English language books and the need for periodic modifications to suit students' needs. Barriers to teaching English include shyness, lack of time, and the difficulty of textbook exercises (Meirbekov & Begaidarova, 2021).The support from many people, such as teachers and parents, as well as from institutions such as schools, English education centers, clubs, or institutions, can help improve children's English, Arabic, and Javanese communicative skills. Habituation through English, Arabic, and Javanese is also prioritized, allowing for better communication with children, teachers, and parents.

Besides, the evaluation of English as a foreign language is limited to questions adjusted to the child's ability. The book material from JSIT is too heavy for children, especially during the pandemic. Connection constraints provide options for teachers to provide learning from home, school, or Microsoft Team. English language learning is carried out in class without using the internet, only books, as the projector is limited. Other language curriculum development constraints include the absence of a language lab, time for conversation practice, and cooperation with institutions to bring in native speakers.

The JSIT syllabus develops according to existing knowledge, such as inquiry training, literacy, and numeracy, following the innovations of the times. The first teacher's strengths are science, as they have included Islamic elements in their teaching. Teachers need to learn to create content with Islamic material.

The solution to the need for native speakers in communication and language development is also necessary. Curriculum development starts from the annual and semester programs and is further elaborated into teaching material lesson plans and extracurricular activities. However, the barriers to teacher availability and the pandemic have hindered progress. Reading materials and assessments include Islamic elements in learning at JSIT schools.

The position of a language in a country is different. If a language is not used as a means of daily communication, both spoken and written, and is only learned in specific situations, it can be classified as English. English in Indonesia, for example, becomes a foreign language when it is studied at special times. Moon (2000) states: "English as a foreign language (EFL) refers to any situation where this language is learned as a subject in schools and used for international specific purposes but not spoken". According to him (Moon, 2000), even children who are active learners make mistakes when learning English as a foreign language, which "indicates the work of the language system". Therefore, errors in English communication are normal in the language system, especially for children.

Early exposure to English in pre-school or primary school is generally regarded as a positive starting point for the long-term development of young learners' language skills and intercultural understanding (Kohler, 2019). At the age of children, especially those who fall into the category of 'young learners', learning English is influenced by their level of language development (Nunan, 2006). The ability to communicate in the target language is the main objective for very young learners. Students' communicative skills and classroom performance must be at the center of teaching in order to ensure that English Language Learners (ELLs) receive high-quality instruction (*Communicative Competence and Performance | TESOL | International Association*, n.d.). Phillips (1993) argues that teaching English to young learners is related to each stage of development. Scott and Ytreberg (1990) expressed the same. Eight to ten-year-old children already have language awareness and readiness each time they learn the English language in their classrooms. However, everyone might be different. Furthermore, Medikawati (2012) suggests that the stimulation of brain cells in children between the ages of 0-3 years can be developed through the introduction of English and may slow down the development of skills at the age of 10-12 years. Thus, researchers can conclude that although language development can be categorized at a certain age, in principle this period can differ from individual to individual, including children's English language learning.

Learning English in Elementary School

At the primary level, English is taught as a foreign language. Students are likely to find this challenging. Therefore, the learning must be done formally and specifically. Learning a foreign language (English) requires children (students) to pay attention to language forms and language meanings. In addition, English is not a mother tongue, so acquisition cannot be done directly through the environment where students are located. This is the language they are native to. Mastery of the first language occurs spontaneously and deliberately, whereas mastery of the second language is achieved through deliberate formal actions (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

The terms 'English language' and 'second language' have different meanings; citing the opinion of Littlewood (1984), a brief distinction is made between these two terms as follows "a 'second' language is socially purposeful as a language within a community (e.g. as a lingua franca or as the language of another social group), whereas a 'foreign' language is purposeful in shaping communication outside its community." (p. 2).

Since the main purpose of learning English is to communicate and acquire knowledge, it is as challenging for students to learn it at school as any other course. In line with foreign and second language learning principles, factors such as motivation, opportunity, and ability to learn are involved. Motivation is an individual's drive, need to succeed, curiosity, and desire for new experiences.

On the other hand, there may be some challenges when teaching a language in a foreign environment. These problems must be identified to find remedies that will help the situation. Therefore, one of the main tasks of the Ministry of National Education is to maintain constant communication with the students and teachers who are the direct cause of the difficulties. The first objective for researchers in the field of English teaching and training is to observe, discover, identify, and establish these problems through discussion with the English teacher regarding the classroom environment. Therefore, they were the ones who could offer some recommendations and solutions to the problems faced by English teachers and students, which helped to facilitate the ministry's easy connection with schools (Kizildag, 2009).

Language teachers tend to use the recommendations appropriately and proportionately, which is also important in overcoming the difficulties of teaching English in a foreign

environment. The role of government in promoting the use of materials to encourage language learning is important. A teacher's agenda should include a variety of teaching resources, as they provide teachers and students with a wide range of benefits in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language (EFL). Research has shown that materials significantly accelerate learning and stimulate students' interest in the target language. Maria (2021) stated that through home-based learning, the communicative approach with teacher-designed materials successfully improves young learners' English communication skills. Put simply, they have a significant impact on language learners and a significant impact on EFL courses (Çakir, 2015).

English as a foreign language can be taught to children of primary school age because of their curiosity and desire for new experiences. This makes it easier for pupils to adapt and improve their language skills. Language skills can be enhanced if they are supported by the ability of language teachers to create an interesting and enjoyable language learning atmosphere, supported by the use of appropriate media, methods, and learning strategies. There are at least two aspects that have an impact on students' motivation, namely, communication needs and attitudes towards foreign language communities. Littlewood (1984) further explained that language acquisition in primary school children is influenced by aspects such as opportunities to use English as a real communication tool, the emotional atmosphere in learning situations, the type of language introduced, and the impact of formal learning.

Learning ability broadly includes cognitive factors, nature (personality), and age. The cognitive aspect is the child's ability to learn, which refers to intelligence and language ability. According to Littlewood (1984), what is meant by language ability is

"a) the ability to identify and remember sounds; b) the ability to memorize words; c) the ability to recognize how words function grammatically in sentences; and d) the ability to infer grammatical rules from examples of speech (pp. 62-63)".

Nature (personality) and age are other aspects determining the ability to learn a language. The urgency of teaching English to children as early as possible is based on the theory expressed by language researchers who support the existence of a language acquisition device in children (Brown, 1987; Littlewood, 1984; Titone & Danesi, 1985) that the normal human capacity to master language occurs from infancy to the age of eleven.

The Integrated Islamic School modifies and develops its curriculum to achieve the main objectives of establishing the school, namely, to give students who have Islamic personalities a strong and intelligent faith. To achieve this goal, all subjects and other programs in the process of implementing learning are integrated with the moral values of the Qur'an, Sunnah, and other general sciences. The aim is to incorporate the Aqidah dimension of SIT's educational ideology.

The curriculum used by SIT was a modified version of the Ministry of Education's curriculum. According to the structure of the curriculum, it contains three programs, which include: regular, IT and self-development (Suyatno, 2013). Five principles characterize the SIT curriculum; 1) education and teaching in all aspects of school activities, 2) competency-based learning, 3) mastery of the Quran, 4) mastery of Arabic and English, and 5) actualization of students' abilities and talents (Norhaidi in Suyatno, 2013). He adds that the SIT curriculum aims to develop knowledge that is equipped with professional skills by inculcating moral values and beliefs in Islam for preaching. The manifestation of the word 'integrated' in the school system is believed to be the basis for preparing a generation with the spirit of Muslim leadership.

Conclusion

The English language curriculum has been designed based on communicative competence. Although it is not optimal, it is according to the revised 2007 edition of Celce Murcia's scheme of communicative competence, namely sociocultural competence, discourse competence, linguistic competence, formulaic competence, interactional competence, and strategic competence.

Before starting the lesson, the English teacher makes a lesson plan with the supervision of the principal. Implementation can match other balanced localized loads. Meanwhile, the evaluation was also carried out by the school principal, the vice curriculum principal, and English teachers. This foreign language curriculum development design is carried out in collaboration with some institutions, such as through the Olympics and competitions. The Language Festival is a new design for developing communicative competence at the elementary school level through the assistance of subject teachers as well as support from the school and parents.

Barriers and solutions to the development of a communicative competence-based English curriculum in integrated Islamic primary schools are adaptation of the face-to-face and distance curriculum, Internet network, the content of the JSIT English language manual that needs to be adapted to the situation and conditions, the integration between religious and general knowledge has not been maximized by the teachers.

The solution needs to maintain qualified time allotments. Together with language experts who are armed with religious knowledge and flexible time for more monitored curriculum adjustments, internet networks can be overcome through the use of asynchronous media such as WhatsApp groups or telegrams, adjustment of handbooks according to the relevance of learning today, and further studies and training for linear and non-linear teachers.

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