



Exploring teacher development strategies in four most popular Kampung Inggris language courses: A descriptive analysis

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ABSTRACT

Teacher development programs have been commonly done for teachers in formal language learning contexts, meanwhile in non-formal contexts, such as language courses, the teacher development program has not yet been widely known, despite the variety of benefits that teacher development programs give to teachers. Thus, this research analyzes the teacher development program in Kampung Inggris language courses through qualitative studies using interviews with nine teachers from four language courses. Results suggest that teacher development programs in the four language courses can be categorized into skill learning, sharing, and mentoring. Skill learning includes drilling, evaluation, and e-courses while sharing and mentoring involve peer-teacher sharing programs and consultation with CELTA-certified teachers. The findings also indicated that teachers still need more teacher development programs that are not yet given by the language courses management. Thus, the study suggests further analysis of this issue and more opportunities for teachers in non-formal language learning programs to develop their teaching skills.



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INTRODUCTION

Development programs for English teachers in formal settings, such as schools and universities, have been extensively studied and implemented over the years (Adnyani, 2015; Harjanto et al., 2018; Soebari & Aldridge, 2016). However, there has been limited research on development programs for teachers who teach English in non-formal contexts, such as language courses. Additionally, the process of improving teachers' quality in Indonesia has also faced various obstacles that hinder the enhancement of teachers' skills (Harjanto et al., 2018). While the previous findings analyze the lack of improvement in formal settings, the improvement of teachers in non-formal settings has yet to be known from previous studies language teaching areas.

Despite the lack of information related to the teacher development programs in non-formal language learning, the process of teacher development programs itself plays a big role in the teacher's competencies enhancement. As supported by Apriliyanti (2020), teachers who joined professional development programs implement their teaching knowledge, pedagogic competence, and professional competencies better, despite facing several obstacles before joining teacher development programs. Vadivel et al. (2021) also elaborated that EFL teachers are able to become better teachers who aid students in achieving their language learning goals through professional development. Ortaçtepe & Akyel (2015) also indicated that teachers' development programs not only improve teachers' academic knowledge but also help increase their level of self-efficacy, which improves their teaching performance in general. Wati (2011) also added that teacher development improves teachers' motivation and confidence. Due to those reasons, teacher development has become one of the crucial aspects that is urgently needed in the language learning and teaching process, whether in formal or informal language teaching contexts.

This lack of development programs for teachers has become a concern due to the fact that previous studies have highlighted the need for improvement in the Kampung Inggris language course.

In the Indonesian context itself, Renandya et al. (2018) mentioned that many teachers in Indonesia have not yet reached the basic proficiency that is considered acceptable for effective language teaching. Addressing that issue, Maharani & Putro (2021) have mentioned that Kampung Inggris language course provides a tutor weekly development program called the “Briefing Program”. Despite that, further elaboration related to how this development program is conducted has not yet been addressed in the study. Furthermore, Maharani & Putro (2020) also identified the lack of significant improvement in the language learning program at Kampung Inggris, despite the high level of students’ satisfaction. Hermawan & Resi (2018) also indicate that Kampung Inggris course development mainly depends on increasing numbers of students, who also can be considered as visitors, to raise the success of market growth, facilitated by the generation's desire to improve their skills in English. This implies that profit becomes another aspect being considered by language course management other than the proficiency of both teachers and students.

Especially in the Kampung Inggris language courses context, where thousands of students are learning English every year, the development of the teachers will be one of the significant aspects that play the role of improving the language learning process. Supporting this, according to the data from Google Maps in 2024, there are approximately 140 language courses in this area. Meanwhile, according to Musfiro et al. (2022), there are approximately more than 100 language courses in this area, and around 20.000 students, which also indicates the rapid growth of the language education market in this area. This village has broken the Indonesian record as the village with the largest number of language courses in the area (Kampung Inggris Pare, 2023). Due to that reason, there is an urgent need to address the method of teaching development in Kampung Inggris due to its different nature from formal education which has been discussed to be influential in the previous study.

Previous experts in EFL teaching have also elaborated on the concepts of teacher development. Brown & Lee (2015) mentioned that teacher development has several layers that need to be addressed, including skill learning, cognitive process, personal construction, and reflective practice. Skill learning includes basic skills in teaching, while cognitive processes mainly focus on second language acquisition based on their personal background, knowledge, and experience. Moreover, personal construction refers to the process of knowledge development through learning and experience. Lastly, reflective practice can be done through evaluation of their own experiences which focuses on improving themselves further.

Based on the research problem outlined above, this study seeks to answer the question: How are teacher development programs conducted in the Kampung Inggris language course? By addressing this question, the research aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the teacher development strategies employed in non-formal language learning institutions. This investigation will help bridge existing gaps in the current understanding of teacher development practices and contribute to the enhancement of future teaching programs.

RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, descriptive research based on qualitative data from four language courses were analyzed using purposive sampling. The selection criteria included identifying courses recognized as top institutions based on the researcher's observations and feedback from locals. Teachers from these courses were interviewed using a semi-structured format to explore their development programs and personal strategies for enhancing teacher competence.

Among the four courses, nine teachers were selected for interviews. These teachers were chosen based on their teaching experience and the specific programs they were involved in at the courses under study. For confidentiality, the courses are referred to as Language Course A, B, C, and D. Interviews included one teacher each from Language Courses A and D, five from Language Course B, and two from Language Course C. This qualitative data was collected to address the research question.

Interviews were chosen as the data collection method due to their ability to provide in-depth information not readily observable. Creswell (2021) supports the use of interviews for gathering information that participants need to provide, such as insights into teacher development practices at the

research sites. The interviews were conducted both online and in-person, recorded, and transcribed. The transcripts were then coded using an adapted version of Brown’s teacher development framework, which encompasses skill learning, sharing, and mentoring.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the data from interviews with teachers of the four language courses, there are various ways of developing teachers’ competence. The teachers’ skills enhancement program includes drilling, joining sharing sessions, micro-teaching, observations with peer teachers, and providing materials. The general findings related to the teachers’ development can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of Teacher Development Programs in Each Language Courses

Language Courses.	Types of Development Programs	
	Skill Learning	Sharing and Mentoring
A	Webinars from fellow tutors	Mentoring with seniors for new teachers
B	E-courses and placement tests prior to teaching	Consultation with CELTA-certified teachers and observing peers and making reflections
C	Grammar drilling prior to teaching	Not Available
D	Drilling using TOEFL exercises every two weeks	Not Available

Furthermore, the elaboration of the teacher development program, which include skill learning, sharing, and mentoring, can be seen in the following subchapter.

Skill Learning

Skill learning is one of the most important parts that is required to be done by teachers, as it helps them improve their English language mastery. As supported by Rohmah (2018), other than capability to utilize various language teaching method, English teachers require the mastery of English language skills. That is why in the development program, skill learning become one of the crucial needs for English teachers. The process of skill learning in teacher development has already been addressed in the language course at Kampung Inggris. Starting from Language Course C, based on the interview excerpt, teachers at Language Course C do drilling even before becoming teachers. This drilling system is conducted in a flexible time, depending on the teacher's capability. This means that the priority of the training is capability, not time.

“At Language Course C there is a system called drilling. So, everyone who is going to teach in the classroom should pass the drilling sessions, and the drilling duration differs for every person. So, we cannot decide if it’s one month, two months, no. The competence is seen during drillings. If they are seen as capable of managing the class in accordance with Course C’s standard, then they can teach. So, there are some teachers that finished drillings in one month, but there are also some that spent months, almost a year even, because we see how capable the teachers are, not from the material.” (LCCI, SL1)

This elaboration of the drilling techniques to develop teachers’ competence aligns with the skill learning concept. The process of skill learning involves the development of basic skills in teaching, such as classroom management (Brown & Lee, 2015).

In addition to that, in the following excerpt, the teacher also added that this system is already suitable to prepare the teachers before teaching.

“Actually, the drilling system at Language Course C is very suitable, I mean all of the system is comprehensive, starting from examination, materials, and psychological factors to handle students” (LCC1, SL2)

The excerpt indicates that the teacher at Language Course C perceives that the teacher's development is already sufficient for teaching. This is not in line with one of the characteristics of teachers' personal qualities competence according to Brown & Lee (2015), which is the enthusiasm to achieve continued growth through short and long-term goals. Thus, the drilling method in Language Course C still has obstacles in increasing the teacher's personal qualities, despite being claimed to improve the teacher's pedagogical skills and background knowledge.

In contrast to Language Course C, in Language Course D, the skill development program is conducted through scoring, as elaborated in the following excerpt.

“I need to sharpen my speaking, especially from a native speaker, but it takes time and money, so far in this course there are TOEFL scoring for tutors every end of every month, to see whether our skills increase or decrease” (LCD, SL1)

While the excerpt also indicates that the language course has yet to address the teacher's needs for speaking skills development through training with native speakers, the language course has provided teachers with monthly TOEFL practice as a form of both skill development and evaluation. The findings above add the contrast between the need for development between language teachers in formal education and non-formal education contexts. In a study by Avillanova & Kuswando (2019) related to teachers in junior high schools, indicates that teachers concern the pedagogical skills of classroom management, assessment, giving instruction, administration, and performance standards, unlike the needs of the subject of this study which focus more on their linguistic knowledge in speaking.

Adding to that, Language Course B has their own variety of methods for developing teachers' skills. Language Course B also provides the teachers with materials to improve their teaching skills. As elaborated in the following interview excerpt

“We try new innovation using the e-course concept...which means members understand by watching learning videos that we provide, by the team and they also need to do some activities, like doing quizzes, making summaries, and solving case studies. Then, in the end of the training period we have material exploration and micro teaching” (LCB1, SL1)

Further to that, another teacher admitted in the following excerpts that the training has started since the beginning of joining the language course as a teacher. Even so, Rahman (2021) suggested that follow-up after the teacher development program is necessary for teachers to support their learning. Additionally, while the e-course provides teachers with knowledge to support the teaching process, practice is also important in ensuring that the teachers comprehend the materials. As supported by, teachers perceive classroom training to be more effective in improving their teaching skills, despite material training might also play a role in the process of improvement. This indicates that there are still some shortcomings in the teacher development program implementation.

Not only that, the interviewee from Language Course B also mentioned that the routine training is conducted every 3 months, as suggested in the following excerpt.

“We always conduct training, usually every 3 months, starting before we join, we receive placement test to decide what skills needs to be improved from the tutor” (LCB2, SL1)

While it is necessary to provide routine training, the duration of training has also proven to influence the impact that teacher training has on the teaching practices. As supported by Allen et al. (2018), a significant improvement in teaching practice can be seen after eighteen months of professional development. Thus, it is necessary to understand the frequency of the teachers' development program as it contributes to the success of teaching practice improvement.

Other than the training that is conducted every 3 months, there are also some trainings that can be done every time, whenever the tutor needs to have inspiration or guides in term of teaching method, as explained by the teacher in the following excerpts

“There is a training where we can join classes that we need...so we see how other tutors are teaching or delivering materials, especially from experienced tutors” (LCB5, SL1)

This type of teacher development program provides teachers with chances to learn through the real-life experiences of their peers. It is also claimed by Fitriansyah et al. (2020) that professional development programs should be personalized based on the teachers' needs. Thus, this method of training in accordance with each tutor's needs has been in line with the previous findings related to this issue.

Unfortunately, this concept of training stated by teachers at Language Course B has not yet been implemented to all of the tutors. This is shown by the following excerpt by one of Language Course B's tutors that have just started working at Language Course B less than a year ago.

“So far, I haven't found any training, some kind of improving (activities)” (LCB3, SL1)

Despite the variety of teacher training programs in Language Course B, there are no clear indications on what are the main goals and purposes of the developmental programs. Meanwhile, Revina et al. (2023) declared that the lack of vision in the teacher development activities might ignite confusion and lack of certainty for teachers. This indicates the need for improvement in the teachers' development programs that had already been conducted in the language course.

Sharing and Mentoring

Other than skill learning, Language Course A provides other types of teachers' development programs. This is proven by the following excerpt from the interview. The teachers' development program includes sharing sessions with tutors, as elaborated in the following excerpt.

“They (the tutors) gave seminars to other tutors as a form of sharing, with the hope to increase the same value with the other tutors. Secondly, the program that we have to develop tutors, we have upgrading and regrading. So, we regrade tutors based on eight aspects I've mentioned, maybe every 3 months we regrade. So, this tutor enters grade A, B, or C. If they get A, they join the official tutor. Lastly, usually, we have mentoring to see the tutor's competence. Mentoring here means that tutors that are considered okay, or have great skills, in handling classes, and we have new tutors that haven't got into that level, we give them platform to share with the tutors, (giving) suggestions that are considered based on attitude, competence, and vibes are suitable with the tutors with better performance.” (LCA, SMI)

Adding to the findings above, Aslan & Öcal (2012) proposed that the process of mentorship where seniors help a junior with less experience is claimed to have effective contributions toward the teaching professions as it helps teachers with low motivation and professional development problems during the trainee period. Also supporting these findings, Colognesi et al. (2020) elaborated that sharing sessions with a mentor has a high possibility to influence new teacher knowledge development. Despite that, it is also indicated that most teachers prefer to have the same level of mentor, compared to seniors, as implemented in Language Course A. Furthermore, Adnyani (2015) also mentioned that supervision has become one of the needs of teachers in their development program, alongside teaching practice and workshops. It is also necessary to mention that the long-term development program through sharing and mentoring could be more significant if conducted with proper planning (Chalmers & Gardiner, 2015). Even so, results from the interview have not addressed the thorough planning of the teachers' development program.

Despite the training not being available to all teachers due to differences in location and expertise, the teachers at Language Course B also try to conduct personal training to help develop their skill as a language teacher. As elaborated in the following excerpt:

“I tried to improve my skills by consulting with English teachers that are also a native speaker...they are also certified CELTA, I tried to ask what method they use...I tried to do personal training” (LCB4, SMI)

The excerpt indicates that a teacher in Language Course B still needs further professional development programs which leads to joining consultation with certified teachers to fulfill the needs

that have not yet been met by the language course management. This finding is in line with Ilma & Rohmah (2023) that teachers are eager in receiving ideas and feedback to enhance their learning. Thus, it should be noted that teachers are enthusiastic about teachers' development programs that involve sharing and mentoring.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there are several types of teacher development programs being implemented at four of the popular language courses at Kampung Inggris. The teacher development programs are able to be identified as skill learning, sharing, and mentoring. While these development programs are able to increase various teaching skills, teachers still need to improve their own skills by having their personal development program in accordance with their needs. Therefore, it is suggested that language course management address the teachers' professional development needs by creating more opportunities for teachers to develop their skills.

While the findings implied that there are various types of teacher development program to achieve a successful English teaching and learning, it is necessary to remember that this study is limited to only four top language courses based on popularity in one area. Thus, future researchers are encouraged to conduct research in other aspect of language courses to achieve more thorough findings related to teacher development programs. This way, the gap in this research can be addressed.

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