

Guru Penggerak and Continuous Professional Development: A Case Study of English Teachers in Palembang

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the significance of *Guru Penggerak* (GP) in developing the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of English teachers. This was done by investigating the need for GP among English teachers to enhance their CPD and identifying the components or parts of *Guru Penggerak* that support their continuous professional development. A qualitative research method was used to investigate the phenomena, with two English teachers who joined *Guru Penggerak* Batch 1 in Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia as participants. Triangulation and member checks were conducted to ensure the dependability of the data obtained from interviews and documentation. The data were described and interpreted using codification, checklists, and thematic analysis. The findings of the study show that it is necessary for teachers of English to join *Guru Penggerak* to enhance their continuous professional development. After joining the program, English teachers were able to improve three components of their professional development: Self-Development, Scientific Publication, and Innovative Works. It was also found that GP mostly encouraged teachers of English in their pedagogical competencies, but less so in their proficiencies. However, GP provided English teachers with the eagerness to improve their English proficiency individually. Additionally, the study proved that *Guru Penggerak* (GP) helped advance English teachers' careers, with some appointed as school principals and assessors of GP in subsequent Batches.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers play an important role in developing qualified human resources, as stated in the Law of Teachers and Lecturers No. 14/2005. National development aims to build qualified human resources in Indonesia, which includes mastery of knowledge and technology. According to the Human Development Index based on data from 2017-2019 released by Statistics Indonesia, Indonesia is ranked 107th among selected countries, while Malaysia is ranked 62nd and Korea is ranked 23rd (Statistik, 2022). The Global

Competitiveness Index shows that Indonesia is ranked 50th, while Japan is ranked 6th and Korea is ranked 13th.

Education is the key to shaping qualified human resources, and teachers are a significant component in establishing it. Schools need to produce qualified graduates to contribute to the development of qualified human resources. Based on the PISA study (Factmaps, 2018), which is held every three years for students aged 15, Indonesia is ranked 71st out of 77 countries that have participated in the program. This is still the lowest ranking among the participating countries.

Since 2005, the Indonesian government has tried to enhance teachers' professional competency. The Law of Teachers and Lecturers number 14/2005 states that teachers and lecturers need to improve their quality to develop the quality of Indonesian education and produce graduates who are capable of facing challenges locally, nationally, and globally. The government has organized various teachers' training courses to improve the professionalism and teaching quality of teachers. However, the results of these courses have so far been unsatisfactory. One of the ways the government aims to develop teachers' professional competency is through a teacher certification program. Article 8 of Chapter 1 of the Teachers and Lecturers Act (2005) stipulates that teachers must have academic qualifications, educational certificates, physical and mental health, and the ability to achieve the educational objectives of the Indonesian nation. Irna (2014) concluded in her research that most certified teachers meet the requirements to become professional teachers. However, the 2015 results of the UKG, which is a test of teachers' competency, contradicted Irna's research. Based on the result of the UKG 2015 (Direktorat Sekolah Dasar, 2019), teachers who passed with a minimum score of 80 were not more than 30%. This means that around 70% of teachers scored below 80 and were in the category of incompetence.

In 2019, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology launched the *Merdeka Belajar* program, a transformation program in education aimed at creating qualified human resources (Kemdikbud, 2020). Several episodes have been launched as part of this program, including Episode 5, which focuses on the development of teaching and learning as well as the independent development of teachers' professional competency. The *Guru Penggerak* (GP) program involves principals and school supervisors as partners of activator teacher candidates to drive educational transformation in their own schools. GP aims to identify teachers with the potential to become future education leaders in Indonesia. Through this program, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology hopes to produce qualified human resources by encouraging *Guru Penggerak* as future education leaders. Sudrajat (2020) emphasizes that the teaching profession requires professionalism from teachers, which is reflected in the results of their work in the teaching and learning process. *Guru Penggerak* are expected to be educational leaders who help students grow actively and holistically. They are also expected to implement student-centered teaching and learning and serve as role models and transformation agents to build an educational ecosystem that creates students with Pancasila profiles (Kemdikbud, 2020).

In the six months of the *Guru Penggerak* program, candidates will receive (1) competency development as educational leaders in student-centered learning, (2) experiences in independent learning as well as guided, structured, and enjoyable group learning, (3) opportunities to learn with other *Guru Penggerak* candidates, (4) guidance from *pengajar praktik* (practical/mentoring teachers) who will serve as companions for *Guru Penggerak* in this program, (5) membership in the latest educational communities, and (6) 310 teaching hours of educational and *Guru penggerak* program certification.

Azmiyah (2021) describes that the objective of *Guru Penggerak* is to enhance teachers' competencies and create a student-centered learning atmosphere. She also mentions that *Guru Penggerak* can move the education process towards student-centered teaching and learning through four steps. The first step is mobilizing teachers' communities in schools. *Guru Penggerak* activates teachers' communities to build a child-friendly learning process at schools. Other teachers will follow the *Guru Penggerak's* lead to build a student-centered and child-friendly learning process. The second step is that *Guru Penggerak* becomes the leaders who can influence other teachers to make the teaching and learning process student-centered and child-friendly. In this case, *Guru Penggerak* enhances their competence as leaders. They have to become school agents to build students' leadership sense and be able to collaborate and organize their schools

with other parties inside and outside the schools. *Guru Penggerak* candidates develop their continuous professional development through *Guru Penggerak* training programs. They improve teachers' capacities for directing student-centered and student-friendly teaching and learning processes, emotional and moral maturity, and the capacity to organize, carry out, reflect upon, and assess student-centered learning.

Lubis et al (2022) state that the *Guru Penggerak* Program is capable of enhancing human resources competencies. According to Lubis, after completing the program, *Guru Penggerak* will be able to understand and implement the Indonesian Educational Philosophy (developed by Ki Hajar Dewantara), as well as establish student-centered and student-friendly learning, emotional and social learning, and coaching skills. Additionally, the program also develops the ability to manage and lead schools.

Professional development, according to Mizell (2010), includes a variety of learning experiences that are relevant to a person's line of work. Richard (2005) stated some reasons why teachers need to seek continuous professional development. Teachers have different levels of experience, skills, and knowledge. Knowledge about language skills is never something permanent. New methods and technologies will always develop in the teaching process. Continuous professional development is the development of teachers' competency that is done to improve their professionalism. This was done continuously as their need (Permenpan 16, 2009). Chapter 5 article 11 of the regulation of the Ministry of State for the use of state apparatus and Bureaucracy reform number 16/2009 about teachers' functional position and credits number shows that there are three components of teachers' continuous professional development. Self-Development, this includes functional training, teachers training to enhance teachers' competencies, and teachers' profession. Scientific Publication, Publishing of research findings that includes novel concepts for textbooks and formal education, enrichment book and teachers guided books. Innovative works: This includes finding appropriate technologies, creating artworks, making/modifying learning tools/demonstration tools/ and practicing and following the development of test evaluation

There have been several studies conducted on GP since its establishment. According to Lestari (2021), it is not clear how English teachers have responded to the GP program. The results of her investigation showed that the program had both positive and negative influences on teachers and students. Sugiyarta (2020) stated that *Guru Penggerak* were able to mobilize their communities and possess complete professional competencies. His research also revealed that *Guru Penggerak* developed various learning activities. Nurihayanti (2022) found that GP was able to promote freedom of learning by upholding the principles of freedom of thought, teacher and student innovation, and providing a learning environment that is oriented towards the needs of the students. Ardiyan (2022) discovered that compared to teachers who were not *Guru Penggerak*, those who were had higher levels of creativity.

The previous studies did not specifically mention how English teachers reacted to GP. It was not clear whether English teachers needed to join *Guru Penggerak* or not, despite all teachers being encouraged to join regardless of the subjects they taught. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the need for English teachers to join *Guru Penggerak* and the benefits they gain from it. This study aims to determine the need for English teachers to join Activator Teachers to enhance their continuous professional development and identify the specific components of *Guru Penggerak* that can improve the continuous professional development of English teachers..

2. METHODS

The objectives of this research are to find out the need for teachers of English to join *Guru Penggerak* (GP) to develop English teachers' continuous professional development and to find some components/material/part of AT in the program which increased teachers of English' CPD. This was done through qualitative research. Qualitative research was an approach to examine and explain the meaning of human phenomena. Using a case study approach, in this study, the investigator explored a real life, contemporary bounded system (Creswell, 2013).

To achieve the objectives of this study, several English teachers who had completed Batch 1 of the *Guru Penggerak* (GP) program in 2021 in Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia, were chosen as participants. Data was collected through interviews and data reviews. Creswell (2013) stated that data

analysis in qualitative research involves collecting and organizing the data. The following steps were taken to analyze the data:

1. Data preparation/organization
2. Coding the data: The data was labeled and coded based on the components of Continuous Professional Development as stated in the regulation of the Ministry of State for the use of state apparatus and Bureaucracy reform number 16/2009 regarding teachers' functional positions and credit numbers.
3. Displaying the results: Thematic analysis was used to describe and interpret the data.

To validate the data, triangulation was performed. This refers to the use of multiple and different sources, methods, and theories to provide evidence of validity (Creswell, 2013). Member checks were also conducted to ensure the dependability of the data. The chart below shows the data analysis process.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In order to achieve the primary goal of this study, which was to assess the necessity for English instructors to participate in *Guru Penggerak* in order to enhance their Continuous Professional Development (CPD), interviews were conducted. The respondents consisted of two English instructors who were participants of *Guru Penggerak* Batch 1. In order to comprehend the initial response to the necessity of joining GP, the study examined how English teachers augment their CPD (Continuing Professional Development) prior to being part of GP. The initial English instructor was a male educator with a teaching experience of 7 years. He was approximately 27 years old and worked as an English instructor at a Junior High school. He had a strong desire to improve his professional skills and actively sought opportunities to do so. Prior to becoming an Activator Teacher, he willingly participated in various programmes aimed at enhancing his professional development, such as enrolling in an S2 master's degree programme and attending webinars on HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) and teacher innovation.

English teacher 1 (ET1):

I am eager to learn. I have joined some CPDs either held by Government or Self-development in my leisure time. For example S2 Master Degree, HOTS Webinar, Teachers Innovation, etc.

The second teacher was a female teacher, who had been teaching for about 20 years. She was about 46 six years old. Before joining *Guru Penggerak*, she had joined some programs only because she was told by her principal to join the program.

English teachers 2 (ET2):

I just did it when there was an instruction from the headmaster, but after joining the ATP I often join seminars or workshops both formally and informally online and offline.

According to Al (2016), teachers considered that continuous professional development (CPD) was a demanding need for enhancing their original knowledge and classroom practice. The fact that some teachers attended training and workshops before joining *Guru Penggerak* indicates that they recognized the importance of CPD for advancing their careers.

English teacher 2 stated that as a teacher in a public school, she had to improve her CPD to be eligible for a higher rank as a civil servant teacher.

I was able to level up my rank as a civil servant teacher through some activities of continuous professional development.

This was in line with Vadivel (2021), who stated that teachers who had courageously increased their CPD also had better outcomes. However, ET1 was not a civil servant teachers, he was a teacher in a private school. In private schools, they have their own mechanism to level up the rank of teachers.

I teach in a private school, and the mechanism to level up teachers' rank uses their own mechanism. It is not using the policy and regulation of the regulation of Ministry of State for the use of state apparatus and Bureaucracy Reform number 16/2009 about teachers' functional position and credits number.

From the results of the above interview, we can see that both teachers were willing to enhance their continuous professional development before joining Guru Penggerak (GP), regardless of their motivation. ET 1, an English teacher in a private school, was willing to join some activities to increase his CPD voluntarily. Meanwhile, ET 2, a teacher in a public school, was encouraged by her school principal to participate in activities to level up her rank as a civil servant teacher. Both teachers agreed to enhance their CPD through various means to improve the quality of their teaching. Priajana (2017) stated that CPD was a secure way to ensure immense teacher quality.

The interview results showed that various programs could enhance teachers' CPD. The next questions were: why did English teachers need to join AT? Despite being able to enhance their CPD through other activities, why did they join AT, and what benefits did they receive from it? The interview showed that both teachers agreed to join AT, and it helped enhance their continuous professional development, like other programs they had participated in.

English teacher 1 said,

I need to join the Activator teacher program for my professional development and to know the other teachers from various schools. This way we can build communities and network among teachers and together we can grow up our professional development as teachers

English teacher 2 said:

I join the program because I want to develop my knowledge and performance as a professional teacher. At first, I wasn't interested in the program, but I found the advertisement everywhere, then somehow I wanted to try to join the program. Then I fill the application and started to register voluntarily.

English teacher 1 said that he joined the Guru Penggerak program to enhance his continuous professional development and broaden his network. The Guru Penggerak program created leaders, so it was a kind of leadership program. He found that this program developed his continuous professional development because GP offered training that enabled teachers to collaborate and understand its material in workshop communities. Vangrieken (2017) stated that teacher communities play a central role in teachers' professional development. According to Hayes (2000), a project for teachers involving collaborative, strategic, and reflective work was able to help teachers manage their professional growth. GP also encouraged participants to apply pedagogical theories, such as differentiated learning, social-emotional learning, and coaching in the classroom. Halim et al. (2018) stated that feedback from the classroom was the best way to help teachers' CPD. This was also in line with what ET2 said, that she joined the program to enhance her performance as a professional teacher in the classroom.

From the interview, ET2 also mentioned that the GP program is intended for candidates of headmasters, advisors, teachers, and instructors.

ET2:

It is the government's program episode 5 that the objective is to prepare the teachers to be the leader of learning and deserved to be a headmaster, an advisor, and an instructor for other teachers.

The statement above was also in line with law number 40/2021 that candidates of school leaders must have GP certificates. Both ET1 and E2 were highly motivated teachers. They felt they needed to learn from time to time because the world of education was changing.

ET1: *I love to learn and try new things. I also like to have wider teacher communities.*

ET2: *Although before AT I only joined teachers' training because the school principals asked me to, seeing the AT, made me eager to learn.*

The second objective of this research was to find out which materials, components, or parts in the GP support teachers' CPD. Based on the interview and documentation findings, there were several materials that ET1 learned from GP. In module 1, *Guru Penggerak's* Paradigm and Vision, he learned about the Indonesian education philosophy of Kihajar Dewantara. From the philosophy, ET1 was able to see different paradigms of how to engage with his students in the classroom. In module 2, Child-Friendly Teaching and Learning Practices, ET1 learned about differentiated learning, social-emotional learning, and coaching theories. He also created some innovative learning media. In module 3, he learned about learning leaders and school development. Here, ET1 was able to develop his capability to manage communities, create programs for his school, and become the leader of some communities. Besides learning materials in the GP, ET1 also joined workshops with some mentor teachers and GP communities. This encouraged and trained him to be a leader.

In total, there were 18 items that he received from GP. The following is the list of the items:

1. Learning about the Indonesian Education Philosophy of Kihajar Dewantara
2. Learning about differentiated learning instruction
3. Learning about coaching
4. Learning about socio-emotional learning instruction
5. Public speaking training
6. School leadership and management training
7. Individual coaching with a mentor teacher
8. Collaborative learning with other teachers in ATP workshops, including sharing about the real implementation of learning theories
9. Collaborative learning with teachers' communities, such as the Program Batch 1 community, to learn from other teachers' ideas and apply them in school
10. Becoming the IT coordinator of the Activator Teacher
11. Implementing a student-centered learning program called EVOLUSI to enhance students' vocabularies and other programs for students
12. Publishing two journals and nine books, attending teachers' seminars and scientific webinars from PPPTK Bahasa and Balitbangda
13. Becoming a resource person in some webinars
14. Creating English textbooks, including a tryout for the 9th Grade
15. Becoming a moderator and being able to interact with stakeholders
16. Creating student-centered learning programs
17. Creating digital media for studying
18. Being appointed as the principal.

English teacher 2 also benefited from the GP program. The following are the findings: (1) Learning about the Indonesian Education Philosophy of Kihajar Dewantara, (2) Learning materials on differentiated learning instruction, (3) Learning materials on coaching, (4) Socio-emotional learning instruction, (5) Public speaking, (6) School leadership and management materials, (7) Individual

coaching with a mentor teacher, (8) Collaborative learning with other teachers in the ATP workshop, sharing ideas with other teachers about the real implementation of the learning theory, (9) Creating student-centered learning, (10) Creating digital media for studying, and (11) Becoming an assessor for the Activator Teacher Program in the following batch.

Using the CPD categorization from the regulation of the Ministry of State for the use of state apparatus and Bureaucracy reform number 16/2009, the data finding were categorized into three main components of CPD, they are Self Development, Scientific publication, and Innovative work. Following Louws, et all (2017) Continuing professional development includes not only on-the-job training and continuing education in the form of organized programs, but also any autonomous and systematic further development, such as the independent reading of books and magazines, participation in university courses, programs and conferences, and interaction with colleagues and supervisors.

According to the regulation of the Ministry of State for the use of state apparatus and Bureaucracy reform number 16/2009, the components of self-development for teachers include participating in functional training and joining teacher communities. The research findings revealed that both ET 1 and ET 2 enhanced their CPD component of self-development by engaging in various activities. These activities included learning about the Indonesia Education Philosophy of Kihajar Dewantara, differentiated learning instruction, coaching, socio-emotional learning instruction, public speaking, school leadership, and management material. They also participated in individual coaching with mentor teachers, collaborative learning with other teachers in the Guru Penggerak program, workshops, and sharing sessions about the real implementation of learning theories. Additionally, they engaged in collaborative learning with teacher communities, such as the GP Program Batch 1 community, where they learned from other teachers' ideas to apply in their schools, and they served as IT coordinators for the Guru Penggerak program.

Scientific publication as a component of CPD involves the dissemination of research studies or innovative ideas in formal education through various mediums, including textbooks, enrichment books, and teachers' guiding books. From the data findings, ET 1 demonstrated significant progress in scientific publication by publishing two journals and nine books, participating in teachers' seminars and scientific webinars hosted by PPPTK Bahasa and Balitbangda, and serving as a resource person in several webinars. Conversely, ET 2 struggled to develop this component of scientific publication and did not achieve the same level of success as an activator teacher in this area.

The third component of CPD is innovative works, which encompasses finding appropriate technology for teaching, creating artwork, making or modifying study tools, displays, and practices, and following the development of standards and guidelines for tests. According to the data findings, both teachers developed innovative works by creating student-centered learning environments and designing digital media for students to study. These innovative efforts highlight their commitment to enhancing the learning experience and integrating new technologies and methodologies into their teaching practices.

The following were the tables of CPD percentages each of the participants obtained.

Table 1. ET1 CPD Categorization Percentage Obtained

No.	Aspect	Score
1	Self-Development	71%
2	Scientific Publication	11 %
3	Innovative works	17%

Table 2. ET2 CPD Categorization Percentage Obtained

No.	Aspect	Score
1	Self-Development	81%
2	Scientific publication	0 %
3	Innovative works	19%

Based on the percentage, it can be observed that the self-development component was the biggest achievement among all the components. According to Kemdikbud, *Guru Penggerak* was designed for voluntary participation by teachers (Kemdikbud, 2020). Since English teacher 1 joined voluntarily, he was able to focus on the self-development component, which constituted around 71% of all the items that he developed. This finding is consistent with his statement that he joined the program to enhance his professional development as a teacher. Wyatt's (2017) study suggests that CPD should be implemented to increase teacher awareness, and teachers should address their needs and interests in developing CPD to support lifelong learning.

The materials that ET 1 and 2 received in GP were the same, but they had different impacts on them. While ET 1 was able to obtain 18 benefits from GP, ET 2 only developed 11 items for her CPD. In Table 1, which shows ET 1's CPD categorization percentage obtained, and Table 2, which shows ET 2's CPD categorization percentage obtained, it was stated that ET 2 was only able to obtain the Self-Development component of CPD. About 81% of the data from the interview and documentation showed that the Self-Development component of CPD was developed by ET 2. As for the component of scientific publication, it was stated that ET 2 obtained zero percent of the items. This meant that the components and materials in GP did not encourage her to develop the scientific publication component of CPD. However, ET 1 was able to develop 11% of the scientific publication component, and about 19% of the items in the field of innovative works

From the interview, it was revealed that developing the scientific publication component of CPD required a lot of work, time, and motivation. ET2 did not have enough time to produce academic writing or engage in other activities associated with scientific publication, such as serving as a resource person or attending conferences to present academic work, as she was a full-time teacher in her school. In terms of career advancement, both ET1 and ET2 were able to advance in their careers. ET1 was appointed as the school principal, and ET2 became an assessor of the next batch of GP program.

4. CONCLUSION

Teachers are lifelong learners who always try to learn to be professionals in their field, English teaching. They need to renew their knowledge in teaching and learning and increase their continuous professional development. One way to enhance English teachers' CPD is by joining some programs for teachers, such as training in communities like MGMP, cascading training, etc. *Guru Penggerak* is the newest initiative introduced by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology to enhance teachers' CPD. From the first objective of this study, it was shown that English teachers felt the need to join AT to enhance their CPD, namely self-development, scientific publication, and innovative works. Through interviews and documentation, it was revealed that AT encouraged teachers to develop these three components of CPD. The two teachers were highly motivated to join it voluntarily. The second objective was to reveal some components/material/parts of AT to develop English teachers' CPD. The interview and documentation review revealed that some materials and components in GP encouraged teachers to develop their CPD. However, the percentage of scientific publication obtained was the lowest of all, so I suggest further research to investigate it thoroughly. For English teachers who have not joined the program, it is suggested to do so to enhance their CPD. However, GP did not enhance teachers' English proficiencies, such as productive skills (speaking and writing) and receptive skills. The weakness of this research is that it cannot reveal why not all English teachers who participated in the *Guru Penggerak* program developed their scientific publication component, and it is suggested for further researchers to investigate it more thoroughly to find the reasons and provide solutions to the problem.

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