

**EXPLORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
NEW LITERACY POLICY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS
IN INDONESIA: A CASE STUDY**

Thesis

Submitted to meet the Graduation Requirements of
Master's Degree MA in Education



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UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Name : Asep Ropiudin
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Title : Exploring the Implementation of the New Literacy Policy in Primary Schools in Indonesia: A Case Study

Nurturing literacy skills in the early years has been extensively studied and demonstrated to contribute to children's success in the later stages of life. The importance of literacy invites government initiatives to provide research-based literacy programs at schools. However, most of literacy reform initiatives reported to have many issues. While similar literacy initiatives have been massively implemented globally, the literature suggests the issues range from the formulation to the implementation process. Therefore, the more comprehensive approach to see the literacy policy is needed to understand the complexity of the process.

This study aims to explore the implementation of literacy policy in the context of Indonesian primary schools. The research questions focus on understanding the factors influencing the formulation of the literacy policy, the conceptualization of literacy in policy documents, and how teachers implement the literacy policy, including their knowledge and perception, their practices, and the challenges they encounter when implementing the policy.

Since the study is explorative in nature, this study utilizes a qualitative case study design. The data collection method includes document analysis of policy documents related to the current literacy policies, semi-structured interviews with policymakers, and questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with teachers. The data were analyzed using the thematic analysis method.

The finding from the study reveals the historical context and factors leading to the formulation of the current literacy policies in Indonesia. Besides, how the conception of literacy intersects with the current literacy research was presented by analyzing the policy documents. Finally, the study highlighted teachers' practices and discussed the unintended consequences related to inequity in access to knowledge and resources. While the government has prioritized literacy to be embed across curriculum in Indonesian primary schools, teachers' challenges need to be addressed to ensure successful implementation.

Keywords: case study, critical policy analysis, literacy policy, policy implementation, teacher professional development

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKM	<i>Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum</i> (Minimum Competency Assessment)
AN	<i>Asesmen Nasional</i> (National Assessment)
ANBK	<i>Asesmen Nasional Berbasis Komputer</i> (Computer-Based National Assessment)
BOS	<i>Bantuan Operasional Sekolah</i> (School Operational Assistance)
BSKAP	<i>Badan Standar Kurikulum dan Asesmen Pendidikan</i> (Education Curriculum Standards and Assessment Agency)
CIERA	Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement
GLN	<i>Gerakan Literasi Nasional</i> (National Literacy Movement)
GLS	<i>Gerakan Literasi Sekolah</i> (School Literacy Movement)
GNLD	<i>Gerakan Nasional Literasi Digital</i> (National Digital Literacy Movement)
GTK	<i>Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan</i> (Teacher and Education Personnel)
ILA	International Literacy Association
LPDP	<i>Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan</i> (Educational Fund Management Institution)
MoEC	Ministry of Education and Culture (<i>Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan</i>) – the name of the ministry before dissolved on 28 April 2021
MoECRT	Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (<i>Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi</i>) – the name of the ministry after dissolved on 28 April 2021
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NCLB	No Children Left Behind
NLS	National Literacy Strategy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Permendikbud	<i>Peraturan Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan</i> (Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture)
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PBD	<i>Perencanaan Berbasis Data</i> (Data-Driven Planning)
PMM	<i>Platform Merdeka Mengajar</i> (Emancipated Teaching Platform)
Pusmenjar	<i>Pusat Asesmen dan Pembelajaran</i> (Center for Assessment and Learning)
SES	Socio Economic Status
SKL	<i>Standar Kompetensi Lulusan</i> (Graduate Competence Standard)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The study aims to explore the implementation of the new literacy policy in primary education in Indonesia. It focuses on understanding the factors behind the formulation of the current policy, how literacy is portrayed in the policy documents, and how teachers as policy actors understand, interpret, and implement the literacy policy in different school contexts. In this introductory chapter, I present background and context of the study to give the context of the current literacy policy under the analysis. After giving the study background, the chapter is followed by the research questions, research objectives, and the significance of the study. Finally, this chapter ends with the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Research Background

Nurturing literacy and numeracy skills in students' earlier stage of life is very important (Barrett & Riddell, 2019; Bigozzi et al., 2023; Derby et al., 2022; Li et al., 2008; Lundberg et al., 1988; Weinberger, 1996). In a longitudinal study, Ritchie and Bates (2013) examined the effects of mathematics and reading achievement in children aged seven on their Socioeconomic status (SES) when they reach age 42. The study's findings showed that mathematics and reading ability at age 7 were significantly positively associated with socioeconomic status (SES) at that age. Another longitudinal study by Weinberger (1996) followed 42 children from aged 3 to 7 to see what predicted their early literacy development. The study also found that children's literacy skills at aged three positively and significantly correlated with their school attainments

at age 7. Thus, high performance in literacy and numeracy skills can help students succeed in their later stages of life.

According to various international assessment results, Indonesian students still need help with literacy skills. According to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018, the performance of the average 15-year-old students in reading, mathematics, and science in Indonesia ranked 74 out of 79 among PISA participating countries (OECD, 2019b). Among the three areas, reading performance has the lowest score, where only 30% of students (compared to the 77% OECD average) can reach the minimum of Level 2 of reading proficiency based on the PISA framework (OECD, 2019a). In this level, students are expected to be able to determine the main idea from moderate-length texts, find explicit information from the texts, and determine the purpose of the texts (OECD, 2019b). Those skills are required for students to be able to function fully in society. Unfortunately, not only is the latest PISA score not encouraging, but the reading performance trend also raises concern. Based on the trend, although the students' reading performance had gradually increased from 2001 to 2009, reaching its peak at 402 mean-performance score, it gradually decreased from 2009 to 2018 to the earlier lowest level.

In other words, the average reading performance of 15-year-old students in Indonesia in 2018 was the same as in 2001. The performance moves 17 years backward to the 2001 level. The reading performance is the worst both in terms of the trend and the current score compared to those in Mathematics and Science (see Figure 1). Although the PISA data and its international comparison have some critics (Araujo et al., 2017), its impact on steering and directing national policy remains influential, especially in developing countries (Engel, 2015; Niemann et al., 2017; Nortvedt, 2018;

Tasaki, 2017). In the current Merdeka curriculum in Indonesia, the PISA framework becomes the primary reference for reading literacy (Wardi, 2020).

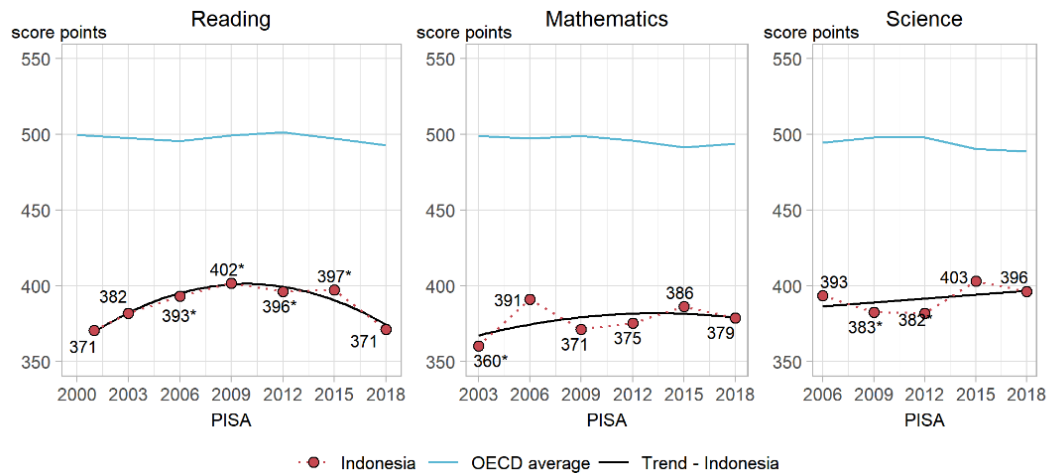


Figure 1. Trends in performance in reading, mathematics, and science among Indonesian students

Efforts to improve students' literacy and numeracy skills in primary schools have become the focus of the Indonesian government. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (MoECRT) has recently abolished the National Exam (Ujian Nasional) (Mendikbud, 2021), which was previously based on specific subjects, and replaced it with National Assessment (Asesmen Nasional) that prioritizes two skills to be assessed: literacy and numeracy. The regulation is based on the Regulation of the MoECRT of the Republic of Indonesia Number 17 of 2021 concerning National Assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate education in general and not individual students, so it no longer affects student graduation (BSKAP, 2022a). To support this policy, the Ministry of Education and Culture, through its different directorates, provides several strategies focusing on nurturing literacy and numeracy skills at schools. The strategies include allocating more time for literacy and numeracy teachings in the curriculum, training teachers focusing on competencies for teaching literacy, providing access to quality books, providing modules on how to teach literacy

and numeracy at schools, and providing a support system for resources for teachers to teach literacy and numeracy (Mendikbud, 2020). Since the National Assessment is regulated, the government continuously conducts training and programs to guide the implementation of the new literacy policy (Meliyanti & Aryanto, 2022).

Before becoming the focus of the National Assessment, literacy education gained more attention when the government launched the National Literacy Movement (Gerakan Literasi Nasional-GLN) program initiated in 2016 (Kemendikbud, n.d.). This program is the actualization of the ministerial regulation regarding character development. However, entering its sixth year of implementation, GLN is considered to have yet to succeed in improving students' literacy skills in Indonesia (Aziz, 2022). According to Aziz (2022), the problems in implementing the program include overlapping implementation across other ministries, the scarcity of the books available for students, and a lack of monitoring and evaluation process.

In order to nurture students' literacy skills, rich and diverse reading materials should be provided for children to learn a complex set of skills related to their literacy development (Neuman, 1999). Therefore, teachers need to provide access to books in their classrooms to encourage students' reading activities. Unfortunately, students' access to books at school has frequently been an issue. Limited books available for students to read at schools become a factor that hinders students' reading interest (Clark & Douglas, 2011). While encouraged to have reading corners in the classrooms, many schools failed to provide access to books. Assuming that one school has one library, Tahmidaten and Krismanto (2020) mentioned that 2 out of 10 schools have no library at the elementary level, increasing to 6 at the high school level. While considered vital to develop students' reading habits, school libraries are not available in some schools. Moreover, books available in school libraries in Indonesian context do not have

interesting stories and do not accommodate students' needs (Aziz, 2022). Even once the books are available, Stone & Twardosz (2001) found that high-quality books and various genres are rarely accessible.

Despite obtaining access to quality books, another challenge in literacy teaching is how teachers use available books to teach literacy. A survey study on literacy instruction quality in 135 classrooms revealed that most teachers give low-quality literacy instruction (Justice et al., 2008). In teaching literacy, teachers need to model the process of comprehending the texts and help students read the right level of books. Since students do not automatically obtain comprehension, no matter how fluent they are (Duke et al., 2021), teachers' ability to explicitly teach literacy is crucial.

The current literacy competence based on the result of the first National Assessment is quite concerning. According to the National Assessment, literacy competence refers to the ability of students to understand, use, evaluate, and reflect on various types of texts to solve problems and develop individual capacities as citizens of Indonesia and citizens of the world so that they can contribute productively to society (Pusmendik, 2022a). The data from National Assessment 2022 revealed that student achievement in literacy competence is still under minimum competence (Pusmendik, 2022b). In the output of learning outcomes for literacy, less than 50% of students in all primary schools across provinces in Indonesia have reached the minimum competency threshold for reading literacy. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education has targeted 58% of students passing the threshold in 2022 according to their strategic plan (Mendikbud, 2020). The gap is quite far and concerning, especially since "less than 50% of students" stated in the earlier report did not mention the exact percentage.

In terms of how a policy is put into practice, previous studies show that the implementation of a new literacy policy tends to have many challenges (Bromley et al., 2019; Coburn, 2005; Curdt-Christiansen & Silver, 2013; Innes, 2021). Hodge and Stosich (2022) analyze how teachers make sense of a complex policy environment, including new education standards, curriculum, assessment, and teacher evaluation. The findings proposed that even if the policy alignment is high, educators still need help making sense of and interpreting them as coherent (Hodge & Stosich, 2022). As the gap between policy-recommended instructions and teaching practice is quite broad, Shanahan (2014) argued that teachers need to actively understand and shape the mandated literacy practices individually and collectively in their professional community.

Moreover, teachers often struggle to understand the new literacy policy. Coburn (2001) investigates how teachers construct and reconstruct their understanding of policy messages, decisions to implement those messages, and negotiations on the more detailed practice of the policy messages. The study results show that informal networks among teachers need to gain more attention from policy practitioners. Such networks can provide an influential role in teachers' sensemaking process. Not only informal networks but teachers' collaboration in formal settings also matters.

In conclusion, a large amount of research suggests the importance of nurturing literacy in early years of education for children's future success (Barrett & Riddell, 2019; Bigozzi et al., 2023; Derby et al., 2022; Li et al., 2008; Lundberg et al., 1988; Weinberger, 1996) which invite international and national attention to take part in the intervention (Innes et al., 2021; Mills, 2011; Moss, 2004).

However, the literature reveals that the intervention in policy regulation often faces many challenges in practice (Bromley et al., 2019; Coburn, 2005; Curdt-Christiansen & Silver, 2013; Innes, 2021), especially what teaching practice is required by the policy and how it enacted teachers' practice (Shanahan, 2014). Therefore, this study aims to explore the implementation of the literacy policy in Indonesian primary schools by identifying the factors behind the formulation of the policy, what the policy documents propose about literacy and literacy instruction, and followed by how teachers' knowledge and perception inform their teaching practice along with the challenges they encounter during the implementation.

1.2 Research Questions

The study aims to explore the implementation of the new literacy policy in primary schools in Indonesia. This study seeks to identify the factors influencing the formulation of the policy to understand the contextual background of the policy. Besides, policy texts were analyzed to understand the conception of literacy used and supported in the policy document. The study seeks perspectives from both policymakers and teachers as different interpretation of policy is one of the crucial factors in policy implementation (Bridwell-Mitchell & Sherer, 2017; Charalambous et al., 2014; Lambert & Penney, 2020; Singh et al., 2013). In addition, to understand the importance of the new literacy policy, the study identifies the background and the context of policy formulation to assess the policy solution given to the problem. Finally, the study looks at the practice of teachers implementing the policy at the school level. The gap between policy and practice has long become an academic discussion (Chowdhury et al., 2018; Diamond, 2007; Schulte, 2018). By looking at the actual teacher practice, the study identifies the challenges faced by teachers as policy actors at schools.

The research questions are guided by Taylor et al. (1997) framework in doing critical policy analysis that includes context, text, and consequence. The first research question focuses on the contextual background leading to the formulation of the policy. The second research question focuses on the content of the policy. Finally, the third research question focuses on teachers' implementation of the policy as consequence. The policy discussed throughout the study focuses on the National Assessment that includes literacy assessment based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 17 of 2021 concerning National Assessment.

1. What backgrounds leading to the formulation of the current literacy policy?
2. What is the definition of literacy in the policy documents? And what literacy practices imagined in the policy documents?
3. How do teachers implement the literacy policy? What are some of challenges teachers face during the implementation of the policy?

1.3 Research Objectives

This research aims to explore the enactment of new literacy policy in primary education in Indonesia. Specifically, the following objectives guided this research:

1. To identify the contextual backgrounds leading to the formulation of the current literacy policy.
2. To explore how literacy conceptualized in the current policy. Specifically, to identify what is the definition of literacy in the policy document and what ideal literacy teaching practices imagined by the policy documents.
3. To explore how teachers implement the literacy policy, including their knowledge and perception about the literacy policy as well as how they implement it in their

teaching practices. In addition, the question addresses the challenges teachers face during the implementation of the policy in their contexts.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study aims to explore the implementation of the new literacy policy in primary schools in Indonesia. This study identifies the definition of literacy used and supported in the policy document. The study seeks perspectives from both policymakers and teachers. Different interpretation of policy is one of the crucial factors in policy implementation (Bridwell-Mitchell & Sherer, 2017; Charalambous et al., 2014; Lambert & Penney, 2020; Singh et al., 2013). In addition, to understand the importance of the current literacy policy, the study identifies the background and the context of policy formulation by interviewing the policymakers.

From the above explanation, the significance of the study is followed:

1. To fill the contextual gap concerning literacy teaching practice in Indonesian context within the new literacy policy.
2. To contribute to the existing literature around discussing discrepancies between literacy policy and practices.
3. To give empirical evidence of teachers' challenges of implementing the current literacy policy in Indonesian primary schools.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This chapter describes the background of the research and enlists the research questions and problems that guide the research structure. This chapter also describes the significance that the research gives. Chapter 2 consists of theoretical knowledge from

previous research related to the current research. It surveys the previous studies and provides frameworks used in the research.

Chapter 3 provides the study's methodology, including the research approach, data collection methods, and data analysis. It also includes information about the research participants and their contexts. Chapter 4 contains the results of the study and the discussions. The results based on collected data are presented and discussed in response to the literature review. Finally, Chapter 5 outlines the conclusion of the research findings and suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The study aims to explore the implementation of the new literacy policy in primary-level education in the Indonesian context. In this theoretical foundation, I would like to give an overview of how literacy has been defined and developed and what literature suggests on literacy instructions. The chapter continues with presenting the literacy policy in an international context and the related issues. For the theoretical framework, this chapter presents critical policy analysis and the specific framework used in this study. Finally, the chapter concludes by reviewing previous discussions in Indonesian context.

1.5 Defining Literacy

Various researchers have discussed and contested literacy from different fields of study and disciplines, including neurology, psychology, and sociology (Tierney & Pearson, 2021). Those contested conceptions surrounding literacy produce different solutions which hardly mutually agree. Furthermore, Barton (2007) reminded us that efforts to solve literacy problems will only succeed if the questions surrounding literacy have been addressed.

The problem of defining literacy derives from its initial definition of literacy as the ability to read and write. From this definition, (Roberts, 1995) argues that the problem lies regarding 'what' content someone has to read and write and 'how much' ability someone needs to become literate, which leads to 3 major approaches among literacy theorists and practitioners: quantitative, qualitative, and pluralist. In the quantitative approach, the 'what' of literacy is often defined as reading ages or years of

schooling where the purpose is to establish the benchmark for determining literacy level (Roberts, 1995, p. 414), which commonly used in benchmarking literacy rate across countries (Wagner, 2011).

In contrast, the qualitative approach (begun in the 1960s) provides a more qualitative definition of literacy, including dimensions and features of literacy such as the ability to communicate using information, to understand and convey information, or to express ideas (Roberts, 1995, p. 418). Finally, while the previous approaches require a 'single' thing someone needs to possess to be literate, the pluralist approach believes there is no single definition of literacy as literacy always needs to be situated within its specific context. Therefore, literacy A is based on A's context and so on (Roberts, 1995, p. 420). Although Roberts (1995) argued that the pluralist approach is preferable in defining literacy, the pluralist approach cannot be applicable in policy research where the plurality of definitions and frameworks is hard to accommodate.

Wagner (2011) highlighted the historical and conceptual changes in literacy from the perspective of UNESCO. From the beginning of its foundation in 1946 until the 2000s, UNESCO has changed in defining and conceptualizing literacy from measurable cognitive skills to literacy as social empowerment (Wagner, 2011, p. 320). This change was influenced by the work of Paulo Freire (Freire, 2000). As a measurable skill, literacy is often defined as the ability to read and write. The definition of literacy as the ability to read and write dates back to the first definition agreed upon internationally by UNESCO in 1958 as a recommendation of the International Standardization of Educational Statistics. They define someone literate as "one who can, with understanding, both read and write a short, simple statement on his or her everyday life" (UNESCO, 2004, p. 12). The definition is practical in terms of measurement and limited to technical skills. The later conception of literacy broadened the definition that

included focused skills to the functional aspect of literacy. In 2003, UNESCO defined literacy as:

“Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.” (UNESCO, 2004, p. 13)

Since the 2000s, UNESCO has contributed to international discussions on literacy. During the first decade of the 21st century, UNESCO has made four significant contributions to literacy (Wagner, 2011). The first is the 2006 Global Monitoring Report: Literacy for Life (UNESCO, 2006), which comprehensively reviews literacy and how it is conceptualized around the world. The second is the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Program (LAMP) under the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), which was designed for international literacy assessment. However, the test was criticized for implementation issues, including the length of data publishing and the need to accommodate each country's context (Wagner, 2011). The third is the assurance of adult literacy concern in the 2009 Belem Framework. Finally, the fourth is the 2010 Global Monitoring Report entitled Reaching the Marginalized (UNESCO, 2010) which highlighted the illiteracy problems among minority ethnic groups and called for attention to this issue.

The later development of literacy is putting both reading and writing in its social context. The seminal work related to this idea is the shift from the 'autonomous' to the 'ideological' model of literacy (Street, 2005a). In the autonomous perspective, literacy is detached from the context and can be individually separate. Meanwhile, the autonomous model approaches literacy as dependent on its context and different based on situations (Barton, 2007). From this point, the focus on literacy has moved from what someone can get from the literacy activity to what they use it for, or “on how written language is

used to mediate social life” (Ivanič et al., 2007, p. 706). Besides, literacy in the recent conception also includes the notion of multimodality (Kress, 2010), where the information we get nowadays goes beyond texts to audio, visual, and various digital materials. Participation with written text, visual representation, and experiences in the digital world are included in the process of understanding in literacy practice (Barone & Barone, 2017). At last, I want to conclude this by referring to the International Literacy Association, which defines literacy as "the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, compute, and communicate using visual, audible, and digital materials across disciplines and in any context." (ILA, 2016).

In conclusion, the conception of literacy has evolved from the traditional view of literacy as reading and writing skills to the view that incorporates different levels of cognitive engagement with a range of multimodal texts in various contexts or ‘literacy as text’ (Street, 2005b). It requires critical thinking that needs to be nurtured beyond just consuming information but assessing it for using it to participate in society. These complexities in literacy conceptions and their consequences in literacy teaching will inform my study of how the current policy defines literacy and what literacy practices are evident from the documents.

1.6 Quality Books and Teachers in Literacy Teaching

To facilitate literacy teaching that encourage students' capacity of critical thinking, access to quality books is crucial. Quality books that foster children's interest in reading strongly correlate with their emergent literacy skills (Clark & Douglas, 2011; Roberts et al., 2005). Neuman (1999) also reported that providing more access to quality books in childcare significantly impacted the development of early children's literacy skills. It is recommended that the students have access to at least seven books per child in the

classroom library and 20 books per child in the school library (IRA, 2000). Diverse books give children more choices and boost their vocabulary, language, and other complex literacy development skills. In fact, there is an inequality in access across classroom levels (Hodges et al., 2019) and between middle-income and low-income children to reading resources (Neuman & Celano, 2001). Nevertheless, the socioeconomic gaps had been significantly decreased in the last decade (Bassok et al., 2016). Looking from an ecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1996), Neuman (1999) demonstrated that surrounding children with books makes them actively engage with books individually outside the regular reading sessions. However, the availability of books alone cannot directly improve literacy skills. Assessing the quality of the books used in the literacy sessions and having the ability to use it in reading instruction is more critical.

Quality books and regular books for school children differ in many ways. Many books fail to provoke children's thinking and imagination skills as they are poorly written and unappealingly illustrated (Stone & Twardosz, 2001, p. 54). Whereas the visual quality of books, especially in children's literature, can help provoke children's cognitive responses through a meaning-making process (Kiefer, 1991) beyond improving language-related skills. Regarding quality books, the variability in access was described not only by the socioeconomic status of the students but also by the teacher's educational background (Stone & Twardosz, 2001). Therefore, the role of the teacher is also crucial.

Providing books alone is not enough. It needs teachers who can use them to teach literacy (McGill-franzen et al., 1999). Reese & Cox (1999) reported that different ways of reading books to children can affect differently to children at different reading levels, where more children's participation leads to more reading benefits. In a low

socioeconomic context, Wasik & Bond (2001) point out that the more interactive reading activities encourage students to ask and answer questions while book reading activity significantly improves students' vocabulary skills compared to the children who were only exposed to the books. It stressed the importance of the way of reading. Similarly, Whitehurst & Lonigan (1998) highlighted the importance of 'dialogic reading' where teachers need to actively pose questions to students on what they are reading during the reading session to gain more benefits. It is similar to what Reese & Cox (1999) refer to as 'describer style', where teachers must provide students' significant involvement during a reading session (p. 27). Providing quality books for students need to be coupled with helping teachers how to use them for optimal literacy instruction.

1.7 Literacy Initiatives in International Context

From the previous studies, the literature broadly mentioned literacy policies and initiatives mandated by the governments. In such policy initiatives, there are usually four core elements: designing the curriculum, aligning all related policies, training teachers to teach based on the initiatives, and setting assessment for accountability of student performance (Spillane, 2004). The government tends to use those elements in any education policy reform. When reviewing literacy policies, the three most commonly discussed cases that I found are the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) in the United Kingdom in 1998, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in the United States in 2002, and the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in Australia in 2008. The three cases are reviewed since those policy initiatives have similarities in the current literacy policy in Indonesia in terms of the focus of the literacy program and the challenges surrounding the policy initiatives.

1.7.1 The National Literacy Strategy (NLS) in the United Kingdom

The NLS is the literacy policy initiative proposed by the UK government in 1998, focusing on standardizing literacy instructions to achieve 80% of students passing a certain literacy level at age 11 (DfEE, 1998). The education reform's focus was to increase the English teaching standard in primary schools (Wyse, 2003, p. 903) which later affected secondary schools (Goodwyn & Findlay, 2003). The literature often discusses the NLS to review the dynamic of literacy policy implementations. However, there is no clear evidence of whether or not the reform succeeded or failed to contribute to literacy at the national level (Soler & Openshaw, 2006). In its initial implementation, Moss (2004) reported that the NLS was considered successful in terms of standardized curriculum and instructions developed at schools and changes in physical classroom arrangement due to the standard. The changes were superficial. For students, it was also accused of contributing to the significant decline in students' attitudes toward reading between 1998-2003 (Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004). The NLS teacher development program considered failed to prepare teachers to adopt the intended literacy curriculum. Although the teachers had been trained using the standard prescribed training menu, teachers tend to return to their old teaching practice when returning to their classrooms (Lefstein, 2008). For the policy initiatives to work, teachers' practices must be aligned and backed with the supported belief (Fullan, 2007). Here, the gaps between policy and teaching practices remain a complex issue.

Another critique of the NLS was regarding the supporting evidence backing up the policy documents. From a critical review of the NLS policy documents, Wyse (2003) pointed out the lack of empirical evidence to support the initiatives. For instance, the categorization of words, sentences, and text levels in the policy documents raised theoretical concerns (Wyse, 2003, p. 913), leading to what Lingard (2013) called

“research for policy” or what Grundin (2018) referred as “policy-based evidence”. The term goes for the research evidence used to back up the policy already mandated. The conclusion resulted from critically analyzing the Phonics Screening Check in the UK context. In addition to this problematic policy basis, the role of the policymakers during the implementation phases of the NLS was concerning. Moss (2009) analyzed how the literacy policy in the NLS evolved within policymaking stages and highlighted how policymakers often passed the responsibilities to other stakeholders outside the system when the education reforms were criticized. It raises the concern about empirical evidence behind the literacy policy and how the policy environment supports the process.

1.7.2 The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in the United States

Similar to the NLS, the NCLB in the US context is a nationwide accountability test implemented in 2002 focusing on measuring students' reading and math skills to ensure that all students achieve success and 'no child left behind' as its name suggests. Driven by international competitiveness, schools must improve students' proficiency in reading and math skills to a certain proficiency level each year, starting from Grade 3 to 8, and once in high school (Klein, 2015). The test was considered high stakes as the failing schools could be penalized. It resulted in the teaching-learning process at school, which focused on preparing students for the test, where the classrooms became ‘test-prep centers’ (Neill, 2003, p. 225). Teaching to the standard caused by the NCLB is inconsistent with the current research on literacy instruction (Ylimaki & McClain, 2005). This focus had limited teachers to include reading-based activities that had been positively developed in the US schools (Lehman, 2009).

The accountability test gave underperformed schools some consequences in terms of funding. Darling-Hammond (2006) proposed the state's flexibility in using the test result to enhance instructional practice instead of penalizing failed schools. In fact, the impact of the NCLB on students' reading improvement is barely supported by the test results (Dee & Jacob, 2011), although the improvement in Math was positive. Therefore, Guisbond & Neill (2004) argued that the quality and equity of the NCLB test is questionable. The focus on standardized test scores inhibits the other important school goals while ignoring students' family background and school support (Guisbond & Neill, 2004, p. 12). The NCLB experience informs how a nationwide high-stake test can negatively impact students and schools. A high-stake assessment refers to the test which purpose is to make important decision for students, schools, or districts, which resulting in punishment, penalty, or failure in graduation when the standards are not fulfilled (Bates-Brantley & LaBrot, 2020).

1.7.3 The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in Australia

In Australia, the NAPLAN was implemented in 2008 to administer annual tests for students in Grades 3, 5, 7, and 9 in literacy (reading, writing, and language skills) and numeracy (ACARA, 2017). Similar to the NCLB, the test received criticism due to its high stake nature resulting in teaching to the test culture and ignoring broader aspects of skills and knowledge (Klenowski & Wyatt-Smith, 2012). This high stake test also has negatively impacted teachers and school stakeholders (Roberts et al., 2019). As reported by Thompson (2013), most teachers have negative responses toward implementing NAPLAN in their schools. Teachers see the tests impact the pressure from the school to

get high scores, the curriculum choice, and the impact on the students' learning experiences (Thompson & Harbaugh, 2013).

Although carefully designed and implemented, it has challenges in local implementation. Comber (2012) uses an institutional ethnographic approach to explore how new national literacy assessment affects teachers' work in the implementation. Teachers' focus had shifted from helping students learn to preparing them for the test (Comber, 2012, p. 15). The author argued that mandated literacy assessment had reorganized teachers' work, especially in a low socioeconomic community with diverse students. Teachers made test preparation a priority and ensured that their students could pass the national tests, resulting in focusing on tested subjects in the curriculum (Comber, 2012). Similarly, Thompson (2013) reported that most teachers have negative responses toward the implementation of NAPLAN in their schools as they see the test impact the pressure from the school to get high scores, the curriculum choice, and the students' learning experiences, not mention its effect on indigenous students (Wigglesworth et al., 2011).

Australia's NAPLAN is similar to the current context of Indonesia, where literacy and numeracy have been the focus of the national assessment. As Comber (2012) illustrates how the mandated literacy assessment change teachers' practice, my previous observation found that the national assessment will affect school budgeting in the provincial Education Board. There is a tendency that a province which has huge gaps in its schools' literacy and numeracy score will get punishment in terms of budget cuts. It will surely make the assessment become high stakes. If that happens, the focus of literacy policy and practice at the school level will be affected. As experienced in the earlier National Exam, schools will use any effort to improve the score of literacy and numeracy. It is what happens in other contexts (Comber, 2012; Curdt-Christiansen &

Silver, 2013; Moss, 2004). In the end, it will not align with the spirit behind the implementation of the new literacy policy. The ministry stated that the national assessment is a low stake test that aims to evaluate the nationwide education process, not the individual students (Direktorat Pendas, n.d.). Therefore, this study focuses on teachers' practice to explore how the school interprets and implements the new literacy policy. Finally, the challenges in implementing literacy policy in the above countries emerged when surveying the literature on literacy policy. Across the diverse context, Fullan (2007) reminds us that such educational initiatives need teachers to adjust their teaching approaches.

1.8 Literacy Initiatives and Teacher Professional Development

Teacher professional development also plays an essential role in the implementation of new literacy policies (Blömeke et al., 2022). Wixson & Yochum (2004) review existing literature on literacy policy and professional development under the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) and pointed out that successful literacy instructions are indicated by the strong support from the national to district level especially for providing professional teacher development programs. Besides the training, Coburn & Woulfin (2012) highlighted the importance of literacy coach in school to guide teachers' practice. The study relates to Kraft & Papay (2014) who stressed that the school professional environment better explain the variability in students' outcomes than the individual teacher. In other word, the success of teacher after training is not only determined by the professional development, but also the school and district supportive environment.

Teacher professional development also found to improve teachers' knowledge and confidence in literacy instruction. Reed (2009) asserts that effective training can help improve literacy teachers' confidence in addressing the students' reading problems. Justice et al. (2008) also highlighted the importance quality trainings in improving teachers' instructional practice. The study adds some aspects of consideration to ensure that the new literacy policy can be successfully implemented. Success requires teachers to have a sound understanding of the literacy practice and how to implement the policy. At the same time, the government must provide support for teachers and schools.

1.9 Policy Implementation: Critical Policy Analysis Lens

1.9.1 Policy Implementation

Policy implementation has been long becoming focused among researchers. McLaughlin (1987) identified the trend of different focuses of policy analysts: the first trend focused on uncovering the relationship between policy and implemented programs; the second trend paid more attention to discovering problems behind policy and practice; while the third trend that he proposed to need to focus on accommodating both the macro and micro levels of the policy implementation process. Later studies produced a number of explanations behind what matters in policy implementation, which is mainly situated on the principal-agent theory driven by human self-interest, and rational choice theory dealing with individual preferences (Spillane et al., 2002). The later studies involve the discussion of policy actors' cognitive processes rather than just being seen as passive agents.

Although had long been studied, problems in policy implementation persist. (Spillane, 2004) pointed out that translating policy into local practice is a perennial problem in policy research. Policy implementation challenges can be summarized into

four categories (Hudson et al., 2019). The first is too optimistic expectations; policymakers tend to overestimate the benefits while underestimating the effort and resources needed to achieve them. The second is different levels of implementation. In the national policy context, the state-level policymakers may have a clear vision of what the policy texts propose, but the local actors do the actual implementation. The third challenge deals with the lack of collaboration between policy stakeholders. Each organization tend to implement policy solely without having interorganizational collaboration that open the opportunity to learn from each other's practice. The last is the notion of the political cycle. Policymakers have a certain period of time in their positions. Therefore, they will most likely finish their program and get credit from it rather than continue to pay attention to implementation problems (Hudson et al., 2019). Those four problems are most likely to happen when implementing the policy.

Related to literacy itself, integrating literacy research into policy has some challenges. Levin (2005) acknowledges three reasons why it is hard to integrate literacy research into policy. First is the debate within the literacy field itself, the 'reading wars', which confuse policymakers. The debate was between those who supported literacy instruction focus on phonic (Adams, 1990) and those who focus on meaning making (Goodman, 1996). As Mraz (2004) pointed out how tensions between literacy experts and policymakers usually happen during the formulation of the literacy policy. While policymakers have limited time to make decisions, literacy experts tend to have different arguments among themselves and fail to influence the policy. Second, early literacy is a critical period that makes people careful of what interventions to do. Ill-advised policy decisions can have a negative impact to the children's future. Finally, the challenge in literacy policy reform is that the study of literacy has become an interest of

various disciplines, making it difficult to agree on what is important to solve and how to solve the problems (Levin, 2005).

Regarding those complexities in policy analysis research, recent studies has proposed the focus into the policy enactment rather than policy implementation (Ball et al., 2012). The term enactment is increasingly used in the literature to summarize the policy process that happens in any context of policy implementation from the top-down level, from the global to the local context (Ball, 2015). According to Ball et al. (2012), policy text is not simply implemented. It needs the process of interpretation and translation among policy actors in a variety of local contexts. Vidovich (2007) argued that by turning the focus from macro (related to power of higher policy actors) vs micro (related to agency of lower-level policy actors) into more holistic approach, teachers and schools will be engaged to participate in interpreting and constructing the policy (p. 295). Situated within this approach, the study utilized critical policy analysis to examine the literacy policy implementation in Indonesian primary schools by looking at interrelated actors, including policymakers and teachers.

1.9.2 Critical Policy Analysis: Contexts, Texts, Consequences

Policy analysis had long been studied from a positivist perspective before more social perspectives came to influence (Molla, 2021). While the previous policy science tradition focused on seeking knowledge to inform policy decisions, the latter emerged as an alternative approach putting polity in the broader contexts, including political, economic, social, and historical arenas (deLeon & Vogenbeck, 2007). The critiques against the positivist approach argued that it failed to answer complex problems in the policy analysis field (Yorke & Vidovich, 2016). On the other hand, critical policy

analysis allows more comprehensive understanding on the policy from the formulation to the implementation stages (Diem et al., 2019).

According to Apple (2019), critical policy analysis has two essential tasks: understanding the complexities of educational policies and practices; and critically assessing the policy initiatives that can potentially produce inequalities. Therefore, instead of placing education policy between top-down or bottom-up dichotomy, policy needs to be seen as the process of policy development instead of implementation (Bell & Stevenson, 2006), capturing the policy text production and the text recontextualized in the policy practice (Bowe et al., 1992). Similarly, Ball (1993) recommends doing a cross sectional analysis in policy making process including the context of policy influence, policy text production, and policy practice. Thus, this study utilizes Taylor et al. (1997) proposed framework for policy analysis that includes three key domains: policy contexts, texts, and consequences.

Contexts

In this framework, contexts refer to the drivers that lead to the formulation of the policy. The drivers can include economic, political, and social conditions that influence the problem to become the policy focus (Taylor et al., 1997). This aspect of analysis can happen at different levels, including the connection between the current policy and the previous policy (Bell & Stevenson, 2006) to see the policy from the historical perspective and how the objectives might differ (Alexander, 2013). The questions can be asked throughout this aspect of analysis are 'why' and 'why now' of the policy that cover both temporary and historical context of certain policies (Taylor et al., 1997, p. 45). To understand policy contexts, qualitative inquiry, such as interview is often applied in addition to policy document analysis (Cardno, 2019).

Texts

While policy texts can be individual policy research (Cardno, 2019), Taylor (1997) argued that "policy texts need to be analyzed within their context and also in relation to their impact on policy arenas in the broadest sense" (p. 33). Texts refer to the content of the policy where the contested ideas proposed to solve policy problems crystallized into the policy text. Therefore, analyzing the texts includes interrogating the texts carefully to answer the purposes and assumptions behind the policy texts to answer the 'how' and 'what' questions of policy at different levels (Taylor et al., 1997, p. 49).

Consequences

Consequences refer to the impact of a particular policy on society at large. While the previous aspects of analysis – contexts and texts – are concerned more in the policymaking process, consequences seek to analyze the policy influence in the local practice. The policy can affect people differently depending of the resources available. Therefore, Ball (1993) argued that policy consequences need to be addressed from two points of view: the first is related to the purpose of the policy that affects its practice, and the second is regarding the issue of social justice. Different contexts where the policy is implemented and different interpretations of the policy contribute to the difficulties in predicting policy effects (Taylor et al., 1997). Looking at the policy consequences also includes examining challenges that emerged while implementing the policy that relates to human, process, structural, and institutional problems (Alexander, 2013).

As the study aims to seek a comprehensive understanding of the current literacy policy, these context-text-consequence framework is adopted. The framework allows to

assess contextual background affecting the policy production, the content of policy documents, and the practical implication of the policy.

1.10 Literacy, Policy, and Teacher Professional Development in Indonesia

In the Indonesian context, literacy had been long defined as the ability to read and write as opposed to illiterate. According to Jalal and Sardjunani (2005), the definition of literacy in Indonesian context is limited to the “ability to read and write simple sentences of Indonesian language in Latin scripts” (p. 3). Using this definition, the implementation of literacy education in primary schools was reported successful as it increased to 82.2 % in 2002 (p. 5). The only indicator that is used in this success criteria is students’ completion rate of elementary schools. It is assumed that by the time they complete elementary schools, students are able to read and write. This definition is far from the international agency that monitor reading literacy of countries worldwide like PISA that defined literacy (Mo, 2019).

In recent years, literacy has become the focus of the government of Indonesia. The term literacy is constantly used in government programs across ministries. In 2016, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology initiated the National Literacy Movement (Gerakan Literasi Nasional – GLN), which promotes 15 minutes of reading before starting school lessons (Kemendikbud, n.d.). The program is the implementation of the ministerial regulation No 23 Year 2015 about Character Development which encourages the habituation of reading among students. In 2021, the Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Culture proposed constructing the Roadmap to improve Indonesian people's literacy culture (Kemenko PMK, 2021). The program focuses on developing literacy in three areas: family, school, and community. In the same year, the Ministry of Communication and Informatics initiated a program

for digital literacy named National Digital Literacy Movement (Gerakan Nasional Literasi Digital – GNLD). The program targeted 12.4 million people in all provinces in Indonesia to learn about various digital topics, including artificial intelligence, machine learning, cloud computing, cybersecurity, digital entrepreneurship, and digital communication (KOMINFO, 2021). In this study, the literacy policy that will become the focus is the policy regulated under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology.

The Ministry of Education recently implemented National Assessment (Asesmen Nasional – AN) to improve the quality of education in schools by administering a nationwide test (Direktorat Pendidikan Dasar, n.d.). The quality of education at schools is measured using three instruments: students' scores in literacy and numeracy through Minimum Competence Assessment (Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum – AKM), character survey, and study environment survey (Survei Lingkungan Belajar – Sulinjar) (Mendikbud, 2021). To support the policy's implementation, in-service teachers have been trained and assisted (Meliyanti & Aryanto, 2022). The National Assessment differs from the previous National Exam (Ujian Nasional) in some points (Pusmenjar, 2021). National Exam was obligatory for every student to determine graduation, which makes it a high-stake test.

Unlike the National Exam, as National Assessment aims to capture the educational process, it only tests sampled students, and the test result will not impact students' graduation status. Regarding test material, the National Exam test is based on content area, while the National Assessment focuses only on literacy and numeracy skills. Instead of mastering the content that can be easily forgotten, the test identifies students' skills that will be beneficial for pursuing further education. This shift in the

assessment paradigm deserves careful attention and must be carefully monitored to achieve its intended objectives.

Since it is a new concept, teachers understanding and perceptions about AN, including AKM, is considered limited. Teachers lack understanding when asked about the concept of AKM (Fauziah et al., 2021), proving the limited information available to teachers and students (Rokhim et al., 2021). Of 220 teachers surveyed, only 51% answered correctly regarding the concept of AN (Novita et al., 2021). The result drops to 33% in another region (Nurjanah, 2021). Iman et al. (2021) reported the same issue that the schools tended to prepare students for the AKM by adding learning hours and providing 'AKM test preparation books'. From the interview excerpts in Iman et al. (2021), I can see that no information was provided for teachers regarding the AKM that impacted teacher interpretation. To support the AKM, the teachers drill students with AKM-like tests and add learning hours. This practice is far from the intended purpose of AN (Pusmenjar, 2020).

Another concern is regarding both in-service and preservice teachers. To give a perspective, most of teacher professional development programs in Indonesia seem to fail to achieve its intended goals in preparing quality teachers (Sumintono & Subekti, 2015). Moreover, even when the training succeeds, it did not improve students' outcomes. Furthermore, for teachers to be ready to teach literacy, the literacy course itself is rarely offered in preservice teacher classes in most teachers' training faculties (Durriyah, 2019). Preservice teachers have minimal trainings on how to deliver literacy instruction. Those add challenges to the implementation of the new literacy policy.

1.11 Concluding Summary

This chapter started by the historical conception of literacy and its current research. I also highlighted the importance of quality books and teachers in supporting literacy instruction. The review continues with overviewing the implementation of literacy policies in international contexts drawn from the NLS, NCLB, and NAPLAN cases. The NLS informs the study that the policy-related documents representing the policy initiatives' goals could be inaccurate and supported by 'policy-based' research. Besides, both NCLB and NAPLAN suggest the harmful effects of the high-stakes nature of a nationwide accountability test. In addition, the dynamic of teachers' practice during policy implementation is also diverse from the literature. Moreover, this chapter continued with the theoretical framework of Taylor et al. (1997) to examine literacy policies from three aspects: policy contexts, text, and consequences. Finally, how previous topics relates to Indonesian context is also discussed. The next chapter presents the research methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of the study is to explore the implementation of literacy policy in primary schools in Indonesian context from multilayer aspects. To understand the importance of the new literacy policy, the study identifies the rationale and the context of policy formulation. In addition, the study seeks to identify the conception of literacy portrayed in the current policy. Finally, the study covers how teachers as policy actors implement the literacy policy at the school level and identify the challenges faced during the implementation. This chapter outlines the research approach and design used in this study along with the reasons and how it is used. It also discusses the way data collected and analyzed as well as how to maintain trustworthiness and ethical issues in the study.

3.1 Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative approach. The benefit of this approach is that it allows having in-depth investigation of the research problems. Since the study focuses on exploring the implementation of policy, a qualitative approach is appropriate where the exploration of problem is one of its characteristics (Creswell, 2015). In qualitative method, individuals have active roles in constructing their own reality. Therefore, having different and unique perspectives across participants is acceptably possible. In qualitative study, the purpose of the research is to provide in-depth description on a particular context, not to generalize a context or a population (Gay & Mills, 2019).

In this study, qualitative approach used to better understand the phenomenon under studied. The study aims to explore the implementation of the literacy policy from

multilayered aspects. Therefore, qualitative approach is better to use as it help understand the complexities of the problems and possible to provide detailed insights into the participants' perspectives.

3.2 Case Study Design

A case study design was adopted to conduct this exploratory study. The purpose of using a case study is “to depict a phenomenon and conceptualize it” (Gall et al., 2003). Adopting a qualitative case study approach allows an in-depth exploration of a specific phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2018). Since this study explored how the literacy policy is implemented by teachers in different schools, a case study was used to capture the complexities of the phenomenon from various data sources including documents, policymakers, and teachers. Moreover, related to policy research, case study can benefit in two ways: it help putting the problem in a broader context and it can inform more relevant solutions from the grass root (Pal, 2005). In this research, case study can both help to contextualize the problem from the teachers' local practice and inform policy recommendations based on the empirical data.

3.3 Methods of Data Collection

3.3.1 Policy documents

The data were collected from government policy documents related to literacy. Document analysis is a systematic method of analyzing written or electronic documents, such as policy reports, to understand the content, context, and implications of those documents (Bowen, 2009). There are several steps involved in collecting policy documents for data sources. First, the policy documents that are relevant to the research topic were identified from the official database of the Ministry of Education and its

directorates. I included the policy documents referred by policy makers when discussing literacy, and browse specifically policy documents that mentions “literacy” in its title and/or its content. In terms of the level of regulations, I included various level of policy regulations including the government regulation, ministerial regulation, directorate general regulation, and head regulation. By including the selected policy documents, I hope to gain thorough understanding on how literacy is portrayed in the current policy based on its official regulation. The policy documents were used to answer my first research question. Here is the list of policy documents I included for my data source.

Table 1. List of Policy Documents Included in the Study

No.	Date Enacted	Category	Description
1.	12 January 2022 (revised the previous regulation on 31 March 2021)	Government Regulation	Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 4 of 2022 Amendment to Government Regulation Number 57 of 2021 Concerning National Education Standards (<i>Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia Nomor 4 Tahun 2022 Perubahan atas PP Nomor 57 Tahun 2021 Tentang Standar Nasional Pendidikan</i>)
2.	22 July 2021	Ministerial Regulation	Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 17 of 2021 concerning National Assessment (<i>Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 17 tahun 2021 Tentang Asesmen Nasional</i>)
3.	4 February 2022	Ministerial Regulation	Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5 of 2022 concerning Graduate Competency Standards in Early Childhood Education, Basic Education Levels, and Secondary Education Levels (<i>Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 5 Tahun 2022 Tentang Standar Kompetensi Lulusan pada Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Jenjang Pendidikan Dasar, dan Jenjang Pendidikan Menengah</i>)
4.	18 January 2022	Director General Regulation	Regulation of the Director General of Teachers and Education Personnel of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 0340/B/HK.01.03/2022 Concerning the Literacy and Numeracy Competency

			Framework for Elementary School Teachers (<i>Peraturan Direktur Jendral Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 0340/B/HK.01.03/2022 Tentang Kerangka Kompetensi Literasi dan Numerasi bagi Guru pada Sekolah Dasar</i>)
5.	2 June 2022	Head Regulation	Regulation of the Head of the Education Curriculum Standards and Assessment Agency of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 030/P/2022 Concerning Book Leveling Guidelines (<i>Peraturan Kepala Badan Standar Kurikulum dan Asesmen Pendidikan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 030/P/2022 Tentang Pedoman Perjenjangan Buku</i>)

In terms of the order, data collection and analysis from policy documents were conducted prior to the interviews. I follow what Yanow (2007) recommends to use policy documents as the resource for interview,

Documents can provide background information prior to designing the research project, for example, or prior to conducting interviews. They may corroborate observational and interview data—or they may refute them, in which case the researcher is “armed” with evidence that can be used to clarify or, perhaps, to challenge what he is being told, a role that observational data may also play. (Yanow, 2007, p. 411)

3.3.2 Questionnaires

In policy study, the data can be derived from documents and people (Bardach & Patashnik, 2016). Earlier I have listed the documents included in this study. For people data, both questionnaire and interview were used for data collection. I used questionnaire to collect data on the teachers’ literacy practices and basic information of the teacher participants. Therefore, the list of questions consisted of multiple choices and short answers.

There are two sections in the questionnaire. The first section adopted the Teacher Questionnaire from the 2016 PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy),

specifically the questions on the teacher's reading literacy practices. I requested to use the questionnaire to the IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) as the organizer of the PIRLS. The approval to adopt part of the questionnaire was provided in Appendix. The second section were the questions regarding teachers' information including gender, age, teaching experience, educational background, the class taught, location and category of the school, and the availability of books in the classroom. Those data were collected using questionnaire to know better teachers' practices and profile before the later interview. The questionnaire also included short description of my study along with the consent form for the teachers. In addition to the participants verbal agreement prior to the questionnaire, written consent in the form of statement and checklist was provided as recorded evidence. For administering the questionnaire, I created it in an online survey form (Google Form) and shared the link to the teachers via messaging app (WhatsApp).

3.3.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

The study also included semi-structured interview with open-ended questions to collect data from participants. Semi-structured interview consists of elements of both structured and unstructured interviews and situated within the continuum (Sarantakos, 2013). This type of interview has prepared questions and guidelines but still provide enough flexibility at the same time. Flexibility is needed as the perceptives of the participants are meaningful in qualitative interview. The length of each interview last around an hour and took place in the locations chosen by the participants, if possible. In fact, most of the interviews conducted via video conferencing tool due to the accessibility of the participants' places and time constraints. The main goals of the interview are to ask questions that let the participants to share their understanding, experiences, and detail

descriptions related to the enactment of the literacy policy and their teaching experience.

The participants for the interviews were policymakers and teachers. I used purposive sampling to select the interviewees based on the case and the research questions I addressed (Silverman, 2014) to provide ‘information rich’ to the research (Yin, 2016). Since this study explored the enactment of the currently mandated literacy policies, I selected the policymakers involved in the process of policy production and the teachers who were trained and involved in the literacy related programs organized by the MoECRT. In total, I selected two policymakers and three teachers as research participants.

The two policymakers were from two different units in the MoECRT: one from the unit responsible for teachers and the other one from the unit responsible for the curriculum. I selected them as the participants as their positions and responsibility as coordinator which involved in the policymaking process and could provide rich information for the study. According to (Machiavelli, 2020), policymakers includes those within the units of ministries that help the government to develop solutions to specific issues. Similarly, I selected the three teachers who already involved in different literacy trainings and workshops to provide rich data. I selected them based on the following criteria: the teacher teaches in primary school at least Grade 3 (assuming that most of their students already have decoding skills) and had been informed with the current literacy policies through trainings and workshops organized by the MoECRT. The information of the selected teachers (pseudonyms) was shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Teacher Information

No.	Questions	Mr. Ari	Mr. Nana	Mrs. Ayu
1.	Sex	Male	Male	Female
2.	Age	30	30	36

3.	Educational Background	Bachelor	Master	Master
4.	Teaching experience	4 years	10 years	14 years
5.	The class taught	Grade 6	Grade 3	Grade 3
6.	Number of students	21 students	20 students	25 students
7.	Type of school	Public school	Public school	Private school
8.	Location of school	Nort Kalimantan (district)	West Java (district)	West Java (urban)

All interviews were digitally recorded using mobile phone and web-based recorder application for the transcription by the researcher for data analysis. The interview transcription was important to observe the tone, intonation, and pauses during the conversations that might have implied meaning beyond what is stated. The transcription process started shortly after the interview finished in order to have fresh memory regarding interview sessions. I also included any relevant information in a memo as additional information of the interview. After each transcription finished, the interview and the transcription were double checked in order to ensure its accuracy.

3.4 Methods of Data Analysis

3.4.1 Preparing the Data

Before doing the analysis, I ensured that all data were prepared and ready for the analysis step. All the policy documents were formatted in scanned PDF files. I could directly convert them into word processing app like Microsoft Word, so I retype most of the content of policy documents myself. After converting the file format, I reread the content to make sure their organization and typos. After that I assigned the code for each data for easier data management. The same process went with the interview transcripts. After transcribing the interview recordings, I reread and check the manuscript and coded them for data management. In total, I collected 10 documents (see Table 2) for the next analysis step.

Table 3. Data Sources Codebook

No.	Coding	Data Type	Description
1.	Doc1	Document	Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 4 of 2022 Amendment to Government Regulation Number 57 of 2021 Concerning National Education Standards (<i>Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia Nomor 4 Tahun 2022 Perubahan atas PP Nomor 57 Tahun 2021 Tentang Standar Nasional Pendidikan</i>)
2.	Doc2	Document	Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 17 of 2021 concerning National Assessment (<i>Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 17 tahun 2021 Tentang Asesmen Nasional</i>)
3.	Doc3	Document	Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5 of 2022 concerning Graduate Competency Standards in Early Childhood Education, Basic Education Levels, and Secondary Education Levels (<i>Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 5 Tahun 2022 Tentang Standar Kompetensi Lulusan pada Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Jenjang Pendidikan Dasar, dan Jenjang Pendidikan Menengah</i>)
4.	Doc4	Document	Regulation of the Director General of Teachers and Education Personnel of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 0340/B/HK.01.03/2022 Concerning the Literacy and Numeracy Competency Framework for Elementary School Teachers (<i>Peraturan Direktur Jendral Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 0340/B/HK.01.03/2022 Tentang Kerangka Kompetensi Literasi dan Numerasi bagi Guru pada Sekolah Dasar</i>)
5.	Doc5	Document	Regulation of the Head of the Education Curriculum Standards and Assessment Agency of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 030/P/2022 Concerning Book Leveling Guidelines (<i>Peraturan Kepala Badan Standar Kurikulum dan Asesmen Pendidikan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 030/P/2022 Tentang Pedoman Perjenjangan Buku</i>)
6.	Pol1	Interview	Interview with Policymaker 1
7.	Pol2	Interview	Interview with Policymaker 2
8.	Tch1	Interview	Interview with Teacher 1

9.	Tch2	Interview	Interview with Teacher 2
10.	Tch3	Interview	Interview with Teacher 3

3.4.2 Data Analysis Procedures

This study adopted thematic analysis to reveal and unpack the meaning conveyed in policy documents and perspectives of the research participants from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Miles et al., 2014). In doing the analysis, I used Quirkos version 2.5.3 (Quirkos, 2022), a qualitative data analysis software, to analyze all texts from the policy documents, and both policymaker and teacher interview transcripts. For each data, the application allowed me to specify properties and values in terms of data type (policy document, policymaker interview, teacher interview), sex (male, female), policy document levels (government regulation, ministerial regulation, directorate general regulation, and head regulation), etc. in order to identify and to give context to the comments in the data. Assigning specific properties and values is also beneficial for the later comparison between each data.

The data analysis started with the process of coding. After inserting the data sources into the software, I started my analysis flow with the policy documents. I carefully read each of the five documents to familiarize myself with the content of the policy. After the first set of readings, I continue with the second reading where I read the texts carefully and selected and assigned a specific word, phrases, sentences, or paragraph into a code. In this study, code is “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 4). The process of coding happened in two major stages: first cycle coding and second cycle coding.

In the first cycle coding, the purpose was to assign codes to chunks of data in order capture the meaning from the data or data condensation (Miles et al., 2014). In

this cycle, I used mostly descriptive coding, in-vivo coding, and process coding (Saldaña, 2016). By descriptive coding, I assigned labels to data in a word or short phrases summarizing basic topics of the data. At the same time, I used in-vivo coding to use words or phrases originated from the documents or interview transcripts. Since my study related to policy practices, I used in-vivo coding to code policy specific terms such as PMM (*Platform Merdeka Mengajar*), PBD (*Perencanaan Berbasis Data*), and BOS (*Bantuan Operasional Sekolah*). The other coding method I used was process coding when I assigned code to identified activities or “process”. Therefore, the codes were written in the form of gerund “-ing”, such as ‘managing classroom’, ‘completing material’, etc. Throughout this cycle, I also revised the code I already assigned and applied Simultaneous coding (Saldaña, 2016) where different codes could possibly overlapped in the data.

After assigning codes to the data, I continued to the second cycle coding process. In this cycle, I examined the initial codes and grouped them into “smaller number of categories, themes, or constructs” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 90). In this stage, I displayed all the initial codes in the software and dragged and dropped them into identifiable categories or themes. Whenever unsure, I reread the original texts surrounding the code to grasp the contexts. It helped me to do constant comparative analysis within and between the data. Doing comparison in qualitative data can lead to better understanding the context within the data (Miles et al., 2014). In my case, I compared the coding in two ways: from the data sources and from the codes/themes. When doing the comparison, I had guided questions like “Are teachers and policymakers talking about literacy practice the same way?”, “Do teachers have the same access to books?”, etc. Example of my coding process is presented in Table 3.

Table 4. Sample of Coding

Question	Excerpts from Data	First Cycle Coding	Second Cycle Coding	Themes / Categories
Can you share your challenges in implementing the literacy policy?	“There is a difficulty, sir, connecting the books with learning outcomes” – Tch1	Connection to books	Challenges-inside classroom	Teacher challenges
	"How are we going to apply literacy with various learning resources, whether using technology or not, because there are no facilities. I mean, ... the learning resources, printed books don't exist, if I want to use digital books, the devices [for displaying] also don't exist, like that.” – Tch2	School facilities	Challenges-inside classroom	
	"So, the headmaster scolded, ‘How come the learning materials has only just reached here?’ ‘Ma'am, I am used to do reading activities in my class, so the theme is hampered.’ I explained to her" – Tch1	School Principal	Challenges-outside classroom	
	“Yesterday I took part in the [program] from GTK. Teachers were trained to strengthen literacy and were asked to give an impact at their schools or in their area [Education Office]. That's also an obstacle sir. Sometimes people who have participated in the [training program] if they can't communicate with the service or with the school, communicating with the area [Education Office], that doesn't change, doesn't have any effect, isn't used.” - Tch2	Education Office	Challenges-outside classroom	

3.5 Trustworthiness

Creswell & Miller (2000) recommends using three points of view when determining the validity of the study which they called “the lens”. The three lenses seek validity from the researcher, the participants, and the individuals outside the study (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Using these three lenses, the study establishes its validity using triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing.

The first step to establish trustworthiness from the researcher choice is by the process of data triangulation. In this study, the findings from policy documents were

triangulated with the other data from both policymakers' and teachers' interview. Accommodating different forms of data can enhance the validity and trustworthiness of the study (Bowen, 2009).

The second lens was from the research participant's point of view by utilizing member checking. After the interviews were transcribed, I gave the opportunity to the participants to check their responses. In member checking, I asked the participants about their intentionality, confirmed factual errors in the transcripts, and offered them to add or delete information from the interview transcripts (Cohen et al., 2018). In this study, I uploaded the interview transcriptions to a cloud-based word processing tool (Google Docs) and give the links to each participant for commenting on specific parts of the transcripts. The link was provided to the individual transcript and was set to restricted and could be accessed only by the research participants. After each transcript was confirmed or its comment was accommodated (if any), the data was proceeded to the analysis step.

Finally, the third lens included external individuals by peer debriefing. I exposed the research and analysis process to the external individuals in order to check the overall process of my research and to identify the next steps in the research (Cohen et al., 2018). The external individuals were the other students and academic advisors.

3.6 Ethical Issues

As this research involved human participants, ethical consideration was applied. In this research, the consent from the participants was acquired from two ways: from the consent form signed by the participants before each interview and from verbal agreement at the beginning of the interview. In fact, I had approached the participants and explained about my research before asking their willingness to participate. When any of them confirmed either verbally or via text message, I would send them the online

consent form to as proof of consent. The consent form was included at the beginning section of the questionnaire after explaining what the overview of the research.

The study also ensured that the participants data are confidential. To protect the research data, all recorded data obtained from human participants were saved in the protected folder and archived in cloud storage to avoid unwanted access and use. Besides, the disclosure of identifiable information was also restricted. For instance, I used pseudonyms for each participant in reporting the findings and avoided recognizable attributions that would possibly reveal the participants' identity such as specific research location or name of the schools. I assigned the pseudonyms for each participant in the table below.

Table 5. Pseudonym for Research Participants

No.	Research Participants	Pseudonym
1.	Teacher1	Mr. Ari
2.	Teacher2	Mr. Nana
3.	Teacher3	Mrs. Ayu
4.	Policymaker1	Mrs. Dewi
5.	Policymaker2	Mr. Angga

3.7 Researcher's Positionality

In a qualitative study, values and beliefs of the researcher can affect the research. Therefore, (Banks, 1998) suggests to acknowledge the positionality of the person conducting the research in order to increase objectivity and trustworthiness of the study. Specifically in education policy research, Rizvi & Lingard (2010) suggested that the people conducting policy study need to acknowledge belief system that can affect the data collection and analysis process. Here, I explain my positionality that possibly affect my judgement.

My interest in literacy and knowledge about its current research arose when I took Introduction to Children's Literature course in my bachelor degree. I learned how

to use children's literature as means to nurture children's literacy. However, book sharing and reading based instructions were not popular in Indonesian context. When I had been teaching after graduated, I had no resources and time to practice what I had learned. The literacy policy that had been initiated at that time was the School Literacy Movement which focused on the habituation of reading, 15 minutes before the class begun. Until recently, the central government shifted the focus of national assessment to literacy and numeracy and invited teachers to use quality books in literacy teaching across the curriculum.

My interest in policy stemmed from my involvement in the governmental program. Since last year, I had involved in trainings and workshops organized by the MoECRT. The trainings and workshops included writing literacy module in a team, facilitating teachers to design leveled books for literacy teaching, and facilitating teachers in writing literacy-based learning modules. Those interests motivated me to conduct this study. I acknowledge that my work informed my values and knowledge during the research. Therefore, I tried to include reflections along the process of my research using notes and memo informing how my value and background knowledge affected my research process.

3.8 Concluding Summary

This chapter started by restating the research aims and objectives to guide the focus of the chapter. A qualitative design was adopted based on its appropriateness to guide exploratory research. The chapter also explained the process of data collection and analysis utilized in the present study. The next chapter applied the methodology to analyze the data and present the results of the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study aims to explore the implementation of literacy policy in primary schools in Indonesia by looking at the policy document and interviewing both policymakers and teachers. The process of data analysis begun with looking at the policy document and explored how literacy is conceptualized. The information from policy documents than were confirmed and asked for further meaning and hidden process behind the policy making process to policymakers. Finally, the data from what expected from policy at the state level was explored through the practice of teachers at school level. This chapter outlines the results and discussions.

4.1 Results

4.1.1 RQ1: What Backgrounds Leading to the Formulation of the Current Literacy Policy?

Looking at policy in its political context is important to know the bigger picture of the policy as a whole story. Policy is always the product of political activity and it serves the interest of the political actors having power. Public policy needs to address public goods so the solutions offered by the policy must reflect the answer to the problem. Therefore, how the problem is framed and the background behind policy making process need to be assessed.

4.1.1.1 Prioritizing Literacy in the Indonesian Curriculum

4.1.1.1.1 Concern about PISA

As the focus on literacy is not new, the previous efforts from central government are also discussed. In the previous curriculum, the 2013 Curriculum, the policymaker agreed that the focus on literacy has been already there. However, the surrounding policies inhibit the goal of nurturing literacy. While the 2013 curriculum was expected to nurture critical thinking skills, the assessment was not aligned. The previous National Exam was heavily focused on content area mastery where students' knowledge about the subjects were the main interest. In addition, the nature of the test is high stake where it determined students' graduation from each level of education from elementary to senior high schools. Consequently, teaching and learning process at schools prepare students for passing the test which completely depends on rote memorization.

“Actually, the previous ministers also had an interest in PISA, right? Only at that time the steps and solutions taken were not directly targeted, in my opinion. Because at that time there had to be a National Examination (*Ujian Nasional*) that measured student achievement in each subject, with the achievement in each subject being rigidly standardized, I see.” – Mrs. Dewi

The national examination that focused on standardized test to ensure each student passes certain subjects like Math, Geography, Biology, etc. to graduate. This high-stake test turns teachers' focus to preparing students for the test leaving less flexibility for teachers to focus on more important skills: literacy and numeracy. Besides, literacy in schools had previously seen as reading fluency. That is appropriate for the beginning steps. However, literacy teaching needs to go beyond reading fluency. Teachers should help students to model the thinking process and guide them in meaning making process so the students are able to criticize and reflect on their reading.

4.1.1.1.2 Turning the Focus to Literacy

The data from the interview revealed that the purpose of the current policy is to nurture literacy in the learning process. Literacy and numeracy are the skills that have to be embedded across subjects. To strengthen this to the public, the National Assessment was designed to just include literacy and numeracy as two skills being tested. It is expected that teachers understand that the two are important skills students need to improve across the subjects. For instance, literacy in Social Science helps students not only to understand about the content, but also to criticize it and to reflect on its connection to students' daily life. The previous misconception is that literacy is only taught in language related subjects such as Bahasa Indonesia and English.

Besides, the focus on literacy is also aimed to improve the students' literacy as measured by PISA. The concern about Indonesian students' performance in PISA where most of the students cannot comprehend explicit information and main idea of the texts. In addition to PISA, the current literacy policy includes the 21 century skills as the goals of the initiatives. Literacy and numeracy are expected to be embedded across the curriculum to enhance students' thinking ability.

“We now have ANBK and it measures literacy and numeracy. The content is across-subject, so reading literacy is considered an entry point for children to understand, analyze, and apply all learning materials to improve their life skills. The 21st Century life skills.” – Mrs. Dewi

4.1.1.1.3 The AKM Literacy as Basis for Policy Formulation

While the public attention is given to the National Assessment, the first attempt was to design learning progression for literacy education. The process had been started since 2019 when the new minister of Education was appointed. Before the assessment and curriculum had been designed, the AKM literacy was prepared as the basis for designing the curriculum and assessment. After the learning progression for AKM

literacy was established, the learning outcomes for each subject then specified in order to align with the AKM. Besides, the learning outcomes across grade levels also ensured to align with the AKM. Along with the formulation of learning outcomes, the curriculum, assessment, and graduate competence standards had been formulated using the AKM as the basis. The alignment to the AKM is the concrete effort to make literacy become the main focus. The AKM literacy competences and sub-competences are presented in Table (Pusmenjar, 2021).

Table 6. Competences and Sub-Competences in the AKM Literacy

Competences	Sub-Competences
Access and Retrieve Information	access and retrieve information in the text find and select relevant information
Interpret and Integrate	understand idea of the texts Make inferences, connections and predictions in texts
Evaluate and Reflect	assess the credibility and quality of content in informational texts reflect on the content and format of the information recognize and manage differing views in information

As the concern regarding PISA was mentioned previously, this framework is similar to the reading literacy framework used in PISA reading test. Then, the purpose to address PISA by using PISA reading literacy framework can be justified.

4.1.1.2 The Goals and Measuring Success of the Literacy Policy

As the program has been implemented, the next step in policy cycle is determining how to measure the success of the program. This step is important in order to monitor and evaluate the program and to make sure that the intended goals behind the enactment of literacy policy are achieved. When asked regarding how to know that the program has been succeeded, Mrs. Dewi mentioned the short term and the long-term goals of the current policy. For short term goal, the implementation of current policy is expected to

be able to improve students' literacy and numeracy skills which can be seen from the result of the AKM (Minimum Competence Assessment) Literacy as part of the National Assessment. As Mrs. Dewi explained,

"The hope is that we will see an increase in literacy skills as indicated by an increase in the Literacy Score in the AKM," - Mrs. Dewi

However, Mrs. Dewi stressed that an increase in the literacy score of the AKM is just the short-term goal of what the central government intended. A set of regulations that focus on the practice of literacy teaching using quality books aspire more than the score increase. Beyond that, the current literacy policies expect students to nurture literacy culture with the love of reading. Students are expected to pass through the continuum of reading, from learning to read to reading to learn. Therefore, the literacy score increase is only the gateway into fostering literacy culture.

"The literacy culture must grow and this AKM score is only one of the short-term targets." - Mrs. Dewi

4.1.1.3 Supports from the Central Government

In order to support the implementation of the current policy initiatives, the central government has provided trainings and programs for teachers and school personnels. The policymakers argued that the central government had already provide massive assistance for teachers and schools in order to support the implementation of the literacy policy which includes support for all level of teachers.

For advanced level teachers, the support is by providing the Micro-credential program, a collaboration between the MoECRT and Teachers College Columbia University to train teachers on reading and writing workshop funded by LPDP. The program has been in place since 2021 and offered each year for teachers in primary schools. Since the program is delivered in English by native tutors, candidates are

selected based on their application including TOEFL requirement. The graduates of the program, the master teachers, then are expected to give impact to their schools and community after finishing the program.

While the micro-credential program is limited to advanced teachers, the other massive program was circulating around 15 million quality books for 25,000 preschool and primary schools in 2022 along with training primary school teachers and principals, and recruiting Literacy Facilitators for each district to help guide teachers and schools to use the books in their teaching and learning activities. The program was targeted to the schools in underdeveloped regions and the schools in which the literacy numeracy score was the lowest based on the previous National Assessment. Each school received 1,500 books for students. The books had proportionally divided for each reading levels from beginner readers to intermediate readers based on leveling books guidance (BSKAP, 2022b). To assist the schools how to use books in literacy teaching, 3 facilitators are provided in each city/district consisting of those from Education Board, Language Center, and Community Reading Park (*Taman Baca Masyarakat-TBM*). Regarding this program, Mrs. Dewi mentioned the research supported the program,

“Because research has proven that teacher training alone will not be effective in increasing students’ literacy capacity. THE BOOK must be available. If not, [teachers] will only use textbooks, without using non-text books. So, the book should also be provided.” – Mrs. Dewi

Her statement highlighted the importance of both quality teachers and the availability of non-text books to support the literacy initiative. The non-text books here refer to authentic books like storybooks, or specifically known as children’s literature, and other texts besides school textbooks that curated for learning purposes. Therefore, teachers who are trained to select and utilize books in literacy instructions are important.

The other support for teachers is the PMM (*Platform Merdeka Mengajar*). The PMM is designed as a learning platform for teachers that bring altogether learning materials for teachers. The content includes articles, video, teaching modules, etc. It also serves as a hub for teachers to share their teaching practices to be adapted by the other teachers. The specific contents to support literacy program are also available in the PMM. As Mrs. Dewi mentioned,

“Now there is content called ‘Let's strengthen literacy’ starting from how to understand literacy in the Rapor Pendidikan, what is meant by literacy competence in the Rapor Pendidikan, what is understanding, what is interpreting-integrating, what is evaluating-reflecting... all are discussed in the PMM.” – Mrs. Dewi

4.1.2 RQ2: How is Literacy Constructed in the Policy Documents?

While the previous GLS recommends literacy habituation in terms of practicing 15 minutes reading before the learning activity begins, the current literacy policy, centered in the AKM Literacy, requires literacy to be embedded inside the curriculum. Knowing this shift in focus is crucial in understanding the findings in this study.

After the ministerial circular previously mentioned, many regulations have been produced and amended to support the focus on literacy and numeracy since 2021. For this report, I have included only the policies that stated literacy in its content. Besides, the policy documents I included are those commonly socialized and referred to in the teacher training programs organized by the MoECRT. To put the documents in perspective, Figure 2. represents how different level of policy documents produced in the very short time.

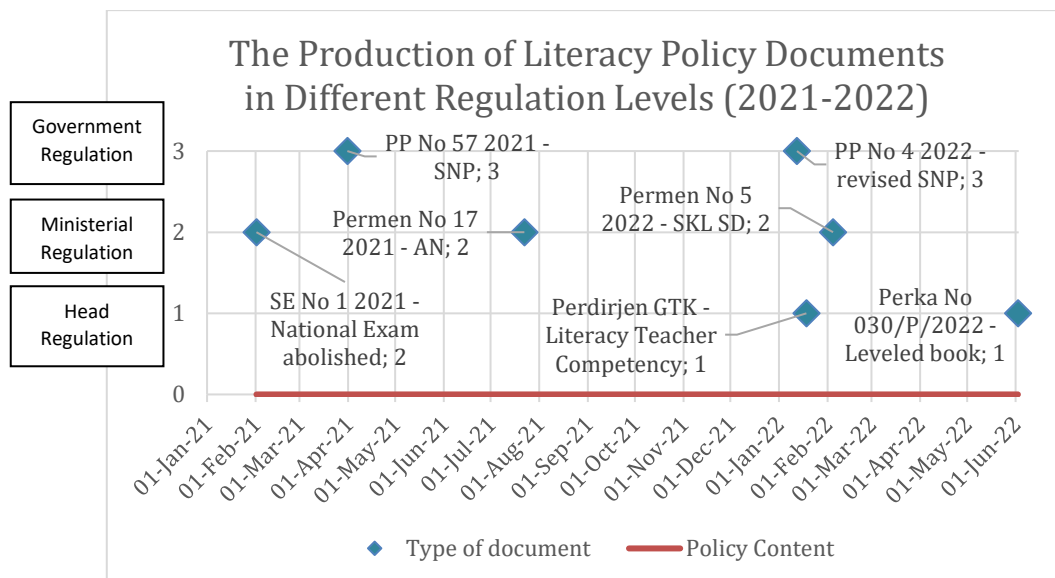


Figure 2. The Production of Literacy Policy Documents in Different Regulation Levels (2021-2022)

To better understand the literacy policy supported by the government, it is important to interrogate the conceptualization of literacy in the current policy documents. In this section, I present where is the position of literacy in the current policy documents and describe its definition as well as what contributes to literacy success as intended by the regulations.

4.1.2.1 Literacy as the Focus of the National Education

In the policy documents, literacy become the focus of teaching and learning process. Following the government initiative to focus on literacy and numeracy, those two skills are mentioned in the SNP Article 6 (c) as the third standard of primary school graduates after being citizen obedient to the One and Only God and the cultivation of Pancasila characters.

“Nurturing literacy and numeracy competencies of students to take part in further education.” – Doc1

Looking further to the document, the SNP has been revised twice in response to the new education focus. The most recent is the government regulation No 4 Year 2022 that has amended the government regulation No 57 Year 2021 concerning the National

Education Standard. The difference lies in the details of the standard. The amended SNP only mentioned on the cultivation of character that in accordance with Pancasila profile and literacy and numeracy competence without detail explanation. Meanwhile, the current SNP mentioned three points as the graduate standards in primary education and stated the purpose of nurturing literacy: to take further education. From this statement, literacy and numeracy are required to prepare primary school students for continuing to the next education level which is junior high schools.

From the above government regulation, the more specific graduate standard in school level education has also been amended in the Regulation of the MoECRT of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5 of 2022 concerning Graduate Competency Standards in Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, and Secondary Education Levels. In this document, the previous statement of literacy competencies is described further. In the Chapter 4 Article 6 point (e), (f) and (g), literacy competencies describe as:

“e. demonstrate the ability to convey ideas, make simple creative actions or works, and seek alternative actions to face challenges, including through local wisdom;

f. demonstrate the ability to ask questions, explain and convey back information obtained or problems encountered;

g. demonstrate the ability and passion for literacy in the form of searching for and finding texts, conveying responses to their reading, and being able to write down their own experiences and feelings;” – Doc3

From the above points, literacy competencies explained in the policy documents includes many activities and engagement with the texts. Graduates of primary schools are not expected to only be able to find and convey information. Beyond that, they are expected to comprehend the texts so they can convey back the obtained information, and to reflect on their readings so they can use it to solve their problems in their life. Besides, the competencies also stressed on reading-response ability students should have. The competencies also highlight the cultural aspects as it mentioned “local

wisdom”. It seems to allow different practices in respect to individual’s context of teaching and learning. Besides, the document also mentions about demonstrating “passion for literacy” (*kegemaran berliterasi*) which stresses that the literacy activity should be enjoyable.

From my later reading, I assumed that the three competencies mentioned in the SKL are related to the AKM Literacy which is part of the National Assessment. In my opinion, the three points represent three different level of thinking in the AKM literacy where Chapter 4 Article 6 (e) refers to the ability to access and retrieve, Article 6 (f) refers to the ability to interpret and integrate, and Article 6 (g) refers to the ability to evaluate and reflect. My assumption was based on the effort to make alignment across the policy documents. In addition to literacy, I compared with how numeracy competencies presented in the document. In contrast to three points on literacy, numeracy is represented by one point in Article 6 (h).

Meanwhile, the focus on literacy and numeracy along with Pancasila Student Profile also confirmed by Mr. Angga. He mentioned that the education standards and the curriculum made aligned to support the focus to literacy, numeracy, and Pancasila Student Profile.

“Well, in the law it is stipulated that curriculum development refers to standards. So, before determining what the curriculum content is like, it must be in line with the standards. In the Government Regulation it is clarified, because we know that there are 8 standards, of which 4 are referred to in curriculum development, made explicit. Actually, during 2006 curriculum, 2013 curriculum, when we change the curriculum, what we revised first were the standards. You can check K13 curriculum, there were 4 Permendikbud [ministerial regulations] that we revised. At that time, it was implicit. But now it is made explicit in the governmental regulation that what is referred to from the 8 standards is only 4 standards. The first is Graduate Competency Standards, Content Standards, Process Standards, and Assessment Standards.” – Mr. Angga

From the statement above, Mr. Angga stressed that for ensuring the literacy, numeracy, and Pancasila profile to be the focus of our education, all the related

standards have been revised. Besides, different with the change in K13 curriculum, the change is more explicit now so schools and teachers understand what matters.

4.1.2.2 The Definition of Literacy

After understanding how literacy is referred to in the policy documents, I continue looking at the definition of literacy. Knowing the definition is essential to have common understanding on the issue. Furthermore, literacy has been the object of study across many disciplines resulting in diverse and rich definitions that might contradict each other. By first knowing the definition, we can have solid ground to how literacy is understood and practiced by teachers in the subsequent analysis. From the policy documents, the definition of literacy is clearly stated in the Perdirjen GTK concerning Literacy Teacher Competency Framework. It is mentioned,

“Literacy is the ability to understand, use, evaluate, reflect on various types of texts to solve problems and develop individual capacities so that they can contribute productively to society.” – Doc4

From the definition, literacy includes the ability of using different levels of abilities and thinking skills from ‘to use’ until ‘to reflect. To accomplish that level, students’ active involvement is expected in the process of teaching and learning. In addition, “various types of texts” requires teachers to provide a wide variety of reading resources for students. In fact, the reading resources should not only vary but also meaningful for students so they can “solve problems and develop individual capacities”. Here, teachers’ understanding of their individual student is also crucial. Finally, the end goal of literacy based on the document is to prepare students to productively contribute to the society.

In addition to the data from the document, Mrs. Dewi also provided a definition of literacy and told how it would benefit the students. In the interview, she mentioned that,

"If a student already has reading literacy, not literacy which is [interpreted as] reading fluently, but reading which is [interpreted according to] the AKM (Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum – Minimum Competence Assessment), he/she has the ability to learn or regulate independently, that's it, and has that independence to learn material, any material." – Mrs. Dewi

From the above excerpt, she stressed that to be literate is beyond to be able to read fluently. The understanding, comprehension, and reflection are needed in order for the individual to be an independent learner. She also consciously referred to reading literacy based on the AKM, which also found in the definition above.

Some teachers also in accordance with the policy document on the definition of literacy to some extent. When asked about literacy, teachers responded,

"Maybe if we talk about literacy, it is an activity... reading activity... until the children understand what they read." -Mr. Ari

"In my opinion, literacy is... actually what I mean sir, so this literacy is for improving abilities, from being able to read and write like what we understood before until recently [understood] now as to [be able to] process information, and be able to analyze, reflect, and apply it in life." – Mr. Nana

"So, the term is, in my opinion, what I understand, so literacy is more about improving, improving individual or students' abilities from what was originally only limited to reading, writing, but now it is more improved. Like that sir" – Mr. Nana

From the above explanation, both teachers mentioned that literacy is related to the activity with reading that contrasted to the ability to read and write. Meanwhile, Mrs. Ayu centered the definition of literacy only into reading as ways of getting knowledge as she shared,

"So, the point of this literacy, yesterday during the discussion with students, is reading books, writing... the point that we discussed yesterday, the point [of literacy includes] activities that can add something to our knowledge. [The method] can be from reading. Actually, [we can get knowledge] from watching videos, so it is also a form of literacy activity as well. Yesterday we discussed what literacy is." – Mrs. Ayu

However, in the other part of the interview when asked about literacy policy, Mrs. Ayu mentioned that literacy focuses on students' analytical abilities rather than memorizing learning materials. She later mentioned that,

“Regarding literacy, for example the assessment is in the form of a literacy and numeracy assessment, which does not focus on memorizing, but on students' analytical abilities both towards numeracy and literacy. Where indeed one of the goals of the policy is to improve literacy skills, students' analytical thinking skills in understanding reading or for example in understanding pictures, infographics, etc. So that's what we're trying to improve instead of just memorizing material like that.” – Mrs. Ayu

From both statements, there are different understanding of literacy given from Mrs. Ayu when asked about literacy alone and literacy in relation to the current policy. Overall, the interview with teachers shows the nuance in the way teachers understand literacy.

4.1.2.3 Literacy Teacher Competency Framework

The new literacy policy also portrays a set of competencies that teachers need to have to be a literacy teacher. A complete portrayal of what an ideal literacy teacher imagined is stipulated in the appendix of Perdirjen GTK No. 0340/B/HK.01.03/2022 Concerning the Literacy and Numeracy Competency Framework for Elementary School Teachers. A competent literacy teacher should have the ability to accompany students to access, use, interpret, and communicate information and ideas from a variety of texts in accordance to students' characteristics and needs. Similar to what mentioned in the definition of literacy, competent literacy teachers are expected to help students to become literate as indicated by the ability to access, use, interpret, and communicate information from wide variety of texts in respect to the students' needs. I summarized the literacy teacher competency framework in Table 4.1 below, while the complete regulation is available in Appendix 1.

Table 7. Literacy Teacher Competency Framework

Dimensions	Aspects	Scopes
Professional Knowledge	Knowledge about Literacy Strategies	The concept of research-based literacy learning from a cognitive, linguistic, sociocultural, and affective perspective. Learning design and literacy assessment

		procedures in accordance to the characteristics and needs of students.
		Knowledge of the language to communicate effectively orally, in writing or multimodal.
Professional Learning Practice	Literacy Learning and Assessment	Skills in designing learning and assessments that focus on improving students' literacy skills with student-centered methods.
	Differentiating Literacy Instruction	Skills to identify and classify students' reading and writing abilities.
	Management of Literacy-Enriched Environments	Organize and manage the physical and social-affective environment so that the classroom becomes a place for learning that is fun, meaningful, and fosters an interest in reading and writing.
Professional Development	Development of Self-Literacy Skills	Improving self-professional competence in a sustainable manner through reading, writing, conducting research both independently and collaboratively.

The above table is the summary of Appendix 1 in the literacy teacher competence framework. For each scope in each aspect, four different level of competence are listed: novice, beginner, competent, and proficient. Based on Article 2 (b), this framework serves as reference for teachers to guide their individual learning journey. However, how to use the framework and what steps to identify current level of competence and how to improve teachers' competence to the next level of competence are not mentioned, nor referred to the other policy documents. Moreover, judging from the nature of teachers in Indonesia, the possibility of majority of teachers to map their own learning journey is low, especially when no consequences of their actions.

4.1.3 RQ3: How Do Teachers Implement the Literacy Policy?

While policy can be perfectly formulated and powerfully mandated, the actual work of policy is on its implementation. The success of the policy is determined by the success of the actors implementing the policy. Therefore, the third research problem deals with the practice of teachers as they implement the current literacy policy. The themes

emerged from the interview include knowledge and perception of the policy, experience in practicing the policy, and challenges happened in practicing policy in the local contexts.

4.1.3.1 Teachers' Background

I recruited three teachers as participants for the study. All of the teachers were recruited as they fulfilled the selection criteria set in research methodology: their background knowledge about the current literacy policy, the grade they are currently teaching, and most importantly their willingness to participate in the study. I use pseudonym to refer to them as follows: Mr. Ari, Mr. Nana, and Mrs. Ayu.

Mr. Ari had been teaching for 4 years in a public school in North Kalimantan. He was 30 years old and had bachelor degree. He had been teaching in Grade 6 for 4 years. There were 21 students in his classroom. The school was quite big and had good facilities. He mentioned that his classroom had a library with around 50 books available for students. The books consisted of non-text books with around 17 different titles. Before becoming a teacher, he was a literacy activist and actively involve in voluntary programs. He had been involved in some trainings held by the MoECRT and other private organizations concerning literacy.

Mr. Nana was 30 years old and had finished his master degree. He had been teaching in Grade 3 for two years. In total, he had 10 years of teaching experience. He had been teaching in a small public elementary school with around 100 students in total. The school is located in a rural area in West Java. There were 20 students in his classroom. In his school, the class library was available with around 40 books but the quality of books was low. The collections were dominated by thematic books with small number of the other books including fables, encyclopedia, and folklore. Regarding the

current literacy policy, he participated in literacy workshops and trainings by the MoECRT.

Unlike Mr. Ari and Mr. Nana, Mrs. Ayu had been teaching in a private school in an urban area in West Java. She was 36 years and had been teaching for 14 years in total and 8 years in the current school. She had a bachelor degree but also had been pursuing a master degree when participating in the study. Her school had good facilities and had around 540 students. In her classroom, the reading corner was available. There are 30-40 books consisting of storybooks, science books, and encyclopedia. She had participated in a literacy workshop organized by the MoECRT and trainings from the Education Board in her city.

4.1.3.2 Teachers' Knowledge of the Literacy Policy

When asked about their knowledge of current policies which focus on nurturing literacy skills, teachers showed sufficient knowledge about the current policy with some variations.

Mr. Ari was well informed with the current policy and at the same time also gave reflections how the policy solved the problem faced in his context. He mentioned some regulations by several units in the MoECRT including book leveling, literacy teacher competence framework, and Education Report as the result of the National Assessment including AKM Literacy and Numeracy. Not only mentioned about the regulations, Mr. Ari provided explanation on how the result of AKM Literacy in the Education Report would be used to improve the current literacy level in his school. He was informed that the MoECRT had given flexibility in using BOS (School Operational Assistance) to purchase books for supporting literacy teaching. This regulation was really helpful for him as he mentioned,

Previously we were always confused about how to use the budget to buy books, there were limits [on how we can spend government budget], then the Ministry of Education issued a policy, the flexibility [of using the budget] is given, judging by the results of Education Report, now that's a very good policy. So, the school is given an intervention to improve its literacy situation through what? The results of his Education Report. – Mr. Ari

Meanwhile, Mr. Nana referred back to the previous policy about GLS in 2015 and mentioned the regulations regarding teacher competency framework. He highlighted the GLS that focus on reading habituation as a good start to nurture students' literacy skills.

"Well, what I know was in 2015 the GLS had been initiated. So now the current regulations are the Teacher Competency Framework. So, there are already guidelines there, starting with how to apply literacy to habituation." – Mr. Nana

From the above excerpt, it is implied that Mr. Nana realized the relationship between the previous GLS and the current literacy policy. He also reported that along with the new initiatives, the implementation guidelines are usually provided.

4.1.3.3 Teachers' Perception of the Literacy Policy

Teachers' perception can lead to what they do in instructional practice. When I asked the teachers about their perception about the literacy policy, most of them have positive attitude. Mr. Ari mentioned that the policy is very important and also shared his experience comparing between two classes: the one practicing frequent reading activities and the other not given any exposure to reading activities. The impact is quite noticeable as he confessed in the interview,

"Very important, very important. So, it is very important that literacy is applied in the early grades as well as in the upper grades. ... Well, I was once in a class where there was no intervention at all in literacy activities. So, when the book was read, I was confused about inviting them to have dialogue. The dialogue was one-way communication. ... Meanwhile, the children who have been intervened with reading aloud, using quality reading books, it is much easier to get the children to communicate. From there I realized that literacy is very important." – Mr. Ari

He stresses that the students' ability to communicate their ideas improved as they frequently involved in discussions with books. Meanwhile, the other group of students that rarely had book discussions were more silent and passive in responding to the teachers' questions.

The other positive comment from Mrs. Ayu stating that the government efforts in bringing the current literacy policy into being deserve appreciation.

On the other hand, although Mr. Nana stated positive perception, he also commented on the new terms in the current policies that confusing for teachers. He mentioned that his teacher colleagues think that the policy already implemented at the school level and the current policy is just the renaming of the previous policy to make it sounds fascinating. As he mentioned in the interview,

"... actually this is actually also for literacy, which is a good thing from the government to improve [reading] abilities, the goal is like that." – Mr. Nana

"Well, maybe this is one of the reasons why the literacy numeracy policy has not been responded to immediately [by teachers], with various considerations, because at the level of the education unit [school], they actually think they have implemented it [the literacy policy]. They know they have implemented literacy and numeracy in their daily instructions. But, only because of the new term it seems as if this is new. Because from these new words it seems that this is something new, so it must be learned. Sometimes it seems as if the new one has a "waw" effect." – Mr. Nana

Based on his answer, Mr. Nana mentioned that teachers perceived literacy policies that currently enacted by the government as just giving the new names to the old practices. He mentioned that the teachers at schools claimed to have already done what government promotes in their daily teaching long before the new policy being introduced. The teachers claimed that learning practice focusing on literacy and numeracy has already been implemented long before the current regulations. Moreover, he also mentioned the teachers' question regarding the continuity of the program by referring to the previous K13 curriculum.

“... from the KBK Curriculum to the K13 Curriculum, now to Merdeka Curriculum, right ... in reality it's like that sir, the wheels of rotation are like that, changing the minister [of Education] will change the curriculum. So, it's like that, as if there's no sustainable learning.” – Mr. Nana

From the comment above, Mr. Nana seems to question the sustainability of the program. He responded positively to the current literacy initiative but at the same time worried that the program would change in the next presidential cabinet.

4.1.3.4 Teachers' Practice of Literacy Teaching

The major implementation of the literacy policy was reflected on the actual practice of teachers at schools. The data from the interview revealed that teachers' literacy practice includes both practicing literacy as school program and literacy in their own classrooms. From the school, the literacy program focused on habituation of reading which influenced by the GLS initiative. Meanwhile, teachers' practice in their classroom was more varied from the independent reading activity to reading aloud.

4.1.3.4.1 Literacy Program Organized by the School

All of the schools where the participants have regular monthly or weekly reading sessions. This practice reflects the previously mandated GLS program based on the ministerial regulation No. 25 Year 2015 concerning cultivation of character (Kemendikbud, 2015). In Mr. Ari's case, the literacy program at his school is regularly conducted once a month on the third Friday in general sessions including all grades.

“We made the program with the school principal. So, there are four Fridays, in one month. Well, the first Friday is for spiritual activities, for example spiritual cleansing for Christian friends, and da'wah for Muslim friends, the second Friday is for gymnastics, the third Friday is for literacy activities. Well, that's where books are used in general assembly.” – Mr. Ari

This school level literacy program also found in Mr. Nana and Mrs. Ayu schools with the more frequent schedule.

“... every Wednesday morning half past 8 to 8, once in a month we gather to read together in the school yard for the GLS. All students in the school are required to read in the school yard. So, everyone will bring books, bring mats, in the yard to read.” – Mrs. Ayu

The reading activities arranged by the school are similar in all teacher participants. The session last around 15 minutes where students bring their own books and gathering in the school yard for a silent independent reading session. Typically, there are no follow up reading response activities after the session. The students went back to their classroom for starting the lesson. Mr. Nana also shared the reading program from the school,

“From school, there is habituation before studying which is scheduled every day. But indeed in practice it has not been consistent like that. And each class depends on each class teacher in its implementation. If my class, it is scheduled twice a week.” – Mr. Nana

The comment from Mr. Nana illustrated that the reading program from school is just a recommendation and the implementation depends on the class teachers. the school passed the responsibility to the teacher. Here, the role of class teacher becomes significant to determine whether or not the reading program implemented.

4.1.3.4.2 Classroom Literacy Instructions

In addition to the school literacy practice, the teachers shared how the literacy instructions commonly practiced with students in their classrooms. All teachers had attempts to include engagement with books in different ways including reading aloud and independent reading. Regarding literacy teaching, the result of the questionnaire reveals that the reading activities are most likely happened only once or twice a week (See Appendix 3) in Bahasa Indonesia subject as confirmed from the interview, as Mr. Nana mentioned,

“What I have done is to integrate literacy into Bahasa Indonesia subject. The book chosen at that time was a fiction book. The goal is to find the main idea in the paragraph.” – Mr. Nana

With quite good access to quality books in his classroom reading corner (Figure 3), Mr. Ari elaborated that he let his students to choose the books they wanted to read and let them to read independently. After the independent reading session, there would be 2 students sharing the story he/she read from the book with his/her own words. As Mr. Ari shared his literacy instruction,

“I asked the students to retell the books they read with their written products. In one day, there are 4 students who tell stories. I have 21 students, sir. In one day, there were 4 children telling stories: 2 in the morning, and 2 in the afternoon before going home from school. So, there is a schedule for 5 days, Saturday here is not a holiday. So later when the students have finished with the book they are reading, they have presented their book, then their friends have responded, so they roll it again with the different title with the friends around them, that's all the concept in my class.” – Mr. Ari



Figure 3 Books in Mr. Ari's Classroom

Regarding the literacy practice in her classroom, Mrs. Ayu shared similar but different thing. In addition to the reading session required by the school, she has literacy session embedded in the learning hour. After the lessons finished, the literacy session will be organized individually for 30 minutes before the students going home (see Appendix 4). She mentioned her practice,

“Well, literacy activities in our curriculum are included in learning hours. So, in our learning schedule, literacy goes into learning hours. Where literacy itself is usually in the final hour before going home. So about 30 minutes before going home when all the lessons had been completed, that’s when the children have literacy activities. [For the activity], literacy, in general, children will read [independently].” – Mrs. Ayu

After the independent reading session, Mrs. Ayu shared that the school has literacy instrument in each classroom named ‘literacy tree’. In the literacy tree, each student will write the title of the book that he/she had read, what is the book about, and his/her name. each student will write it in one leaf to be attached to the literacy tree. Below is the literacy tree in Mrs. Ayu’s classroom.



Figure 4. Literacy Tree in Mrs. Ayu's classroom

Beside independent reading, teachers also mentioned about doing reading aloud with the students. The reading aloud session was reported to be organized once to twice a week depending on the availability of the books. For reading aloud activity, teachers mentioned the title of the books they used in their literacy instructions in the past semester. Here are the books the teachers mentioned,

“There are some books like *Tambalan Tak Terlihat*, *Kado Natal untuk Sam*, *Jangan Menangis Bujang*, and others.” – Mr. Ari

“We read books for instance *Harta Karun, Barter, Kisah Burung Dara dan Semut, Kegiatan di Rumah, Aturan Makan*, etc during learning activities in thematic subjects.” – Mr. Nana

“The book titles are *Seminggu Menakjubkan di Jepang, Kaktus yang Malang, Si Elang yang Sombong, Jangan Suka Menipu*, etc. for literacy activities in the classrooms.” – Mrs. Ayu

In conclusion, literacy practices shared by most teachers are extensively guided by the previous GLS initiatives focusing on the habituation of readings as the program promoted by the schools. However, the interview data also revealed two reading activities happened in their classroom: reading aloud and independent reading. However, those activities happened only in Bahasa Indonesia subjects in two teachers and as separated activity in one teacher practice. Besides, not much information mentioned about how teachers modeled and taught reading strategies explicitly during the literacy instructions as they cannot really explain it clearly.

4.1.3.5 Challenges in Teachers' Practice

The teacher participants already performed quite sufficient knowledge about the conception of literacy and the literacy policies. However, different literacy teaching practices still emerges due to different challenges. Based on the themes appeared from the interview, teachers' challenges can be classified to inside the classroom and outside the classroom challenges. Inside the classroom, teachers deal with situation that directly affect the process of teaching and learning. In contrast, outside the classroom, the challenges are related to external factors that indirectly affecting the literacy practice.

4.1.3.5.1 Teachers' Challenges Inside the Classroom

Availability of Books and School Facilities

All of the teacher participants mentioned different challenges in accessing classroom and school facilities to support their literacy teaching practice which centered on the

availability of both physical and digital books. Both have their own affordances. Physical books are often considered expensive and hard to get in some places, while it has practicality in use when access is obtained. Meanwhile, digital books are mostly open accessed (especially the online resources supported by Kemendikbud), but the devices to bring them into the classroom are not always available.

Among the teacher participants, Mr. Nana has both problems. He mentioned about the limited resources the school provides regarding learning resources, especially physical books due to the expensive price and school budget.

“... the schools have very few reading books. Especially if refer to the current decodable and leveled books that are in accordance with children's development, that's really difficult to find sir. First of all, the book is quite expensive, right? expensive, and second, there is no budget for purchasing those books provided by the schools.” – Mr. Nana

When talking about books, he mentioned how decodable and leveled books needs to align with students' level of reading. Unfortunately, while he knows about the availability of digital books to use for literacy instruction, the projector to display the digital books is not always accessible. Mr. Nana explained about his school which located at a theft prone area. Therefore, the projector was placed in the school guard's house far from the school and would only bring to school by request from teacher.

"... the learning resources like printed books don't exist, if I want to use digital books, the projector [for displaying] also rarely exist. ... because the projector was not kept at school. Our school is prone to thieves, sir. So, the projector is stored in the school guard's house. I want to use the projector every day. But earlier right, I also felt sorry for the school guard if I ask him to bring it every day. If I bring [the projector] myself, it's not allowed by the school principal” – Mr. Nana

Mr. Nana has difficulty to provide access to books for his students. While the policy encourages to provide students extensive engagement with texts, the extensive access to books was not always available. Here is the reading corner in Mr. Nana's classroom which dominated by textbooks with no books displayed to attract students' interest.



Figure 5. Reading corner in Mr. Nana's classroom

As can be seen from the picture, the books are thick and stacked on the table without displaying the front cover or the side title of the books. The way the book displayed are not encouraging for students to check the books to read. Besides, digital books that are accessible to use as an alternative cannot be displayed due to the availability of the projector.

Connecting Books into the Learning Outcomes

As mentioned earlier, the current policy places the importance of literacy teaching using books embedded across the curriculum. This teaching practice is new for teachers in Indonesia, even to the teachers that have already trained. Applying theory into practice is always challenging. Mr. Ari reported that it is difficult for him to connect available books in the classroom with the learning objectives or vice versa. The difficulty relates to the subject as he mentioned,

“There is a difficulty in connecting the books with learning outcomes... In Bahasa Indonesia, it is easier, because the learning outcomes are Listening, Reading, and all language related things. But in IPA, IPS, it's difficult for me. It's hard to find reading materials that fit the subject I want to teach.” – Mr. Ari

From the excerpt, Mr. Ari shared his challenges regarding how he aligned his learning outcomes with the reading materials including books. He experienced different challenges across subjects. It is easier for him to use books and a variety of reading materials in Bahasa Indonesia as the learning objectives are easily connected. However, the case is different when he taught social science and science subjects. The connection to reading materials was harder to find.

Having that problem, Mr. Ari reported to continue teaching literacy with books in his classroom without referring to specific learning objectives. Consequently, his class learning left behind compared to the other class in the same grade. It leads to the other problem. When it is the time for mid test, Mr. Ari's class have not finished the same theme which provoked conflict with the other teachers at the same grade.

“I don't connect it (learning activity with books) to learning objectives sometimes, that's why I'm left behind, thematically I'm behind... My class is parallel, there are Class A-B-C. The students in other classes have learned up to the theme 8, I'm still in theme 6. Even in theme 6 in the middle. So, in the last mid-test, my colleagues and I had different test questions.” – Mr. Ari

The interview with Mr. Ari revealed that his literacy instructions did not align with learning outcomes in the curriculum resulting in his class being left behind compared to the other classes in the same cohort.

4.1.3.5.2 Teachers' Challenges Outside the Classroom

Dealing with the Principal

The interview with teachers revealed that they often had different perspective with their principals in terms of how literacy teaching is conducted in the classroom and the support to obtain book access from the school principal.

Mr. Ari interview showed that there were some arguments between him and the principal regarding how to improve the students' literacy skills. The principal usually focused on inspecting teachers' teaching administrative such as lesson plan, assessment,

and ensuring the completion of the learning materials. On the other hand, Mr. Ari wanted that his students learn in more meaningful ways although not always completing all the materials. Therefore, the failure to catching up with learning target got the principal's attention. Mr. Ari was called to the principal office and was interrogated about the problem. Mr. Ari explained to the principal about the reading activities in his class that become the reason of the left behind.

"So, the headmaster scolded, 'How come the learning materials has only just reached here?' 'Ma'am, I am used to do reading activities in my class, so the theme is hampered.' I explained to her" – Mr. Ari

Mr. Nana also shared how the school principal did not support his practice in terms of purchasing the books he needed. He proposed the purchase of books to the principal several times but the books were never purchased. Although the regulation of BOS already gave flexibility to school to allocate the fund for book purchasing, the school did not proceed Mr. Nana's request.

Conflicting Program with Education Office

From teachers' shared experience, literacy programs offered by Education Office commonly did not support the intention of the current literacy initiative. There might be different interpretation of the policy happened between the teachers trained by the central government and the Education Office in their city/district.

While the literacy instructions are expected to be nurtured in learning activities, Education Board in Mrs. Ayu's case organized a workshop for teachers to design AKM-like questions to drill students. Instead of focusing on modeling how to comprehend the texts through reading activities, teachers are trained to prepare students for the test. In addition, when asked to share her experience in the AN, she mentioned that students at

Grade 4 (before having AKM test at Grade 5), students are already trained with the AKM-like tests. Mrs. Ayu explained,

“Indeed, from Grade 4 to prepare them for Grade 5, the questions already prepared are the questions similar to those in the National Assessment ...So yesterday the school supervisor invited schools to take part in training on how to design AKM-like questions...” – Mrs. Ayu

The other program was also shared by Mr. Nana where the Education Office in his district had organized ‘literacy competition’ for schools. The students participated in this program needed to report the books they have read into a google form. So, there were challenges in each month regarding the number of books to read and the genre of the books. The competition seems to only focus on reading fluency and ignore reading comprehension. Mr. Nana shared about the program,

“The literacy activities are made into competitions, turned into challenges, sir. So, reading the book was made a challenge. Students have to read the book, then review it, one month students will read the book and review it, one month students will read the other book, then the students will compose rhymes, so the challenges keep changing.” – Mr. Nana

The other challenge encountered was to give impact to the teachers in the community. After trained as master teachers, the teachers are expected to share their knowledge about how to use literacy strategies in teaching. However, as mentioned by Mr. Nana, he often gets rejections both from his school and the education board. Consequently, the expected impact never happened. As he mentioned,

“Yesterday I took part in the [program] from GTK, teachers were trained to strengthen literacy and were asked to give an impact at their schools or in their area [Education Office]. That's also an obstacle sir. Sometimes people who have participated in the [training program] if they can't communicate with the stakeholders or Education Office, that doesn't change, doesn't have any effect, is not used.” - Mr. Nana

4.2 Discussions

The three research questions in this study were answered based on the three data sources: policy documents, policymaker interviews, and teacher interviews. The interview with policymakers informed the contexts behind the formulation of literacy policies. Informed by the context, the policy documents provided the content of the policy and how literacy is defined and conceptualized. Finally, the teacher interviews examined the actual practice of the policy enacted by local policy actors in their educational context. In this part, the discussions of the research findings are outlined using Taylor et al. (1997) critical policy analysis framework, which focuses on three aspects: policy contexts, policy texts, and policy consequences.

4.2.1 Policy Contexts: Policy Actors and International Competitiveness

Context refers to the factors that trigger policy formulation that varies from social, economic, sociological, and historical aspects. Uncovering the context of policy helps to answer the ‘why’ and ‘why now’ of the policy (Taylor et al., 1997) to better understand the purpose and rationale behind the policy agenda. The ‘why now’ is essential to ask as understanding education policy in general always needs to involve its past, present, and future. The past informs our current policy decisions and reflects what is intended for the future (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The findings from policymaker interviews suggest some contexts behind the development of the current literacy policies and the rationales behind the policy formulation.

4.2.1.1 Policy Actors as Policy Drivers

The result shows that the background behind the enactment of the literacy policy is related to the policy actors. While mandated in 2021 as part of the National Assessment, AKM Literacy has been discussed and processed since 2019 as a proposal from the newly appointed minister for the MoECRT in the new presidential cabinet. The data

from the interview revealed that the new minister was concerned about solving the literacy problem, mainly reflecting on students' poor performance in the international assessment PISA. To formulate the solution, literacy experts, organizations, and activists were involved to ensure that the policy refers to the current research and best practices in literacy scholarship.

From the previous studies, education reform was produced within political events (Mills, 2011; Moss, 2004, 2009). Specifically, Kingdon (2014) three ingredients of agenda setting are political events, problems to solve, and proposed solutions. From the finding, the appointed new minister plays a key role produced by the political event. The defined problem was the students' low literacy skills and teaching practices that were too focused on the National Exam. Then, the proposed solution for this problem was to bring literacy into the classroom by shifting the assessment focus. The change in assessment is expected to turn teachers' focus back to the quality of teaching and learning instead of preparing students for the test. The finding helps to understand that the intended purpose of the current literacy policy is to improve the quality of teaching and learning and not about the assessment.

4.2.1.2 Concern about PISA

The finding also suggests the need to improve students' performance in PISA scores where literacy learning is perceived as a solution. The performance of Indonesian students aged 15 has decreased in the latest OECD PISA tests (OECD, 2019b). Regarding the issue, literacy can and cannot be the solution. In the report on Indonesian literacy for UNESCO, Jalal & Sardjunani (2005) explained that literacy in the Indonesian context has been long defined as the ability to read and write. Using that definition, success has been measured by the school completion rate in primary school

resulting in above 95% of students being literate. However, PISA has a different definition of literacy.

According to the recent PISA 2018, reading literacy is defined as “understanding, using, evaluating, reflecting on and engaging with texts in order to achieve one’s goals, to develop one’s knowledge and potential, and to participate in society” (Mo, 2019). From the definition, reading literacy goes beyond the ability to read and write. Instead, reading involves the ability to understand the text and what to do with the text. Furthermore, reading literacy requires students to connect what they read in order to fully participate in society. This participation in social context can only happen when students are not only able to read and write the text but are able to make meaning of it. Therefore, a different definition of literacy affects the practice of literacy instruction. The solution can be achieved only when all policy actors, from policymakers to teachers, have the same understanding.

The finding regarding PISA concern has been shared in the literature (Ababneh et al., 2016; Araujo et al., 2017; Engel, 2015; Michel, 2017; Niemann et al., 2017; Nortvedt, 2018; Tasaki, 2017). PISA has increasingly influenced national policy as the trigger for education reform and establishing globalized standards for quality comparison (Sellar & Lingard, 2014). From the data, PISA influence can be identified in two ways. First, its effect as the driver for education reform as it raised the minister’s concern that worth solutions. Second, its effect on the development of the AKM Literacy that adopted PISA-like assessment and framework. In this case, PISA is used for both political and technical dimensions (Engel, 2015). This finding adds to the literature regarding international tests’ impact on national policy.

4.2.2 Policy Text: From Traditional Definition to Literacy Learning Progression

The influences of the policy context have been identified in the policy texts. The findings suggest a number of production and reproduction of policy documents to ensure the alignment of the current literacy policy. Besides, the finding also indicates that the current literacy defines literacy by referring to the International Literacy Association. Finally, the policy documents envision the literacy teachers having sufficient knowledge and teaching practice and giving impact as requirements for competent literacy teachers.

4.2.2.1 Alignment with the Standards

The effort to make literacy focus of education in primary schools is reflected in the number of policy documents produced and reproduced since the shift to the National Assessment in 2021. The finding suggests that revising policy documents ensures the current literacy policy is supported and aligned with the education standards. Four standards are being revised to ensure alignment with the current literacy policy, including the Graduate Competency Standards, Content Standards, Process Standards, and Assessment Standards.

In the literature, at the beginning of the reform, the government's focus is to design a more aligned education reform (Spillane & Jennings, 1997) to avoid policy ambiguity. As (Matland, 1995) pointed out, the success of policy implementation will vary regarding the clarity of the policy goals and the intensity of policy conflict. To avoid ambiguity, the data suggests that the AKM Literacy learning progression is the backbone for revising the other policy documents. For instance, three graduate competency standards (SKL) points confirm the cognitive levels in literacy learning

progression. Besides, all other standards, including content, process, and assessment, are aligned with the literacy and numeracy focus.

4.2.2.2 Definition of Literacy in the Policy Documents

The finding indicates that the definition of literacy in the policy document has similarities with the definition proposed by the scholarly prominent association International Literacy Association (ILA) and PISA as found in the literacy teacher competency framework (Dirjen GTK, 2022). As mentioned in the literature review, there are waves of development in the literacy field (Tierney & Pearson, 2021) and various attempts to define literacy offered by the experts where the traditional definition of literacy was obsolete and adoption of the current definition is needed to adapt to the current communication needs (Wagner, 2011). The policy documents, for instance, not only highlight the importance of comprehension but also how the students use that comprehension of text to fully solve their own problems. Therefore, meaning-making activity in engaging with texts and responding to texts is crucial to nurturing the literacy instructions. The current literacy policy has adopted the most current literacy definition that promotes literacy as not only the ability to read and learn but expands the definition to the ability to use information to successfully function in society.

The finding indicates more serious attempt to address literacy from the governmental regulations. In Indonesian context, as reported by Jalal & Sardjunani (2005) for UNESCO's Global Monitoring Report, literacy in Indonesia is defined as the ability to read and write Latin script of simple sentences. It translated to the government programs aimed to eradicate illiteracy and measured primary school completion rate as indicator for literacy success. The later progress was in the GLN where 'literacy' the first time appeared in the government document which based on the MoE Regulation

No. 23 of 2015 concerning Character Development which mentioned about habituation of 15 minutes reading before starting the lessons. While the previous regulation placed outside the classroom instructions, the current policy requires literacy as a center for teaching and learning activities. The shift of assessment to literacy and numeracy aims for teachers to embed literacy across curriculum. The current policy has provided comprehensive definition of literacy and has similar features to the definition proposed by PISA and ILA.

The finding suggests that the policy document's conception of literacy refers to the current research. This is important to discuss as the previous research reviews conflicting ideas between what research suggested and what policy mandated (Allington & Woodside-Jiron, 1999; Duboc & Ferraz, 2020; Shanahan, 2014). For instance, Grundin (2018) found that the Phonic Check was ineffective and not supported by the research in the UK context. Similarly, Ylimaki & McClain (2005) also argued that the current practice in the NCLB contradicts the current literacy research in the US context.

4.2.2.3 The Imagined Literacy Instructions

The findings from the policy documents indicate recommended literacy instructions expected from the current literacy. From the earlier literacy definition, students are expected to have the ability 'to understand, use, evaluate, reflect on', which requires different levels of thinking capabilities from understanding to reflecting on the information. This requires teachers to create a student-centered classroom environment by inviting students to involve in the discussions with texts. In addition, the policy document also mentioned 'from the variety of texts', which assumes the availability of enough reading materials that teachers use in the literacy instructions. This is aligned with the previous studies that highlighted access to books as an integral part of literacy

instructions (Fisher & Frey, 2018; Hodges et al., 2019; Neuman, 1999; Neuman & Celano, 2001; Stone & Twardosz, 2001).

4.2.3 Policy Consequences: Disparity in Knowledge and Access

In the previous sections, the influence and the content of policy text have been discussed. After examining what drives the literacy policy and how it affects the content of the policy, policy consequences deal with the practical implications of the policy during the implementation. The findings suggest how teacher participants have nuanced practices with respect to their contexts and the resources and challenges they encounter during the implementation.

4.2.3.1 The Dynamic of Teachers' Knowledge, Perception, and Practice

While teachers' knowledge can significantly predict teachers' quality instructions (Parrila et al., 2023), the findings indicate that the teachers have different levels of knowledge and perception that might influence their teaching practice at some level. The previous studies found that teachers tend to have a lack of understanding regarding the National Assessment and the AKM Literacy and Numeracy (Fauziah et al., 2021; Iman et al., 2021; Novita et al., 2021; Nurjanah, 2021; Rokhim et al., 2021). However, all teacher participants in this study found sufficient knowledge about the National Assessment and AKM literacy, although the details might differ. In addition, all teacher participants expressed positive perception toward the current government initiatives. Knowledge and belief might represent the will of policy actors to implement the policy.

The previous study highlighted the importance of the actor's will in policy implementation. Two factors are fundamental for policy implementation: the capacity and will of those implementing the policy (McLaughlin, 1987). Capacity can be developed by policymakers and the government. In contrast, the teachers' will,

including beliefs and perceptions toward the policy, is hard to control. The policymakers can easily invite teachers to involve in the training, but at the end of the training, it is what the teachers believe about the policy that makes them do the policy. Teachers may think the new policy is too hard to implement and ignore it. In a school context as a loosely coupled system (Weick, 1976), it is beyond the policymakers' control. The finding suggests that the teacher participants have a good intentions and will to support and implement the policy.

Among all teacher participants, the nuance of practice probably can be explained by the different knowledge and access to the teaching resources. The teachers receive different frequencies of professional development. Consequently, the data indicate that teachers who received more professional development are more likely to develop greater confidence in practising the literacy policy in their classrooms. The literature has shown that professional development, in general, positively affects teachers' instructional practice (Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001; Guskey, 2002) and for early childhood teachers (Schachter, 2015). Besides the knowledge, disparity of access influence teachers' implementation. The finding also indicates that teachers with more quality books provided in the classroom tend to have more reading engagement activities with the students. This aligned with the studies that point out the importance of access to books in literacy learning access to books as an integral part of literacy instruction (Neuman, 1999; Neuman & Celano, 2001; Stone & Twardosz, 2001).

Further finding also indicate that the access to books need to be paired with the ability of teachers to use it for educational purposes. One teacher reported to have supportive principal and school facilities that enable her to request any materials needed to support students' learning. However, the reading activities shared with students are limited to independent reading focusing on reading habituation. Not much effort put on

intentional meaning making activities which include responding to the texts as reported from the questionnaire. In fact, the literature suggests the important role of teacher in facilitating students literacy instruction (Reese & Cox, 1999; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). In other words, more intense professional development programs and more access to books are needed to equip teachers with more literacy teaching skills.

4.2.3.2 Different Interpretations Regarding the Focus of the Literacy Policy

The findings also suggest the gaps in policy interpretation between the teachers trained by the central government, the school principals, and the education stakeholders at the city/district level. This is known in the literature as policy refraction (Freeland, 1981), commonly happening in the state where there are different layers of implementing actors (Taylor et al., 1997). Although important, the role of the district as an institutional policy actor is often ignored (Rorrer et al., 2008). Regarding support from the principal, Murphy (2004) pointed out the importance of leadership in determining the success of literacy programs. Therefore, the central government must address the policy's different interpretations. Otherwise, these different interpretations tend to lead to misalignment in the implementation, resulting in unintended consequences.

Regarding unintended consequences, the finding indicates the potential of interpreting the literacy assessment as a high-stake test. It is the opposite of the goals of the current assessment paradigm in the literacy policy. The goal is to shift teachers' focus to bring more meaningful learning for students, not preparing them for the test. Otherwise, the National Assessment can be just the other National Exam with a different name as reported by (Curdt-Christiansen & Silver, 2013) in the Singaporean context. The data indicated that the school prepared Grade 4 students for the AKM by

drilling them with the AKM-like tests but not giving them more engagement with books. The program from the Education Office also supports this indication based on the content of the program. Instead of training teachers to better understand how to provide more quality engagement with books, the program trains teachers on how to construct the AKM questions. If we want to nurture students' love of books and guide them to become lifelong learners, drilling them for the test is not the option. Engagement with books that interest them and invite them to discuss what is meaningful for them in reading sessions are the options.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter outlines the study's conclusion by summarizing the key findings discussed in the earlier chapter in relation to the research aim and questions. In addition, the chapter also presents the practical implications of the study. Finally, it highlights the study's limitations and offers suggestions for future research.

4.3 Conclusion

The study aimed to explore the implementation of literacy policy in the Indonesian primary school context by looking at interrelated policy aspects of context, text, and consequence, as suggested by Taylor et al. (1997). The results indicate that the influence driving the formulation of the literacy policy is an attempt to reclaim teachers' focus to nurture literacy skills in primary schools in a more meaningful and strategic way as opposed to the previous practice in a high-stake test climate. This contextual background was related to how literacy learning progression appeared in the policy documents. Further findings also show that the teachers' practice at schools reflected their initial intention and effort to embed literacy across the curriculum. However, different challenges hinder the implementation of the policy in the teachers' context.

The first research question aimed to identify the contextual background behind the implementation of the current policy. From the previous studies, education reform was produced within political events (Mills, 2011; Moss, 2004, 2009). Specifically, Kingdon (2014) three ingredients of agenda setting are political events, problems to solve, and proposed solutions. From the finding, the appointed new minister plays a crucial role in putting the literacy focus as a political agenda. The change in assessment is expected to turn teachers' focus to the quality of teaching and learning instead of

preparing students for the test. The finding helps to understand that the intended purpose of the current literacy policy is to improve the quality of teaching and learning and not about the assessment.

After covering the policy influence, the second research question aimed to see how literacy is defined and constructed in the policy documents. The finding suggests that the policy document's conception of literacy refers to the current research. This is important to discuss as the previous research reviews conflicting ideas between what research suggested and what policy mandated (Allington & Woodside-Jiron, 1999; Duboc & Ferraz, 2020; Shanahan, 2014). The policy documents, for instance, not only highlight the importance of comprehension but also how the students use that comprehension of text to fully solve their own problems. Therefore, meaning-making activities in engaging with and responding to texts are crucial to nurture in the literacy instructions. This is an encouraging progress as the previous study stated that literacy had been simplified to the ability to read simple Latin scripts (Jalal & Sardjunani, 2005).

The third research question aimed to explore the practice of teachers implementing the literacy policy in their contexts. The study looked at the dynamic of teachers' knowledge, perceptions, and practices related to the current literacy policy. From the previous studies, teachers have a lack of understanding regarding the National Assessment and the AKM Literacy and Numeracy (Fauziah et al., 2021; Iman et al., 2021; Novita et al., 2021; Nurjanah, 2021; Rokhim et al., 2021). Compared to the previous studies, all teacher participants in this study were found to have sufficient knowledge about the National Assessment and AKM literacy, although the details might be different. In addition, all teacher participants expressed positive perceptions

toward the current government initiatives. Knowledge and belief might represent the will of policy actors to implement the policy.

The finding also suggests that teachers' disparity in knowledge and access might contribute to the practice. From the data, teachers who received more professional development were more likely to develop greater confidence in practicing the policy in their classroom. The literature has shown that professional development in general positively affects teachers' instructional practice (Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001; Guskey, 2002) and for early childhood teachers (Schachter, 2015). Besides the knowledge, disparity of access influence teachers' implementation. The finding also indicates that teachers with more quality books provided in the classroom tend to have more reading engagement activities with the students. This aligned with the studies that point out the importance of access to books in literacy learning access to books as an integral part of literacy instruction (Neuman, 1999; Neuman & Celano, 2001; Stone & Twardosz, 2001).

4.4 Limitations

Since this study aims to explore the implementation of the literacy policy from interrelated aspects, the depth and the details could not be addressed. First, the participants in this study included three teachers and two policymakers within a specific educational context. Therefore, the characteristics of participants need to consider when reading the findings in this study. To get the nuance of the data, I included teachers from different gender, school type, and school location. The study ensured that the data did not only include specific characteristics.

Second, due to distance and time constraints, the study did not include classroom observation to examine teachers' practice in implementing the literacy

policy. The initial intention was to observe teachers' classroom practices, but the timeline was not aligned with the school agenda, such as holidays and school tests. A deliberative interview was used to assess teachers' responses to address this issue. Some follow-up confirmations were conducted after the interview to ensure the data's consistency. In addition, I asked for teachers' documentation to support their responses.

Third, the study might not capture the external factors and contextual influences that contribute to implementing the literacy policy. These contextual factors are beyond the control of the study and need to be considered when interpreting the research findings. Finally, despite my effort to maintain objectivity in the research process, potential bias might influence how the data from document analysis and interview transcripts are interpreted.

4.5 Suggestions

The suggestions from this study are divided into two parts. The first part presents suggestions for practical implications drawn from the research findings. Meanwhile, the second part presents suggestions for future research based on the results and discussions.

For practical implication, several points need to be addressed. First, the finding showed that the availability of books at school is still an issue. Although the central government has claimed to distribute 15 million books to primary schools, not all schools are targeted. There needs to be an option for those schools with limited funding to access books for literacy learning.

Second, the finding also suggests that the current professional development is still not enough to prepare teachers to teach literacy across the curriculum. By the time of the study, teachers' guideline on how to choose books and manage literacy-enriched

classrooms are still limited. Third, government tends to focus on the lack of resources in rural areas. Meanwhile, the finding suggests that the teachers with good resources also need to be trained on how to better use the resources for literacy teaching and where the school funding needs to be allocated. Finally, strong coordination among all the stakeholders is needed to ensure that a cohesive understanding of the literacy initiative's goals is achieved.

Further research can address several areas related to the literacy policy investigated in this study. First, since the purpose of this study is to explore the implementation of the literacy policy, this study used qualitative descriptions of the documents to examine the content of the policy. A critical perspective suggests a critical analysis of the document to reveal the power relation and its effect on equality/equity issues. Therefore, a study using critical discourse analysis can address the issue.

Second, the finding suggests that the leadership role in schools can affect the implementation of literacy policy. Further study can see the implication of school leadership toward literacy instructions. How school leadership can support or hinder the implementation of literacy policy. Third, the finding indicates different ways teachers deal with the limited access to books, including utilizing digital books. Further study can also seek more light to understand how teachers use digital books in the classroom as an alternative. Finally, this study was initially intended to involve discussing teachers' knowledge of children's literature as its role in literacy instruction is also crucial. Further study can explore how this topic informs teachers' literacy instruction.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Literacy Teacher Competencies Framework

APPENDIX I REGULATION OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TEACHERS AND EDUCATION PERSONNEL NUMBER 0340/B/HK.01.03/2022 ABOUT LITERACY AND NUMERATION COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHERS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Teacher Literacy Competency Framework

CATEGORY 1

Professional knowledge

ASPECT

Knowledge/Understanding Related to Literacy Strategy

SCOPE

The concept of research-based reading learning from a cognitive, linguistic, sociocultural, and affective perspective. The concept of research-based writing learning from a cognitive, linguistic, sociocultural, and affective perspective. Instructional design procedures and assessments of reading and writing according to the characteristics and needs of students. Knowledge of the language to communicate effectively orally, in writing or multimodal.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCY INDICATORS: NOVICE

The teacher is able to explain the profile of students' reading abilities from the aspects of letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, and reading comprehension in the subjects they teach in general.

The teacher is able to explain the profile of students' writing abilities from the aspects of ideas, organization, mechanics, and sound in general.

The teacher is able to explain the importance of a Literacy-rich learning environment in influencing students' motivation to read and write.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCY INDICATORS: BEGINNER

The teacher is able to identify and explain the profile of students' reading abilities from the aspects of letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, and reading comprehension with their developing knowledge.

The teacher is able to identify and explain students' writing ability profiles from the aspects of ideas, organization, mechanics, use of language, and point of view.

The teacher is able to explain the importance of a Literacy-rich learning environment in influencing students' motivation to read and write.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCE INDICATORS: COMPETENT

Teachers are able to analyze and interpret students' reading ability profiles from the aspects of letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, and reading comprehension with their developing knowledge.

Teachers are able to analyze and interpret students' writing ability profiles from the aspects of ideas, organization, mechanics, use of language, and point of view.
The teacher is able to describe the importance of a literacy-rich learning environment in influencing students' motivation to read and write.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCE INDICATORS: PROFICIENT

Teachers are able to evaluate, formulate solutions, and reflect on problems related to their students' reading abilities from the aspects of letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, and reading comprehension.
Teachers are able to evaluate, formulate solutions, and reflect on problems related to students' writing abilities from the aspects of ideas, organization, mechanics, use of language, and points of view.
The teacher is able to describe the importance of a literacy-rich learning environment in influencing students' motivation to read and write.

CATEGORY 2

Professional Learning Practice [1]

ASPECT

Literacy Learning and Assessment

SCOPE

Skills in designing learning and assessments that focus on improving students' literacy skills with student-centered methods.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCY INDICATORS: NOVICE

The teacher carries out learning and assessment based on a simple design with reference to a single learning media for all students.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCY INDICATORS: BEGINNER

The teacher develops a design and implements learning based on the design. Teachers develop designs and carry out assessments but are still dominated by summative tests. The teacher uses a single learning media for all students.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCE INDICATORS: COMPETENT

The teacher develops designs and implements learning by taking into account the characteristics and needs of students. The teacher develops designs and carries out periodic summative and formative assessments. The teacher utilizes multimodal learning media according to the level of students' reading abilities.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCE INDICATORS: PROFICIENT

The teacher develops designs and implements learning that integrates reading and writing strategies explicitly in accordance with the teaching materials taking into account the characteristics and needs of students.
Teachers develop designs and carry out assessments to improve students' literacy skills on a regular basis. The teacher utilizes multimodal learning media according to the level of students' reading abilities.

CATEGORY 2

Professional Learning Practice [2]

ASPECT

Mapping the diversity of students' reading and writing abilities.

SCOPE

Skills to identify and map students' reading and writing abilities.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCY INDICATORS: NOVICE

The teacher identifies and maps the general profile of students' reading and writing skills (reading & writing profiling).

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCY INDICATORS: BEGINNER

The teacher begins to map students' reading and writing profiles (reading & writing profiling) at the beginning and at the end of the year. The teacher takes care to improve students' reading and writing skills.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCE INDICATORS: COMPETENT

The teacher begins mapping students' reading and writing abilities (reading & writing profiling) at the beginning, at the end of the semester, and at the end of the year. Teachers carry out special handling to improve students' reading and writing skills systematically.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCE INDICATORS: PROFICIENT

Teachers map their students' reading and writing abilities (reading & writing profiling) through periodic assessments and carry out special treatment for these students according to their reading and writing ability profiles.

CATEGORY 2

Professional Learning Practice [3]

ASPECT

Management of a Literacy-rich learning environment

SCOPE

Organize and manage the physical and social-affective environment so that the classroom becomes a place for learning that is fun, meaningful, and fosters an interest in reading and writing.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCY INDICATORS: NOVICE

The teacher began to try to organize the class according to the needs of students. Teachers sometimes allocate time for students to read enrichment books.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCY INDICATORS: BEGINNER

The teacher adjusts the class arrangement to the needs of students and a variety of learning methods. The teacher schedules a special time for students to read books, but not periodically. The teacher seeks to provide supporting facilities to create a literacy-rich classroom environment.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCE INDICATORS: COMPETENT

The teacher arranges the class according to the needs of students and a variety of student-centered learning activities. The teacher schedules special time for students to

read enrichment books regularly. Teachers develop the ability to select enrichment books in class to support learning and fun reading activities.

TEACHER LITERACY COMPETENCE INDICATORS: PROFICIENT

The teacher arranges the class according to the needs of students and a variety of student-centered learning activities. The teacher schedules special time for students to read enrichment books regularly. The teacher schedules a special time for students to make writing journals. Teachers develop the ability to select enrichment books in class to support learning and fun reading activities with the participation of students, parents and school members.

Appendix 2: Approval to Use the Questionnaire

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Title: Executive Director

¹ Cf. ECJ 16 July 2009, Case C-5/08 (Infopaq I).

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Appendix 3: Tabulation of the Questionnaire Results

On Teachers' Literacy Instruction

No.	Questions	Mr. Ari	Mr. Nana	Mrs. Ayu
1.	When you have reading instruction and/or do reading activities with the students, how often do you do the following? (Every day or almost every day; once or twice a week; once or twice a month; never or almost never)			
a.	Read aloud to students	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month
b.	Ask students to read aloud	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a month
c.	Ask students to read silently on their own	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month
d.	Teach students strategies for decoding sounds and words	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Never or almost never
e.	Teach students new vocabulary systematically	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week
f.	Teach students how to summarize the main ideas	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week
g.	Teach or model skimming or scanning strategies	Once or twice a month	Never or almost never	Never or almost never
2.	How often do you do the following in teaching reading to this class? (Every or almost every lesson; about half the lessons; some lessons; never)			
a.	Provide reading materials that match the students' interests	Every or almost every lesson	Every or almost every lesson	About half the lessons
b.	Provide materials that are appropriate for the reading levels of individual students	Every or almost every lesson	About half the lessons	About half the lessons
c.	Link new content to students' prior knowledge	Every or almost every lesson	Every or almost every lesson	Every or almost every lesson
d.	Encourage students to develop their understandings of the text	About half the lessons	About half the lessons	Every or almost every lesson
e.	Encourage student discussions of texts	About half the lessons	About half the lessons	Every or almost every lesson
f.	Encourage students to challenge the opinion expressed in the text	About half the lessons	About half the lessons	About half the lessons
g.	Use multiple perspectives (among students and texts) to enrich understanding	About half the lessons	Some lessons	About half the lessons
h.	Give students time to read books of their own choosing	Every or almost every lesson	About half the lessons	Every or almost every lesson

i.	Give individualized feedback to each student	Every or almost every lesson	Some lessons	About half the lessons
3	How often do you ask students to do the following things to help develop reading comprehension skills or strategies? (Every day or almost every day; once or twice a week; once or twice a month; never or almost never)			
a.	Locate information within the text	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week
b.	Identify the main ideas of what they have read	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week
c.	Explain or support their understanding of what they have read	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week
d.	Compare what they have read with experiences they have had	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week
e.	Compare what they have read with other things they have read	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month
f.	Make predictions about what will happen next in the text they are reading	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week
g.	Make generalizations and draw inferences based on what they have read	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Never or almost never
h.	Describe the style or structure of the text they have read	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month
i.	Determine the author's perspective or intention	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Never or almost never
4.	How often do you ask the students to do the following things to help develop reading comprehension skills or strategies? (Every day or almost every day; once or twice a week; once or twice a month; never or almost never)			
a.	Write something about or in response to what they have read	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Never or almost never
b.	Answer oral questions about or orally summarize what they have read	Every day or almost every day	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month
c.	Talk with each other about what they have read	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a week	Never or almost never
d.	Take a written quiz or test about what they have read	Never or almost never	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a month

Teachers' Information

No.	Questions	Mr. Ari	Mr. Nana	Mrs. Ayu
1.	Sex	Male	Male	Female
	Age	30	30	36
2.	Educational Background	Bachelor	Master	Master
3.	Teaching experience	4 years	10 years	14 years
4.	The class taught	Grade 6	Grade 3	Grade 3
5.	Number of students	21 students	20 students	25 students
6.	Type of school	Public school	Public school	Private school
7.	Location of school	Nort Kalimantan (district)	West Java (district)	West Java (urban)
8.	Do you have a reading corner in your classroom?	Yes	Yes	Yes
9.	Number of books in the reading corner	50 books	40 books	35 books
10.	Short description on the study and consent form (checklist) for the interview agreement	Checked	Checked	Checked

Appendix 4: Timetable of Mrs. Ayu's Classroom

Kelas : 3C
Jumlah Anak : 26 siswa

Waktu	Senin	Selasa	Rabu	Kamis	Jum'at
07.00 – 07.15	Jurnal Pagi	Jurnal Pagi	Jurnal Pagi	Jurnal Pagi	Mid Semester Parents – Teacher Conference (PTC)
07.15 – 07.50	Upacara Bendera	Dhuha dan Tadarus	KRIDA	Dhuha dan Tadarus	
07.50 – 08.25	Matematika Luas bangun datar dan gambar benda dengan satuan kotak, Volume benda cair Hal : 11,12,17	Math Unit 10 - Capacity Pupil's book : page 127 - 134 Activity book : page 127 - 133	PJOK	Matematika Simetri lipat dan Putar Hal : 32-34 & 47-48	
08.25 – 09.00	Istirahat	Istirahat	Istirahat	Istirahat	
09.00 – 09.15	PAI Bab 9 Zikir dan Doa Halaman : 117 – 124	Basa Sunda Pangajaran 7 Hemat Energi Hal: 82,83,84,85, 86	B. Indonesia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mengelompokkan nama produk, makanan, minuman & bahan dasar dari hasil teknologi pangan. Melengkapi tabel nama produk dan manfaat produk olahan pangan Menulis informasi penting dari teks. Hal : (30,31,40,41,42,43,49,50,51,52,54,55)	Science Unit 10 Earth, the Sun and the Moon – The Shape of Earth, Sun and Moon	
09.15 – 09.50 09.50 – 10. 25	ESL Unit: 9 Let's have fun. - Sports and games Pupils Book page: 40-43 Workbook page: 35-36	B. Indonesia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membaca & menyimak teks (Berbagai jenis makanan dan minuman teknologi olangan pangan). Menemukan produk (Olahan hasil teknologi pangan) 	ESL Unit: 9 Let's have fun. - Adverbs - comparative and superlative degree Pupils Book page: 40-45 Workbook page: 35-39	SBDP Variasi pola irama lagu & Gerak tari	
10.25 – 11.00 11.00 – 11.35					

11.35 – 12.30	Istirahat	Hal (2,3,9,10,14,15,16,19,22,23)	Istirahat	Istirahat	
12.30 – 13.05	PKn Arti gambar Garuda Pancasila Bersatu dalam keberagaman individu Hal: Sub 1: 4,5,13,23,24 Sub 2: 35,45,46,55,56	Al-Qur'an	Al-Qur'an	Al-Qur'an	
13.05 – 13.40					
13.40 – 14.00	Literasi	Literasi	Literasi	PS	

Appendix 5: Policymaker Interview Questions

1. What policies has the government made related to literacy? What are they?
2. Why are those policies important?
3. What is the essence of those different policies?
4. What changes in teacher's practices are expected based on the policies?
5. What is the context and the background behind the enactment of the new literacy policy?
6. What makes the National Assessment differ from the previous National Exam?
7. How will the result of the National Assessment be used?
8. In what way do the schools use the result to improve the quality of teaching and learning at their schools?
9. Are there any consequences for the school and education authorities regarding the result of the National Assessment?
10. How should teachers use the literacy competence framework? How do teachers identify themselves using the framework?
11. How does the government help teachers to improve their literacy competence?
12. How does the government provide quality books for literacy resources?
13. How are teachers expected to use books as literacy resources in their classroom instructions?
14. How will the implementation of the policies related to literacy initiatives be monitored and evaluated?

Appendix 6: Teacher Interview Questions

1. The government through Kemendikbud has recently enacted policies regarding literacy. What do you know?
2. Have you ever heard about Asesmen Nasional? What do you know about the Asesmen Nasional?
3. Have you ever heard about Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum Literasi? What do you know about the AKM Literasi?
4. What is your opinion about the current literacy initiatives?
5. When you heard the word “literacy”, what is in your mind?
6. Can you tell me how literacy teaching conducted in your classroom?
7. What sources do you use to teach literacy?
8. How do you decide which children’s books to use in your classroom?
9. Can you explain your process of selecting books to use in your classroom? what are the steps?
10. What considerations do you have when choosing those books?
11. When using children’s books in your literacy instruction, what activities happen in your classroom?
12. Can you mention the title of children’s books you use in your classroom?
13. Can you share your challenges in your teaching practice?
14. Do you have other concerns related to the literacy policy that have not been covered from the previous questions?

Appendix 7: Sample of Policymaker Interview

The recording was started after I explained the overview of my study, the procedure of the interview, and asked the participant's permission to record the interview.

Asep : First, can you tell me about the current literacy policy?

Mrs. Dewi : Yesterday we met Mr. Angga to see from the curriculum aspect. So this literacy initial idea was to strengthen literacy through learning. Because the Minister is very concerned about PISA. Actually, previous ministers also had concern for PISA. But at that time the solution steps taken were not directly targeted, in my opinion. Because at that time there had to be a national exam that measured student achievement in each subject, with the achievement in each subject being rigidly standardized. Even though in the previous curriculum, actually the learning outcomes did not have to be complete, but many were carried out inappropriately in the field. The essence of the 2013 curriculum is not understood by teachers. So what happens is the teachers complete the material by teaching textbooks the whole way. Everything is taught to students. Well, according to the policy makers at that time, actually that's not what they wanted. That means the implementation is wrong. This means that the previous policy had not really targeted precisely. If the diagnosis is that we are weak in literacy and numeracy skills, the medicine is still at a conceptual level.

Asep : What conceptual level?

Mrs. Dewi : the foundation of how books designed, about Basic Competency, was not an accurate diagnosis. So that during the Mas Minister era, teachers were given stronger enforcement, that learning did not have to be completed, by loosening the curriculum, competencies basis, so that it becomes what is currently called Learning Outcomes.

(...)

Appendix 8: Sample of Teacher Interview

The recording was started after I explained the overview of my study, the procedure of the interview, and asked the participant's permission to record the interview.

- Asep : Can you tell me what do you know about the current literacy policy?
Mr. Ari : Yes, sir, thank you. Maybe if we talk about literacy it is an activity, reading activity until the children understand what they read. Well, today is good enough sir with the concept of the Merdeka curriculum. Because in the past, GLS, the School Literacy Movement, what teachers knew about literacy activities was just reading books, children reading books. There are even more implementations, the child reads 15 minutes before class or before class. But with this Merdeka curriculum and assisted by the Merdeka Mengajar Platform, and there is also a webinar series, now friends in the field already know enough what literacy is, myself included, how to implement literacy strategies, it turns out there are strategies and how to choose reading, quality reading books. In the past there were no guidelines, students were just required to read books, the point is that children read anything. The important thing is that they read, it is enough to be called literacy. But in fact, today it turns out that literacy is not like that, there are strategies that are applied, and there are books that fit children's criteria. More or less like that Pak Asep. So in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, it supports literacy, and I think that literacy is good. We can access the Merdeka Mengajar Platform and the webinar series at the Ministry.
- Asep : Ok. Thank you for your answer, Mr. Ari. So, how do you think about the policy?
- Mr. Ari : Very important, very important, sir. I see the difference between children whose literacy in the early grades was not intervened with good literacy activities, when in the upper grades I taught children about literacy that was still awkward. But it's different when it's children who have been intervened from the early grades. So you can see the difference between the children who were intervened from the early grades when they were in the upper grades, when we had dialogue with the children, because when they used to have dialogue with the book, it was delicious. So it is very important that literacy is applied in the early grades as well as in the upper grades.
- (...)