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## EFL Teachers' Competence in Understanding Curriculum: Impact on Instructional Quality

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### Abstract

*This study describes teachers' competence in understanding curriculum and its impact on English instructional quality. The choice for the topic is because it is quite important to find out the impact of teachers' competence in understanding curriculum on instructional quality used for the students. If we can find that out, we might better understand the bigger question of why the government must ensure that all English teachers have a comprehensive understanding of the current curriculum: by creating avenues to enhance their (teachers) effective communication/ socialization skills, regular and evenly providing engaging workshop or training for the teachers whose understanding competence must improve for better instructional quality, to be imparted to the students. So, to be able to advise the government and just anyone that better instructional quality can improve understanding on the part of the students, structured interviews were used to collect the data of this qualitative research. The data collected from 15 English teachers at 6 Senior high schools in Pidie (Indonesia) were analysed using descriptive statistics. This research found that the students' achievement of Minimum Completeness Criteria was still low due to the English teachers' low understanding of the curriculum in preparing the teaching process, doing pedagogical teaching activities, and implementing teaching evaluation. These findings contribute not only to helping educationists carry out further related research but also to the government ensuring that the implemented curriculum runs well.*

**Keywords:** teachers' competence, curriculum understanding, English instructional quality

### 1. Introduction

Curriculum principles are the values of a school's beliefs that provide success and what they think is right and give its context. (Naghdi-pour, 2016). Whatever the name of the running curriculum, the purpose is to make the students ambitious to have skills, knowledge, and understanding of their need to develop into well-rounded, informed individuals. However, the individual teacher is not expected to have a complex understanding and high awareness of learning according to the demands of the applicable curriculum as a direct actor in the education domain. When the curriculum is implemented, many problems arise in a field related to implementing the current curriculum. It can happen because most teachers still need to fully understand the main principles of the curriculum that are being applied (Hungerford-Kresser et al., 2022). Teaching and learning a second language are complex processes that require careful consideration of various factors, including the availability of resources, instructional

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methodologies, and learner needs (Zhumashova et al., 2023). All chosen methods and activities have already been conducted with students of foreign languages. Therefore, it is possible to see their strong and weak sides. Teachers using these methods and activities can then adapt them according to their needs (Ivenz & Blanka, 2022). Based on that, most of the students are still unable to master English both orally and written. This phenomenon was seen from the result of the survey that the author did in Pidie-Aceh as the basis of this research.

Indonesia Human Development Index is ranked 107th out of 189 countries in the world, (Fahmy et al., 2015, Craddock et al., 2024). Indonesia is still under Malaysia and Thailand. There are various problems faced in implementing the curriculum Connor & Higginbotham, (1986); Mentioned that content standards, infrastructure standards, management standards, graduate competence standards, and funding standards are the difficulties in implementing the K13 curriculum. Most studies on teachers' use of curriculum materials have yet to obtain objective measures of teacher competence, have not investigated how teachers with different levels of knowledge use their existing curriculum resources, and have not investigated how both inform the quality of the teaching process (Fahmy et al., 2015). Teachers' knowledge has been identified as a person who is potentially contributing to curriculum implementation. The teachers and the curriculum are active participants and contributors to teaching outcomes in a dynamic interrelationship (Pradipto & Abraham, 2014). There is still very limited research on the extent to which teacher's competence level in understanding the principles of the curriculum in Indonesia. Namely, first, understanding the teaching process instead of the main principle of curriculum, the principle of planning for teaching, material designing, and choosing relevant textbooks. Second, understanding of using suitable methods of teaching, understanding communicative learning principles, scientific approach teaching model, understanding of applying scientific approach procedures, and last, understanding of authentic assessment for English teaching evaluation.

This study aims to describe the level of EFL teachers' understanding of the curriculum and the quality of the teaching process. The Minimum Completeness Criteria achievement level is a tangible manifestation of the quality of the teaching and learning process that occurs in the classroom. This complex interplay is linked to how they perceived and constituted their students and how they were constituted as professionals by others. Almost all high schools in Indonesia use the K13 curriculum as a learning guideline, including in Aceh. Based on the initial observation of the researcher in Pidie, Aceh Province, English teachers still experienced several obstacles in implementing the current national curriculum. Lack of curriculum socialization and lack of learning facilities are the main factors contributing to this phenomenon. This can affect the improvement of teachers' competence in understanding the curriculum. Hence, the teachers' role is to implement the national curriculum and establish value transmission and learning outcomes.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1. Teachers' Competence**

Teachers' competence is the teacher's ability to teach and learn successfully. There are competencies that teachers should have, namely knowledge, skills, and values (Denston et al., 2022), while Collier et al., (2022) Teachers should have four competencies to carry out their profession as professional educators. Two of them are pedagogic competence and professional competence. Pedagogic Competence: A teacher must have the ability to understand the

curriculum, including preparing the teaching process in a good way, from designing material for the learning process based on the student's needs, applying communicative activities, and carrying out learning evaluations (Rechsteiner et al., 2022). According to Merle et al., (2022) Good pedagogical competence can be seen from the instructional quality conducted by the teachers. The teaching process should be based on the student's condition and facilitated by an innovative teaching method. As stated by Moreno-Casado et al., (2022) Professional Competence is a teacher must master the substance of his knowledge and the structure of the scientific method in his field. Several indicators of responsibility determine a professional educator: teaching reflection, maintaining a record of students, interacting with students' parents, contributing to the local society, participating in professional development events, and showing professionalism (Caspari-Gnann & Sevan, 2022). Professional teachers must be able to use appropriate methods to engage all of the differences of the students. Thus, professional teachers try to develop their competence to improve the quality of teaching to increase students' learning outcomes (Shen et al., 2020). Having good knowledge and experience is very important for being a professional teacher. If this happens, it is certain that the teachers already have the capital to understand the curriculum well, including the K13 curriculum.

Several factors affect teachers' competence: professional environment, building and facilities, elements relating to the student, elements relating to the teachers, teachers' ability, and compensation policy. However, in general, teachers' competence level is influenced by several factors: their level of education, relevant workshops and seminars attended, and even their personalities -the fact that some obstacles still often appear in improving the personal quality of teachers. For example, not all teachers are interested in continuing their studies to higher education, and not all teachers get equal training opportunities. Also, only some teachers can access the information needed properly because the internet network still needs to be evenly distributed.

## **2.2. Curriculum in Teaching**

In general, the curriculum is the central guide for the teachers as to what is essential for the teaching and learning process. The government implements the K13 curriculum to replace the 2006 Curriculum, often called KTSP. The 2013 curriculum is an integrated competence and character-based curriculum, which is a refinement of the education unit-level curriculum (KTSP). In contrast to the previous one, there are several characteristics of the 2013 curriculum, namely a scientific approach and authentic assessment in learning. The purpose of holding the 2013 Curriculum is "to prepare Indonesian people to have the ability to live as individuals and citizens who are faithful, productive, creative, innovative, and effective and also able to contribute to the life of society, nation, state, and world civilization", as stated in the Regulations Minister of Education and Culture Number 70 of 2013 concerning the Basic Framework and Curriculum Structure of Vocational High Schools/Vocational Madrasah Aliyah. This was approved by (Saraswati et al., 2020) Who said that the major changes that have occurred in the education unit level curriculum (KTSP) into the 2013 curriculum have resulted in teachers who have not fully understood the meaning of the curriculum and how to implement it. This idea was supported by (Kastawi et al., 2017) They found in their research that teachers still need to understand the substance of the curriculum so that they cannot apply it properly. Because learning activities organized by teachers are the main part of formal education, the absolute requirement is a curriculum to guide learning programs implementing the learning process and applying an evaluation system. So, if the teachers need to understand the curriculum well, this will seriously impact the instructional quality or student performance and achievement in the classroom (Aprilianti, 2018).

### 2.3. English Teaching Quality

Confirmed the belief that learning and developing intercultural communicative competence by learners of English is imperative, especially in the context of globalized English and the growing trend for the teaching quality and the effectiveness of English teaching (Salih & Omar, 2022). It can be improved by using some strategies: Supplement educators with hands-on activities, prepare the needs of the students, develop ways to engage a diversity of learners at the same time, and use the student's prior knowledge as a basis for learning certain topics to draw out and work within building more meaningful learning (Loughran, 2018) (Alimi, 2011). But there are very rarely founded research study on the extent to which teachers understand the curriculum they must run in English teaching in the classroom based on the lesson they are teaching. Even though this is very important because the level of teacher competence is very influential on the quality of instructional and the level of the achievement of educational goals that have been set, including the achievement of Minimal of Criteria Completeness or KKM (Munif, 2015).

Related to the explanation above, (Kastawi et al., 2017) found that many teachers not only have been unable to apply thematic and scientific learning but also have yet to be able to conduct authentic assessments. One of the factors that come from outside is that the results from the training, as has been given, could be more optimal. (Astri et al., 2021) in their study found that some of the aspects of difficulties in implementing the 2013 Curriculums are nothing but those difficulties in planning to learn, implementing the learning process and evaluating learning activities due to a need to understand curriculum principles. Therefore, this paper is very important because we have an idea of how the level of English teachers' competence in understanding the curriculum, especially the K13 curriculum that is currently running, can be influential. The consideration for the government and education practitioners to evaluate further or study this matter.

## 3. Methods

### 2.4. Participants and setting

In obtaining the data for the research problem answers, the writer collected the data from 15 English teachers at 6 High Schools in Pidie as the object of this research. These 6 schools were randomly selected based on the location of the region of this regency, as shown in table 1 below:

**Tabel 1:** The Demographic Distribution Data of Respondents.

No	Respondent	Age	Gender
1	Teacher 1	55	M
2	Teacher 2	51	M
3	Teacher 3	55	M
4	Teacher 4	42	F
5	Teacher 5	45	M
6	Teacher 6	40	M
7	Teacher 7	56	F
8	Teacher 8	57	F
9	Teacher 9	55	M
10	Teacher 10	57	M
11	Teacher 11	40	F
12	Teacher 12	38	F
13	Teacher 13	51	F
14	Teacher 14	45	M
15	Teacher 15	38	F

Data of Respondents (2022).

## 2.5. Instrument

Regarding the instructional quality, the researcher interviewed the English teachers to know how far the average score of the achievement of Minimum Completeness Criteria obtained by the students at Senior High School in the Pidie area can be.

A questionnaire for collecting this research data was distributed as a set of questions to 19 respondents based on structured interviews and to English teachers who were the direct object of this study. The writer also interviewed the teachers one by one directly based on the preset schedule to know the achievement of the Minimum Completeness Criteria. In order to avoid negative things appearing related to timeliness and the validity of the data obtained.

## 2.6. Procedure

This kind of research uses qualitative procedures to gain data about the abovementioned topic using structured interviews. A set of questions used to investigate the teachers' competence in understanding the K13 curriculum: 5 questions related to teachers' competence in understanding the principle of preparing to teach and 6 questions related to the principle of teaching activities in the classroom, other 4 questions related to the principle of teaching evaluation. This research aims to obtain data about how English teachers' competence in understanding the K13 curriculum contributes to instructional quality at Senior High School (SMA) in Pidie Regency. This study gathered information about four problems. Moreover, structured interviews were used with questions related to teachers' competence in understanding the principles of the K13 curriculum. That is to say, first, understand teaching preparation principles. Second, understanding teaching principles applications related to applying communicative activities and scientific approach procedures in teaching activities. Third, understanding the evaluation skills principle of teaching. Fourth, teaching quality is related to achieving Completeness Criteria (KKM).

In doing research about social knowledge especially on social condition, the data usually analyze and interpret more clearly based on the situation (Nasution, 2007:24). For easier data analyzing, the writer determined to measure the score of each item of statement. Then, the data compared with criteria to measure the category level of teacher understanding K13 curriculum which refer to decree of Ministry of education of republic of Indonesia Number 74 years 2011 about evaluation teacher performance as listed in table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Criteria to Measure the Level of Teachers' Understanding Curriculum.

Score (%)	Categories
85.01 - 100	Very good
70.01 – 85.00	Good
55.01 – 70.00	Enough
00 – 55	Less

Data from structured interviews about the achievement of minimum completeness criteria and the data about English teachers' competence in understanding the K13 curriculum were analyzed using a percentage index in the table to be interpreted and described qualitatively.

## 4. Research Result

As mentioned above, this study aims to answer four research problems about investigating English teachers' competence in understanding the K13 curriculum and instructional quality at Senior High Schools in Pidie Regency. The first problem concerns the level of minimum

completeness criteria achieved by the students. The second is about teachers' competence in understanding the preparation of teaching principles, the third is about teachers' competence in understanding the principles of teaching activities, and the last is about teachers' competence in understanding teaching evaluation principles. All the data of these problems are presented one by one systematically in the following explanations.

#### 4.1. Minimum Completeness Criteria Attainment Level

Learning processing is the first step in transferring knowledge to students to achieve the minimum completeness criteria set in national education in Indonesia. This data shows that the average percentage of achievement of the Minimum Completeness Criteria or KKM in English learning at SMA in Pidie is 36%, still in the category of less and even very different in each teaching class.

In the teaching and learning process, achieving a minimum level of KKM is emphasized. However, when the exam shows results that do not meet the expectations of English teachers, 76% of students only achieve a score of 36. The overall average value of the minimum required KKM must reach 75, at least from the maximum 100 value scale. Only 24% of certain students reach the minimum criteria during school examinations. The teacher responses can be seen in Table 2

**Table 3:** Teachers' Perception of Student Achievement of Minimum Completeness Criteria.

Question	Teacher Responses	Statements
What do you do when your students still don't meet the set grade standards?	Teacher 1	We provide enrichment as well. The KKM score still needs to be appropriate because the KKM in this school has risen to 75, while if we calculate the ability value, it does not meet, although not all students are the same. There are also some students who we are indeed helping totally.
	Teacher 2	Look at his attitude; it can help.
	Teacher 3	Remedial or retest; see attitude.
	Teacher 4	Retest and give assignments at home.
	Teacher 5	Repeating, although sometimes not very effective, there is a slight improvement; at least, students have tried repeating.
	Teacher 6	KKM scores for English in this school vary. For class 10, it is 68 KKM; for class 11, it is 72 KKM. Class 12 is 78 KKM.
	Teacher 7	Remedial: From the beginning, we must monitor special treatment.
	Teacher 8	Remedial, if it is still lacking, we also see his attitude.
	Teacher 9	Make the remedial, and there is an increase, even if it is small.
	Teacher 10	It must be of sufficient value, but we do not get hit.
	Teacher 11	KKM value is 75, which is appropriate. 65 is appropriate.
	Teacher 12	KKM value is 75, which is still not appropriate.
	Teacher 13	KKM value is 75, which reaches the standard of only 35%.
	Teacher 14	If it has not been obtained, the value is given as it is.
	Teacher 15	Remedial



The results of this teacher interview showed that students' ability to achieve the minimum completeness criteria by national policy did not reach the specified KKM requirements. The average KKM achievement score of English students in high school in Pidie is still very low. English class students need help to achieve the KKM scores set by high schools in the Pidie area. Students in the Pidie district still need to understand the material provided so that it has an impact on the results achieved when the exam is held. KKM achievement by the student is shown in detail below in Table 4

**Table 4:** The Teachers' Perception on the Percentage of Student Achievement.

Question	Teacher Responses	Statements
What percentage of students meet the KKM standards in the class you teach.	Teacher 1	10% of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 2	The value of KKM 75 reached around 50% of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 3	The value of KKM 75 is achieved around 15% of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 4	The value of KKM 75 is achieved around 40% of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 5	KKM value 68. Generally, those who reach KKM in ordinary classes are 30%-40%, except in superior classes, which sometimes can reach 50% of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 6	20% - 65% the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) for overall classes.
	Teacher 7	Not yet at the highest 35% the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 8	25 % of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 9	KKM score is 75; the average student reaches KKM, around 85% - 90%. However, one or two people must reach the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 10	KKM score 75, students who achieve KKM 70%
	Teacher 11	On average, about 30% of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 12	50% of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 13	35% of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 14	50% of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).
	Teacher 15	85% have met the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).

The level of achievement of KKM, which is still in the category, needs to be more related to the low understanding of teachers about the principles of teaching preparation, the principles of the teaching process, and the principles of teaching evaluation. Teachers are generally preoccupied with the school administration's completeness, and concentration on developing the learning process is neglected. The teacher development process provided by schools and educational institutions is often targeted at only some teachers, only coaching and training to certain teachers. This results in the impact of decreasing the resulting achievements. The development of teacher competence only reaches some teaching staff in schools.

Based on the statement above, it can be concluded that the dense administrative completeness requirements for teachers are one of the causes of the teacher's lack of focus on controlling self-competence and has an impact on decreasing student abilities, on the other hand, there is also uneven coaching between teachers in schools. So, the information teachers need to compile student development patterns needs to be improved for the less trained.

#### 4.2. Teacher Competence in Understanding the Principles of Teaching Preparation and It Facilities.

Teachers understand the concept of developing self-competence and the target of developing students' abilities in the school's teaching and learning process. However, curriculum housing impacts teachers and students, where some teachers still apply learning concepts that apply to the old curriculum, thus affecting declining student outcomes. Support for the teacher competence development process is also related to teaching facilities. Thus, every teacher needs to consider developing self-competence by improvising/ adjusting limited teaching facilities. The teacher's statement for self-competence development based on available facilities is the following.

**Table 5:** The English Teachers' Perception on the Scientific Approach.

Question	Respondent	Teacher statement
If at school you lack English teaching facilities, what do you do so that the learning process of Scientific Approach can be achieved?	Teacher 1	Take advantage of your smartphone.
	Teacher 2	I have told the school about the lack of facilities, but the school's response will be sought. The language laboratories functioned in the past, but now, because the officers are different, they cannot be used anymore. So we have to bring our learning media.
	Teacher 3	There is, but it doesn't work
	Teacher 4	Bring your teaching media, such as a sound system and speakers.
	Teacher 5	The laboratory is there but is never used because it is always locked off the door.
	Teacher 6	Facilities are sufficient, multimedia rooms are available, and Projector, laptops, and loudspeakers can also be operated in class.
	Teacher 7	Using a computer, or smart phone.
	Teacher 8	Yes, there are facilities
	Teacher 9	Using a computer, or smart phone
	Teacher 10	Nothing, for example, the English lab does not exist, so sometimes you must bring a Projector, laptop, and audio system to class.
	Teacher 11	There are, but sometimes underutilized.
	Teacher 12	Utilizing existing media and easy to get
	Teacher 13	There is a laboratory that can be used well in this school,
	Teacher 14	No laboratory at the school
	Teacher 15	There is, but there is no content. However, the teacher can use the multimedia space.

The table above shows the average percentage of English teachers' competence in understanding teaching preparation. The understanding of high school English teachers in Pidie towards the K13 curriculum is in the good category. It only needs refinement and adjustment to apply the K13 curriculum from the general principles of the K13 curriculum, which is still in the sufficient category. Teacher competence in designing teaching materials



based on scientific approaches is still in the satisfactory category. From these data, the competence of English teachers in understanding the principles of teaching preparation in high school in Pidie still needs to be improved. Meanwhile, teaching development needs to be supported by facilities to improve the abilities of teachers and students. The need for these facilities is considered urgent, and every teacher expresses an opinion to look for alternatives to replace facilities that are not yet available.

**Table 6:** The English Teachers' Perception on availability of facilities related to the Scientific Approach.

Question	Respondent	Teacher statement
Do you know that there are English teachers in your school who do not teach with scientific learning procedures because of lack of facilities?	Teacher 1	There may be schools that do not teach with scientific learning procedures because of a lack of facilities.
	Teacher 2	There is, because the facilities are inadequate
	Teacher 3	They are usually combined from various sources.
	Teacher 4	It may be often, because of the quality of special facilities according to the topic,
	Teacher 5	There are, but sometimes they are overlooked too because of insufficient time. So, it is assigned an additional task.
	Teacher 6	There may be when I use multimedia to teach.
	Teacher 7	It could be that you can use a real Computer if you want
	Teacher 8	In general, it is possible, but you can use Computer.
	Teacher 9	Often, attempt to use any facility as long as it fits properly.
	Teacher 10	There is; use it
	Teacher 11	Sometimes, play what's there
	Teacher 12	Maybe yes,
	Teacher 13	Yes, sometimes discussions too
	Teacher 14	never discussed, so don't know
	Teacher 15	I always discuss with national instructors if there are obstacles.

#### 4.3. Teacher competence in understanding teaching activities in the K13 Curriculum

Teacher competence in understanding the main themes of learning activities in the classroom is still considered sufficient in teaching activities in the K13 Curriculum. The high school teachers in Pidie understand the basics of English language teaching activities, but it still needs to be improved and must be improved. Based on related data, teacher competence in understanding the learning approach is still sufficient. The Good category includes data on teachers' understanding of pedagogical knowledge. Teachers' skills in understanding communicative learning strategies are still sufficient in teaching activities related to the K13 Curriculum. Data on teacher competence in understanding scientific techniques is still quite sufficient. Data on teacher competence in understanding the use of communicative activities based on teaching materials are then classified as Good.

**Table 7:** The English Teachers' competence in understanding teaching activities to the K13 Curriculum.

Question	Respondent	Teacher statement
Do you think the K13 curriculum is easy or difficult to understand? The reason? Reason	Teacher 1	No, it is the same as the previous curriculum.
	Teacher 2	There are different levels; there is a difference between high, mid (medium), and low materials.
	Teacher 3	It is easier to use the K13 curriculum. Because in K13, the initial step preparation is simpler and has many resources.
	Teacher 4	Less understanding of the 2004 curriculum is more focused on the material of the lesson plan.
	Teacher 5	Difficult to understand.
	Teacher 6	The K13 curriculum is easy to understand but difficult to apply. Because many steps are confusing, there is a lack of focus.
	Teacher 7	More complicated now in the K13 curriculum.
	Teacher 8	It is not easy to understand the K13 curriculum.
	Teacher 9	It's almost the same curriculum
	Teacher 10	It is almost the same curriculum.
	Teacher 11	It is the same curriculum situation.
	Teacher 12	difficult to understand in the k13 curriculum
	Teacher 13	The K13 curriculum is harder than the previous curriculum.
	Teacher 14	The K13 curriculum is difficult to understand.
	Teacher 15	I do not understand everything, but I just run it according to the teaching objectives that I understand; for me, the 2004 curriculum is more focused.

The results of the interview above show that the data on teacher competence in understanding the main teaching activities in the classroom is still in the sufficient category. High school teachers in Pidie who understand the principles of English teaching activities still need to be improved and need to improve teaching activities based on the K13 Curriculum. Related data states that teacher competence in understanding teaching methods is still in the sufficient category. Data on teachers' understanding of pedagogical knowledge are included in the good category. Teacher competence in understanding communicative learning procedures is still in the sufficient category. Data on teacher competence in understanding scientific procedures is still in the sufficient category. Teacher competence data in understanding the use of communicative activities based on teaching materials is included in the good category. Moreover, data on teacher competence in understanding how to apply teaching materials based on the Scientific Approach learning model in the classroom is still good. The ability of English teachers to understand the principles of the K13 curriculum teaching process also still needs to be improved.

#### 4.4. Communicative Competence in Understanding Teaching Learning Process

English teachers' understanding of knowledge assessment is still in the good category. However, their understanding of the standards determining the relationship between their level of competence and their students' learning objectives could be much higher. The average

teacher competency score in understanding the curriculum is in the good category, but the student KKM Achievement category still needs to be higher; this shows that English teachers in high schools throughout Pidie Regency still need professional teacher competence in understanding the curriculum.

**Table 8:** Teacher Competence and Understanding in Evaluating English Learning.

Question	Respondent	Teacher statement
Do you think the students here have mastered adequate communicative competence in the field of English? If so, what is the evidence? Otherwise, why declining you?	Teacher 1	In general, there are One or two people who have mastered adequate communicative competence in the field of English.
	Teacher 2	There are several, about 30% pointed.
	Teacher 3	The reason is that many problems exist, such as students who need to be more active in studying.
	Teacher 4	Not yet mastered adequate communicative competence in the field of English.
	Teacher 5	Not yet mastered adequate communicative competence in English because sometimes not all students reach KKM.
	Teacher 6	50% have mastered. If it is an ordinary class, maybe 20-30 % have mastered adequate communicative competence in English.
	Teacher 7	25% have mastered adequate communicative competence in the field of English.
	Teacher 8	Not all have mastered adequate communicative competence in the field of English.
	Teacher 9	30% have mastered adequate communicative competence in the field of English.
	Teacher 10	25% have mastered adequate communicative competence in the field of English.
	Teacher 11	Not yet mastered adequate communicative competence in English because sometimes not all students reach KKM.
	Teacher 12	Not yet, it's still a long way
	Teacher 13	Not yet mastered adequate communicative competence in the field of English.
	Teacher 14	no, (there are 1 or 2 people)
	Teacher 15	75% have mastered communicative competence in the field of English.

Data from the table above show that English teachers' level of understanding of the principles of evaluation teaching falls into the good category. Related data shows that teacher competence in understanding the principles of teaching evaluation skills is in the good category. Data on teachers' ability to understand attitudinal assessments (social and mental) in the good category. Then, data on the assessment of teachers' ability to understand skill competencies are included in the good category. Moreover, the competence of English teachers in understanding knowledge assessment is still in the good category. In contrast, the ability of teacher competence to understand the curriculum between the level of teacher competence and student learning outcomes still needs to improve.

Analysis of this research data proves that the level of competence of English teachers in understanding curriculum principles in high schools throughout Pidie Regency still needs to improve as professional teachers because the average teacher competency score in understanding the curriculum is in the good category. The achievement category of KKM students still needs to be higher. The low ability of teacher competence to understand the curriculum because the level of teacher competence and student learning outcomes have a close relationship.

## 5. Discussion

This study shows that the English teachers of Senior High Schools in Pidie needed to understand the curriculum principles more comprehensively. Because of that, the achievement of Minimum Completeness Criteria in teaching English at Senior High Schools in Pidie was very low, too. The government should have extraordinary work to prepare high-quality teachers to improve students' learning outcomes.

The data analysis found that English teachers at Senior High School in Pidie-Aceh still needed to understand the teaching preparation principle of the current curriculum maximally. Understanding teaching preparation is very important for teachers because planning is the way for the teachers to show the step-by-step structure of learning mechanisms and the kind of classroom management strategies that will make the teaching process more influential (Ali, 2021; Kyriacou, 2019). If the teachers have a low understanding of planning, it will impact the quality of the teaching process because teaching objectives cannot be achieved maximally, as shown in the following explanation (Oeschger et al., 2022)

Suppose the teachers need a better understanding of planning. In that case, it will impact the quality of the teaching process because teaching objectives cannot be achieved maximally, as shown in the following explanation (Harmsen et al., 2018). They also suggest that the lesson plan helps the teachers think about the lesson in advance to resolve problems and difficulties, provide a map to follow, and provide a record of what they have been taught. Understanding teaching preparation well is very important and urgent for teachers to prepare for successful teaching and learning processes. If teachers cannot prepare plans for English lessons well, it will positively impact the quality of the English teaching process in the classroom. It has been proven by the result of this research that English teachers' competence in understanding the principles of the teaching process is lower than teachers' competence in understanding teaching preparation and teaching evaluation skills.

The data on teachers' competence in understanding teaching activities at SMA in Pidie is still in *the enough* category. As good English teachers, they must understand that teaching is helping the students learn how to communicate in English (Zen et al., 2023). So, how best do they prepare learning activities set up that the students will experience to generate learning outcome (Kyriacou, 2019). Suppose the teachers will need help to achieve the desired learning target. It could be seen from the result of this research, which shows that the students' KKM achievement level in the teaching and learning process at SMA in the Pidie region is still low. The teachers' understanding of the curriculum still needs to be improved, especially in applying scientific approach procedures in English teaching. Besides, the teachers should also know the students' motivation to learn the language, create a welcoming environment, and provide opportunities for the students to interact, use the target language, and conduct ongoing reviews and assessments.

Based on the discussion above, it can be seen that the Minimum Completeness Criteria achievement of the students at SMA in Pidie still needs to be higher. Inevitably, the teachers' competence in understanding a curriculum and instructional quality are closely related. Because the curriculum provides the purpose of teaching, material teaching guidelines, teaching strategy, curriculum organization, and evaluation principles, it is only possible to have a good learning outcome quality if English teachers' competence in understanding the curriculum still needs to be comprehensive.

This fact has a serious impact on the student's learning outcomes. Students' achievement could prove that KKM still needs to improve in this study. These are the reasons why Aceh's education quality still needs to improve. The data of BPS Aceh (2018) shows that the quality of education in Aceh in 2016 and 2017 was at the level 32 out of 34 Provinces in Indonesia. Similarly, Indonesia's Human Development Index (HDI) in 2020 and 2021 was ranked 107th out of 189 countries. It can be ensured that it was closely related to the lack of teachers' understanding of the curriculum.

Based on the explanation above, the writer suggests that the government should ensure that all teachers have a clear understanding of the implemented curriculum to increase the quality of instructional material in the classroom. Some strategies should be prepared to make teachers understand the curriculum comprehensively:

1. Regularly and evenly train the teachers on preparing the teaching process.
2. Socialize the principles of new or current curricula intensively in an effective way.
3. Evaluate the extent to which the desired expectations can be applied to the curriculum by checking the real data in the field.
4. Learn and compare with the countries that are fully successful in providing a superior quality of education.
5. Ensure all the teachers are evenly and regularly trained perfectly.

Most teachers must be able to get information and learn from the Internet. However, it is not easy because not all areas run the internet signal smoothly in every country. Moreover, the last is to ensure that the government gets the original data about the actual situation in the field where the curriculum is running. Suppose a new curriculum will be implemented, such as curriculum Merdeka, which will be determined nationally in Indonesia in the academic year 2024/2025. In that case, it must be ensured that all of the teachers understand the curriculum's principles. Based on this research's data it must be considered because most teachers still need to understand the current curriculum implementation better.

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the English teachers of Senior High School in Pidie still need to understand the curriculum and their competence should be improved. The level of this competence hurts the quality of the student's learning outcomes. The teachers need help achieving the desired learning target; this condition makes achieving the Minimum Completeness Criteria level in the English teaching and learning process at Senior High School in Pidie Regency very low. Suppose the desired educational achievement is in line with the government's and society's expectations. In that case, the teachers must make various efforts to understand the implemented curriculum well and maximally. Moreover, it can be ensured that the Minimum Completeness Criteria are achieved maximally. Therefore, it needs all parties' attention to work well together to improve the quality of education by increasing teachers' competence in understanding the curriculum.

The result of this research is very beneficial for the authors as educators in the faculty of teacher training and education.

Experience doing this research can increase the author's knowledge and insight into the level of English teachers' understanding of the implemented curriculum and the quality of the teaching process in the classroom, which are closely related. As educators, this research can be used as a reference in evaluating curriculum, designing lecture plans, and preparing appropriate assessments for the students who will become teachers in various schools in the future. In addition, the results of this study are also expected to be used as a reference for other researchers conducted in related studies.

This research still has many things that could be improved; it needs to review other research related to this topic in different areas because of limited sample improvement. This research was just done at Senior High School in Pidie Regency. So, for it to be necessary to expand related research (at other schools and other regions), the result of this research must be made more objective and not biased.

### **Declaration of Conflicting of Interest**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this work.

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