Enhancing Professional Development of Indonesian High School Teachers through Action Research

by

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BA *UNS (Ind.)*, MEd *Usyd.*

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

This study involved ten English teachers from seven high schools in Surakarta Indonesia. It investigated their perceptions of the impacts of action research on their professional development. Five areas of investigation were set up in this study and were aimed to explore: 1) teachers' perceptions of whether their involvement in AR enhances their PD; 2) teachers' perceptions of whether their involvement in AR affects their practice; 3) teachers' perceptions of whether their involvement in AR influences their students' learning; 4) difficulties that teachers encountered during carrying out their AR projects; and 5) kinds of support structures that teachers needed as they undertook their AR projects. The study was conducted through several stages, starting with gathering background information about teachers' perceptions of professional development and their prior knowledge of action research; then, inviting the teachers to a series of action research workshops; engaging them in action research projects in their classes for one term; disseminating their research through producing reports, presenting posters, and delivering papers in a seminar; and finally conducting a post-study after the teachers' research projects finished.

Data collecting techniques included a combination of questionnaires, interviews, teacher's diaries, researcher's journal, and document analysis. Repeated careful examination of the data was conducted in order to identify patterns, issues, and themes which emerged from the data in order to understand the realities of action research when it was conducted by high school teachers.

This study suggests that while conducting action research was not an easy matter for the teachers, they gained several benefits from their involvement in AR projects. Teachers reported that there were significant improvements in many aspects of their classes, including the teaching, learning, and the atmosphere in the classrooms. Role shifting in some teachers also occurred from being "technicians" and more into decision makers. The findings also reveal that teachers required support, facilitation, funding, and time to enable them to undertake action research effectively. This study also makes suggestions addressed to the teachers themselves, the school, the researcher herself, and the teacher education.

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List of Abbreviation

AMEP	:	Australian Adult Migrant English Program
AR	:	Action Research
ESL	:	English as a Second Language
EFL	:	English as a Foreign Language
HS	:	High School
MGMP	:	Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran (forum of discussion for subject teachers)
PD	:	Professional Development
PGSM	:	Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Menengah (a project for education of high school teachers)
SLTE	:	Second Language Teacher Education
ST	:	Student Teacher
TE	:	Teacher Educator
TEFL	:	Teaching English as a Foreign Language