

The Role of Pathway to English in Reducing Teacher Burnout in English Language Teaching

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Abstract

Teacher burnout has become an important issue in English Language Teaching (ELT), particularly due to increasing instructional demands and workload. One factor that may help teachers manage these challenges is the availability of well-structured teaching materials. This study aims to explore the role of Pathway to English, published by Erlangga, in supporting English teachers' instructional practices in ELT classrooms. This study employed a qualitative descriptive method using a questionnaire administered to English teachers who use Pathway to English Phase F in their teaching practice. The findings indicate that the textbook supports teachers by providing well-structured lesson organization, ready-to-use learning activities, contextually relevant materials, and integrated language exercises. These features help reduce instructional preparation time and facilitate classroom management while supporting the implementation of the Learning Outcomes (Capaian Pembelajaran/CP) of Phase F in the Merdeka Curriculum. Rather than directly demonstrating a reduction in teacher burnout, the findings suggest that Pathway to English serves as an instructional resource that helps lessen teachers' workload and provides pedagogical support. Such support may contribute to more manageable teaching practices and may help address factors associated with teacher burnout. Further studies employing validated burnout measurement instruments are recommended to examine this relationship more directly.

Keywords: *Teacher burnout, instructional support, Pathway to English, English language teaching, ELT textbook, Merdeka Curriculum*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a foreign language requires teachers to coordinate curriculum interpretation, lesson planning, language input, classroom interaction, assessment, and the diverse needs of learners. These responsibilities make English Language Teaching (ELT) intellectually meaningful but also demanding. When instructional demands continue without sufficient time, resources, or organizational support, teachers may experience prolonged stress that can develop into burnout. Burnout is commonly discussed in terms of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization,

and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment (Nayernia & Babayan, 2019). These dimensions may weaken teachers' professional functioning and engagement with students (Valosek et al., 2021).

Research on teacher burnout consistently identifies workload as a central concern. Heavy workload, limited administrative support, limited collegial support, low student motivation, and student misbehavior have been reported as sources of strain among EFL teachers (Güneş & Uysal, 2019). Time pressure, excessive administrative tasks, and classroom management problems have also been identified as contributors to teacher burnout (Valosek et al., 2021). Differences in teaching workload and departmental conditions may affect emotional exhaustion and depersonalization among English teachers (Lou & Chen, 2016). These pressures are not isolated. They interact with teachers' self-efficacy, motivation, competence, and perceptions of whether the resources available to them are sufficient for the work they are expected to perform. Sato et al. (2022) found that teacher motivation negatively predicted perceived burnout among EFL teachers. An and Tao (2024) showed that self-efficacy and well-being were important predictors of burnout. The evidence suggests that teacher burnout is related not only to the quantity of work, but also to teachers' sense of control, competence, and support while completing that work.

In Indonesia, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum adds a specific curricular context to teachers' workload. English teachers are expected to interpret Learning Outcomes or *Capaian Pembelajaran* (CP), formulate learning objectives, organize differentiated and student-centered activities, select suitable media, and conduct assessment in ways that respond to learner characteristics. Rosadi and Alim (2025) found that teachers generally recognized the educational value of the curriculum but faced limited understanding, delayed preparation, and difficulty accessing or adapting instructional resources. Sari and Fatmawati (2024) reported limited time for designing differentiated instruction and challenges in maintaining student engagement. A textbook that provides a coherent instructional sequence and curriculum-related activities may therefore function as an important professional resource.

Pathway to English Phase F, published by Erlangga, is used by English teachers as a teaching resource within this curricular environment. A well-designed textbook may do more than provide reading passages and exercises. It may organize the sequence of instruction, supply activities that can be used or adapted, connect

language skills, and clarify how classroom work relates to curriculum expectations. Li and Xu (2021) emphasize that language materials function as a de facto curriculum and that effective materials use involves subject-matter, pedagogical, contextual, and curricular knowledge. From this perspective, the value of a textbook is partly determined by the extent to which it helps teachers transform curriculum intentions into manageable classroom practice.

This study explores the role of Pathway to English Phase F in supporting the instructional practices of English teachers. The study does not treat the textbook as a psychological or clinical intervention for burnout. Instead, it examines whether the organization and pedagogical content of the textbook help reduce preparation demands and support classroom management, thereby addressing workload-related factors that are commonly associated with teacher burnout. The study is guided by two questions: (1) How does Pathway to English Phase F support teachers' instructional preparation and classroom practice? and (2) In what ways may this instructional support help address work demands associated with teacher burnout?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Burnout in English Language Teaching

Burnout develops when persistent job demands exceed the resources available to individuals for managing those demands. Within teaching, emotional exhaustion refers to the depletion of emotional energy, depersonalization involves a detached or cynical orientation toward students, and reduced personal accomplishment concerns a declining sense of professional effectiveness (Valosek et al., 2021). In ELT, these dimensions may be intensified by the continuous need to use and teach a foreign language, respond to learner errors, maintain communication, prepare varied activities, and motivate students whose engagement with English differs considerably.

Studies involving English teachers show that burnout is related to both situational and personal resources. Güneş and Uysal (2019) identified heavy workload, insufficient administrative and collegial support, low student motivation, and student misbehavior as major sources of burnout among English language teachers. Lou and Chen (2016) likewise grouped causes into factors related to the job, students, management, teacher development, and family. Nayernia and Babayan (2019) found that self-assessed language proficiency was negatively related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and positively related to personal accomplishment. These

findings indicate that teachers are more vulnerable when professional demands are high and the knowledge, confidence, time, or support needed to respond is limited.

Teacher motivation and self-efficacy can operate as protective resources. Sato et al. (2022) reported that autonomous motivation negatively predicted perceived burnout, suggesting that teachers who retain meaningful reasons for teaching may be better able to manage emotional demands. An and Tao (2024) found that self-efficacy explained substantial variation in burnout and had a stronger predictive role than general well-being in their model. A resource that supports teachers in organizing instruction, managing activities, and meeting curriculum expectations may strengthen perceptions of competence, although such a relationship must be examined rather than assumed.

Job Demands, Resources, and Burnout Prevention

A useful way to interpret burnout is to examine the relationship between the demands attached to teaching and the resources available for meeting those demands. Demands include the time, cognitive effort, emotional regulation, and professional decisions required to complete teaching responsibilities. Resources include knowledge, confidence, collegial assistance, organizational support, time, technology, and usable instructional materials. Burnout becomes more likely when teachers repeatedly face demanding responsibilities without resources that are sufficient, accessible, or appropriate for the context. Nayernia and Babayan (2019) describe burnout as emerging from a mismatch between job demands and the individual resources used to cope with them. This perspective does not imply that every difficult lesson produces burnout. It instead draws attention to repeated imbalance, particularly when teachers must compensate for missing resources by extending preparation into personal time or continually working under uncertainty.

Resources can be personal, relational, organizational, or instructional. Personal resources include language proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, self-efficacy, motivation, and strategies for emotional regulation. Relational and organizational resources include supportive colleagues, responsive leadership, fair procedures, professional recognition, and realistic workload allocation. Instructional resources include textbooks, teacher guides, assessment examples, digital tools, and other materials that help teachers plan and conduct lessons. Ozturk et al. (2025) show that teacher well-being is shaped by the interaction of workload, autonomy, competence, support, work-life balance, health, and personal life. This multidimensional view is

important because an instructional material can support only part of the wider system. A textbook may reduce uncertainty or routine preparation, but it cannot compensate for unsupportive management, excessive teaching hours, or a lack of professional recognition.

The workload dimension is especially relevant to the present study because it contains tasks that occur both inside and outside the classroom. Marking, administrative work, completing teaching tasks, fitting responsibilities into limited time, and working after school hours are included in the workload component of teacher well-being (Collie et al., 2015). Textbook use may influence this dimension by changing how much time teachers spend searching for content, sequencing activities, composing exercises, or interpreting curriculum expectations. Materials may also influence student-interaction well-being when clear tasks support participation and classroom organization. These possible contributions remain narrower than a complete account of well-being, yet they provide a defensible basis for examining instructional materials as professional resources.

Research on burnout reduction also supports the need to distinguish among types of assistance. Agyapong et al. (2023) reviewed interventions such as mindfulness-based approaches, cognitive and behavioral programs, relaxation, physical activity, and other school-based initiatives. These interventions primarily help teachers manage stress responses or strengthen coping. Pathway to English is not an intervention of that kind. Its potential value is practical and pedagogical: it may reduce avoidable preparation work and provide a more usable structure for curriculum enactment. The distinction prevents the role of a textbook from being overstated while still recognizing that the organization of teachers' daily work can influence the conditions under which stress accumulates.

Teacher Well-Being, Workload, and Professional Support

Teacher well-being is broader than the absence of burnout. Collie et al. (2015) conceptualized work-related teacher well-being through three interconnected areas: workload well-being, organizational well-being, and student-interaction well-being. This framework is useful for the present study because instructional materials may affect teachers' experiences of workload and student interaction, even though they cannot independently resolve organizational conditions such as leadership, recognition, or decision-making.

More recent qualitative work emphasizes the multidimensional nature of teacher well-being. Ozturk et al. (2025) identified workload, work-life balance, autonomy, competence, supportive relationships, feeling valued, health, and personal life as interconnected contributors. Acton and Glasgow (2015) similarly argued that teacher well-being should be intentionally supported through professional learning and social networks rather than framed solely as an individual responsibility. Simmons et al. (2019) further highlighted the need to foster well-being at individual, collective, and institutional levels. Therefore, reducing one source of instructional pressure is valuable, but it should be understood as part of a wider ecology of teacher support.

Agyapong et al. (2023) reviewed school-based interventions for teacher stress and burnout and concluded that suitable programs can strengthen coping and improve general well-being. However, most interventions in their review were psychological or wellness-oriented. A textbook is different: it is an instructional resource. Its possible contribution lies in reducing avoidable preparation demands, offering pedagogical structure, and making curriculum implementation more manageable.

Instructional Materials as Professional Resources

Instructional materials are central to language education because they influence topics, task sequences, classroom discourse, and opportunities for language practice. Li and Xu (2021) describe language materials as a de facto curriculum and argue that teachers draw on four domains of knowledge when using them: subject matter, pedagogy, curriculum, and context. Materials can support professional practice when their pedagogical intentions are transparent, their activities are usable, and they allow teachers to adapt content to learners and local conditions.

The quality of support matters. Li and Xu (2021) found that teachers often consult textbooks and teacher guides for strategies, explanations, and ideas for conducting classroom tasks. When guidance is unclear or inadequate, teachers must search for additional resources, redesign activities, and compensate through extra preparation. Conversely, well-structured materials may reduce the need to create every component of a lesson from the beginning. They can also provide a common instructional pathway that teachers adapt rather than invent, preserving teacher agency while lowering routine planning demands.

The relationship between materials and teacher well-being is therefore indirect. Materials do not remove all job demands, and teachers still need professional judgment to select, adapt, sequence, and evaluate activities. Nevertheless, materials can alter the

balance between demands and resources. When a textbook provides usable activities, contextualized content, integrated practice, and curriculum alignment, it increases the instructional resources available to the teacher.

Teacher Agency in Textbook Use

A textbook supports instruction most effectively when it is understood as a resource for professional decision-making rather than a script that must be followed without modification. Teachers interpret the aims, language, sequence, and activities contained in materials before transforming them into classroom practice. They consider learners' proficiency, interests, prior knowledge, available time, classroom size, school facilities, and assessment expectations. Li and Xu (2021) describe materials use as a process that draws on subject-matter, pedagogical, contextual, and curricular knowledge. This means that the same unit can be enacted differently by different teachers because materials interact with local knowledge and professional judgment.

Teacher agency is therefore compatible with the use of structured materials. A clear sequence does not have to restrict creativity; it can provide a stable starting point from which teachers make purposeful adaptations. For example, a teacher may retain the learning objective and core text while changing grouping arrangements, simplifying instructions, adding local examples, extending a speaking task, or adjusting the expected written output. These choices preserve responsiveness to students while avoiding the need to create every component from the beginning. The professional value of the resource lies in enabling teachers to direct their effort toward high-value adaptation rather than repetitive reconstruction.

The quality of the material affects how much compensatory work is required. When pedagogical intentions are unclear, teachers may need to search online, consult colleagues, redesign tasks, or prepare extensive supplementary explanations. Li and Xu (2021) found that teachers often consulted guides for ideas about introducing topics, explaining language, and conducting activities, but unclear guidance could impede productive use. In contrast, transparent instructions and coherent tasks can make the intended pathway easier to interpret. The textbook then becomes a form of distributed professional knowledge that teachers can evaluate, modify, and combine with their own expertise.

The Merdeka Curriculum and Phase F Instruction

The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes flexible, student-centered learning and requires teachers to connect classroom instruction with Learning Outcomes, learning

objectives, assessment, and learner needs. Rosadi and Alim (2025) found that EFL teachers held positive perceptions of the curriculum but experienced challenges involving limited understanding, delayed preparation, technology access, and adaptation of learning resources. They recommended training, collaboration through teacher groups, evaluation, and guidance in using available platforms.

Sari and Fatmawati (2024) reported that English teachers were able to integrate curriculum components into instruction, yet limited time for differentiated lesson design and difficulties maintaining student engagement remained important concerns. These findings are directly relevant to instructional materials. A textbook aligned with Phase F can help teachers locate objectives and activities within a coherent sequence, while contextually relevant tasks may reduce the extent of adaptation required before classroom use.

The Present Study's Conceptual Position

The present study connects three areas that are often discussed separately: EFL teacher burnout, curriculum implementation, and the use of instructional materials. The connecting concept is instructional support. Pathway to English is examined in terms of whether it supplies resources for tasks that teachers must complete, including lesson sequencing, activity preparation, contextualization, integration of language practice, classroom organization, and interpretation of Phase F Learning Outcomes. Each area represents a form of professional work. When a material provides a usable starting point, it can reduce the amount of independent design and searching required before teaching begins.

This position requires a distinction between proximal and distal outcomes. Proximal outcomes are effects that are close to textbook use, such as clearer planning, access to prepared activities, more predictable lesson flow, or reduced preparation time. Distal outcomes include emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment, overall well-being, motivation, and decisions about remaining in the profession. The questionnaire primarily supports claims about proximal instructional outcomes. Connections to distal psychological outcomes are theoretically plausible because workload and efficacy are associated with burnout, but those connections were not directly tested in this research.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative descriptive design. A qualitative descriptive approach was selected because the study aimed to describe teachers' experiences of

using Pathway to English Phase F and to interpret the instructional support they perceived in their everyday teaching practice. The purpose was not to test a causal model of burnout reduction but to identify how textbook features were connected to preparation, classroom organization, and curriculum implementation.

The participants were English teachers who used Pathway to English Phase F in their teaching practice. Participation was based on the central criterion that the teachers had direct classroom experience with the textbook. This criterion ensured that responses were grounded in actual instructional use rather than general impressions of commercial textbooks.

Data were collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire invited teachers to describe how the textbook supported lesson organization, preparation of learning activities, selection of contextually relevant material, integration of language exercises, classroom management, and implementation of the Phase F Learning Outcomes. The responses were treated as qualitative data and were examined for recurring patterns related to instructional workload and pedagogical support.

The analysis followed a descriptive thematic procedure. First, questionnaire responses were read repeatedly to identify statements concerning preparation time, activity design, material relevance, classroom implementation, and curriculum alignment. Second, related statements were grouped into preliminary categories. Third, the categories were refined into themes that represented the main roles of the textbook. Finally, the themes were interpreted in relation to research on teacher burnout, teacher well-being, EFL teacher efficacy, materials use, and Merdeka Curriculum implementation. Interpretive caution was maintained throughout the analysis: references to burnout were limited to workload-related factors because no validated burnout instrument was administered.

Analytical Boundaries and Interpretive Transparency

The questionnaire was used to obtain teachers' descriptions of the functions they associated with the textbook. Accordingly, the unit of analysis was the meaning expressed in the responses rather than a numerical burnout score. Statements concerning lesson structure, activity availability, contextual relevance, integrated practice, classroom management, and curriculum alignment were interpreted as perceptions of instructional support. The analysis did not convert these perceptions into estimates of clinical severity, psychological change, or causal effect.

Interpretation was organized at three levels. The first level consisted of claims directly supported by the questionnaire, such as the availability of a structured sequence or prepared activities. The second level consisted of reasonable instructional interpretations, such as a reduced need to create tasks from the beginning. The third level concerned broader associations with teacher burnout that were discussed through previous research. Claims at the third level were expressed cautiously because the study did not administer the Maslach Burnout Inventory, the Teacher Burnout Scale, or another validated measure.

The available study summary does not report the number of participants, detailed demographic characteristics, school locations, response quotations, or the full questionnaire items. These details were therefore not invented or reconstructed in the present article. This reporting choice limits the amount of methodological detail that can be presented, but it protects the accuracy of the manuscript. Future reporting should include participant profiles, recruitment procedures, instrument development, ethical arrangements, examples of responses, and a clearer audit trail from codes to themes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire responses indicate that Pathway to English Phase F functions as an instructional support resource in six closely related areas: lesson organization, ready-to-use activities, contextual relevance, integrated language practice, classroom management, and alignment with the Phase F Learning Outcomes. These themes are presented in Table 1. The findings do not establish that teachers' burnout scores decreased. Instead, they show how the textbook may make instructional work more manageable by reducing the amount of planning, searching, sequencing, and adaptation teachers must complete independently.

Table 1: Main Themes Identified from Teachers' Responses

Theme	Description of the finding
Lesson organization	The textbook presents content and activities in a structured sequence that helps teachers determine the direction and progression of a lesson.
Ready-to-use activities	Teachers can use or adapt prepared learning tasks instead of designing every activity from the beginning.

Theme	Description of the finding
Contextual relevance	Materials are perceived as sufficiently connected to learners' contexts, reducing the need for extensive replacement or explanation.
Integrated language exercises	Language skills and components are practiced through related exercises, helping teachers maintain instructional coherence.
Classroom management	Clear task sequences and available activities help teachers manage time, transitions, and student participation.
Phase F curriculum support	The textbook assists teachers in implementing the Learning Outcomes (CP) of Phase F within the Merdeka Curriculum.

Well-Structured Lesson Organization

The first theme concerns the organization of lessons. Teachers perceived that the textbook provided a clear sequence for moving from one stage of learning to another. This organization is important because lesson planning requires teachers to decide what content should be introduced, how activities should be ordered, how much time should be allocated, and how the lesson should lead toward the intended learning outcome. A structured textbook reduces the number of decisions that must be made from an empty starting point.

This finding is consistent with the argument that materials shape classroom discourse and embody pedagogical sequences (Li & Xu, 2021). When the sequence is transparent, teachers can focus on adaptation and interaction rather than constructing the full lesson architecture. The textbook does not replace teacher judgment; teachers still decide which parts are appropriate and how they should be presented. However, it provides an initial instructional pathway that can lessen planning pressure.

From a well-being perspective, this feature relates most directly to workload well-being. Collie et al. (2015) include fitting tasks into allotted time, completing teaching work outside school hours, and finishing instructional responsibilities among workload-related concerns. A coherent lesson structure may help teachers use preparation time more efficiently and reduce uncertainty about what should occur next in the classroom.

The practical importance of organization is also cognitive. Planning from an empty page requires teachers to hold curriculum aims, language content, learner needs, timing, and assessment in mind at the same time. A textbook sequence externalizes part of this planning structure by making the relationship among topics,

inputs, tasks, and outputs visible. Teachers can then review an existing pathway and decide what to retain, omit, reorder, or expand. This does not eliminate preparation, but it can change preparation from open-ended design into a more bounded process of evaluation and adaptation.

Ready-to-Use Learning Activities

The second theme is the availability of learning activities that can be implemented with limited modification. Teachers often spend considerable time searching for texts, writing questions, designing worksheets, developing speaking tasks, and preparing follow-up exercises. The availability of tasks in Pathway to English enables teachers to select, adapt, and deliver activities without constructing every element independently.

This support is particularly relevant in the Merdeka Curriculum, where teachers are expected to facilitate active and differentiated learning. Sari and Fatmawati (2024) identify limited time for designing differentiated instruction as a practical challenge. Ready-to-use activities do not automatically create differentiation, but they give teachers a base from which to adjust task difficulty, grouping, pacing, or expected output. In this sense, the textbook can shift teachers' work from complete production toward targeted adaptation.

The finding also illustrates the importance of educative materials. Li and Xu (2021) argue that materials should be developed for teaching as well as for learning because teachers use them to access pedagogical knowledge. When activities communicate what learners are expected to do and how the activity can be conducted, they provide procedural support that may strengthen teachers' sense of competence.

Prepared activities may also support differentiated instruction when they offer a common task that can be adjusted across levels of readiness. Teachers can modify the amount of scaffolding, the complexity of language, the length of responses, the use of models, or the composition of groups. Sari and Fatmawati (2024) identify limited design time as a difficulty in differentiated learning. Starting with a usable activity allows differentiation to focus on specific learner differences instead of requiring several entirely separate lessons. The quality of this support depends on whether activities are sufficiently clear and flexible for adaptation.

Contextually Relevant Materials

Teachers also highlighted the contextual relevance of the materials. Contextual relevance matters because materials that are distant from learners' experiences require

teachers to spend additional time explaining background information, replacing examples, or developing supplementary content. When the themes and situations are understandable and meaningful to students, teachers can more readily connect the textbook to classroom discussion.

This finding should not be interpreted to mean that every text or activity will be equally suitable for every class. Materials use is context-driven, and teachers need the agency to adapt content according to students' proficiency, interests, and local circumstances (Li & Xu, 2021). Nevertheless, a generally relevant starting point can reduce the scale of adaptation required and support student engagement. Better engagement may in turn ease some classroom management demands, although the present study did not measure student behavior or motivation independently.

Contextual relevance also has implications for the emotional quality of classroom interaction. When students recognize situations, purposes, or topics, teachers may spend less time establishing basic background knowledge and more time facilitating language use. Relevant material can create more natural opportunities for discussion, comparison, and personal response. The questionnaire does not demonstrate that student motivation increased, yet the perceived relevance helps explain why teachers considered the textbook usable. It reduces one common source of preparation work: the repeated replacement of examples that do not connect with the class.

Integrated Language Exercises

The fourth theme concerns integrated language exercises. Teachers perceived that the textbook connected language components and skills within an organized learning sequence. Integrated exercises can help teachers avoid fragmented instruction in which vocabulary, grammar, reading, listening, speaking, and writing are treated as unrelated classroom events. They also make it easier to move from input to guided practice and production.

For EFL teachers, integrated practice may provide both linguistic and pedagogical support. Nayernia and Babayan (2019) showed that EFL teachers' perceived language proficiency was related to dimensions of burnout. An and Tao (2024) emphasized the protective role of teacher efficacy. A textbook cannot substitute for teachers' language development, but clear examples and connected exercises may reduce uncertainty when preparing language input and may support confidence in conducting the lesson.

Integration is especially useful when teachers must demonstrate that a lesson develops several elements of communicative competence. A reading text can introduce vocabulary and grammatical patterns, while follow-up speaking or writing tasks allow learners to reuse the same language for a meaningful purpose. Such continuity reduces the need to locate unrelated exercises from several sources. It also helps teachers explain why one classroom stage follows another. The perceived coherence of the activities therefore supports both lesson planning and the communication of task purposes to students.

Classroom Management and Instructional Time

The fifth theme is classroom management. Teachers indicated that the structured organization and available activities helped them manage classroom processes. Classroom management is not limited to responding to misbehavior; it also includes establishing task clarity, maintaining pace, organizing transitions, sustaining participation, and ensuring that learners understand what to do. Materials that present coherent tasks can reduce idle time and help teachers anticipate the flow of the lesson.

Student behavior and motivation are included in the student-interaction dimension of teacher well-being (Collie et al., 2015). Classroom management problems have been identified as a contributor to teacher burnout among EFL teachers (Güneş & Uysal, 2019). Classroom challenges have also been associated with daily pressure, stress, and fatigue among teachers (Valosek et al., 2021). The present findings suggest a plausible pathway through which instructional materials may help: clear and usable activities support lesson flow, which can make management demands more predictable. This remains an instructional interpretation, not evidence that the textbook independently changes student behavior or teacher burnout.

Predictability is a central mechanism in this theme. Teachers can manage time more confidently when they understand the number of stages in an activity, the likely learner response, and the transition to the next task. Clear instructions may reduce repeated explanations, while an organized sequence may reduce periods in which students are uncertain about what to do. These advantages cannot prevent every management problem, particularly in large or highly diverse classes, but they provide a structure within which teachers can monitor participation and respond to emerging needs.

Support for Phase F Learning Outcomes

The sixth theme concerns curriculum alignment. Teachers perceived that Pathway to English supported the implementation of the Learning Outcomes of Phase F. Curriculum alignment can be a substantial planning task because teachers must connect broad outcomes with lesson objectives, learning activities, and assessment. When textbook content reflects the expected phase, teachers have a reference for selecting and sequencing instruction.

This support responds to challenges documented in studies of the Merdeka Curriculum. Rosadi and Alim (2025) found that limited understanding, delayed preparation, and difficulty navigating available resources complicated curriculum implementation for EFL teachers. A textbook that helps translate CP into classroom activities may reduce the amount of independent curriculum mapping required. It does not eliminate the need for teachers to study the curriculum or adapt instruction, but it can function as a bridge between policy expectations and classroom enactment.

Curriculum alignment also gives teachers a basis for professional accountability. Teachers need to explain how classroom activities contribute to the outcomes expected at a particular phase. A textbook that reflects Phase F can provide examples of how broad curriculum language may be represented through texts, communicative tasks, and integrated exercises. Rosadi and Alim (2025) show that teachers may struggle when curriculum guidance and resources are difficult to interpret. A material that makes the connection visible can reduce uncertainty, although teachers must still verify that the selected activities match their learners and the intended objective.

Table 2: Relationship between Textbook Features and Teacher Work Demands

Textbook feature	Instructional demand addressed	Potential form of support
Structured lesson sequence	Sequencing content and planning lesson stages	Provides an initial pathway that teachers can evaluate and adapt.
Prepared learning activities	Designing tasks and worksheets from the beginning	Allows preparation to focus on selection and modification.
Relevant contexts	Searching for replacement examples and extensive background explanation	Reduces the amount of contextual adaptation in suitable classes.

Textbook feature	Instructional demand addressed		Potential form of support
Integrated exercises	Connecting components and skills	language	Supports coherent progression from input to practice.
Clear classroom tasks	Managing transitions, participation	pace, and	Makes the flow of classroom activity more predictable.
Phase F alignment	Interpreting mapping curriculum expectations	CP and activities to	Provides a practical reference for curriculum enactment.

DISCUSSION

Pathway to English as a Job Resource

The findings can be interpreted through the balance between job demands and resources. Teaching demands include preparation, decision-making, classroom interaction, assessment, and curriculum compliance. Resources include time, professional knowledge, supportive colleagues, useful technology, and instructional materials. Pathway to English appears to function as a job resource because it supplies organization, content, activities, and curriculum-related guidance that teachers can mobilize in their work.

This interpretation is compatible with research showing that a mismatch between demands and resources increases the likelihood of burnout (Nayernia & Babayan, 2019). It is also consistent with research on materials use, which views textbooks as active components of classroom practice rather than inert collections of content (Li & Xu, 2021). The textbook's contribution depends on the teachers' knowledge and context. The same resource may be used differently across classes, and teachers remain responsible for deciding whether and how it should be adapted.

Instructional Support, Self-Efficacy, and Motivation

The perceived usefulness of the textbook may also be related to self-efficacy. Teachers are more likely to feel capable when they can organize lessons, access suitable activities, and respond to curriculum requirements with available resources. An and Tao (2024) found that teacher self-efficacy was a strong predictor of burnout. Sato et al. (2022) showed that autonomous teacher motivation negatively predicted perceived

burnout. Instructional resources that make successful lesson enactment more attainable may support feelings of competence and preserve motivation.

Nevertheless, the present study did not measure self-efficacy or motivation. It is therefore not possible to claim that Pathway to English increased either construct. The findings only indicate that teachers perceived pedagogical support in areas closely connected to professional competence. Future research can examine whether perceived textbook support predicts changes in self-efficacy, motivation, preparation time, or burnout.

Interaction among the Six Themes

The six themes should not be understood as independent benefits. Lesson organization creates a framework within which prepared activities can be placed. Contextual relevance affects whether those activities can be used with limited modification. Integrated exercises connect classroom stages, while clear tasks support time management and participation. Curriculum alignment gives the sequence a policy and learning-outcome reference. Their combined value is therefore greater than the value of any single feature because they address several decisions that occur during the same planning process.

This interaction also helps explain why instructional support may influence perceived manageability. A teacher who has a relevant text but no clear activity must still design the procedure. A teacher who has activities but no connection to Phase F must still complete curriculum mapping. A teacher who has curriculum alignment but fragmented exercises must still construct coherence. Pathway to English was perceived as useful because it brought several resources together in one instructional pathway. The finding is consistent with the view that materials participate actively in the classroom ecology (Li & Xu, 2021).

A Supportive Resource, Not a Complete Burnout Intervention

The title of this study refers to reducing teacher burnout, but the results require a careful distinction between reducing burnout and reducing factors associated with burnout. No validated burnout scale was administered, and the study did not compare burnout before and after textbook use. Consequently, the data do not show a direct reduction in emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, or reduced personal accomplishment.

What the findings support is a narrower and more defensible conclusion: Pathway to English can lessen instructional preparation demands and provide

pedagogical support. Workload is a recognized component of teacher well-being (Collie et al., 2015). Heavy workload has also been reported as a factor associated with EFL teacher burnout (Güneş & Uysal, 2019). Differences in workload may influence emotional exhaustion and depersonalization among English teachers (Lou & Chen, 2016). By making some teaching tasks more manageable, the textbook may help address one group of risk factors. Wider policy pressures and accountability conditions also influence teacher well-being (Acton & Glasgow, 2015). Leadership, autonomy, recognition, support, work-life balance, and personal life are additional contributors to teacher well-being (Ozturk et al., 2025). No textbook can resolve all of these conditions.

This distinction is important because placing responsibility for burnout solely on individual teachers or their choice of materials can obscure organizational and systemic causes. A supportive textbook should be part of a broader approach that includes reasonable workload allocation, collaboration, professional development, access to teaching technology, supportive leadership, and opportunities for teacher voice.

Table 3: Scope and Limits of the Present Findings

Interpretive level	Statement
Supported by the questionnaire findings	Pathway to English provides lesson structure, prepared activities, contextual material, integrated exercises, classroom support, and Phase F curriculum guidance.
Reasonable interpretation	These features can lessen preparation demands and provide pedagogical resources related to manageable teaching practice.
Not established by this study	A measured or causal reduction in teacher burnout, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, or reduced personal accomplishment.
Required for stronger evidence	Validated burnout instruments, clearly reported participant characteristics, preparation-time measures, comparison groups or longitudinal data, and triangulation with interviews or observations.

Implications for Teachers, Schools, and Materials Developers

For teachers, the findings suggest that Pathway to English is most useful when treated as an adaptable professional resource. Teachers can use the textbook's sequence and activities as a starting point, while modifying pacing, examples, grouping, and output according to learner needs. This approach preserves teacher agency and

avoids both extremes of following the textbook mechanically or reconstructing every lesson without using available support.

For schools, providing an appropriate textbook should be accompanied by collaborative planning and curriculum discussion. Rosadi and Alim (2025) emphasize teacher groups and guidance as important responses to Merdeka Curriculum challenges. Collaborative use of the same material can allow teachers to share adaptations, divide preparation work, discuss difficult content, and develop common interpretations of Phase F outcomes.

For materials developers, the findings reinforce the need to design resources for teachers as well as learners. Pedagogical intentions, instructions, activity sequences, and curriculum connections should be clear enough to reduce unnecessary searching and uncertainty. At the same time, materials should leave room for adaptation, because teacher knowledge of students and context remains essential (Li & Xu, 2021).

For school leaders, the findings imply that the adoption of a textbook should be evaluated partly through its effect on teachers' work. Selection procedures can consider the clarity of lesson progression, the quality of activity instructions, the availability of adaptable tasks, the relevance of topics, the integration of skills, and the visibility of curriculum connections. Leaders should also provide time for teachers to examine the material together. A common resource becomes more useful when teachers can share adaptations, discuss difficult sections, and build a collective understanding of the curriculum.

For teacher education and professional development, materials literacy deserves explicit attention. Teachers need opportunities to evaluate the assumptions of a textbook, identify its pedagogical intentions, adapt tasks responsibly, and judge alignment with learners and curriculum. Li and Xu (2021) argue that knowledge for materials use is a distinctive part of EFL teacher expertise. Strengthening this knowledge can prevent two unproductive practices: treating the book as an inflexible script or rejecting it and preparing every lesson without using available support.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The principal limitation is that the research did not directly measure burnout. The findings describe perceived instructional support, and the discussion connects that support with workload-related factors identified in previous studies. It is therefore inappropriate to conclude that emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, or reduced personal accomplishment declined. A stronger design would administer a validated

burnout instrument and examine whether scores differ according to patterns or duration of textbook use.

A second limitation concerns the available methodological information. The study summary does not state the sample size, participant characteristics, school contexts, questionnaire construction process, or examples of teacher responses. These omissions restrict judgments about transferability and the depth of thematic analysis. Future studies should report teaching experience, educational setting, curriculum implementation stage, weekly workload, class size, and access to supplementary resources because these conditions may shape how teachers evaluate the same textbook.

A third limitation is the reliance on a single form of self-report. Questionnaire responses provide access to teachers' perceptions, but they do not show how the textbook is used during actual lessons or how much preparation time is saved. Future research can combine questionnaires with interviews, lesson observations, planning diaries, document analysis, and time-use records. Classroom observation would clarify how teachers adapt activities, while planning diaries could compare preparation with and without the textbook. Longitudinal research could examine whether perceived support remains stable after extended use.

Future research should also examine possible mediating variables. Teacher self-efficacy, autonomous motivation, curriculum confidence, perceived autonomy, and student-interaction well-being may help explain how instructional resources relate to burnout risk. An and Tao (2024) demonstrate the importance of self-efficacy in predicting EFL teacher burnout. Sato et al. (2022) identify a negative relationship between autonomous motivation and perceived burnout. Testing these variables would allow later studies to move from a general association between materials and workload toward a more explicit explanatory model.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study explored the role of Pathway to English Phase F in supporting English teachers' instructional practice and addressing work demands associated with teacher burnout. The questionnaire findings show that the textbook provides well-structured lesson organization, ready-to-use learning activities, contextually relevant materials, integrated language exercises, support for classroom management, and alignment with the Learning Outcomes of Phase F in the Merdeka Curriculum. Together, these features

help teachers reduce preparation time, organize lesson flow, and translate curriculum expectations into classroom activities. The textbook therefore functions as an instructional and pedagogical resource that can make teaching practice more manageable. However, the study does not demonstrate a direct reduction in burnout because it did not employ a validated burnout instrument or a design capable of testing causal change. The most appropriate conclusion is that Pathway to English may help address workload-related factors associated with burnout, while teacher well-being continues to depend on broader personal, relational, organizational, and policy conditions. Future research should combine qualitative accounts of textbook use with validated burnout measures, teacher self-efficacy scales, preparation-time data, classroom observations, and longitudinal or comparative designs.

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