

# Adventist English Conversation Schools, East Indonesia

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## CORNELIS RAMSCHIE

Cornelis Ramschie, Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction (Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Silang, Cavite, Philippines; B.Th. and M.P.Th., Universitas Klabat), is the Education director of East Indonesia Union Conference, Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia. He served as a church pastor, chaplain, teacher, and executive secretary of Maluku Mission. He is married to Trisne Mona.

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The Adventist English Conversation Schools (AECS) are operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the East Indonesia Union Conference to teach Indonesian people to communicate in English while introducing the gospel, healthy living, and other activities intended for mental, social, and spiritual development.

## Founding of the English School

Ten years after the East Indonesia Union Mission was effectively established in January 1964,<sup>1</sup> seeing that an English-language school could become an acceptable approach to evangelize people, the East Indonesia Union Mission Executive Committee held a meeting at which they voted to establish the Adventist English Conversation Schools (AECS).<sup>2</sup> Dale J. Bidwell, the union treasurer, was appointed to be the director.<sup>3</sup> The Union Executive Committee members who attended the meeting were Anthon Waworoendeng, D. J. Bidwell, E. W. Higgins Jr., Tananbua Katemba, E. Kamuh, H. Mamanua, J. K. Manoppo, J. D. A. Matusea, F. A. Massie, Kaleb Onsoe, E. H. Pasuhuk, and W. Raranta. B. G. Mary, from the Far Eastern Division office, also attended.<sup>4</sup>

In order to have the needed classrooms and office for the English school, the Union Executive Committee met on February 12, 1974, and voted to recommend the construction of a building at the union office compound.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the first English class began on March 1, 1974, in the conference room of the union office located at Walanda Maramis St. No. 38, Tikala Manado.<sup>6</sup> (Later, the name of the street was changed by the government to B. W. Lopian St.)<sup>7</sup> The first teacher, Janet Weighall, from Loma Linda University, California, United States of America, was a student missionary.<sup>8</sup> The need for foreign missionaries, particularly the college or university students, had led the Union Executive Committee to request more since 1973.<sup>9</sup>

After a month of English class activities, the Union Executive Committee met on April 2, 1974, and called Ellen Maringka to be the secretary. On April 30, 1974, the executive committee appointed Dale J. Bidwell to be the supervisor of AECS and the sponsor of student missionaries, replacing Elder L. Bissell, who had been transferred to Southeast Asia Union College, Singapore. Bidwell was assisted by Tanambua Katemba to strengthen the

mission of the English school.<sup>10</sup> Later, Ance Dimpudus joined AECS as administrative personnel.<sup>11</sup>

## Development and Expansion of Adventist English Conversation Schools

AECS began its class in 1974 with 12 students, but by August, 231 students were reported to be attending.<sup>12</sup> The English school's good progress and development attracted the attention of the AECS board (executive subcommittee), which had been organized in August 1973.<sup>13</sup> The AECS board decided to open English schools in different territories in the East Indonesia Union Mission. The new schools were named after the cities where they were located:

Manado English Conversation School (MECS), located in Manado, North Sulawesi, was established in May 1974 with Lester Mamanua as the first director.

Ujung Pandang English Conversation School (UPECS), formerly located at Botolempangan St., Number 38, Ujung Pandang (Makassar), South Sulawesi, was established in 1976, and Douglas Martin was appointed to be the director. In 2004 UPECS was handed over to Durian Adventist Education Foundation.<sup>14</sup> UPECS was permanently closed in 2004, and the land and the building were sold in 2005.<sup>15</sup>

Palu English Conversation School (PECS), located in Central Sulawesi, was established in 1983 with Yoram Tumarante as the first director. PECS was permanently closed in 2014.<sup>16</sup>

Gorontalo English Conversation School (GECS), located in Gorontalo, in the southern part of North Sulawesi, was established in 1985, and Lely Sualang was appointed to be the director.<sup>17</sup> This language school was permanently closed in 2014.<sup>18</sup>

Sorong English Conversation School (SORECS), located in Papua (Irian Jaya Mission), was established in 1986, and A. J. Kountur was appointed to be the director.<sup>19</sup> Then the AECS board transferred it to Irian Jaya Mission in December 1986.

## List of AECS Directors/Supervisors (1974–2018)

Dale J. Bidwell and LaVerne Bissel (1974); Ch. Tidwell (1975–1978); D. L. Gouge and James A. Green (1979); C. S. Wallace (1980); C. G. Oliver (1981); T. Katemba (1982); Dan Tilstra (1983); B. Malingkas (1984); A. Rantung (1985);<sup>20</sup> J. Kohdong (1985–1989);<sup>21</sup> F. Sundalangi (1990–1995); Y. Hamel (1997–1998); T. Katemba (1998–1999); U. Mandey (1999–2004); B. J. Sepang (2004–2006); Agus Wohongan (2007–2011); Warouw T. Polii (2011–2013); A. Dien (2014–2015); C. Ramschie (2016–2018)<sup>22</sup>

## List of Branch Directors/Principals

The director of each school was also assigned as a chaplain.

MECS—Manado English Conversation School (1974–2019):

Lester Mamanua (1974–1976); Bobby J. Sepang (1977–1979); Arie Dien (1980–1981); Tommy Mambu (1982–1983); Yoram Tumbarante (1984); Johny Kohdong (1985–1989); Franky Sundalangi (1990–1995); Arie Dien (1996–1998); Dolfie Lontoh (interim 1999); T. Katemba (1999–2001); Alex Weol (2002–2003); J. A. Engka (2004–mid-2005); Brandes Lasut (2005–2007); Lorsye Muntuan (2008–2011); Robert Siby (2011–2013); John Tielung (2014–mid-2015); Cristar Rumbay (interim 2015); Cornelis Ramschie (interim 2015); Trisne A. Mona (2016–2019)<sup>23</sup>

UPECS—Ujung Pandang English Conversation School (1976–2014):

Douglas Martin (1976–mid-2005); Tommy Mambu (1977–1978); Bobby. J. Sepang (1979); Berny Manaroinson (1980); Arie Dien (1981–1984); Yoram Tumbarante (1985–1988); Dolfie Lontoh (1989–1998); Cornelis Ramschie (1999–2000); Arie Dien (2000–2002); Cornelis Ramschie (2003–early 2004)

PECS—Palu English Conversation School (1983–2014):

Yoram Tumbarante (1983); Juntje Walangitan (1984–mid-1986); Evert Kamuh (1986–1995); Andreas Noni (1995 caretaker); John Karwur (1996); Warouw T. Polii (1997–1998); Brandes L. Asut (1999–2005); Lorsye Muntuan (2005–2007); Ferry Lasut (2008); Pastor Ole (2012–2013); Agnes Bawias (2014)

GECS—Gorontalo English Conversation School (1985–2014):

Lely Sualang (1985–1990); Arie Dien (1991–1992); Warouw T. Polii (1983–early 1997); Cornelis Ramschie (1997–1998); Bun Hok Pasulatan (1999–mid-2002); Billy Sakul (interim 2002); Novry Frans (2003–2014)

SORECS—Sorong English Conversation School:

J. Kountur (1986)

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## NOTES

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20. Ibid., 538.
21. Ibid., 538.
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