

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the reasons why this research was taken. There are areas of research that are very different from other research, because look at the parts of this research. The details of the research start from the research background, research questions, research objectives, research significance, scope and limitations, and definitions of key terms.

### **A. Background of the Study**

The curriculum is a word used in education to describe the complete student experience throughout the education process. It can be defined as a mix of studying methods, learning encounters, and evaluating student performance aimed at getting and enhancing knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In education, the curriculum is crucial as it outlines the overall plan and design of a course. It details how course content is translated into a teaching and learning process, ultimately aimed at achieving desired learning outcomes (Richards, 2013). In Indonesia, the curriculum has undergone multiple revisions since the country's independence, with at least ten modifications affecting teaching methods. These revisions vary from the 1947 Curriculum to the recently contested "*Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum".

The Kemendikbudristek (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology) launched the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum in 2022. The curriculum aims to increase flexibility and autonomy for both teachers and students, allowing them to tailor learning activities to their specific needs and

environments. The *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum places considerable emphasis on bolstering the character development and soft skills of Indonesian students via projects designed to enhance their profile as Pancasila learners. Pancasila learners are required to demonstrate six profile dimensions, namely religious, nationalist, independent, collaborative, possessing integrity, and adaptive.

In implementing the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum, teachers must understand the Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran (ATP), Modul Ajar (MA), Project Modules, to evaluating student progress (Nurhidayat et al., 2022). This demonstrates the crucial role teachers play in accomplishing national education objectives through their instructional and educational efforts. Thus, it is vital to concentrate on cultivating teachers' potential as professionals with moral principles, adherence to rules, a sense of professionalism, and competence. Another crucial factor in facilitating the implementation of the *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum is the educational institution, particularly the principal. The curriculum places students at the center of the learning process, also known as the "Student Center". They are regarded as the cornerstone of education and, as such, constitute the main focus of the learning process. To foster their skills, interests, and potential in English, they require aides, including teachers, principals, and staff.

Reading comprehension is the capability to analyse literature, comprehend its significance, and integrate prior knowledge (Yurko & Protsenko, 2020). For students, reading comprehension is a crucial skill that helps acquire knowledge and information from an assortment of texts. Moreover, this ability encompasses identifying main concepts, contrasting and

comparing, inferring, predicting outcomes, recognizing supporting details, and other proficiencies that aid readers in constructing meaning from texts. Bamford and Day (1998) state that the process of reading involves interpreting the meaning of a written or printed message. Thus, readers must integrate the information from the message with their existing knowledge to generate comprehension and understanding.

The implementation of the *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum in reading comprehension instruction presents a compelling research topic due to its potential impact on the quality and efficacy of reading instruction and learning outcomes. Moreover, the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum affords teachers and students opportunities to integrate reading comprehension with relevant and meaningful subjects and themes. Therefore, this study aims to investigate how *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum is applied in teaching reading comprehension at SMKN 2 Kota Kediri.

Based on the explanation above, researcher is interested in observing and finding out about the implementation of *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum in teaching reading comprehension at one of the schools in Kota Kediri which has been implemented in 11th grade. For this research to be carried out, the researcher takes the title ***“The Implementation of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in Teaching Reading Comprehension at SMKN 2 Kota Kediri”***

## **B. Research Question**

Based on the background of study above, the research question is formulated as follows:

How does English teacher at SMKN 2 Kota Kediri implement *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum in her teaching reading comprehension?

## **C. Research Objective**

In accordance with the following research question above, the objective of this study to describe the implementation of *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum in teaching reading comprehension at SMKN 2 Kota Kediri.

## **D. Significances of the Study**

### **1. Theoretical**

This study aims to add to the existing literature on the implementation of the *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum, an innovative curriculum designed to enhance the quality of education in Indonesia. The study will provide empirical evidence on the application of the *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum in teaching reading comprehension. This skill is crucial for students to thrive in the 21st century.

### **2. Practical**

#### **a. For English Teachers**

This research aims to provide English teachers with an overview of implementing the *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum to enhance reading comprehension teaching. In addition, it serves as a motivating factor for teachers to improve their professionalism and gain experience in

teaching according to this curriculum. This will facilitate the development of knowledge and abilities for organizing effective teaching and learning activities.

**b. For the Writer**

Researcher aim to provide a comprehensive resource to facilitate the implementation of the *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum for effective teaching of reading comprehension. This study is expected to shape future educational practices.

**c. For the Next Researchers**

This study provides valuable insights into the use of the *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum to enhance reading comprehension in educational settings. It serves as a practical reference for future research endeavours seeking to explore this topic further.

**E. Scope and Limitation**

In this study, researchers analysed the implementation of the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum in teaching reading comprehension to classes XI TJKT 2 and XI PMS 1 at SMKN 2 Kota Kediri.

The limitation of this study is focused on narrative text material only in the first semester. Researchers selected this material due to its high level of interest among students based on the Teaching Module.

**F. Definition of Key Term**

1. Implementation

According to Ehrens (2015). Implementation is defined as the execution of a plan, method, design, idea, model, specification, standard, or policy with the objective of achieving a goal. Thus, implementation is a necessary action that follows the initial idea for the desired outcome to materialize.

## 2. *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum

Kemendikbud (2022). Established the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum to furnish students with extensive opportunities to study subject matters in-depth and refine their skills through diverse intracurricular learning experiences. It is crucial for instructors to possess access to various materials to individualize each student's education according to their particular requirements and interests. To achieve the objectives of the Pancasila learner profile, projects were developed based on topics chosen by the government. This initiative does not aim for specific learning outcomes and therefore, does not rely on textbooks or other teaching resources.

## 3. Reading Comprehension

Burnes (1991) says that reading comprehension is a reading activity whose success depends on the reader's intelligence, thinking speed, and ability to see connections. Often, it's up to the reader to figure out what's going on. It's clear that reading comprehension is more than just knowing what words mean. It's also about getting ideas from texts, whether they are explicit or not.