

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem/Research Question, Purpose of the Study, Significance of the Study, Scope and Limitation, and Definition of Key Terms.

A. Background of the Study

The curriculum is an essential element of education, forming a shared understanding of teaching and learning that enables desired learning outcomes (Richards, 2013). This country is independent, and many program improvements and adjustments have been made in Indonesia. There have been ten changes that have had at least an impact on learning styles. Since the program was introduced in 1947, "*Merdeka Belajar*" has recently attracted much attention.

Under the direction of Nadiem Makarim, the Ministry of Education and Culture launched Freedom to Learn, highlighting that Indonesia revised its curriculum three times annually in less than ten years (Sugiri & Priatmoko, 2020). These adjustments are a response to the difficulties and shifts that Indonesia has experienced over time. They are all sophisticated attempts to improve Indonesian education in terms of its objectives, models, and coherent learning methodologies with academic success. Indonesia expects these measures to equip kids for academic and non-academic success better.

The design, implementation, and assessment of learning underwent significant changes due to transforming the 2013 program into the Merdeka

program. One of them is the introduction of new concepts such as Learning Objective Flow (ATP), Teaching Module (MA), Learning Achievement (CP), Learning Objective Achievement (KKTP), Criteria, Students, Pancasila Notes, diagnostic assessment, student reflection, and reflection. Teachers, all of which are intended to improve the abilities of students and teachers (Hardania, 2022). This modification encourages teachers to continue their education and adapt to implement the new Merdeka program learning paradigm successfully.

Adapting to the new curriculum, namely the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, is necessary, especially when learning English. It is essential for future learning. In the context of English as a foreign language. Mastering learning strategies can be done in various ways. Four skills must be learned, namely, speaking skills, writing skills, listening skills, and reading skills. With speaking skills, students can learn to pronounce words well and correctly. With writing skills, students can learn to write essays that comply with the rules. With listening skills, students can capture the sound of English dialogue. With reading skills, students can understand the context of reading carefully.

The schools are undoubtedly open to challenges, especially with the new independent curriculum, which changes the learning planning structure and differs from the previous curriculum. This change in the curriculum will require adaptation, and there will be several obstacles in the adaptation process. If students must understand all the material and then discuss and do assignments, some will need help understanding it. Therefore, the teacher

plays a vital role as a spirit builder for students, how to ensure that learning goes according to plan.

Based on the results of observations, implementing the independent curriculum for students at SMAN 1 Grogol is needed. In the independent curriculum, there is a Project for Strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile, known as P5, where all students must participate in this activity. This P5 activity is held every fifth hour until the last hour to reduce the English lesson hours from one to four hours a day to two hours. English learning is reduced and less effective than usual. Meanwhile, students find it difficult to learn independently and only rely on lessons from teachers at school, even though more is needed.

Previous research was conducted by Afiya Ulin Nuha Annafiah (2023) in her research entitled "The Implementation of The Merdeka Curriculum In English Lesson At Man 2 Ponorogo", which has similarities in efforts to implement the independent curriculum. And previous research conducted by Dita Farisa Setyo Budhi (2023) in her research entitled "The Implementation of Pancasila at Student Profile SMPN 3 Kota Kediri" also has similarities in the problem of the project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students in the independent curriculum.

The conclusion is that curriculum is an essential component of education. The curriculum is a guideline for planning the arrangement of learning materials for teaching and learning activities. However, as the years changed, there have been many improvements and adjustments to the program or curriculum until now, namely "Merdeka Belajar". The

independent learning curriculum is a new curriculum that still requires adaptation.

B. Research Question

1. How is the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in learning English at SMAN 1 Grogol for the teacher and student in academic year 2023/2024?
2. What challenges are faced by the teaching in the Implementation of *Merdeka* Curriculum in learning English at SMAN 1 Grogol for the academic year 2023/2024?

C. The Objective of the Study

1. To Explore the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in learning English at SMAN 1 Grogol in academic year 2023/2024.
2. To Identify English teachers' challenges for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum for English language learning at SMAN 1 Grogol for the academic year 2023/2024.

D. Scope and Limitation of the study

The researcher limited the research location to SMAN 1 Grogol because the title stated that the school was the object. The research was carried out using interviews and observations, interviews with only 2 English teachers and observations in class XI. The research should be close to the topic, so it only examines the implementation and strategy of the independent English learning curriculum and the problems teachers face when teaching. The weakness of the research that will be carried out is in the data search process because more than interviews are needed.

E. Significance of the Study

1. For English teachers

This research aims to provide a general overview of how the Independent Curriculum is implemented when teaching English. It can also inspire you to develop your skills as a teacher and increase your knowledge about teaching techniques based on the Merdeka Curriculum. It is also helpful in expanding knowledge and abilities in planning learning and learning activities.

2. For the School

The results of this research aim to provide information and assessment to school principals regarding the planning and implementation stages of teacher learning according to the Merdeka Curriculum.

3. For the Further Researches

This research aims to make it easier for future researchers to regard the Merdeka Curriculum so that it becomes a reference for consideration and improvement for further research findings.

F. Definition Of Key Terms

1. Merdeka Curriculum

The curriculum is a general plan or outline of courses and an overview of the contents of these courses, which has been converted into a general description of teaching and learning that enables the desired learning outcomes to be achieved. In other words, the curriculum is a guide or guideline that teachers use as a guide in learning activities to achieve specific goals. Teaching according to the curriculum and

learning has a direction to educate students. Meanwhile, the independent learning curriculum is a new curriculum that is carried out according to the lesson schedule and time allocation determined by creating various kinds of content that aim to enable students to understand the material more deeply.

2. Learning English

Learning English is a way to develop the ability to speak, read, write and listen to English with various methods that are easy to understand. Learning English is mandatory for every high school student, and they must follow the learning path designed by the teacher. Because in this era, English is essential.

3. Curriculum Implementation

Curriculum implementation is an effort to implement a learning system with the aim of improving the quality of learning throughout the archipelago. This implementation is carried out by all school parties, especially teachers. Teachers must be able to make students follow the learning system in the curriculum rules. Students must also follow the teacher's directions for good learning.