

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses the literature review that is related with this study which focuses on the role of teaching methods applied in the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* towards students' engagements in the English Language Learning Process

A. Teaching Method

Richards & Rodgers (2001), define teaching methods as the notion of a systematic set of teaching practices based on a particular theory of language and language learning. methods are procedural which is the overall plan for the orderly presentation of the material. Asep, et al., (2023: 2) argue that teaching methods refer to specific ways used by teachers in delivering material. Hasanova, et al., (2021) defines teaching methods as teaching procedures in accordance with a predetermined plan. This procedure is used to pay attention to the entire learning process in achieving a goal (Zainiyati, 2010: 200). Teaching methods are the teacher's way of organizing learning materials and students so that the learning process is carried out effectively and efficiently (Mawati, et al., 2021). Encouraging students to be directly involved in learning actively in the learning process is the goal in applying teaching methods (Salhuteru, et al., 2023). Shroff, et al. (2021) argue that the teaching method may be connected to active learning. This is because teaching methods are used as instructional methods to engage students in learning. The function of learning methods is to create a learning atmosphere for students in learning teaching materials/learning materials easily (Rianto, 2006: 11). In addition, according to Mu'awanah (2011: 25) teaching method is a tool used to achieve teaching goals. Therefore, it can be concluded that the teaching method is a method used by teachers in delivering learning materials, organizing the learning process and as an effort to encourage students' engagements to achieve learning objectives effectively.

According to Pertiwi, et al. (2022) based on the results of their research conducted in a literature study, it shows that the teaching methods

applied in learning in the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* are student-centered methods. The following methods can be applied:

1. Discussion method

Wilkinson (2009) defined The discussion method is a forum used for an open and collaborative exchange of ideas between teachers and students or among students. The discussion method is a method used by the teacher in presenting material where students are given problems and they discuss these problems with members of the group that has been formed (Mislán & Irwanto, 2019: 9). In this method, it is possible that each student will be actively involved because they will practice expressing opinions or ideas in discussions in the small groups formed. Students' engagements in this method is emphasized in the classroom discussion process (Kusuma, et al., 2023: 123). During the discussion process, this method aims to exchange opinions, ideas and information. In addition, the use of this method aims to provide stimulus to students in an effort to engage them in the learning process (Sutikno, 2019: 38). This discussion method makes students more communicative through responses, arguments and ideas that they convey in their own groups or to other groups (Zainiyati, 2010: 209). The process of implementing this discussion begins with the teacher presenting a grand problem with several sub-problems. These sub-problems are distributed to the groups that have been formed to be discussed. Then, at the end of the session each group reports the results of its discussion (Mulyono & Wekke, 2018: 69).

2. Simulation method

Jones & Barrett (2017), simulation is a teaching method used by teachers to imitate or replicate an event adapted to actual procedures. Simulation is considered a method where the teacher provides simulations or exercises of learning experiences for students to understand the principles and skills of the material

being taught. For example, before students operate a machine, they are first taught how to run it. This process is teaching through the simulation method to improve their understanding and skills of something. According to Rianto, in this method of learning students can be involved through each step in the simulation activity so that students can improve their understanding (Rianto, 2006: 74). In the 1970s, the Foreign Policy Association established six guidelines for teachers to develop their own simulation activities and games:

- a. Identify the goals to be achieved
- b. Construct a simplified model of the activity or game
- c. Identify the roles of individuals and groups who will be participants
- d. Set the conditions for the players/students being certain to set up specified guidelines regarding procedures, resources, personnel, etc
- e. Develop specific objectives or goals for the actors
- f. Set the limits and overall rules that will govern permissible behavior (Maxson, 1974; Jones & Barrett, 2017).

3. Experimental method

This method is a method used to provide students with an understanding of the theory or concept of a material through exploration and experimentation. Through this method, students can gain direct experience. In addition, students can actively participate through observation activities or the implementation of the experiment (Nasution, 2017: 155). The use of this experimental method is a teaching method that allows active and independent learning (Helmiati, 2012: 74). This can encourage students' curiosity about the implementation of learning theory (Kusuma, et al., 2023: 136).

4. Assignment (resitation) method

This method is defined as a teaching method in which the teacher provides instructions to students on how to facilitate students to actively learn independently or in groups. In other words, this method is a way carried out by the teacher in building teaching and learning interactions in the learning process through assignments given to students according to the topics discussed (Nasution, 2017: 149). In this method, there are planning activities between teachers and students about a problem that must be resolved within an agreed period of time (Nurhasanah, 2019: 91). According to Mulyono & Wekke, (2018: 76) the implementation of this method is not only done in the classroom, but can utilize the school environment. Examples of the types of tasks given include research tasks around the school environment, tasks to find literature sources in the library, etc.

5. Self-directed learning method

This method is a teaching method where students are asked to learn and understand knowledge according to relevant topics independently. Independent is defined as students who do not depend on anyone and they are expected to be able to lead and control their activities. According to Setlhodi (2019), this self-directed learning method is intended to optimally empower the potential possessed by students and stimulate students' initiative to learn. This stimulus refers to the stimulus provided by the teacher about the learning topic, then independently students explore their abilities to create meaningful learning (Hakiki & Abdulrahman, 2017).

6. Problem solving method

This problem-solving method is one of the options in overcoming student problems regarding low student learning activity during the learning process. In addition, this method is implemented to increase student involvement and assist students

in increasing their understanding of certain fields. Students' engagements is through efforts and ideas that are distributed to solve a problem until the conclusion stage (Mulyono and Wekke, 2018: 80).

7. Case study method

This case study method is a method used to reflect and analyze a case presented to students. the use of this method involves students' ability to think critically through analysis of cases that are relevant to the learning material (Minniti, 2017). In this method, students are actively asked to find information relevant to theoretical concepts and interact with other students through discussions conducted both among students and groups. This method prepares students to become lifelong learners (Dewi, et al., 2023). This is in line with the learning principle in the independent curriculum, namely learning is designed to build the capacity to become lifelong learners.

8. Project-based method

The project-based method is the method that is most emphasized in the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*. In line with Nursalam (2023), this method is one of the concepts underlying the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*. Project-based method is a learning method that involves students in project-making activities that focus on the creation of a product or performance (Orey, 2010). According to Widiyanti (2020), the project-based learning method is a method used to develop practical skills through the implementation of real projects. Almulla (2020) states that the implementation of this method is an effort to increase student involvement. This method aims to develop student competence practically. This project-based method is a method applied to the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* which emphasizes active learning and focuses on student learning experiences (Ni'mah, 2024). As

Thomas (2000:1) states, project-based method is a learning process that is organised and focused through working on projects assigned to students. Krajcik and Shin (2014) in an article written by Guo, et al. (2020) indicate that two points are the focus in using this method: student participation in learning and collaboration among students in each group. As defined by Guo, et al. (2020), collaboration refers to the process of integrating knowledge and applying it to the project. Therefore, this project-based method, which is one of the concepts of curriculum implementation, is a teaching method that focuses on developing practical skills and increasing students' engagements through the process of collaboration and cooperation in working on assigned projects. Orey (2010) suggests that there are three phases to Project Based Learning:

- a. Planning, the learner chooses a project, finds the resources needed
 - b. Creating and implementing, includes activities to build a product that can be shared with others
 - c. The processing include reflection and project follow-up
9. Active learning method

Students being able to actively participate is a concept that is emphasized in the implementation of this method. Active learning method is a method that creates a student learning environment to encourage students to participate through receiving and doing a lesson (Safitri, et al., 2023). This method is also applied to encourage and direct students to learn actively who dominate activities during the learning process (Hilmi and Summiyani, 2023).

There are several factors that influence students' engagements in the use of teaching methods according to Cents-Boonstra, et. al., (2022):

- a. The stimulation and feedback given by the teacher to students to enable students to be actively engaged
- b. Providing opportunities to do certain activities in the learning process, such as allowing students to have the initiative in solving problems or encouraging students to improve their thinking skills
- c. The implementation of motivating learning
- d. Conducting learning according to students' interests and needs. This refers to the relevance of the learning context to life.
- e. Establishing communication or interaction with students

According to Helmiati, in her book entitled *Metode Pembelajaran* states (2012:58-60) the things that need to be considered in choosing a method are as follows:

- a. The goal to be achieved
- b. Conditions and characteristics of students
- c. The nature of the learning material
- d. Availability of facilities and media
- e. Level of student participation

B. *Kurikulum Merdeka*

Kamiludin and Suryaman (2017) define the curriculum as a set of educational programs prepared and implemented by elements within educational institutions with the objective of achieving educational goals. The curriculum serves as a guide for the learning process (MKDP Developer Team, 2016: 9). As stated by Munna (2022), the role of this curriculum will determine the design or learning model that will be applied by the teacher during the learning process, including teaching methods and learning materials.

In Indonesia, several curriculum revisions have been implemented. The most recent revision, known as the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, represents a significant departure from previous curriculums, emphasizing a diverse

intracurricular learning model. This model allows for a more optimal utilization of instructional time, enabling students to engage in deeper explorations of concepts and the strengthening of competencies. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2021). The implementation of this *Kurikulum Merdeka* offers several advantages. Firstly, it allows educational institutions to choose appropriate learning methods, ensuring that the learning process is more relevant and interactive. Secondly, the curriculum provides opportunities for students to be active, engaging them in project activities that address actual issues.

The implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* is an effort to guide the development and potential of students. Efforts are made by applying relevant and interactive learning such as project-based learning, so that students are directly involved in learning and can stimulate students' interest in learning. Wiguna & Tristianingrat (2022) argue that the *Kurikulum Merdeka* emphasizes core subjects, character development, and proficiency in areas of student interest and strength. The implementation of this curriculum is expected to provide a more engaging and student-centered learning experience, with greater autonomy and flexibility for students and teachers (Rahimah & Widiastuty, 2023).

In accordance with the tenets of a *Kurikulum Merdeka*, it is imperative to engage students in a learning process that integrates both theoretical and practical elements within the context of vocational education. This process is designed to facilitate the acquisition of vocational competence by each individual student, as evidenced by the findings of Firduas, et al. (2023). The *Kurikulum Merdeka* is designed to be more flexible and adaptive and emphasizes student skills (Anisah and Qamariah, 2023). This flexibility and adaptability in the curriculum allows teachers to customize the learning process according to students' needs and interests, including the implementation of practical methods that are more relevant to the world of work and not only improve students' technical skills, but also better prepare them for encountering the challenges of the industry. According to Astina, et al. (2023), the learning design innovation

implemented through the *Kurikulum Merdeka* is in line with the practical learning implemented in the Vocational High School. Through the concept of freedom emphasized in the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, the learning modules implemented in Vocational High School can be modified or adapted to the learning objectives, namely students are expected to master skills and competencies according to their respective vocations (Hermawan and Jasrial, 2023).

As the government develops and changes the curriculum, the methods used need to be adapted. Through the teaching methods used, it is expected to be able to increase the involvement of students in the learning process. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2022), learning designed by teachers to be implemented in the classroom is learning that is (1) interactive; (2) inspiring; (3) fun; (4) challenging; (5) motivates students to actively participate; and (6) provides sufficient space for initiative, creativity, independence according to the talents, interests, and physical and psychological development of students.

Therefore, the principles of learning in the *Kurikulum Merdeka* are as follows (Kemendikbud, 2022)

1. Learning is designed by considering the current stage of development and achievement level of learners, in accordance with learning needs, and reflects the characteristics and development of different learners, so that learning becomes meaningful and enjoyable
2. Learning is designed and implemented to build capacity for lifelong learning
3. The learning process supports the holistic development of learners' competence and character
4. Relevant learning, i.e. learning designed according to learners' context, environment and culture, involving parents and communities as partners
5. Sustainable, future-oriented learning.

C. Students' engagements

One criterion for successful teaching is how much learners engage in learning rather than just mastering material (Sanjaya, 2010: 214). This is in line with the graduate competency standards and content standards that emphasize the learning principles used are learning that prioritizes acculturation and empowerment of students (Helda & Syahrani, 2022). Research shows that one aspect that determines the effectiveness of learning is students' engagements (Pratama, et al., 2019). The Australasian Survey of Students' engagements (AUSSE) defines students' engagements as student participation in activities and conditions associated with quality learning. Engagement is defined as affective and behavioral participation in learning experiences (Marks, 2000). According to Connel & Wellborn (1991) in Gladisia, et al.'s study (2022), students' engagements is defined as student participation in learning that is manifested through behavior, cognition, and emotions and refers to student performance in interactions with academic processes. Engagement includes students' time and effort in playing an active role in various activities aimed at academic and non-academic aspects (Vázquez-Villegas, et al., 2023). In addition, students' engagements also describes student participation that includes energy, purpose, and persistence (Christenson, et al., 2012). Meanwhile, Reeve (2012) argues that this definition of students' engagements emphasizes learning activities or task-related activities. If the student has a role or is involved in the activity in learning, then it is defined as students' engagements. Thus, it is concluded that students' engagements is the role and active participation of students in academic interactions during the learning process.

According to Fredricks, et al (2004), students' engagements is divided into 3 aspects

1. Behavioral Engagement

Behavioral engagement is shown when students engage or participate in the learning process and academic assignments through effort, perseverance, concentration, attention, asking questions, and

contributing to class discussions. The active participation shown through these behaviors indicates the direct engagement of students in the learning process (Pratama, et al., 2019).

2. Emotional Engagement

In the context of learning, this engagement refers to how students' affective reactions are shown through emotional responses or students' feelings such as interest, boredom, happiness, sadness, and anxiety. According to Fredricks & McColskey (2012), this emotional engagement affects students' willingness to do their work.

3. Cognitive Engagement

Cognitive engagement is a psychological involvement that leads to learning material, understanding, mastery of knowledge, skills, or expertise that is demonstrated through academic activities during the learning process. Students' efforts to engage intellectually are referred to as cognitive engagement. According to Gladisia, et al. (2022), this engagement is reflected in students' tendency to master and understand the learning material taught by the teacher.

D. Previous Studies

Several researchers have conducted research on the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum with various focuses and results. The following are some studies that are relevant to the current research:

1. The first research is entitled Analysis of Implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in English Learning Process at SMA Negeri 1 Palembang which was conducted by Sukma & Trisno (2023). This study aims to analyze the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in English learning at SMA Negeri 1 Palembang and focuses on aspects of students' learning needs in the methods used by teachers. This research uses a descriptive research design with interviews as the method of data collection. The participants of this study were English teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Palembang. This study found that the method applied by teachers in learning, namely differentiated learning in the

implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka*, is considered good enough in an effort to find the learning needs of students.

2. The second research is research from Nurmasyitah, et al (2023). This research was conducted to find out how the impact of implementing an *Kurikulum Merdeka* on student activities during learning. The specific activities under investigation were those of discussion, questioning, and responding by students during the learning process. Additionally, the research aimed to analyze how the *Kurikulum Merdeka* is able to accommodate the different learning styles used by students so that teachers are able to apply suitable teaching methods to solve these problems. How the *Kurikulum Merdeka* could accommodate students' diverse learning styles, enabling teachers to apply effective teaching methods to address the identified issues. The study used a descriptive research design. This research used test and observation as data collection techniques. The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* has an effective impact on student activity and that the use of appropriate methods can accommodate students' different learning styles.
3. The third research was a study conducted by Sibuea, et al (2023) that discusses an evaluation of the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* at a Vocational High School. The evaluation aspect in this research was the CIPP evaluation model (Context, Input, Process, and Product). Subjects in the research were school principals and teachers who understand and master the topic of study in this research. Subject selection is done through purposive sampling. After obtaining subjects in accordance with the criteria, distributing questionnaires to respondents via Google Forms was carried out to collect data. Through the results obtained from this study, teachers should be able to develop students' creativity through improving teacher competences and implementing interesting and fun learning.
4. The fourth research is entitled Implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in Improving the Quality of Senior High School by Kamila and Agus

RM (2023). This study aims to identify how the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* seeks to achieve educational goals. Based on the results in this study, it shows that success in achieving these educational goals can be done through the learning process carried out. This research uses a qualitative approach and data is collected through observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The analysis is done through the process of collecting data, reducing data, presenting data, and concluding findings.

5. The last research from Dewi and Alam (2022), in this study aims to identify the impact of the use of learning facilities used in the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* on students' achievement. Quantitative research with an ex post facto approach is the design used in the study and data were obtained through a survey on 120 students selected through purposive sampling technique. The results show that the facilities used in the learning process have a positive and significant influence on students' achievement.

In conclusion, the similarities between previous research and the current research are the focus on implementing the *Kurikulum Merdeka*. However, what differentiates the two is the aspect that is the object of the current research. Previous research focused on learning methods, aspects of learning needs, student activity, and the use of this method as a tool to achieve goals. Another focus was on learning facilities and improving teacher competence. In contrast, the current research examines the use of teaching methods in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum on students' engagements. The objective is to identify the teaching methods used by teachers and their impact on students' engagements.