CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter discussed the review of related literature. It consisted of some parts. Those were the definition of curriculum, the history of curriculum in Indonesia, the definition of the Merdeka curriculum, the objectives of the Merdeka curriculum, the characteristics of the Merdeka curriculum, the components of the Merdeka curriculum, the differences between the 2013 curriculum and the Merdeka curriculum, the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, and the English language teaching and learning, the definition of English language teaching, the objectives of English subject, the characteristics of English, and the English model.

A. Curriculum

1. Definition of Curriculum

A curriculum is an educational program that includes a course plan for one period in an educational institution. It is arranged based on the needs of the education level and the job market and aims to comprehensively guide learning towards the desired goal (Pratycia et al., 2023).

2. History of Curriculum in Indonesia

The discussion will then cover the history of the curriculum in Indonesia, tracing its development from its inception to the present day. Indonesia's history of education began long before independence, primarily through Islamic boarding schools. After independence, Indonesia only started to manage its schools independently, as previously, the invaders controlled the education system(Raharjo, 2020). Indonesia has changed the curriculum several times. They are Rentjana Pelajaran 1947,

Rentjana Pelajaran Terurai 1952, Rentjana Pendidikan 1964, Kurikulum 1968, Kurikulum 1975, Kurikulum 1984, Kurikulum 1994, Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi (KBK) 2004, Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) 2006, Kurikulum 2013 (K- 13). The newest curriculum is the Merdeka curriculum. Each curriculum has its characteristics. However, it has the same basis, Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Fitriyani, 2022). Here are the characteristics of each curriculum in Indonesia.

1. Rentjana Pelajaran 1947

Rentjana Pelajaran 1947 is the first curriculum in Indonesia. The curriculum is known in Dutch as ―Leer Plan" (meaning ―lesson plan‖). Instead of focusing on cognitive components, this curriculum aims to emphasize character development, and state, and society awareness. (Iramdan - & Manurung, 2019).

2. Rentjana Pelajaran Terurai 1952

Rentjana Pelajaran 1947 is improved by Rentjana Pelajaran Terurai 1952. The government started to concern itself with cognitive issues. It has a term called *Pengembangan Pancawardhana* (Pancawardhana Development).Its subjects are broken down into five study area categories: moral, intellectual, emotional, skillful, and physical.

3. Rentjana Pendidikan 1964

Rentjana Pendidikan 1964 is arranged at the end of Soekarno's presidential term. The emphasis in the learning system is on active, inventive, and successful learners. The teacher assists students in problem-solving skills. The teacher applied a method named *gotong royong terpimpin* (guided mutual help). Saturday is commemorated as

a special day, named Krida Day. Today, students are allowed to train their ability and passion in sports, culture, and art. The reporting system also changed into letters, those are A, B, C, and D (Asri, 2017).

4. Kurikulum 1968

Kurikulum 1964 had been modified for use in Kurikulum 1968. The structure changed, becoming Pancasila soul-building, basic knowledge, and specialized skills. The curriculum was developed independently by the particular teachers. In addition, it serves material, methodology, and evaluation. This curriculum aims to shape authentic Pancasila individuals who are strong, healthy, and have strong moral, and ethical values, and religious beliefs.

5. Kurikulum 1975

Kurikulum 1975 is an attempt to carry out the development strategy of the new order era. These are the principles of Kurikulum 1975, such as: (1) goal-oriented. The objectives are hierarchies of educational goals, such as educational goal, institutional goal, curricular goal, general instructional goal, and particular instructional goal; (2) Each lesson is significant and contributes to the realization of more integrative objectives; (3) Power and time efficiency; (4) Emphasizing stimulus responses; (5) Methods, materials, and teaching objectives detail in the Instructional System Development Procedure (PPSI), known as lesson units, namely lesson plans for each unit discussion (Fitriyani, 2022).

6. Kurikulum 1984

To keep up with the growth of science, Kurikulum 1975 is changed into Kurikulum 1984. It comes up with the Active Student Learning Method as a teaching

strategy. Practical methods are also applied in this curriculum. The majors are listed as programs A and B. Program A comprises the following: (1) A1, with a focus on physics; (2) A2, with a focus on biology; (3) A3, with a focus on economics; (4) A4, with a focus on language and culture. Meanwhile, program B is a course of study that results in vocational abilities that will enable students to be placed in the public. However, this program is temporarily discontinued because it needs adequate educational facilities (Asri, 2017).

7. Kurikulum 1994

Kurikulum 1994 is the revision of Kurikulum 1984. The implemented system is known as the Caturwulan system. It divides a year into three parts, each with a very in-depth topic. This curriculum aims to concentrate on the subject matter and problem-solving abilities. However, there were criticisms due to the heavy learning load. Thus, Kurikulum 1994 changed into Suplemen Kurikulum 1994 (Fitriyani, 2022).

8. Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi (KBK) 2004

Curriculum changes are again named Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi (KBK) in 2004. It is known as a curriculum that concerns learning outcomes and diversity. There are various learning sources and approaches. The assessment of KBK 2004 focuses on process and output learning in mastering a competency.

9. Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) 2006

KBK 2004 is refined by implementing *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan* (KTSP) 2006. As cited in (Fitriyani, 2022), the government builds competency standards, and basic competencies. Then, teachers are allowed to create their syllabus

and assessment based on the school's condition. In summary, KTSP gives authority to guide student's learning.

10. Kurikulum 2013 (K-13)

Kurikulum 2013 is a replacement curriculum for KTSP 2006. The focus of Kurikulum 2013 is competencies and character building. The curriculum uses scientific approaches in-class instruction (Fitriyani, 2022). In 2016, The Ministry of National Education and Culture revised Kurikulum 2013 into Kurikulum 2013 Revision. There is an addition called literacy, HOTS (High Order Thinking Skills), and 4C (communication, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and innovation) (Asyadiyah, 2023).

The 2013 curriculum illustrates how it is changing to reflect the times. Modern technology is evolving quickly, and the curriculum is expanding to include new subjects where scientific and technological advancements are blended with educational ideas (Ananda & Hudaidah, 2021). The 2013 curriculum is not the last or the most recent. The most recent is the Merdeka curriculum which has been implemented for the past few years.

B. Merdeka Curriculum

1. The definition of the Merdeka curriculum

The Merdeka curriculum is a curriculum that gives students and teachers the freedom to implement learning and teaching styles. The Merdeka curriculum is an educational program with various interactive studying systems where the content is more suitable for learners to have sufficient time to learn about the subject and develop skills. Teachers will have the flexibility to choose various teaching tools to adapt to the needs and interests of students, (Qamariah and Zidan 2023).

2. The objective of the Merdeka Curriculum

The Merdeka curriculum's goal is to achieve meaningful and practical learning that increases faith, devotion to God Almighty, and noble character, as well as developing students' copyrights, tastes, and senses as lifelong learners with Pancasila character (Wahyudin et al., 2024). Rahayu et al. wrote The Merdeka Curriculum was designed to overhaul the Indonesian national education system in response to the country's ongoing developments and advancements. It aimed to modernize and adapt the education system better to meet the demands of a rapidly changing environment and ensure that the curriculum remains relevant and effective in contemporary progress (Fadhli, 2022). It also develops students' potential because this curriculum is simple and flexible, so learning will be more in-depth (Maharani et al., 2023).

The Merdeka Curriculum offers benefits when put into practice. Because this curriculum focuses on developing learner competencies and vital content, it is first simpler and deeper. Secondly, because students can select their courses based on their interests, abilities, and objectives, educators and students will be more Merdeka. Teachers can adapt their lessons to the stages of learners' development and achievement. Thirdly, schools have the power to design curricula and oversee instruction based on the needs of students and educational units (Kemdikbud, 2022b),(Fauzan, Ansori et al., 2023).

3. The characteristics of the Merdeka curriculum

The curriculum is the "spirit" of education, and it must be evaluated in an innovative, dynamic, and periodic manner as it evolves with time (Rintaningrum et al., 2023). The Merdeka curriculum is the essence of freedom of thought, according

to Mr. Nadiem, and must be preceded by teachers before they teach it to their students (Sabriadi & Wakia, 2021).

This curriculum has at least three benefits, including First, it focuses on the core of learning and essential material so that there is a more meaningful deepening and development of competencies; second, teachers and students are Merdeka; teachers are free to teach according to the achievements and development of students; and third, it gives teachers and students opportunities to engage in Merdeka learning so that they can explore every topic and subtopic; and finally, it is designed to help students develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Location and time, are also included in a Project on the Merdeka Curriculum (Maharani, 2022).

The concept of the Merdeka curriculum is expected to form students who think critically, have quality competencies, are expressive in innovating, and are progressive in improving interests and talents. The Merdeka curriculum has three main characteristics: (1) Simplification of content and focus on essential material. So that students can deepen their understanding of basic competencies such as literacy and numeracy. (2) Project-based learning to improve students' soft skills and character by aligning with the goals of Pancasila students. In this project, learners need to collaborate, be applicative, and choose subjects of interest. (3) Teacher flexibility in differentiating learning based on learners' abilities in more flexible lesson hours (Heppy, S. &Bagja, 2022).

The main characteristics of the Merdeka Curriculum, as revealed by Mrs. Ayu as an English teacher, including student-centered learning, emphasis on developing basic competencies, and strengthening national character and values. This is in line with the

contemporary education paradigm that emphasizes the importance of placing students as active subjects in the learning process, not just passive recipients of information. This approach aims to develop students' critical thinking, creativity, and independence, which are essential skills in facing the challenges of the 21st century.

4. Components of Merdeka Curriculum

As stated by Shihab (2017), the components of the *Merdeka* curriculum have three components namely commitment, independence, and reflection. These three components are interrelated and equally important.

a. Commitment

The commitment aspect emphasizes students to be goal-oriented as independent learners. A strong commitment will make a person have a firm stance on the goals that will be achieved. The three fundamental things that grow commitment to the *Merdeka* curriculum for the students (Anggila, 2022), are as follows:

1) They can understand learning objectives and the teacher's role.

2) They have to focus on daily and long-term goals.

3) They must be able to determine priorities because they are independent learners who learn not by force.

b. Independence

According to (Shihab, 2017), learning is characterized by awareness and curiosity. The students who have a high curiosity in learning can learn independently. They are not pushed or forced by someone. This is what will be trained for students in the

Merdeka curriculum. They have to learn with or without a teacher because learning is a lifelong process.

c. Reflection

The reflection aspect means that the students evaluate their strengths and limitations. The students have to understand what needs to be improved and how to do it. For example, if the students have given his/her evaluation results, they know what to do afterward. They will probably make improvements for the next semester. This is an important aspect of the independent curriculum as it will determine future learning steps (Amri, 2024).

5. The differences between the 2013 curriculum and the Merdeka curriculum

As mentioned by Nur'aini et al. (2022) in their research entitled "*Analisis Perbedaan Model Pembelajaran Kurikulum 2013 dan Kurikulum Prototype Berbasis Buku Panduan Guru Sekolah Dasar,*" the main differences between the 2013 curriculum and *Merdeka* curriculum include the aspects of learning guidelines, learning objectives, teaching approaches, target hours, learning steps, assessments, and learning resources, as follows;

a. Learning guidelines

The 2013 curriculum implements a syllabus that involves *Kompetensi Inti* and *Kompetensi Dasar*. *Kompetensi Inti* is consists of religious, affective, cognitive, and psychomotor. Furthermore, *Kompetensi Dasar* involves students' competency to achieve the goals of learning based on the materials. On the other hand, the *Merdeka* curriculum has *Capaian Pembelajaran* that will develop to be *Tujuan Pembelajaran* and the flow of *Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran*. Both of the curricula have different terms to address the learning purposes.

b. Learning objectives

After mapping *Kompetensi Inti* and *Kompetensi Dasar* in the 2013 curriculum, the next stage is to formulate indicators and the learning objectives. The indicator is developed by the competence or characteristics of learners in which includes operational verbs and content. Then, the indicator is formulated to be learning goals. Learning objectives in the 2013 curriculum were developed by considering learners' and teachers' ability to achieve learning objectives (Budiastuti et al., 2021). Whereas in the *Merdeka* curriculum, *Capaian Pembelajaran* is directly relegated to learning objectives.

c. Lesson Plan

The teachers should provide a lesson plan before they teach materials in the class. In the 2013 curriculum, the lesson plan is made from a syllabus. As stated by Sommeng, (2019), a syllabus consists of plans, policies, and assessments. It will help the teacher to create a lesson plan that addresses learning objectives specifically. However, the *Merdeka* curriculum has *Modul Ajar* that has all of the learning components for instance learning objectives, *Lembar Kerja Peserta Didik*. Moreover, a lesson plan in the *Merdeka* curriculum is simpler than the previous one as it is called on *RPP satu halaman*. Hence, the teacher will focus on how to present the materials as engaging as possible rather than focus on a detailed lesson plan that probably cannot be applied as it is written.

d. Teaching Approach

The scientific approach is the most common in the 2013 curriculum. It includes 5 components consisting of observing, questioning, experimenting, associating, and communicating/networking. By Rhosalia (2017), the scientific

approach is designed to stimulate students to construct the concept with five steps such as observing, asking, gathering information, associating, and communicating. The focus of the scientific approach concerns attitudes, knowledge, and skills. In the real condition, those five components are not systematically implemented. It depends on the class situation. However, the *Merdeka* curriculum concerns student-centred methods, and the teachers may apply any approach that suits students' needs.

e. Lesson hours

In the 2013 curriculum, lesson hours were determined for a week. The lesson hour is counted as 35 minutes. Grades 4, 5, and 6 in elementary school have 36 lesson hours for a week. On the other hand, lesson hours in the *Merdeka* curriculum are determined for a year. Therefore, every school probably has a different allocation of lesson hours in one semester.

f. Learning steps

Due to the scientific approach, the learning steps consist of those five components namely observing, questioning, experimenting, associating, and communicating/networking. However, it may be implemented systematically. As stated above, the teachers can determine any learning approach that suits students' needs, and so does the learning steps and model. They may choose a learning approach and the steps depend on students' needs.

g. Assessments

Both the 2013 curriculum and the *Merdeka* curriculum have different aspects in terms of assessment. Assessment in the 2013 curriculum involves formative and summative assessments to improve students' learning outcomes. It includes

the three domains namely attitudes (affective), knowledge (cognitive), and skill (psychomotor). On the other hand, the *Merdeka* curriculum is divided into three types of assessments such as diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. Firstly, the students get a diagnostic assessment in the first or second meeting to identify students' psychological condition, emotional condition, and learning style. Secondly, formative assessment is taken to know some obstacles that students face along the learning process and make improvements. Lastly, summative assessment aims to evaluate students' learning achievements.

h. Learning resources

The textbook is commonly used by teachers as a learning resource. In the 2013 curriculum, textbooks can be guidelines for teachers in the teaching and learning process. Both the teachers and students have their own textbooks which include detailed instructions and it cannot be changed. They also can use non-textbooks as a supported resource from the internet (e-book). Nevertheless, the learning resources in the *Merdeka* curriculum can be anything else that is relevant for students. It not only comes from a textbook, but also online resources can be used as long as the resources are accessible for the students. Moreover, the learning sources can be developed by teachers such as *Modul Ajar* and *Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran* (Amri, 2024).

C. The Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum

According to the guidelines for implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in educational institutions, as issued by the BSKAP of the Ministry of Education and Culture, there are three stages to the curriculum implementation process: planning, implementation, and evaluation (Nafik, 2023).

1. Planning

The initial step in executing the Merdeka Curriculum is planning. This involves establishing written objectives aligned with the education unit's vision and mission. The planning stage comprises various phases, including creating the Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP), Teaching Modules, and enhancing educational resources.

2. Implementation

The second step in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum is to implement the plan. This includes incorporating planning into the implementation process with guidance and motivation, ensuring that each participant can carry out their tasks according to their roles, duties, and responsibilities to the best of their abilities. This stage has various exceptional measures, 22 including using Pancasila student profiles, student-centered learning, merging evaluations into learning, and teaching based on student learning levels.

3. Evaluation

According to Aisyah (2022), the evaluation phase involves evaluating something through specific criteria to produce the essential data or information set.

We can facilitate this learning by tailoring the course content to each student's current knowledge. This differentiation aims to ensure that all students reach the set learning objectives.

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2022c), the following is an overview of the learning implementation cycle:

a. Educators assess at the beginning of learning whether each

student is ready to learn the material they have designed.

b. Based on the assessment results, educators change plans and make adjustments for some students.

c. Implement learning and monitor learning progress using various formative assessment methods.

d. Conduct a final evaluation of learning to determine how learning objectives have been achieved. This assessment can be used as the first assessment in subsequent learning.

Many changes have been implemented and evaluated in learning due to the transition from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum. Several new ideas have been presented to improve teacher and student performance, including Learning Objectives Flow (ATP), Teaching Modules (MA), Learning Outcomes (AP), Learning Objective Criteria (KKTP), Pancasila Student Profile, diagnostic assessment, and reflection teachers and students (Hardanie, 2022). These changes inspire teachers to continually learn and adapt to effectively integrate new educational approaches, such as self-directed curricula.

1. **Pancasila Learner Profile**

Kemdikbudristek, (2022) mentioned that *profil pelajar Pancasila* is the goal in Kurikulum Merdeka which concerns students to have character and competence to strengthen Pancasila values. It is in line with national education goals as stated in Law No. 20 year 2003. Also, education does not ignore paying attention to developing character and competence of Indonesian students.

Based on these considerations, *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* consists of six dimensions, namely: 1) faith, fear of God Almighty, and noble character, 2)

independence, 3) cooperation, 4) global diversity, 5) critical thinking, and 6) creativity. Furthermore, each dimension of Profil Pelajar Pancasila will be explained more as follows: (Budhi, 2023)

1) Faith, Fear of God Almighty, and Noble Character *(Beriman, Bertakwa Kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, dan Berahlak Mulia)*

Indonesian students who have faith, devotion to the faith, fear of God Almighty, and noble character are students who exhibit moral behavior in their relationship with the Almighty. Indonesian students understand the teachings of their religion and beliefs and apply this understanding in their daily lives (Kemdikbud, 2022).

2) Global Diversity (*Berkebhinekaan Global*)

Indonesian students maintain their noble culture, locality, and identity, and remain open-minded in interacting with other cultures, thereby fostering a sense of mutual respect and the possibility of forming a new culture that is positive and does not conflict with the nation's noble culture (Kemdikbud, 2022).

3) Mutual Cooperation (*Bergotong Royong*)

Indonesian students can work together, namely, the ability to carry out activities together voluntarily so that the activities carried out run smoothly, easily, and lightly (Kemdikbud, 2022).

4) Independence (*Mandiri*)

Indonesian students are Merdeka students, namely students who are responsible for their learning processes and outcomes (Kemdikbud,2022). Furthermore, Merdeka learners possess critical thinking skills and the ability to make informed decisions.

5) Critical Thinking (*Bernalar Kritis*)

Indonesian students who think critically can objectively process both qualitative and quantitative information, build relationships between various information, analyze information, and evaluate and conclude it (Kemdikbud, 2022).

6) Creative (*Kreatif*)

Creativity is the last dimension of *Profil Pelajar Pancasila.* Creative students can modify and produce something original, meaningful, useful, and impactful (Kemdikbud, 2022).

Making Merdeka curriculum learning plans, namely that SMK Tri Mitra - Karawang teachers already understand and can make Merdeka curriculum learning plans with steps:

a. Analysis of Learning Outcomes

Learning outcome analysis activities are the first step in planning learning, by analyzing learning outcomes it is hoped that teachers can determine competencies, materials, and learning objectives to the maximum according to the phase stages at each level of education.

b. Flow of Learning Objectives

After analyzing the learning outcomes, from the learning objectives that have been made, the flow of learning objectives is carried out for reference in the development of teaching tools, namely teaching modules

c. Assessment.

The assessment carried out is a diagnostic assessment, which is an assessment carried out by the teacher to determine the initial competence of students. The teacher carries out formative assessment at the beginning of learning until the end of learning at each meeting. Summative assessment is carried out by the teacher to measure the ability of students after the end of one material, or the end of the semester. After the three stages are carried out, the teacher makes the teaching module according to the components that have been determined (Apriyanti, 2023).

2. Rahmatan Lil Alamin Learner Profile Value

The value of Rahmatan lil Alamin is the principles of attitudes and perspectives in practicing religion so that the pattern of religion in the context of nation and state runs properly so that the general benefit is maintained along with protection of humanity in religion. An endeavor to maintain traditions and sow friendly and moderate religious ideas.... The idea of Rahmatan lilAlamin is actually one of the options for maintaining Indonesia's diversity without having to uproot existing traditions and cultures. Developing the concept of moderate religion among the people is very important, especially in Indonesia. Because in this country there are many schools of religion, diverse mindsets, and multi-ethnicity.

As a country based on the philosophy of Pancasila, Pancasila can be seen as one of the manifestations of Rahmatan lil Alamin. Many of the noble values in Pancasila are in harmony with religious teachings. Religion and Pancasila, which are built harmoniously in the Indonesian democratic system, are proven and are expected to

continue to be able to ward off the virus of political radicalism, religion, ethnicity and so on.

The student profile of Rahmatan Lil alamin is based on 10 values. The ten values are: Civilized (Ta'addub), Exemplary (Qudwah), Citizenship and nationality (Muwaṭanah), Tolerance (Tasāmuh), Shura, Fairwa I`tidal (consistent), Tawazun, Tawasuth, Equality (Musawwa), Dynamic and Innovative (Tathawwur wa Ibtikar). These values contain character values and behaviors that can be observed, familiarized, and evaluated by teachers so that they can form a profile of students who are praiseworthy, tolerant, and become good citizens.

The principles of P5-PPRA include: Holistic Principles, Contextual Principles, Learner-Centered Principles, Explorative Principles, Collaborative Principles, Diversity Principles, Independence Principles, Benefit Principles, Religious Principles (Nur'aini, 2023).

Table 1.1. Rahmatan Lil Alamin Learner Profile Values

Dimension	Element	supplement
Believing, obeying the Almighty, and having a noble character	Religious morality	Knowing and loving the One True God
		Understanding of religion/belief
	Personal morality	Performing worship rituals

		Integrity
	Human morality	Taking care of oneself physically, mentally, and spiritually
		Prioritizing similarities with others and respecting differences
	Moral to nature	Empathizing with others
		Understanding the interconnectedness of Earth's ecosystems
	Moral to the country	Safeguarding the surrounding natural environment
		Carrying out rights and obligations as an Indonesian citizen.

3. Teaching Module

Formulated by the Education Development Agency of the Ministry of Education and Culture (in Kosasih 2021: 19-20) states, "The teaching module is a unit of the smallest teaching and learning program which very specifically states the following: a) general instructional objectives that will be supported by their achievement; b) the type that will be used as the basis for the teaching and learning process; c) specific instructional objectives to be achieved by students; d) the main material to be studied and taught; e) the position and function of the unit (module) in a broader program unit; f) the role of educators in the teaching and learning process; g) tools and sources to be used; h) learning activities that must be carried out and observed by students in sequence; i) worksheets that must be filled in by students; j) evaluation program that will be carried out by students during the learning process. Then according to Daryanto (2013: 9), the module is a form of teaching material that is packaged as a whole and systematically, in which it contains a set of learning experiences that are planned and designed to help students master specific learning objectives (Salsabillah et al., 2023).

Before compiling teaching modules, teachers must know the teaching module development strategy by paying attention to several criteria that teaching modules must have and learning activities in teaching modules must be by the principles of learning and assessment. The criteria that must be owned by the teaching module are. (1) essential, namely understanding the concepts of each subject through learning experiences and across disciplines. (2) interesting, meaningful, and challenging, that

is, the module can foster interest in learning and involve students actively in the learning process, related to their prior knowledge and experience so that it is not too complex, but also not too easy for their age stage. (3) relevant and contextual, that is, the module is related to prior knowledge and experience, as well as by the context of time and the environment of the learners. (4) sustainable, that is, the module has a flow of learning activities by the learning phase of the learner.

There are steps in developing teaching modules in the Merdeka curriculum (Salsabillah et al., 2023)

1. Analyze students, teachers, and teaching units on their conditions and needs. At this stage the teacher can identify the problems that arise in learning, the teacher can analyze the conditions and needs of students in learning so that the teaching modules designed are accurate with the problems that exist in learning and make the learning process interesting and fun.

2. Conduct specific diagnostic assessments to identify the competencies, strengths, and weaknesses of students. At this stage, teachers will identify learners' readiness before learning.

3. Identify and determine the profile of Pancasila learners who will be achieved after the learning process. At this stage, the teacher can identify the needs of students and refer to character education. The Pancasila learner profile can essentially be achieved by doing a project. Therefore, teachers must be able to design time allocations to be in line with the dimensions of the Pancasila learner profile program.

4. Developing teaching modules that are sourced from the Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP), the Flow is by the Learning Outcomes. The essence of this stage

is the development of material as well as developing material on the lesson plan (RPP).

5. Designing types, techniques, and instruments for assessment. Teachers can determine the instruments that can be used for assessment based on three national assessment instruments, namely the minimum competency assessment, character survey, and learning environment survey.

6. The teaching module is organized based on the components that have been determined.

7. Teachers can determine some essential components that suit learning needs. Some existing components can be used according to the needs of students in the learning process.

8. Essential components can be elaborated in learning activities.

9. After applying the previous stages, the module is ready to use.

10. Evaluate the teaching module. The teacher will evaluate the teaching module that has been implemented to find out the students' achievement of the objectives in the teaching module and as an improvement to the teaching module in the next learning activity.

4. Assessment of the Merdeka curriculum

Assessment is a procedure that a teacher uses to evaluate and track his students' progress (Brown, 2004). Based on the guidelines from the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia, Kurikulum Merdeka has two kinds of assessment. They are formative assessment and summative assessment (Anggraena et al., 2022). Formative assessment comes first. It attempts to observe and improve the learning process. In addition, it aims to evaluate the accomplishment of learning objectives.

The next following assessment is summative. On the contrary to formative assessment, summative assessment is considered as the evaluation at the end of the semester, end of the school year, and or end of the level. In primary and secondary school, the goal is to determine whether a student will graduate from an educational unit from how well his achievement to learning outcome. The achievement of student learning outcomes is by comparing the student learning outcome accomplishment with the standard learning objectives. Summative assessment can be done at the end of learning, for instance after one material, which may include one or more learning objectives, at the end of the semester or phase.

Teachers must understand the Learning Objectives Flow (ATP), teaching modules (MA), project modules, and even how to assess student progress when implementing the Merdeka curriculum (Nurhidayat et al., 2022). This demonstrates the crucial role of educators in achieving the country's educational goals, so they must concentrate on realizing their potential to the maximum.

5. Differentiated Learning

Learning is done using assessment at the beginning, during, and end of the process; understanding students' needs and circumstances to adjust learning approaches; emphasizing student progress over curriculum coverage and mastery; and involving collaborative reflection with other educators on students' learning development. Learning in the Merdeka curriculum is carried out with varied or differentiated learning according to the student's level of understanding or competence. Because learning styles can develop, differentiation here means being grouped in learning styles but differentiated in teaching materials and methods that

vary (Ginanto et al., 2024). Teachers should understand that different strategies are required when applying differentiated learning. They must address three main elements in differentiated instruction: content, process, and product. To effectively implement differentiated learning, teachers should use various methods to deliver the material. This includes planning and organizing instructional resources, activities, and assignments for both in-school and at-home work, and creating final assessments that match students' readiness, interests, and preferences (Gusteti & Neviyarni, 2022).

The following are some essential parts of differential learning: curriculum adjustment, variations in teaching methods, diverse assessments, additional material provision, collaboration and group work, choice provision, and special planning. Some critical aspects of differentiated learning include curriculum adjustment, variations in teaching methods, diverse assessments, provision of additional materials, collaboration, group work, specific options, and planning. Strategies that can be applied in differentiated learning include:

a. Content Differentiation: Present learning materials at various depths so that students can understand them according to their different levels of understanding.

b. Process Differentiation: Using various learning methods and strategies to meet the needs of different students.

c. Product Differentiation: Giving students a choice in expressing and demonstrating their knowledge (Labudasari et al., 2023).

Under the Merdeka Curriculum, students are encouraged to be more creative, allowing teachers to implement differentiated learning (Mahfudz, 2023). Teachers employ various teaching methods to meet the individual needs of each student, which may include learning styles, interests, and subject understanding. Differentiated

learning allows teachers to engage with students according to their knowledge level and learning preferences, creating a challenging and stimulating learning environment. This means teachers continually monitor progress, identify specific learning needs, and adapt their teaching methods accordingly. Subban (2006) suggests that in differentiated classrooms, teachers should engage students by tapping into their interests and involving them in classroom activities.

Research by Merliza et al. (2023) found that workshops on differentiated learning for the Merdeka Curriculum received positive feedback from participants, who demonstrated a thorough understanding of learner-centered teaching strategies (Syafira Ahmad et al., 2024).

D. English Language Teaching and Learning

English language teaching (ELT) carried out in schools refers to the regulations of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia which regulate the guidelines for curriculum implementation in the context of learning recovery (Mendikbudristek, 2022b) where English is the main subject that students must learn. This is because English is one of the dominant languages used globally (Crystal, 2016) both in the aspects of education, business, economics, and so on, and is lingua franca (Harmer, 2017). ELT has become an intrinsic part of the Indonesian educational system (Jon et al., 2021).

By learning English, students can have great opportunities to communicate and interact using various types of texts, both spoken and written. In learning English objectives released by Mendikbudristek, (2022a), it is stated that learning English is focused on strengthening the ability to use English in six language skills, namely

listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting in an integrated manner, in various types of texts (Mubarok et al., 2023).

1. **Definition of English language teaching**

English is spoken in most countries either as a second language or foreign language in any field, namely science, economics, technology, law, health, social, and culture. According to Aufa (2018), the main difference between English as a second and a foreign language is the usage. English as a second language means that it is frequently used for daily communication, for instance, Malaysian people who have a national language is *Malay or Bahasa Malaysia* often speak English for everyday conversations. Whereas, if English is rarely spoken in society for daily conversation, it is called English as a foreign language.

English is taught to Indonesian students at almost every educational level, namely in kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and university levels. Teaching English in Indonesia is classified as English as a foreign language because the majority of Indonesian people do not speak English for everyday usage. The purpose of learning English is to get information from all over the world as English is a global language. Moreover, there are two ways to acquire English, namely learning acquisitions and language learning Aufa (2018). Learning acquisition is subconscious and natural process of babies acquire their first language from their parents or relatives. However, language learning is conscious and optional process included theoretical explanations from a teacher (Hussain, 2017). Learning English is the ability to express thoughts and feelings either in written or oral forms in English

2. English Subject Objectives

According to (Kemendikbud, 2021) on the Merdeka Mengajar platform, English subjects aim to ensure students can do the following things:

a. Developing communicative competence in English through various modes of communication such as oral, written, visual, and audiovisual

b. Communication is crucial, as is developing intercultural competence to comprehend and value Indonesian and foreign cultural outlooks, practices, and goods.

c. Building self-confidence in expressing oneself as Merdeka and

d. Responsible individuals are equally significant, along with the development of critical and creative thinking abilities.

3. Characteristics of English Subjects

Below are the characteristics of English subjects based on (Kemendikbud, 2021):

a. Several types of texts commonly taught in general English, including narratives, descriptions, expositions, procedures, arguments, discussions, specialized texts such as short messages and advertisements, and authentic texts. Various texts are presented in written, spoken, visual, audio, and multimodal forms. These texts include authentic and instructional examples, ranging from single to multiple texts produced on paper or screen. The objective is to promote students' technological literacy, enhancing their proficiency in navigating digital information.

b. Teachers can choose the text they want to teach based on classroom conditions. Students can start learning from texts with topics they already know, to understand what they read and produce this type of text orally or in writing. Then, teachers

can introduce students to new text types. The teacher can assist students in comprehending new text forms, enabling them to generate verbal and written works in such formats. The variety of text forms can adapt to circumstances commonly encountered by the students, such as those within school or home settings, facilitating real-world application and practice.

c. The learning process should be centered on the learner. It should focus on modifying students' behavior due to their inability 18 use English in the six language skills across various text types. General English learning concentrates on students' language skills at different stages of their language development. It covers receptive skills such as listening, reading, and viewing, as well as productive skills such as speaking, writing, and presenting.

4. English Learning model

   a. The Genre-Based Approach (GBA)

The Genre-Based Approach (GBA), also known as the Text-Based Approach, is a method of language teaching and learning that focuses on understanding and producing texts of a specific genre. This approach involves analyzing the characteristics of the text and its relationship to the context in which it is used (Masyitoh, 2024).

Genre Based Approach (GBA) the teacher must conduct several steps in teaching reading comprehension. According to Hammond's theory (1992), there are four stages of GBA. They are:

a. BKoF (Building Knowledge of the Field)

Building Knowledge of the Field (BKoF) refers to the process of building understanding and knowledge about the context, purpose, and characteristics of a particular genre text. At this stage, the teacher invites students to carry out activities such as building cultural context, sharing experiences, discussing vocabulary, and grammar patterns, and so on. All of these activities are directed at the types of oral texts and topics that will be discussed in the second stage. The teacher tries to connect the students' own experiences with the text to be studied. In other words, students are expected to bring their own experiences into the learning process.

b. MoT (Modelling of the Text)

Modeling of the Text (MoT) is the second stage of the genre-based approach. MOT refers to an educational strategy that aims to help students understand the characteristics and structure of various types of genre texts. At this stage, teachers and students discuss and explore the text and its main grammatical features together. The goal is for students to focus on the characteristics of the genre being targeted. Several examples of genre texts are analyzed so that students understand the structure and grammar of these genre texts. For example, if students are required to be able to write descriptive texts. During the BKoF stage, they might engage with shorter functional texts, dialogues, and monologues. In short, at this stage, students can listen, answer, and analyze text components.

c. JCoT (Joint Construction of the Text)

At this stage, the teacher applies scaffolding techniques, where the level of teacher support is adjusted to the student's cognitive abilities. Teachers provide prior

knowledge into students' practice. At this stage, students can develop target texts with teacher guidance so that they can work Merdekaly. Teachers gradually reduce their contribution to learning. In other words, the teacher only acts as a guide in learning activities. The main goal of JcoT is to train students to understand, develop, and ultimately produce texts that are appropriate to the genre being studied.

d. ICoT (Independent Construction of the Text)

Merdeka Construction of the Text is a complementary concept to Joint Construction of the Text. ICoT refers to activities in which students plan, compose, and produce texts in a particular genre Merdeka. At this stage, after collaborating with friends and teachers, students are encouraged to read what they discuss. Here, students develop their reading skills. In this final step, the teacher allows students to show what they have learned.

b. The Inquiry-Based Learning

Inquiry-based Learning is a learning model that emphasizes the process of thinking critically and analytically to seek and find answers to problems. and find their answers to a questionable problem.

1. Characteristics of the Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) Model.

   The characteristics of the Inquiry-Based Learning model are as follows:

   a. Asking questions or problems

   b. Interdisciplinary focus

   c. Authentic inquiry

   d. Production and exhibition of artifacts

e. Collaborative Inquiry-Based Learning

2. Steps of Inquiry-Based Learning Model (IBL)

The steps of implementing inquiry learning are very diverse and depend on the purpose of the inquiry. Learning by Inquiry, introduced by Albert Learning follows the following stages as follows;

a. Planning

In conducting a plan, teachers and students need to determine the topic, select learning resources or sources of information required before the learning takes place.

b. Retrieving information

Before conducting a lesson, teachers need to collect and select information that will be conveyed during learning, and after learning, it is necessary to evaluate the information to obtain the information needed.

c. Processing

Teachers can analyze the information obtained and find relationships and temporarily conclude from the observation.

d. Creating

Teachers can manage information by creating a learning environment to improve the quality of learning to be better.

e. Sharing

Teachers can communicate with students to explain the results of student performance in learning.

f. Evaluating

Teachers provide evaluation after the learning process using the Inquiry learning model. With the teacher's hope in evaluating learning, students are able to overcome other problems in learning. overcome other problems in learning (Istikomah, 2023).

3. The steps of the inquiry-based learning model are as follows;

   a. Students identify their needs through asking questions

   b. Students conduct an investigation or search of various materials to be studied

   c. Students determine each of their roles in investigating the material to be studied

   d. Students carry out reinforcement actions through group discussion and presentations, and carry out exercises on the students' worksheets

   e. Students are given an evaluation as a follow-up to the success of a learning process (Marlina, 2023)

In this model, education plays a role in the inquiry process, from setting the theme to evaluating. These include: First, open inquiry. Where, this learning teachers position themselves as facilitators during the learning process. The teacher can provide input and get involved in helping learners if requested. In the learning process, learners have the freedom to explore their investigations. There is their own initiative from the learners in solving a problem and finding the answer themselves. Second,

guided inquiry. Unlike open inquiry, the role of the teacher in guided inquiry starts from determining the theme and topic of the inquiry. inquiry starts from determining the theme and topic of inquiry that will be discussed. In addition, the teacher also helps develop questions that students will investigate. In this case, the teacher is involved in guiding from the beginning of the process to the end (Dasar et al., 2025).

The role of the educator in inquiry-based learning is crucial but different from traditional teaching. Educators no longer function as designers of learning experiences that encourage students to actively explore, ask questions, and find their own answers. Educators must be able to create a learning environment that supports the inquiry process, facilitates discussion, and guides students without giving direct answers (Rahmawati et al., n.d.).

IBL can be implemented at different levels(Duran & Dökme, 2016). Mackenzie (2016) explores the differences between four types of student inquiry – structured, controlled, guided, and free. He further explains that teachers usually begin the year in a structured inquiry model, move to controlled inquiry, then guided inquiry, and if all goes well, conclude the year with free inquiry. The following is a summary of four types of student inquiry:

a. Structured Inquiry: Students follow the lead of the teacher as the entire class engages on one inquiry together

b. Controlled Inquiry: The teacher chooses topics and identifies the resources students will use to answer the questions

c. Guided Inquiry: the teacher chooses topics and questions, and students design the product or solution

d. Free Inquiry: The students select their topics without reference to any prescribed outcome (Gholam, 2019)

Whereas Bybee et al. (2006), list five inquiry phases: Engagement, Exploration, Explanation, Elaboration, and Evaluation. The way an inquiry cycle is presented usually suggests an ordered sequence of stages. However, researchers explain that IBL is not a prescribed, uniform linear process (Pedaste et al., 2015). Peter and Stout (2011) adapt the 6E Model to inquiry, which is similar to the 5E ChInstructional Model by Bybee et al. (2006), but includes an additional component: E-learning. A summary of the 6E Instructional Model is provided in the table below (Peters & Stout, pp. 10-11):

Table 1.2, The 6E Instructional Model

Component	Characteristics
Engagement	The teacher or a curriculum task accesses the learners' prior knowledge and helps them become engaged in a new concept through the use of short activities that promote curiosity and elicit prior knowledge
Exploration	Exploration experiences provide students with a common base of activities within which current concepts (i.e., misconceptions), processes, and skills are identified and conceptual change is facilitated.
Explanation	The explanation phase focuses students' attention on a particular aspect of their engagement and exploration experiences and provides opportunities to demonstrate their conceptual understanding, process skills, or behaviors.

Elaboration	Teachers challenge and extend students' conceptual understanding and skills. Through new experiences, the students develop deeper and broader understanding, more information, and adequate skills. Students apply their understanding of the concept by conducting additional activities.
Evaluation	The evaluation phase encourages students to assess their understanding and abilities and provides opportunities for teachers to evaluate student progress toward achieving the educational objectives
E-Learning	This phase is infused throughout the model to enhance the technological skills of the learners while they do things such as gather information, engage in explorations, explain and communicate their findings.

The inquiry models provide a meaningful, coherent structure to help teachers plan, implement, and assess their instruction (Marshall, 2013).

To achieve English proficiency, the teaching and learning process must prioritize Trial and Error and encourage active participation and freedom to express opinions and ideas based on real-life situations. In essence, mastery of English includes listening, writing, speaking, and reading (Melli, 2016).

E. The Challenges in Implementing the Curriculum

Implementing a new curriculum often faces various challenges, such as the availability of resources, teacher readiness, and diverse student characteristics

(Nurcahyono & Putra, 2022). Some of the difficulties often faced by teachers in compiling and developing learning tools in the Independent Learning Curriculum include 1) Lack of understanding of the concept of the Independent Learning Curriculum: Many teachers still do not fully understand the concept and principles of the Independent Learning Curriculum, 2) Limited time and resources: Teachers often have a high workload and limited resources to develop quality learning tools, 3) Difficulty in designing interesting and meaningful learning, 4) Lack of support from schools: Not all schools provide sufficient support for teachers in developing learning tools, 5) Lack of training: Teachers may need more intensive training to be able to implement the Independent Learning Curriculum effectively, 6) Paradigm change: Teachers must adapt to a new paradigm in learning that is more centered on students, and 7) Preparation of teaching modules: It takes time and special skills to prepare quality teaching modules (Walid et al., 2024). The challenges that teachers often face in implementing the curriculum are at the level of preparation, implementation, and assessment (Sofiana & Mubarok, 2019). Some of them include the need for time for teachers to adjust to the different teaching approaches expected by the new curriculum (Nugroho & Narawaty, 2022).

Based on the explanation above the researcher observed the teacher's challenges in implementing the Merdeka curriculum in English language teaching and learning at MAN 3 Blitar.

1. The lack of teachers' understanding of the Merdeka curriculum

   The socialization that is only carried out digitally and the lack of face-to-face interaction in technical guidance make it difficult for teachers to adapt to the changing

digital era. In addition, teachers' personal experience in Merdeka learning is still minimal, influenced by limited past learning experiences.

2. Difficulty in designing interesting and meaningful learning

The teachers have difficulty in designing interesting and meaningful learning.

3. Limited time and resources

Teachers often do not finish the teaching module before teaching. Additionally, a teaching module is a part of successful learning and also a sign that the teacher is ready for teaching.The theory of solution

The solutions to overcome these challenges are to improve their competence, collaborate with other teachers, utilize technology, create learning communities, and seek references from various sources (Ayudia et al., 2023). The Merdeka Belajar curriculum provides opportunities for teachers to be more creative and innovative in designing learning. However, the implementation of this curriculum also requires strong support from various parties, including the government, schools, and teachers themselves (Walid et al., 2024).

Some solutions that teachers can do to overcome these difficulties include: a) Improving self-competence: Teachers need to take part in training and professional development to improve their understanding of the Independent Learning Curriculum and effective learning strategies, b) Collaborating with other teachers: Teachers can collaborate with other subject teachers or teachers from other schools to share experiences and ideas, c) Utilizing technology: Teachers can utilize various technologies to develop interesting and interactive learning tools, d) Creating a learning community: Teachers can form a learning community to support each other

and share information, Looking for references from various sources: Teachers can look for references from various sources such as books, journals, and the internet.

F. Previous Studies

Several previous studies are related to this research. First, *Zidan Rafi M., and Qamariah Zaitun, (2023)* carried out research entitled *"A literature study on the implementation of Merdeka curriculum"*. Merdeka curriculum also known as Merdeka study is this modern era's newest curriculum, as we know in this current world technology has been developed at the speed of light and also affects students' character toward studying and that is why the Merdeka curriculum is being made. This article's main purpose is to explain the format and implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in this modern era. It states that the main purpose of this curriculum is to use tech as a useful, (Muhammad Rafi Zidan & Zaitun Qamariah, 2023).

Second, *Parwiro Ali M., & Indraprastha Purnama S. (2023)* did research entitled *"Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum to Improve the Quality of Learning English"*. This research aims to analyze the application of the Merdeka curriculum in improving the quality of learning, especially English, and whether this approach can strengthen creativity and English language proficiency among educators and students, (Syahfitri Purnama & Pawiro, 2023).

Third, *Fauzan, Ansori M. A. R., Dannur M., Pratama A. & Artamain H. (2023)* did research entitled *"The Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Merdeka Curriculum) in Strengthening Student's Character in Indonesia"*. This research explains that the curriculum Merdeka gives students the ability to autonomously plan

and create learning strategies that suit their needs and environment(Fauzan, Ansori et al., 2023).

Fourth, *(Amelia, 2024)* did research entitled *" Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in English Subjects (a qualitative research SMP NEGERI 1 Caringin and MTSN Kota Bogor)"*. Research aims to discover the learning patterns in the Merdeka curriculum, the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in English subjects, and the difficulties and efforts made in implementing Merdeka curriculum. In the results of this study, related to learning patterns from two schools, differentiated learning or teachers identify the differences between each student in abilities, interests, and learning styles and learning that exposes students to real problems relevant to the learning context. There are two sides to implementing the Merdeka curriculum in English subjects: teachers and students. Last, the difficulties experienced and the efforts to overcome these difficulties also come from two sides: teachers and students. However, there are also efforts made by the government or schools that teachers perceive.

Fifth, *Sonzarni, Ismail A. M., Qolbiyah Aini (2022)* did research entitled *"Implementation of The Merdeka Learning Curriculum at The Driving School"*. This study aims to discuss the implementation of the Merdeka learning curriculum at the driving school. This research is a literature study that is sourced from library materials using a qualitative approach. In this case, the researcher explored several data sources, both primary data and secondary data with the following steps: reading and studying in-depth primary data such as books, journals, articles, theses, and dissertations related to the discussion of the Merdeka learning curriculum at the driving school. This study concludes that the existence of facilities and infrastructure supports the

implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in driving schools. (Aini Qolbiyah et al., 2022).

Sixth, *Ulfa S. M.* (2024) did research entitled "*Merdeka Curriculum in High School: Its Implementation and Teachers' Challenges in English Language Learning Classroom*". The changing of the new Merdeka Curriculum at schools especially in high schools brings various impacts to the process that happened in the classroom language learning. That is why, it is important to take a deeper sight of the implementation of it and also teachers' challenges. The purpose of this study was to depict the implementation of the new curriculum, namely an Merdeka curriculum, and also, the teachers' challenges inside the English language classroom (Ulfa, 2024).

This research differs from previous studies as it focuses on the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, the challenges, and the strategies for overcoming the challenges in English teaching and learning at MAN 3 Blitar. This research also shares similarities with previous studies that explain the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum contributes to increasing the quality of the school.