

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Recently, there have been a lot of papers explaining the curriculum which is basically a learning material for researcher to develop educational development. The curriculum becomes very important after the many phenomena that occur in the world that require education to adapt the best curriculum. As stated by Ojong and Enyimba it is necessary for education in the world to regulate the education system, guide school activities, learning processes and academic staff to achieve their goals and objectives efficiently.¹ Budiyanto also stated that the curriculum is one of the best and most appropriate standards for organizing and driving teaching and learning activities and processes. Therefore Budiyanto added that it is important for the government and education stakeholders to be creative, smart, innovative, critical in paying attention to the curriculum so that it fits the needs of students, teachers and schools.²

¹ Maduka Enyimba, "The Role of Curriculum and Development in Teaching and Learning : A Critical The Role of Curriculum and Development in Teaching and Learning : A Critical Appraisal" 1 (2019): 94–96.

² Budiyanto, "Language as a Dynamic System," *JournalNX- A Multidisciplinary Peer Reviewed Journal* 6, no. 8 (2020): 10–18.

In Indonesia, after the COVID-19 pandemic occurred in recent years, the government has been intensively socializing the merdeka curriculum, especially at the lower education level to higher education, both of which are required to adapt the merdeka curriculum as the curriculum implemented in schools.³ This is based on policy considerations issued by the Minister of Culture, Research and Technology (Mendikbudristek) as one of the efforts made by the government during the learning crisis, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia.⁴ The interests and needs of students are known as the Merdeka Curriculum which is still related and is part of the Program Merdeka Belajar.⁵ As the name suggests, the Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum that seeks to liberate students and teachers in learning process and activities.⁶ Learning processes and activities are related to each other as described by Baharun and Syafiqiyah learning activities or processes related to the development of curriculum goals as one of the main

³ Eko Purwanti, "Preparing the Implementation of *Merdeka Belajar* – Kampus *Merdeka* Policy in Higher Education Institutions" 518, no. ICoSIHESS 2020 (2021): 384–391.

⁴ Dedi Riyan Rizaldi and Ziadatul Fatimah, "*Merdeka* Curriculum: Characteristics and Potential in Education Recovery after the COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC-ND) ([Http://Creativecommons.Org/Licenses/by-Nc-Nd/4.0/](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/))," *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction* 15, no. 1 (2022): 260–271, <https://orcid.org/0000-0000-0000-0000>.

⁵ Sukron Mazid, Sauqi Futaqi, and Farikah Farikah, "The Concept of 'Freedom of Learning' in a Multicultural Education Perspective," *Ta'dib* 24, no. 1 (2021): 70.

⁶ Antara, "Mendikbudristek: Konsep *Merdeka Belajar* Beri Kesempatan Peserta Didik Untuk Berinovasi," *Edukasi.Okezone.Com*, last modified 2021, accessed December 1, 2022, <https://edukasi.okezone.com/read/2021/08/10/65/2453708/mendikbudristek-konsep-merdeka-belajar-beri-kesempatan-peserta-didik-untuk-berinovasi>.

components of the curriculum.⁷ Besides that the activity or learning process is the result of curriculum implementation as stated by Tukiran and Rudi Wijaya.⁸

Fakhrurrazi defines the learning process or it can also be said as a process that involves teachers and students with goals that can be achieved efficiently and effectively.⁹ Munna and Abul Kalam added that the teaching and learning process is defined as the process of transferring knowledge from teachers to students. It is also referred to as a combination of learning elements in the process in which an educator determines and analyzes learning objectives and implements teaching and learning strategies by developing teaching resources.¹⁰ In the learning process activities, the curriculum is important because it serves as a guideline for achieving targets in learning and with a curriculum, learning activities and processes become effective and facilitate each teacher in teaching and learning activities.¹¹ The relationship between the two forms the basis of an interesting research, namely between learning processes and merdeka curriculum as research material.

⁷ Hasan Baharun and Syafiqiyah Adhimiy, "Curriculum Development Through Creative Lesson Plan," *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 16, no. 1 (2018): 41.

⁸ Tukiran and Muhammad Rudi Wijaya, "Implementation of Curriculum Content Through Learning Planning," *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling* 4, no. 3 (2022): 209–215.

⁹ Fakhrurrazi Fakhrurrazi, "Hakikat Pembelajaran Yang Efektif," *At-Ta'fikir* 11, no. 1 (2018): 85–99.

¹⁰ Afzal Sayed Munna and Md Abul Kalam, "Teaching and Learning Process to Enhance Teaching Effectiveness: Literature Review," *International Journal of Humanities and Innovation (IJHI)* 4, no. 1 (2021): 1–4.

¹¹ Arif Wahyudi, "Curriculum Development," *Journal Of Islamic Education (JIE)* 11, no. 2 (2017): 173–194.

The Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has been previously evaluated using descriptive qualitative. However, the focus and results of these studies are different. For Examples Prastowo found that the implementation of the merdeka curriculum received positive results, especially the focus on assessments.¹² It was supported by Shadri et al.,¹³ While, Rizki and Fahkrunisa received negative, especially about the readiness of the teacher.¹⁴ Tricahyati and Zaim also expressed their agreement based on the results of quantitative data showing that teachers experienced problems in formulating learning outcomes and applying differentiated learning during the teaching and learning process.¹⁵ In addition, in a different curriculum phenomena. Researcher also found that the learning process was not carried out optimally in the implementation of the 2013 curriculum studied by Nurkhamidah, this also had an impact on the assessment process which had not been implemented optimally.¹⁶ Contrary to the results of

¹² Rofiatius Surul Andi Prastowo, "Analysis of The Implementation of *Merdeka* Curriculum Assessment Assessment in English Courses at Elementary School," *CREW Journal* 1, no. 2 (2023): 57–68.

¹³ Robby Shadri et al., "Assessment in the *Merdeka* Curriculum: How Are the Teachers' Perspectives on It? Penilaian Dalam Kurikulum *Merdeka*: Bagaimana Perspektif Guru Dalam Pelaksanaannya?," *Jurnal PAJAR (Pendidikan dan Pengajaran)* 7, no. 1 (2023): 202–209, <http://dx.doi.org/10.33578/pjr.v7i1.9127>.

¹⁴ Reffy Ananda Rizki and Lulu Fahkrunisa, "Evaluation of Implementation of *Merdeka* Curriculum," *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogic Studies (JCPS)* 1, no. 4 (2022): 32–41, <https://e-journal.lp2m.uinjambi.ac.id/ojp/index.php/jcps>.

¹⁵ Sania Tricahyati and M Zaim, "English Teachers' Readiness in Implementation of '*Merdeka* Belajar' Curriculum in Teaching English at Junior High School in Padang" 12, no. 1 (2023): 97–105.

¹⁶ Nurkhamidah, "English Learning Process On The Implementation Of Curriculum 2013 At The Students Seventh Grade Of SMP Negeri 1 Sumber" (IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, 2017). P

research conducted by Bulan et.al., the results of this study indicate that the process of learning English using the 2013 curriculum is carried out very well.¹⁷

This research is in several ways similar to the research "The Implementation of *Merdeka* Curriculum in English Teaching Learning at The Seventh Grade Of SMPIT Insan Mulia Surakarta in The Academic Year 2022/2023" by Sari, but differs in many ways. For example: the research conducted by Sari was conducted at SMPIT which used a separate school policy in implementing merdeka curriculum, especially in learning activities. This made the results of this study slightly different, especially in the application of merdeka curriculum in the learning process. In addition, the research conducted by Sari used 2 classes as the subject under study with class observations conducted 2 times in 2 classes without using the time allocation specified in the teaching module and also focused on the problems faced by teachers in implementing the merdeka curriculum in class.¹⁸ While the research conducted by the researcher this time was carried out at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung as sekolah penggerak and focused on class VII D and was observed during 5 meetings according to the time allocation in the teacher's teaching module. In addition, the stages of the learning process at the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages in this study are explained in more detail based on the teacher's guidebook in implementing the

¹⁷ Arif Bulan, Maman Suryaman, and Mardiah, "The Process of English Language Teaching in the 2013 Curriculum," *VELES Voices of English Language Education Society* 4, no. 1 (2020): 85–93.

¹⁸ Yanuarti Apsari, "Teachers' Problems and Solutions in Implementing Curriculum 2013," *Acuity: Journal of English Language Pedagogy, Literature and Culture* 3, no. 1 (1970): 11–23.

merdeka curriculum. And also focuses on the teachers' perspective in implementing the *merdeka* curriculum at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung in terms of readiness, solutions, obstacles/challenges and advantages/advantages.

Researcher presents a new phenomenon, namely *merdeka* curriculum related to the learning process as the focus of research. In addition, researcher also examined teachers' perspective on the *merdeka* curriculum carried out at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung which was selected as sekolah penggerak and one of the schools implementing the merdeka curriculum in Pandeglang. The results of this study are expected to contribute as a reference for researcher and educators, especially in the implementation of the merdeka curriculum in the learning process in the classroom. Based on the statement above, it can be seen that the purpose of this research is to describe learning processes and activities based on the implementation of the *merdeka* curriculum and the perspectives of teachers in implementing merdeka curriculum using a qualitative descriptive research entitled "*Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in English Learning Processes at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung*"

B. Identification of Problems

Based on the explanation of the background study above, here are some problem identifications below:

1. The phenomenon of the best curriculum has become a hot topic after the pandemic and the *merdeka* curriculum was used as a solution from the government in overcoming the learning crisis in Indonesia
2. The existence of a new curriculum phenomenon makes the learning process adapt to applying new roles. Starting from the learning tools prepared by the teacher, how the core activities of the learning process, and how the process of evaluation or assessment carried out by the teacher.
3. Implementation of the *merdeka* curriculum at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung in one of class VII, from the learning Planning, Learning Process and Evaluation.
4. Teachers' perspectives on the implementation of the *merdeka* curriculum in learning processes and activities at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung

C. Scopes and Limitations of The Research

The research entitled "Implementation of The *Merdeka* Curriculum In English Learning Processes at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung" will be limited to several studies:

- 1) First, this research will describe the implementation of the *merdeka* curriculum in the seventh grade English learning process by conducting classroom observations in class VII D and documentation. The learning process in question includes: learning planning, learning activities, and

learning assessment which are arranged in teaching modules on the subject topic "He is a Footballer" which is created by the teacher based on the *merdeka* curriculum of class observation and documentation.

- 2) Second, The researcher also wants to know the perspective of the seventh grade English teacher and the vice principal of SMPN 1 Karangtanjung as well as the curriculum teacher which includes the implementation of the *merdeka* curriculum at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung, implementation of learning activities in class, readiness, obstacles/challenges and solutions to implementing the *merdeka* curriculum in the classroom environment. In this case, students are only objects of class participation and do not include students as interview sources.

This research only focuses on English teacher at VII D class and the vice principal who also serve as curriculum teachers as well as seventh grade English teachers at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung who were used as interview sources.

D. Research Question

Based on the background of study above, the researcher formulates the following goals of the research:

1. How is the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in the English learning processes in class VII D of SMPN 1 Karangtanjung?

2. What are the teachers' perspectives on the implementation of the *merdeka* curriculum at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung?

E. Objectives of Study

1. To describe the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in the English learning processes in class VII D of SMPN 1 Karangtanjung
2. To describe the teachers' perspectives on the implementation of the *merdeka* curriculum in learning processes at SMPN 1 Karangtanjung

F. Significances of Study

This research is important to see from two points of view, namely theoretical and practical. Theoretically, this research will increase knowledge and understanding of the independent curriculum as an independent curriculum in the learning process. And practically, this research is important for many parties, such as:

1. For majors

This research provides new understanding for departments that are currently adapting MBKM because it discusses the current phenomenal curriculum being implemented in many educational institutes after the learning crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic, namely the independent curriculum. It is hoped that this research can be a reflection for the

department in evaluating the curriculum, learning planning, learning activities and assessment

2. For students

This research provides in-depth information about learning processes in real driving school environments and shows the large role of teachers in dealing with curriculum changes. It is hoped that this research will become a foundation for students as English teachers in the future in preparing themselves to become English teachers who are competent, adaptable, smart to innovate and creative in dealing with problems.

3. For further research.

This research presents a new phenomenon regarding the independent curriculum which is useful for a deeper understanding of the independent curriculum in the learning process. This research can be a reference for further research in exploring more about the independent curriculum phenomenon in various research focuses.

G. Previous Study

There are some previous studies that were conducted by several researcher:

First study, entitled "*Vocational high school English teachers' perspectives on "merdeka belajar"*" by Anita Kusuma Pertiwi and Ririn Pusparini in 2021. The results of data processing show that not all teachers understand the concept of Freedom to Learn. The results of data processing also show that the implementation

of lesson plan 1 sheet by the teacher has not met the expectations of Freedom to Learn. There are several statements that are different from what the subject wrote on the questionnaire and during the interview. But overall, all participants fully support the implementation of *Merdeka Belajar*. In their research, Pertiwi and Ririn emphasized that in short, the learning concepts applied in several schools were not all understood by teachers equally due to several factors, for example due to the lack of direct socialization from the government.¹⁹

The second study, entitled "*Teachers' perception on the new policy called merdeka learning: a page of lesson plans*" Reiga Wierna Aulia in 2021. The results of the study show that teachers agree that these 3 components are the most important components to be included in preparing lesson plans. The results of the study also show that although some of them think additional attachments are still needed, while others think it would be better if they were prepared and had some kind of lesson plan that was simple but the points were right.²⁰

The Third Study, entitled "*Implementation Merdeka Curriculum of Learning to Students' Learning Activities*" The result of the research reveals that visual learning-style dominates 47%, kinesthetic learning style is 37% and auditory learning-style covers 16%. The subject of the reasearch is students of class 7B of

¹⁹ Anita Kusuma Pertiwi and Ririn Pusparini, "Vocational High School English Teachers' Perspectives On 'Merdeka Belajar' Curriculum," *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 3, no. 5 (2021): 1982–1992, <https://edukatif.org/index.php/edukatif/article/view/672>.page 1

²⁰ Wierna Aulia Aulia, "Teachers' Perception on The New Policy Called *Merdeka Belajar*; a Page of Lesson Plan," *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Manajemen Islam* 14, no. 02 (2021): 1966–1980.

SMPN 3 Lubuk Pakam. The observation result shows that implementation of *Merdeka* Curriculum relates to students' activities in the learning process effectively.

The fourth study, entitled “*The Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum In English Teaching Learning at The Seventh Grade of Smpit Insan Mulia Surakarta In The Academic Year 2022/2023*” by Arum Ambar Sari in 2023. The results of the study show that the *Merdeka* Curriculum has been implemented in English teaching learning. The teacher has also implemented a learning cycle and conducted an assessment based on the *Merdeka* Curriculum. Learning components in the form of objectives, materials, methods, media and evaluation have been fulfilled in English teaching learning. The problem faced by the teacher are the limited time to design differentiated learning based on the individual needs of students and the teacher cannot maintain student enthusiasm until the end of the lesson.²¹

The last study, entitled “*Implementing Curriculum 2013 in English Lesson at SMPN 52 Makassar,*” by Muhammad Iqbal Maliang in 2022. the research conducted by Maliang showed that English teachers had implemented the 2013 curriculum in class well. Then prepare learning tools that are in accordance with the 2013 curriculum standards. This can be proven by the formation of learning tools.²²

²¹ Arum Ambar Sari, “The Implementation of *Merdeka* Curriculum In English Teaching Learning at The Seventh Grade of Smpit Insan Mulia Surakarta In The Academic Year 2022/2023,” *UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta* (UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, 2023), <http://eprints.iain-surakarta.ac.id/id/eprint/6366>.

²² Muhammad Iqbal Maliang, “Implementing Curriculum 2013 in English Lesson at SMPN 52 Makassar,” *Repository.Unibos.Ac.Id* (Universitas Bosowa, 2022), [https://repository.unibos.ac.id/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/1961/2022 MUHAMMAD IQBAL MALIANG 4518101021.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://repository.unibos.ac.id/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/1961/2022%20MUHAMMAD%20IQBAL%20MALIANG%204518101021.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

H. The Organization of Writing

Chapter I is Introduction. In this chapter, the researcher put some points including Background of study, Identification of Problem, Scopes and limitation of the research, Research Question, Objectives of the Study, Significances of Study, Previous Study and The Organization of Writing.

Chapter II is Theoretical Framework. This chapter consists of some theories from some experts who have conducted the research related to this research.

Chapter III is Research Methodology. This chapter consists of Research Method, Place and Time of Study, Instrumet, Population and Sample, and Data Collection and Data Analysis.

Chapter IV is Findings and Discussion. This chapter consists of some points including Research Findings and discussion

Chapter V is Conclusion and Suggestion. This chapter consists of conclusion and suggestion.