CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Study

Indonesia's educational system has changed significantly in the last few decades, particularly with the adoption of the *Merdeka* Curriculum. This curriculum emphasizes the value of a more personalized, relevant, and contextual learning process by giving pupils the freedom of choosing their own learning paths. This idea is consistent with theories of cognitive learning put forth by Russian developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky, who highlighted the role that social and cultural interactions play in a person's cognitive growth.

In the context of Indonesian education, English plays an important role as an international language that supports global communication, access to knowledge, and competitive skills in the modern era. The *Merdeka* Curriculum, implemented by the Indonesian government, emphasizes the development of students' basic competencies with a more flexible and contextual learning approach. English learning in this curriculum aims to improve students' communication skills, both orally and in writing, while building critical thinking skills, collaboration, and creativity.

In order to enhance students' comprehension and abilities, Vygotsky's cognitive theory particularly the notions of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding has been applied extensively in educational settings. ZPD is the difference between what pupils can accomplish on their own and what they can accomplish with help from more seasoned individuals, such classmates or teachers. Scaffolding, on the other hand, describes the provision of short-term assistance to help students reach greater comprehension or ability levels; this assistance is then progressively decreased as students' abilities grow.

The use of Vygotsky's ideas in the framework of the *Merdeka* Curriculum presents a fantastic chance to raise the standard of education in Indonesia. Teachers can use more social interaction and collaboration-based learning tactics to help students reach their full potential because of the flexibility in this curriculum.

Indonesia is a legal country that requires all its citizens to undertake education as stated in Law Article 31 paragraph 1 "Every citizen has the right to receive education". This law regulates the education that all citizens must take. Education is a process by which states and nations maintain and develop individual self-awareness. In the world of education, achieving the intended outcomes requires a learning process. Learning is commonly defined as the process of preparing oneself to acquire, enhance,

or modify one's knowledge, skills, values, and worldview by combining cognitive, emotional, and experiential elements.[1]

Social and cultural activities, which entail learning from society's discoveries and involve mental development processes like memory, attention, and reasoning, are inextricably linked to human development. The social-cognitive development of children is a crucial area to monitor, as it necessitates significant processing in character formation to enhance the likelihood of improved memory and thinking. Children should work with more mature (talented) peers who can guide them methodically through more difficult challenges in order to maximize their growth. Lev Vygotsky was a pioneer in education who observed that learning happens in social contexts. [2].

According to Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development, children's thinking and cognition are primarily influenced by their sociocultural surroundings. According to him, infants absorb knowledge through internalizing the process of addressing problems, and their growth is comprised of an unending stream of conflict and dialectical resolution. All newborns, however, have unique skills, talents, and interests in

---

[1] Tri Wahyuni, Nurul Uswatun, and Endang Fauziati, 'Merdeka Belajar Dalam Perspektif Teori Belajar Kognitivisme Jean Piaget', *Tsaqofah*, 3.1 (2023), 130.
[2] Anggun Fahira and others. "Teori Vygotsky", (Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang, 2017), p. 1.

addition to having the Potential for unique talent. Early life experiences have a significant impact on a child's development, particularly social activities and his surroundings, as these elements have a major impact on all stages of a child's development, including learning, attitude, and personality development.[3]

The *Merdeka* Curriculum was created by Kemendikbudristek with flexibility and support for high-quality education in mind. Additionally, students are allowed to create and learn. "From the child's side, a wide opportunity is given in certain materials to be able to solve problems that are widely put forward," said Sugiyo at the Ministry of Education and Research's The *Merdeka* Curriculum Festival. The hardest thing, he disclosed, is dealing with the teacher. The scope of the subject is substantially greater because teachers need to be proficient at the implementation level. The government, through the Ministry of Research and Technology, has released Permendikbudristek Number 5 of 2022 regulating graduate competency standards in early childhood education, basic education, and secondary education as a regulation for the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum. At the conclusion of an educational level, these graduation standards serve as minimal

---

[3] Fitri Fitriani and Maemonah Maemonah, 'Perkembangan Teori Vygotsky Dan Implikasi Dalam Pembelajaran Matematika Di Mis Rajadesa Ciamis', *Primary: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar*, 11.1 (2022), 35.

requirements for the coherence of attitudes, abilities, and knowledge that demonstrate students' attainment of their learning outcomes. SKL *(Standar Kompetensi Lulusan)* serves as a reference for the *Merdeka*, Emergency, and 2013 curriculum.[4]

Around the world, a great deal of research has been done on the application of Vygotsky's theory to education. These studies have demonstrated how teaching with ZPD and scaffolding can enhance students' conceptual understanding, particularly in difficult topics like science and math. But as the majority of these research were carried out in nations with educational systems that differ from Indonesia's, contextual adaptation is required in order to apply this idea in this setting. The use of Vygotsky's theory in Indonesia is still relatively new and has not received much attention, particularly in light of the recently enacted the *Merdeka* Curriculum. No study has explicitly looked at how Vygotsky's ideas can be used and incorporated into the *Merdeka* Curriculum, despite a number of prior studies evaluating the efficacy of interactive and collaborative learning techniques within the framework of earlier curricula.

Research examining Vygotsky's theory's application in the Indonesian educational context, particularly in the *Merdeka* Curriculum,

---

[4] Quratul Aini and Adiyono, 'Implementation of an Independent Curriculum in Supporting Students' Freedom to Create and Learn', *Journal of Scientific Research, Education, and Technology (JSRET)*, 2.3 (2023), 1000.

is still lacking, despite the fact that it has been acknowledged and used in many educational contexts across the globe. There is a gap that needs to be filled in the empirical research on the integration of ZPD and scaffolding into regular teaching methods in Indonesian classrooms. Furthermore, further research is also needed to fully grasp the principles and how Indonesian instructors use them in the country's distinct educational environment, with all of its promise and limitations.

Vygotsky's Cognitive Learning Theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction and scaffolding in learning, is relevant to be applied in English learning based on the *Merdeka* Curriculum. This approach allows teachers to provide support that is in accordance with students' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), helping them to master skills that were previously difficult to do independently. By applying this theory, it is hoped that students can be more active and independent in learning, and understand new concepts in English more quickly through gradual guidance from teachers or peers. This supports the goal of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in forming students who think critically and are able to adapt in various learning contexts, so this study is important to understand the application of Vygotsky's cognitive theory in English learning.

As the research's main focus, the author introduces a novel occurrence in the learning process that Vygotsky called cognitive. In

addition, as a school that has implemented the *Merdeka* Curriculum in SMP-IT Al-Masykar Bina Insani Cilegon was chosen, and writer observed teacher-student interactions during the learning process there. It is intended that the findings of this study will serve as a valuable resource for scholars and instructors, particularly with regard to incorporating Vygotsky's theory of cognitive processes into the curriculum of schools that now employ the *Merdeka* Curriculum.

Based on the statement above, it is clear that the goal of this research is to describe the process of learning in English language classes at SMP-IT Al-Masykar Bina Insani using the *Merdeka* Curriculum and cognitive learning theory as proposed by Vygotsky. This type of qualitative descriptive research is called *"The Implementation Of Vygotsky Learning Theory Of Cognitivism In English Learning Based On The Merdeka Curriculum."*

B. Focus and Sub-Focus

Based on the background above, the focus in this research is: Implementation of Vygotsky's cognitive theory in the English learning process in supporting students' cognitive development in classroom interactions.

- Sub-Focus in this research is:

  Implementation of Vygotsky's cognitive learning theory in the *Merdeka* Curriculum in one of the VII classes of SMP-IT Al-Masykar Bina Insani starting from planning, learning process and evaluation

C. Research Question

According to focus and sub-focus in this research are :

1. How is the implementation of Vygotsky cognitivist learning theory in the English learning process in supporting students' cognitive development in classroom interactions at SMP-IT Al-Masykar Bina Insani?

2. How is the planning, learning process and evaluation of Vygotsky's cognitive learning theory in the *Merdeka* Curriculum at SMP-IT Al-Masykar Bina Insani?

D. Objectives of Study

According to the research question above, the objective of study are:

1. To find out the implementation of Vygotsky cognitivist learning theory in the English learning process in supporting students' cognitive development in classroom interactions at SMP-IT Al-Masykar Bina Insani

2. To find out and describe the planning, implementation, and evaluation of Vygotsky's cognitive learning theory at SMP-IT Al-Masykar Bina Insani which uses the *Merdeka* Curriculum.

E. Significances of Study

Writer hope that this research can be useful in society at large, especially for the needs of teaching and learning in English education. Writer divide the significance of research both theoretically and practically.

a. Theoretically

Theoretically, the writer hopes that this research can be used as reference material for developing knowledge, contributing valuable insights in the fields of education, curriculum development and learning design, with a focus on the application of Vygotsky's Cognitivism Learning Theory in the context of the *Merdeka* Curriculum.

b. Practical

This research is expected to be practical for students, teachers and future writer. For students, they gain new knowledge about the principles of cooperation in conversation and apply them in everyday life. Writer hope that with this research teachers can apply cognitive

learning theory according to Vygotsky's theory during classroom learning with students. Because with social interaction and good communication between students and teachers, teaching and learning activities will also run well.

F. Writing Organization

This research divided into five chapters, which contains some points to describe each chapter.

Chapter I Introduction, contains Background of Study, Identification of Problem, Scope and Limitation of Problem, Formulation of Problem, Objectives of Study, Significance of Study and Organization of Discussion.

Chapter II Theoritical Framework, contains Pragmatics, Implicature, Cooperative Principle, Classification of Cooperative Principle, Textbook.

Chapter III Research Methodology, contains Method of Research, Research Instrument, Data Collection Technique, Data Analysis Technique.

Chapter IV Research Finding Discussion.

Chapter V Conclusion and Suggestion.

G. The Previous Studies

The first study that writer discovered that was relevant to this topic was titled *"Evaluation of Implementation of Independent Curriculum"* and was carried out in a journal by Reffy Ananda Rizki and Lulu Fahkrunisa from STAI NIDA EL-ADABI, West Java, Indonesia. The analysis's findings demonstrated that implementing a new curriculum had both advantages and disadvantages. The primary obstacle is to the instructor's preparedness, whereas the primary benefit is an enhancement in the students' communication, teamwork, critical thinking, and creative thinking. The study's findings can be taken into account when creating educational policies and as a point of reflection for administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders. [5]

The second was a publication published by Fitri Fitriani and Maemonah of FKIT UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, titled *"The Development Of Vygotsky's Theory And Its Implications In Mathematics Learning At Mis Rajadesa Ciamis".* Based on the analysis, the findings indicate that, in this instance, ZPD is the most effective method, as per the fifth-grade math teacher at MIS Rajadesa Ciamis school, for delivering math lessons utilizing Vygotsky's theory, which emphasizes reciprocal

---

[5] Reffy Ananda Rizki and Lulu Fahkrunisa, 'Evaluation of Implementation of Independent Curriculum', *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogic Studies (JCPS)*, 1.4 (2022), 35–38.

interaction between teachers and students as they work through mathematical problems. provided by letting the child work on the problem under complete direction, letting him learn on his own, letting him use initiative, and getting to the point when the youngster can complete a task on his own. A person will employ their cognitive processes more intensely and be able to perform tasks to the best of their abilities the more stimuli they are exposed to. According to Vygotsky, constructivism, or sociocultural learning theory, is essentially a thinking tool that is inextricably linked to the impact of social interaction with the environment on the development of each individual's skills.[6]

Wening Sekar Kusuma, Nur Dwi Sukmono and Oktavian Dwi Tanto from STKIP MODERN NGAWI, Indonesia, conducted the third journal. " *Stimulation of Children's Cognitive Development Through Traditional Games Dakon, Vygotsky and Piaget's Perspective* " is the research's title. The results of this study show that, A child using the Dakon game in this study demonstrates cognitive progress. This study used the dakon game to stimulate children's cognitive development in terms of Piaget and Vygotsky's theories, which differ in that Piaget's theory of cognitive development in children with different dakon game stimuli seen

---

[6] Fitriani, Fitri, and Maemonah Maemonah. "Perkembangan Teori Vygotsky Dan Implikasi Dalam Pembelajaran Matematika Di Mis Rajadesa Ciamis." *Primary: Jurnal pendidikan guru sekolah dasar* 11.1 (2022): 37-41.

from children's exposure to the dakon game according to Piaget's cognitive development age stage. The dakon game is a traditional game that emphasizes the mastery of counting. Its purpose is to train children's cognitive skills through counting. According to Vygotsky's theory, children's cognitive growth is encouraged by the dakon game, which arises from social interaction with adults or other people. This is the basis for the review of the dakon game's ability to do so.[7]

The fourth is the result of a study conducted by Eka Maulidhatul Fitriah from UIN KIAI HAJI ACHMAD SIDDIQ JEMBER, entitled *"THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MERDEKA CURRICULUM IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT THE ELEVENTH GRADE OF SMAN 1 JEMBER"*. Based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that this study aims to describe the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in English learning and the challenges faced by teachers in implementing this curriculum at SMAN 1 Jember. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. The subjects of the study were English teachers and grade XI students of SMAN 1 Jember. The results of this study indicate that teachers prepare

---

[7] Wening Sekar Kusuma, Nur Dwi Sukmono, and Octavian Dwi Tanto, 'Stimulasi Perkembangan Kognitif Anak Melalui Permainan Tradisonal Dakon, Vygotsky Vs Piaget Perspektif', *Raudhatul Athfal: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini*, 6.2 (2022), 76–79.

teaching modules that include Learning Achievements, Learning Objectives, and Achievement Criteria. The module is designed to suit students' abilities through differentiated learning. Learning activities include the opening stage (initial monitoring), core activities (scientific approach and differentiated learning), and closing activities (student reflection). Teachers use video media and scientific approaches in the teaching process. There are formative evaluations (assessment as and for learning) and summative (final assessment based on LMS). The challenge is that teachers have difficulty in understanding new terminology in the curriculum and the application of differentiated learning as well as in managing and processing student grades effectively.[8]

---

[8] Fitriah, Eka Maulidhatul, "The Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in Teaching English at the Eleventh Grade of SMAN 1 Jember", (Undergraduate thesis, UIN KH Achmad Siddiq Jember, 2024).