

The Implementation Of Kurikulum Merdeka In English Subject At Smp Negeri 02 South Bengkulu

Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris Di SMP Negeri 02 Bengkulu Selatan

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in English language instruction at SMPN 2 South Bengkulu using a qualitative descriptive method. The study focuses on understanding the processes, challenges, and strategies involved in adopting the curriculum, which emphasizes educational diversity and flexibility. Through observations, interviews, and documentation, the research reveals that SMPN 2 South Bengkulu has effectively integrated the Merdeka Curriculum, guided by the principles of Pancasila and the development of superior human resources, despite encountering some obstacles. Key findings include the importance of teacher preparation, where English teachers familiarize themselves with curriculum regulations, analyze learning outcomes, prepare teaching tools, and understand the principles of Merdeka Curriculum assessment. The study also highlights the implementation of the curriculum in classroom activities, from opening sessions to core interactions and closing evaluations. Finally, the research discusses the assessment methods used, including diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments, which are adapted to the students' competencies and needs. The findings suggest that while challenges exist, the Merdeka Curriculum offers a flexible and holistic approach to education, promoting the development of students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills in a democratic learning environment.

Keywords: Kurikulum Merdeka, Implementation, English Subjek.

1. Introduction

The education system is the main component of education and has an important role in determining the quality of human resources. The education system introduced by the Indonesian government focuses on character education by conducting assessments in all subjects taught to students (Mahrus, 2021). Based on the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003, Article 1 Paragraph 19 states: "The curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding the objectives, content, and learning materials as well as the methods used to guide the management of learning activities to achieve certain educational goals".

Indonesia has experienced 10 curriculum changes. These changes began in 1947 and lasted until the government implemented the curriculum in 2013. Merdeka Curriculum is a new curriculum issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2020. This curriculum is designed to strengthen national character, culture and adapt to the times. The implementation of this curriculum requires readiness from various parties, including teachers as direct implementers in schools. Merdeka Curriculum (Maulinda, 2022), has several important things in the context of education in Indonesia, including, first, developing national character. The Merdeka Curriculum aims to develop a strong national character and character, so that students have quality and are ready to face future challenges. Second, improving the quality of

learning. The Merdeka Curriculum offers more innovative and enjoyable learning for students, so it is expected to increase students' interest and motivation to learn. In addition, the Merdeka Curriculum also emphasizes the development of students' competencies and skills that are relevant to the needs of the world of work. Third, adjusting to the times. The Merdeka curriculum is designed to adapt to the times, so that students can keep up with and take advantage of the development of technology and science that continues to develop. Fourth, part of independent learning efforts. The Merdeka Curriculum is part of the independent learning efforts launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Independent learning aims to provide wider opportunities for students to learn and develop according to their interests and talents.

English language learning in general at the primary and secondary education levels in the national curriculum provides students with the opportunity to open up insights relating to themselves, social relations, culture and employment opportunities available globally. Their understanding of this sociocultural and intercultural knowledge can enhance their critical thinking skills. The ability to communicate across cultures, English is a basic skill that all Indonesian children need to master. This curriculum emphasizes the importance of learning English as a global language, and aims to improve the quality of English in Indonesia. Teachers as implementers of the Merdeka Curriculum are strongly emphasized to be able to implement this curriculum effectively. Teachers must ensure that they can implement Merdeka Curriculum in the learning process so that students can achieve academic goals.

The Merdeka Curriculum is one of the government policies recover the learning lag caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The curriculum structure will be more flexible and the targeted time allocation can be more than one year. The focus is also on essential material so that learning outcomes are more organized. The flexibility also provides flexibility for teachers to use various learning media according to the needs and character of students. However, in reality, because Merdeka Curriculum is a new education policy. English teachers in Indonesia need to adapt to all the regulations and guidelines of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Indonesia previously implemented curriculum 13, which in this curriculum contains the development of a balance between spiritual and social attitudes, as well as knowledge and skills that are applied in various situations in schools and communities, then the 2013 Curriculum (K13) became the Independent Curriculum based on the decision of the Ministry of Education and Culture as a solution to the backwardness of education in Indonesia due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the progress of the times. The 2013 curriculum itself has been implemented starting from the 2013/2014 school year. The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia launched a policy in the form of Merdeka Belajar as a solution to the backwardness of education in Indonesia. So since then a new curriculum has emerged, namely the Merdeka Curriculum. The Merdeka Curriculum provides freedom to educators to create quality learning that suits the needs and learning environment of students. The Merdeka Curriculum is implemented with the aim of practicing independence in thinking for students. The main point of this freedom of thought is addressed to the teacher. If the teacher is not independent in teaching, of course, students are also not independent in thinking. The Merdeka Curriculum gives educators the freedom to create learning that suits the needs and learning environment of students. The Merdeka Curriculum is implemented with the aim of training students' independence in thinking.

Merdeka curriculum using modules, the Merdeka Curriculum Teaching Module is a document that contains learning objectives, steps, and media, as well as the assessments needed in one unit or topic of learning compiled based on the Independent Curriculum. This teaching module is used as a learning tool or tool which contains material, learning methods, limitations, and evaluation methods that are systematically and stunningly arranged to achieve the expected success indicators. Modules have the same function as lesson plans, except that there are a number of adjustments in them. Teaching modules assist teachers in carrying out

learning activities more optimally and provide teacher freedom in choosing or modifying teaching modules provided by the government according to the characteristics of students.

The government has established an independent curriculum that is applied in all Indonesian schools although in practice schools are still given the freedom to choose whether or not to use the curriculum. Therefore, the merdeka curriculum was not implemented massively and simultaneously. Based on the policy of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikburistek) which gives freedom to educational units to implement the Merdeka curriculum. Where schools that have implemented the Merdeka curriculum and have meet the criteria are called Mover Schools.

The merdeka learning curriculum has four principles that are transformed into new policy directions new policies, namely; 1) USBN has been replaced by an assessment test, this is to assess student competence in a written test or can use other assessments that are more comprehensive in nature such as assignments, 2) UN is changed to a minimum competency assessment and character survey, this activity aims to competency assessment and character survey, this activity aims to encourage teachers and schools to upgrade the quality of learning and student selection tests to the next level cannot be used as a basic reference. can be used as a basic reference. Minimum competency assessment to assess literacy, numeracy, and character. 3) Lesson plans, different from the previous curriculum in which lesson plans follow the general format. The independent curriculum provides flexibility for teachers to be able to freely choose, create, use, and develop the lesson plan format. What needs to be considered are the 3 core components in making lesson plans, namely learning objectives, learning activities, and assessment. The lesson plan is now known as the teaching module.

Teaching modules are learning tools or learning designs that are based on the curriculum that is applied with the aim of reaching the predetermined competency standards. competency standards that have been set. Teaching modules have a major role to support teachers in designing learning. The role of the teacher when preparing learning tools. The role of the teacher when preparing learning tools is very important, in this case the teacher is honed to have creativity in following the teaching module so that later learning can run effectively and efficiently. teaching modules so that later learning can run effectively and efficiently in accordance with the character of the students. The module that is compiled must be in accordance with the Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP). Learning Objectives (ATP). Therefore, the pedagogical competence of teachers in the preparation of teaching modules needs to be developed. therefore the pedagogical competence of teachers in the preparation of teaching modules really needs to be developed.

Curriculum renewal is a natural thing, one of the factors is the rapid progress of science and technology that is so massive in the field of education. Among our society, it is often heard "change the minister change the curriculum" because maybe they think that every change of government will change the curriculum like a tradition that is continuously preserved. However, if examined further changes or improvements to the curriculum, therefore the researcher is interested in further analyzing the "Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in English Language Learning at SMP Negeri 02 South Bengkulu" because SMP Negeri 02 South Bengkulu has implemented the Merdeka curriculum but not yet optimally in accordance with the aspects of learning. optimized in accordance with the aspects of differentiated learning

2. Research Methodology

This research was conducted at SMPN 2 South Bengkulu, using a qualitative research method with a descriptive format. Qualitative method is a method used to describe and describe phenomena that exist in natural object conditions, where the researcher becomes a key instrument, which does not try to influence certain variables on other variables according

to Sugiyono (2016, p.15). In this case the researcher acts alone to conduct observations, interviews, and documentation. In addition, researchers also use other instruments. these instruments are observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and other documents related to the implementation of the independent curriculum in English lessons at SMPN 2 South Bengkulu. Through descriptive qualitative research, researchers try to observe and understand the processes and obstacles in the implementation of the independent curriculum at SMPN 2 South Bengkulu.

The subjects in this study were the principal, and 5 English teachers at SMP Negeri 02 South Bengkulu. The process of implementing Merdeka Curriculum in English subjects at SMP Negeri 02 South Bengkulu. Problems in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in English subjects at SMP Negeri 02 South Bengkulu. Efforts made to overcome the problems of the Merdeka Curriculum in English subjects at SMP Negeri 02 South Bengkulu. In the data analysis stage, it starts from collecting all the results of observations, interviews and documentation

3. Results And Discussion

The research utilized a qualitative descriptive method to analyze data related to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMP Negeri 2 South Bengkulu. This curriculum, introduced under the Decree of the Minister of Education No. 56 of 2022, emphasizes educational diversity and flexibility, allowing schools, teachers, and students to adapt learning to local needs and student capabilities. Influenced by Paulo Freire's educational philosophy, the Merdeka Curriculum fosters the development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills in a democratic learning environment.

SMP Negeri 2 South Bengkulu, a driving school, has effectively adopted the Merdeka Curriculum, including in English language instruction, despite some challenges. The school's transition from the previous 2013 Curriculum (Kurtilas) to the Merdeka Curriculum was guided by the principal's commitment to integrating the new curriculum into all lessons, ensuring that the school's educational goals align with the principles of Pancasila and the development of superior human resources. The implementation process in English subjects includes teacher preparation, curriculum execution, and learning assessment.

A. Teacher preparation in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka

1. Understand the regulations or rules for implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka

In implementing the Merdeka Curriculum is needed as a guide and so that it can be implemented according to the predetermined objectives in organizing the Merdeka Curriculum at SMP Negeri 2 South Bengkulu. In implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at the school, there needs to be a number of regulations or regulations so that the entire process of preparation and implementation activities is directed both in the field of school curriculum development, teacher resources owned by schools, school infrastructure and education personnel.

In understanding the regulations or regulations in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, SMP Negeri 4 Purwokerto uses several regulations listed in each lesson, one of which is BSKAP Decree Number 008 / KR / 2022 concerning Learning Outcomes in PAUD or Early Childhood Education, Elementary or Primary Education Level, and Junior High and High School or Secondary Education Levels in the Merdeka Curriculum as one of the achievements in achieving the desired competencies.

a. understand the implementation of the kurikulum merdeka

- 1) Learning is designed by considering learners' current stage of development and level of achievement, according to learning needs. The Merdeka Curriculum focuses on the individual needs and development of learners, so that the learning delivered is relevant and effective.

- 2) Learning is designed and implemented to build the capacity to become lifelong learners. The Merdeka Curriculum aims to develop learners' competencies and characters in a sustainable manner, so that they can become lifelong learners.
 - 3) The learning process supports the holistic development of student competence and character. The Merdeka Curriculum does not only focus on academic aspects, but also on developing broader character and competencies.
 - 4) Relevant learning, which is learning designed according to the context, environment, and culture of students, and involves parents and the community as partners. The Merdeka curriculum considers local context and culture, and involves the community in the learning process to increase its relevance and effectiveness.
 - 5) Learning that is oriented towards a sustainable future. The Merdeka Curriculum is designed to prepare learners for a better future, with a focus on the abilities and character needed to face global challenges.
- b. Analyzing Learning Outcomes
- In BSKAP Decree Number 008/KR/2022 Regarding Learning Outcomes in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, and Junior and Senior High School in the Independent Curriculum. English teachers can analyze and determine the appropriate phases and learning outcomes to be applied to learning at SMP Negeri 2 South Bengkulu.
- c. Prepare teaching tools
- In educational institutions, learning planning is closely related to the existence of learning tools prepared by teachers. Learning tools are important for a teacher to support learning before carrying out the learning process. According to Kunandar (2014), learning tools are plans used in the learning process. Every teacher must compile a complete and systematic learning tool to enable learning that is interactive, inspiring, fun, challenging, and motivates students.
- In addition to preparing teaching tools before the lesson begins, the English teacher's efforts are to compile Learning Outcomes (CP), teaching modules that include the objectives of the learning process (TP), compile the flow of objectives in a lesson (ATP), and compile the Operational Curriculum of the Education Unit.
- In this case, there are new terms in the Merdeka Curriculum and the previous curriculum. Among others, namely: If in the past during the 2013 Curriculum there was such a thing as a lesson plan or lesson plan, the Merdeka Curriculum is called a teaching module, if in the past there was such a thing as Core Competencies (KI) and Basic Competencies (KD), the Merdeka Curriculum is called Learning Outcomes (CP). So it is necessary to have a deep understanding by a teacher to be able to implement the Merdeka Curriculum properly.
- d. Understand Kurikulum Merdeka learning principles/assessment
- Evaluation is one of the components in education that is no less important than the learning process. If the learning process is a process of behavioral change that occurs in students, then evaluation is a process of accumulating, analyzing, and explaining information to determine the level of achievement of students' learning goals. So it is important for English teachers to be able to provide evaluation in learning well to students.
- In learning English subjects in the Merdeka Curriculum, teachers carry out the learning process by prioritizing differentiated learning, which is learning that pays close attention to how students' abilities and competencies are in learning. The learning method used by the teacher is determined through an assessment of the abilities and competencies of each learner, so that students are lighter in understanding the material taught by the teacher because it is in accordance with their competencies and abilities.

2. Implementation of the kurikulum merdeka in terms of teachers conducting the learning process in the classroom

a. Starting or opening activities

In an activity, the opening has an important role to attract the attention of the audience, this is because the opening will determine every subsequent activity. A good and unique opening will be able to give a good impression during the activity, and will run smoothly and have quality in it. Activities before the start of learning, teachers have an important task because it is the first step to encourage students to focus their eyes and attention on learning.

In the initial activities before the learning process begins, English teachers at SMP Negeri 2 South Bengkulu connect their experiences with what is being learned at that time and convey the purpose of the learning process that will be carried out. This can be used to build closeness with students, so that students are more comfortable and focused in following the ongoing learning.

In addition to starting activities interestingly and well, teachers must also see the readiness of students before learning begins. This can be a benchmark for a teacher when to start learning and when it is time for the teacher to attract the attention of students to be more focused in participating in learning activities.

b. Core activities

The process of interaction or communication that occurs between teachers and students in learning will always occur, many researchers have revealed that interaction in learning is important and interaction is an important component in learning in order to create learning in accordance with the desired goals. Therefore, it takes interaction between students and teachers that are mutually sustainable. And if the teacher succeeds in guiding the interactions that occur between students, it will be easier to go towards the educational goals to be addressed.

In delivering the material, many methods are used by English teachers, such as discussion methods, question and answer, field trips, and others. In implementing Merdeka Curriculum learning, namely differentiated learning, English teachers try their best by inviting students to discuss looking for a problem as well as a solution in solving it and then describing and expressing the results of students' discussions.

c. Final activity or closing

After carrying out a series of learning activities, evaluation is the final activity in learning. Evaluation can be interpreted as an action or action in a process to determine the value of learning success of a person or student after carrying out the learning process.

After the learning activities are completed, the English teacher asks students to express the conclusions of the discussion during the learning process or gives assignments as evaluation materials and measuring tools for students' understanding and competence. Then the lesson is closed with the delivery of the next material that will be studied together, and convey to students to always record the material at that time to be read again.

3. English language learning assessment in the Kurikulum Merdeka

In implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, basically it provides flexibility for students in learning so that the form of assessment is free. In this curriculum, the form of assignments can be in the form of practice, assignments, portfolios, products, written tests, oral tests, and projects. The tasks given by English teachers are adjusted to the abilities and needs of students so that the results obtained do not have to be the same but must remain within the scope of the same material or focus.

Meanwhile, the form of assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum is that the teacher has three ways including diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, and summative

assessment. The efforts of English teachers at SMP Negeri 2 South Bengkulu use three assessments, namely:

a. Assessment diagnostic

In assessment or diagnostic assessment, English teachers carry out an assessment at the beginning of learning to find out how the abilities and competencies of students

b. Assessment formatif

In formative assessment, the English teacher's efforts in conducting assessments for students are by conducting assessments during the learning process.

c. Assessment sumatif

In the assessment carried out by English teachers if the teacher feels that the ability and competence possessed by students is not enough. Then the summative assessment will be carried out, namely the assessment carried out after the learning is completed or the end of the semester, summative assessment can also be called remedial for students who have not reached the desired standard.

The assessment given by English teachers can use the 3 methods provided by the government, but the assessment is adjusted to the competence and needs of students

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of research that has been carried out and conducted by researchers regarding "Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in Learning English Language Learning at SMP Negeri 2 South Bengkulu", it can be concluded that conclusion regarding this matter that: In the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum for English subjects, there are three stages implemented and carried out by teachers before the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is carried out, including

1. English teacher preparation in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum Merdeka In the preparation carried out by the teacher, there are 5 steps that are prepared, including: understanding the rules and regulations for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, analyzing Learning Outcomes, compiling learning tools, and understanding the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum learning assessment.
2. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum from the Side of the Teacher Implementing the Learning Process in the Classroom In implementing an independent curriculum, only grades VII and VIII because grade IX is a class that will take the School Examination, there are 3 activities carried out by English teachers in implementing an independent curriculum, including opening activities or initial activities, core activities, and closing activities or final activities.
3. Assessment of English learning in the Independent Curriculum. Meanwhile, the assessment carried out by English teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Bengkulu Selatan only uses 2 assessment methods, namely diagnostic assessment and formative assessment. Because the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has not been one year, summative assessment has not been carried out by English teachers

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