

## The Perceptions of English Teachers on the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Idanogawo Schools

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**Abstract.** *The curriculum is an important component in the education system. Curriculum changes can be influenced by various factors, one of which is student learning outcomes. The interviews with English teachers regarding the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in schools revealed various insights. The teachers expressed challenges in implementing the curriculum due to a lack of facilities and the recent initiation of the curriculum in their schools. They highlighted the potential of the Merdeka curriculum to improve English language learning by actively involving students in learning, enhancing critical thinking skills, and improving English language proficiency. The curriculum's learner-centered philosophy was met with mixed responses, with some teachers expressing uncertainty about its implementation. However, others acknowledged the potential benefits of the curriculum, such as providing freedom to students and creating enjoyable education. The teachers also emphasized the importance of readiness in terms of educators' competence, skills, and mindset, as well as the availability of infrastructure and facilities. Despite the challenges, they recognized opportunities for support from school principals, curriculum teams, and parents, as well as the positive use of technology in learning. Overall, the interviews reflected a range of perceptions on the Merdeka curriculum, highlighting both challenges and opportunities in its implementation.*

**Keywords:** *merdeka Curriculum, implementation challenge, Learner-centered philosophy Potential benefits, Educator readiness, Support systems*

**Abstrak.** *Kurikulum merupakan salah satu komponen penting dalam sistem pendidikan.. Perubahan kurikulum dapat dipengaruhi oleh berbagai faktor, salah satunya adalah hasil belajar siswa. Wawancara dengan guru Bahasa Inggris mengenai penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka di sekolah mengungkapkan berbagai wawasan. Para guru mengungkapkan tantangan dalam menerapkan kurikulum karena kurangnya fasilitas dan baru dimulainya kurikulum di sekolah mereka. Mereka menyoroti potensi Kurikulum Merdeka untuk meningkatkan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris dengan melibatkan siswa secara aktif dalam pembelajaran, meningkatkan kemampuan berpikir kritis, dan meningkatkan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris. Filosofi kurikulum yang berpusat pada peserta didik mendapat tanggapan yang beragam, dan beberapa guru menyatakan ketidakpastian mengenai penerapannya. Namun, ada pula yang mengakui potensi manfaat kurikulum, seperti memberikan kebebasan kepada siswa dan menciptakan pendidikan yang menyenangkan. Para guru juga menekankan pentingnya kesiapan dari segi kompetensi, keterampilan, dan pola pikir pendidik, serta ketersediaan sarana dan prasarana. Meskipun terdapat tantangan, mereka menyadari adanya peluang untuk mendapatkan dukungan dari kepala sekolah, tim kurikulum, dan orang tua, serta penggunaan teknologi secara positif dalam pembelajaran. Secara keseluruhan, wawancara mencerminkan berbagai persepsi terhadap Kurikulum Merdeka, serta menyoroti tantangan dan peluang dalam penerapannya.*

**Kata kunci:** *merdeka Kurikulum, tantangan implementasi, Filosofi yang berpusat pada peserta didik Potensi manfaat, , Sistem pendukung*

## **BACKGROUND**

According to John Dewey, education is a process of renewing the meaning of experience. It can happen naturally or be intentionally implemented to create societal sustainability. It can also happen in casual interactions or associations with young adults. The immature person and the group he lives with must be supervised and developed during this process (Williams, 2017). Education can be obtained outside of the classroom as well. Examples of this include informal education that takes place in the community, social education that occurs in our surroundings, and family education that occurs at home. The goal of education, then, is to fulfill the demands of children's growth and development, according to Ki Hajar Dewantara. This is seen as an effort to help pupils learn in accordance with their innate skills, with the ultimate objective being the attainment of the highest degree of safety and happiness in the lives of all members of society. It is crucial for educators to help students build their competence in accordance with their interests, talents, and abilities through the aforementioned educational objectives. As a comprehensive plan or design for a course and how the course material transforms into an overall framework for teaching and learning that enables the achievement of the targeted learning goals, the curriculum is one of the most important factors in education, according to Richards (Sari, 2023). Right now, the school system in Indonesia is using the Merdeka Belajar curriculum for autonomous learning. The Kurikulum Merdeka replaced the 2013 curriculum, which had an effect on the phases of learning implementation, planning, and assessment. While teacher-centered learning was still employed in the previous curriculum, teachers now need to incorporate student-centered learning into the Kurikulum Merdeka. The National Education Standards Agency states that instructors and students have the choice to select and hone their chosen and strengthened abilities. New terms are also added to the list of items mentioned in the prior curriculum as a result of this modification. One of these, according to Hardani, is the emergence of new terminology like Capaian, Modul Ajar, and Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran (ATP). Diagnostic assessments, Pembelajaran (CP), Kriteria Ketercapaian Tujuan Pembelajaran (KKTP), Profil Pelajar Pancasila, student and teacher reflections, and diagnostic evaluations all contribute to strengthening educational goals. 2023 Sari.

In the course of a single year, the curricular structure develops the distribution of lesson hours and contains recommendations for that allocation based on whether teaching

is delivered on a weekly or regular basis. There is no variation in the total number of lesson hours; instead, each topic is assigned one lesson hour to each of the two learning activities: P5 (co-curricular) and intracurricular learning. For intracurricular learning, allow up to 75% co-curricular and 25% extracurricular activities. P5, or Pancasila Student Profile, is an activity that involves students in its implementation. The dimensions in P5 are: 1) faithful, devoted to God Almighty and noble; 2) independent; 3) mutual cooperation; 4) global diversity; 5) critical reasoning; and 6) creative. Now every school combines P5 with various lessons, including English lessons. In addition, students will acquire habits, abilities, and information that will enable them to adjust to other cultures worldwide. It is anticipated that studying English in secondary education will enable pupils to successfully acquire the capacity for English-language communication as one of their life skills. People make text when they talk or write, according to Halliday & Matthiessen (2014), and text is what readers and listeners interact with and interpret.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the curriculum, covering both the Kurikulum Merdeka and the prior curriculum. Every study, however, is unique when it comes to this issue. such as difficulties, roadblocks, advantages, and disadvantages in putting the 2013 curriculum into practice; media-based research; and assessments in putting Kurikulum Merdeka into practice. Nevertheless, there hasn't been a lot of research done by prior scholars on how English teachers see the English subject when the Independent Curriculum is implemented.

Based on the explanation above, this research aimed to know about “The Perceptions of English Teachers on the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Idanogawo Schools.

## **METHODS**

This research used a qualitative descriptive research design. Qualitative research, according to Creswell (2014), is an understanding-based inquiry process that examines a social or human problem using many methodological traditions of inquiry. Next, a content analysis of the literature was employed as the methodology. As a result, the researchers used interviews as their instrument to gather data. The subject of this study is English teachers of 1 Junior High School and 1 senior High school who have implementing Kurikulum Merdeka. There are 2 English teachers in Junior High School idanogawo and there are 2 senior high school idanogawo . The data on this study will English teachers.

Researchers will collect data using instruments. The researcher developed a questionnaire adapted from (Nurhayati, Samiati, & Hersulastuti, 2018) with modifications. The questionnaire contains 5 questions that are expected to collect teachers' perceptions of the English learning process through the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. The instruments itself such as :

1. How do English teachers perceive the philosophy and goals of the Merdeka curriculum?
2. what extent do English teachers understand the content and competencies contained in the Merdeka curriculum?
3. What are the challenges and opportunities that English teachers face in implementing the Merdeka curriculum?
4. How can the Merdeka curriculum improve the quality of English language learning in schools?
5. Do English teachers agree with the Merdeka curriculum's learner-centered philosophy?

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### ***The results of the research***

Perception is the ability to interpret something with insight. (Nurhayati, Samiati, & Hersulastuti, 2018) define perception as the process by which an individual chooses, arranges, and interprets the inputs of information to produce a meaningful overall notion. Knowing the new curriculum is crucial for instructors since it gives English teachers knowledge of the tactics they can use to utilize to successfully instruct the kids. Further information regarding the transition from the former curriculum to Kurikulum Merdeka is required. The sole difference in this new curriculum is that only lesson hours for each topic are set aside for P5 (co-curricular) and intra-curricular study. The purpose of introducing this new curriculum was to find out how English teachers felt about Kurikulum Merdeka's integration into the English teaching and learning process. The perception of English teachers can be gauged by six factors: conduct, change, differences, preparedness, knowledge, and challenges.

. Research on English instructors' perceptions of the Merdeka curriculum's application in Idanogawo schools has yielded the following scientific findings:

1. English teachers have high opinions of the Merdeka curriculum's student-centric orientation. They think that curricula may direct and assist students in becoming better qualified people who are equipped to handle issues in the future. The knowledge that the curriculum prioritizes student autonomy and a fun learning environment, in keeping with Indonesian national values, lends credence to these conclusions.
2. English teachers range in their comprehension of the subjects and skills included in the Free curriculum. While some individuals may be aware of the three roles that intracurricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular teachers play, others might not have a thorough grasp of competencies like faith, a strong devotion to God, moral character, independence, global diversity, teamwork, critical thinking, and creativity.
3. The availability of teachers, facilities, and infrastructure, as well as the diversity of students in the classroom, provide problems in putting the Merdeka curriculum into practice. But there are also chances for constructive use of technology in the classroom, as well as support from the curriculum team, parents, and the head of the school.
4. Merdeka's curriculum is considered to have the potential to improve the quality of learning English at school. It is seen to actively involve students in learning, improve critical thinking skills, and improve their English language skills through a variety of student-centred approaches.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

After describing and analyzing the data, the researcher makes conclusions that answer the research questions. Based on the results and discussion above, we can conclude that Merdeka Curriculum has the potential to improve the quality of English learning in schools by actively involving students in learning, improving critical thinking skills, and improving English language skills. Going forward, it is important to address the challenges that have been identified, especially the readiness of educators and the availability of infrastructure and facilities. The implementation of Merdeka Curriculum has improved student learning outcomes. This statement is supported by (Nisa', 2022) that the Merdeka Curriculum learning objectives are divided by phase. This is done to simplify things and give students more time to master competencies. This can provide opportunities for students to learn according to their abilities, needs, levels, and learning preferences, so it is important for teachers to modify instructions according to students' conditions and characteristics. This study only has limited subjects in data collection. For

future researchers, it would be better if they take more than 4 English teachers as subjects, so that researchers will get more valid data.

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