

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### A. Research Background

Education is one of the most fundamental rights that everyone must have. A good education will create highly competent human resources to respond to complete globalization with all challenges and competencies. The UU Number 20 of 2003 About The National Education System explains that education is a means to educate national life, develop talents and abilities, and form the character and civilization of a dignified nation and state.<sup>1</sup>

Educational problems are endless topics to discuss. Nowadays, the issues in Indonesian Education feel very complex, from issues with teaching staff to curriculum policies, which still need to be updated in their consistency; current education is presented with a rigid and formative demeanor. Now, students are forced to follow the existing system without paying attention to this student's potential. All students must meet the same standards regarding understanding a lesson rather than being encouraged to like what they are learning.<sup>2</sup>

There is a government policy, as stated in regulation Number 19 of 2005, concerning National Education Standards is one solution regarding increasing essential teacher competencies, which include four basic competencies: (1) pedagogical competence, (2) professional competence, (3) personality competence and, (4) social competence.<sup>3</sup> Learning could be more innovative and can cause students to become bored. Therefore, teachers must consider appropriate learning strategies and methods to use during the learning process. But, what needs to be updated in the components of the education system in Indonesia, whether it is an educator, student, or educational institution, is still a complex issue.

Curriculum and education are like two pieces of money between one and another, they are connected and cannot be separated. Education can be carried out well when the curriculum is the main support in teaching and learning. Since the era of independence until now, Indonesia has experienced 11 changes to the

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<sup>1</sup> Afril Guza, "UU Sistem Pendidikan Nasional dan UU Guru dan Dosen", Jakarta: Asa Mandiri, 2009, p.5.

<sup>2</sup> Berkamsyah, Eka Prasetya, "Relevansi Pemikiran Ki Hajar Dewantara dengan Konsep Merdeka Belajar Nadhim Makarim", A Thesis of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Gultom, Desi Nova Natalia, "Standard Kompetensi Mengajar Guru", Universitas Djuanda, 2002, p.12.

Education Curriculum, eight times before the age of regional autonomy and three times during the restricted autonomy period until now. Before regional autonomy in 1999, Indonesia experienced eight changes in the curriculum: (1) the 1947 Curriculum, (2) the 1964 Curriculum, (3) the 1968 Curriculum, (4) the 1973 Curriculum, (5) the 1975 Curriculum, (6) 1984 Curriculum, (7) 1994 Curriculum, (8) 1999 Curriculum / 1994 Perfected Curriculum. Meanwhile, at the time currently, Indonesia is experiencing three regional autonomy times the curriculum has changed there is (1) the 2004 Curriculum, competency-based Curriculum/KBK; (2) the 2006 Curriculum, unit Level curriculum education/KTSP; (3) the 2013 Curriculum.<sup>4</sup> The adage “Change Minister Change Policy does not always happen,” but the changing education minister to Nadiem Makarim proves this adage is true. The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture triggered it for the first time during a speech at the National Teacher’s Day Ceremony in November 2019<sup>5</sup> that the Merdeka Curriculum is a breakthrough from the Ministry of Education and Culture which provides freedom to educators and students to carry out the teaching and learning process. This concise speech gives a fairly factual impression, the language is easy to understand, and the teacher feels anxious about administration, which can stifle the teacher’s creativity. The Ministry of Education and Culture states, “Freedom to Learn is Freedom to Think”.<sup>6</sup>

Merdeka Curriculum is an idea that liberates teachers and students in determining the learning system. During this time, the learning process and teaching are very rigid, where the teachers and students are taught. In systems like this, most of them will focus on the knowledge and lack of skill aspect. Even though the scope of education is broader than only knowledge, but includes skills as well

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<sup>4</sup> Afista, Yeyen, et all “*Analisis Kesiapan Guru PAI dalam Menyongsong Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar (Studi Kasus di MTsN 9 Madiun)*”, Universitas KH. A. Wahab Hasbulloh Journal of Education and Management Studies, Vol.3, 2020, p.55.

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Education and Culture, “Speech by the Minister of Education and Culture at the Flag Ceremony on National Teachers' Day 2019”, quoted from. <https://www.kemdikbud.go.id/main/blog/2019/11/pidato-mendikbud-pada-jasa-bendera-peringatan-hari-guru-nasional-tahun-2019>. Accessed March, 25 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Kurniawan, Yosep, “*Implementasi Merdeka Belajar Berdasarkan Ajaran Taman Siswa dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Lembaga Kursus Kelas Anak*”, Proceedings of the International Seminar on the Implementation of Merdeka Belajar based on Ajaran Taman Siswa”, 2020, p.104.

as attitudes. Merdeka Curriculum is an innovation offered by the Minister of Education and Culture in responding to educational challenges in increasingly demanding era aspects of skill, as in the current generation Z, which has a different character from previous generations. According to David Stillman in his book entitled "Generation Z," there are several characteristics of Generation Z that are very striking, one of which is that this generation has character Hyper-Customitation, which means they have a very fluid life towards something they cannot be restrained from doing that they want. This definition does not always have negative connotations because if the character of Hyper-Customitation is treated appropriately, from the concept of The Ministry of Education and Culture through the Merdeka Curriculum, this generation may be able to become a golden generation for Indonesia in the future.

Minister of Education and Culture new policy in Indonesia for secondary education has been issued about the concept of the Merdeka Curriculum, which is based on four things: (1) Exam Independent Nasional Standard School/USBN (2) Remove the national Examination system and replaced it with new system namely Minimum Competency Assessment and Character Survey (3) Simplified Learning Implementation Plan/RPP (4) Zoning regulations for Accepting New Students (PPDB).<sup>7</sup> The beginning of implementation Merdeka Curriculum was implemented from the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic (2019/2020 academic year) at the junior and senior high schools, starting in the 7<sup>th</sup> class to 9<sup>th</sup> class for junior high school and 10<sup>th</sup> class to 12<sup>th</sup> class for senior high school. But in this focus discussion, the author will only discuss preparation for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at the junior high school.

The Merdeka Curriculum aims for students, teachers, and parents to have pleasant conditions for each other. It is hoped that from the Merdeka Curriculum, students and teachers can be free thinking so that this can be implemented in teacher innovation in delivering material to students, not only that, students will also be made more accessible in this curriculum because students will be made easier to innovate and more be creative in learning. Besides that, the benefits of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum are that school principals, teachers, parents, and local governments can work

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<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Education and Culture, "*Mendikbud Tetapkan Empat Pokok Kebijakan Pendidikan Merdeka Belajar*", Web Manager for the Minister of Education and Culture: SIARAN PERS Nomor: 408/sipres/A5.3/XII/2019, accessed from [www.kemdikbud.id](http://www.kemdikbud.id) on April, 1 2023.

together to seek and find effective, efficient, and fast solutions to this condition, challenge, and problem of education in each school, significantly to improve the quality of the student learning process. School principals, teachers, parents, and local governments feel ownership and responsibility for the education management in schools in their respective regions.

Long with time, all educational institutions will use the Merdeka Curriculum. Still, because the Merdeka Curriculum is a new policy or curriculum, it has obstacles and constraints in process implementation; teachers are an integral part of essential education components that must complete appropriate problems. Therefore, the teacher's ability to learn also plays an essential role in the success of understanding the Merdeka Curriculum.

Based on the results of pre-research conducted by researcher in July 2023, researcher obtained information from interviews with Mrs YM, Mrs SK, and Mrs U as an English teacher at a junior high school in Pati. He is still confused about understanding the Merdeka Curriculum and feels that he isn't appropriate in carrying out learning according to the Merdeka Curriculum.<sup>8</sup> However, researcher also saw teaching and learning activities directly at one of the schools where he taught when learning English in that class. The researcher saw the teacher conducting a pretest. Then, the teacher forms study groups based on the results of a pretest conducted before teaching and learning activities. This shows that he has strong determination and will to carry out teaching and learning activities based on Merdeka Curriculum where learning is adapted to the needs of students. The group divisions prove this carried out before the teaching and learning activities, and then based on the results of the pretest, and they are grouped again based on student readiness, collaborating, and also mapping the teaching materials.

Based on the explanation above, the author is interested in finding out more about what preparations need to be prepared in implementing this Merdeka Curriculum, so it should be in line with government policy's plan with the title "ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH TEACHER'S READINESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE MERDEKA CURRICULUM."

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<sup>8</sup> YM, "The Interview from The Reseaercher, Interview 2, Transcript, July 2023.

## **B. Research Focus and Scope**

Based on the background above, the researcher focuses on what English teachers need to be prepared to face the Merdeka Curriculum And the several problems that are the focus of this research:

1. Curriculum changes: The Indonesian government has rolled out the Merdeka Curriculum program is an effort to improve the quality of education. This change in curriculum creates significant challenges for teachers, especially English Teachers, who must be able to adapt.
2. Importance of English Education: English education has an important role for everyone in the future. Therefore, the readiness of English teachers to implement the new curriculum is very important.
3. Support and resources: Teacher readiness can also be influenced by local government support, available resources, training provided, and appropriate teaching materials.

## **C. Research Questions**

Based on the background stated above, the problems that will be examined in this research are:

1. How do the English teachers implement the Merdeka Curriculum in teaching and learning?
2. What are the supporting and inhibiting the English teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum?

## **D. Research Objectives**

Based on the problem formulation above, the aim of this research are:

1. To describe the English teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in teaching and learning.
2. To explain factors that supporting and inhibiting the English teacher implementing the Merdeka Curriculum.

## **E. Research Significances**

What is expected from this research is that make a significant contribution both theoretically and practically, which are as follows:

### **1. Theoretical Significance**

As a result, it is hoped that the information and research findings will contribute to developing and reference materials for those interested in teaching with the Merdeka Curriculum. Besides that, it can develop educational knowledge and increase



scientific insight for readers. It also can be used as reference material for further research carried out by other people and especially for researcher themselves as theories that have been proven to be accurate, as well as adding to the treasures in IAIN Kudus literature.

## **2. Practical Significance**

### **a. For Institution**

It is hoped that the results of this research can be used as a guide or reference for similar research, as well as adding to treasure in the IAIN Kudus literature.

### **b. For School**

The result of this research can be used as positive input preparation for the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum learning, improving the quality of education and effectiveness of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, as well as reference in developing learning management strategies so that schools can take steps to enhance the learning process and welfare of teachers, especially English teachers

### **c. For English Teachers**

The results of this research can be used as a solution in preparation for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum for English teachers if teachers can know more about this curriculum, provide and increase students' understanding of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, and can prepare thoroughly what will support the success of this Merdeka Curriculum.

### **d. For Researcher**

The result of this research can be used as new knowledge and broad insight for researcher as prospective teachers who will later be able to provide their best abilities in preparation for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in English learning.

### **e. For the Next Researcher**

It is hoped that the result of this research can become reference material for further study.

## **F. Definition of Key Terms**

This study will discuss an analysis of the preparation English teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, so this research does not become extensive. The limitations are:

## 1. Curriculum

In UU Number 20 of 2003, it is stated that the curriculum is a set of plans and regulations regarding the content and learning materials and the methods used as guidelines in implementing the teaching and learning process.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Merdeka Curriculum

Merdeka curriculum is a condition that gives teachers and students complete trust in learning so that students can develop optimally under the teacher's guidance. Based on the explanation above, it can be stated that the Merdeka Curriculum is essentially the freedom to think, be creative, innovate, and improvise for teachers and students, resulting in something more meaningful.<sup>10</sup>

## G. Organisation of Thesis

The preparation of this research is divided into several chapters so that the readers can easily understand, the result of this dept research such:

### CHAPTER I: BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

This chapter contains an introduction to the research background, research focus, research objectives, research significance, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis.

### CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter contains three sub-chapters, the first includes a theoretical basis and a description of the theoretical description are: the meaning of analysis, readiness of English teacher, the meaning of Merdeka Curriculum, the policy point of Merdeka Curriculum, the Curriculum structure in the Merdeka Curriculum, Supporting and Inhibiting factors of Merdeka Curriculum, and the pre- requisites readiness for Merdeka Curriculum the second contains the framework of thinking, and the last sub-chapter is previous research.

### CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter is about research methodology, it contains the research method, research setting, research participants, instruments, data collection techniques, research data validity, and data analysis techniques.

### CHAPTER IV: FINDING AND DISCUSSION

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<sup>9</sup> Jeflin, Hairunnisa, "*Pengertian Kurikulum, Proses Administrasi Kurikulum, dan Peran Guru dalam Administrasi Kurikulum*", a thesis Universitas Padang, 2020,

<sup>10</sup> Mulyasa, "*Menjadi Penggerak Merdeka Belajar*", Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2020, p. 31

This chapter contains the result of research which includes a description of the object of research, data analysis, and discussion of research result.

#### CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter contains the conclusion from the research results, suggestions, then ends with a closing.

