

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background

Education is the most crucial element in creating a better future (Suparlan, 2019). If one wishes to use human resources more effectively, education is crucial. Individual life experiences directly affect how people think and see the world, making them a priceless source of information. Education is defined as "a deliberate and integrated effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process" under Article 1 of the National Education System Law from 2003. In addition to knowledge and skills that are crucial for people, society, the nation, and country, this aids students in "actively developing their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, and the noble character." Education also enables pupils to "actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, and intelligence". in addition to essential knowledge and abilities (Hayati et al., 2021)

The goals of national education as stated in Article 3 of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System are the same as the goals of education. basically enhancing students' potential to evolve into exceptional, capable people. (Nasbi, 2017). This goal is contained in both educational goals and national education goals. to compete both nationally and internationally in a particular field. who have reverence for God, who are morally upright, who are physically fit, who are intellectually curious, are artistically gifted, who are independent, and who mature into contributing members of society (Suryaman, 2020).

The field of education is a field that is constantly changing. The wide spread of the Covid-19 virus is just one of many factors contributing to the chaos and instability in the current education system. The pandemic has directly affected educational standards, lower than ever, and a learning crisis has replaced optimal educational arrangements.

According to Andriani, this outbreak has forced 1.7 billion students to engage in indirect learning, where it is inevitable that they will face challenges and losses (Putri, 2020). As a consequence of learning loss, both students and teachers experience a decrease in their ability to communicate effectively with each other and collaborate during the learning process (Mahnun, 2012). To overcome and provide answers to the challenges that must be faced, various policies and strategic approaches are needed (Cintia&Cintiasa, 2021).

Therefore, in responding to the learning crisis, the government is trying to improve education by taking proactive and strategic steps (Pragholapati, 2020). Given these obstacles, the Indonesian government has adopted a strategy known as the "*merdeka curriculum*. to revive the education reform movement (Suryaman, 2020). The main objective of the curriculum is to assist students in acquiring specific knowledge, such as information about behavior, skills, and the results of their performance. Because of the structure of this curriculum and the way it is implemented, it is considered soft enough to accommodate pre-existing problems.

As a means of implementing state guidelines, curricula have been developed and are currently being used throughout the country. The desired educational goals, or the desired learning outcomes for students, are always included in the curriculum being taught (Nasbi, 2017). Curriculum development is carried out as an anticipatory step in responding address the difficulties brought on by these advances. This step takes into account the situation and conditions as well as the norms that apply in society and is carried out by considering all of these factors (Hamdi, 2020).

As part of the educational process, it is ensured that students obtain adequate competence in the mastery and use of technology by developing curriculum development steps that are by the nature of students (Usman, 2000). Therefore, teachers are tasked with directing their students toward the full realization of their potential. When faced with this challenge, teachers

must be skilled in choosing and/or combining various persuasive strategies in order to overcome problems in the education sector (Drajat & Efendi, 2014).

The plan and course of action for the new curriculum, which was meant to be a solution to the problems plaguing the education system in Indonesia, faced a number of challenges (Alfarisi, 2020). The new curriculum, which has received criticism for being hastily developed, needs to be evaluated in light of the potential benefits that the policy can provide. In accordance with what is stated in this curricular policy, it requires self-introspection of students so that they can successfully adapt to educational challenges that are dynamic in nature. If we compare the new curriculum with the old curriculum, there are also differences in the mandate or structure of the two curricula, which can be seen in the previous sentence.

A science-based or scientific approach is required by the 2013 curriculum, while a project-based approach is required by the *merdeka curriculum*. This is consistent with the view that all curricula have a general framework that emphasizes the formation of moral character (Efendi et al., 2021). However, in this situation, character manifestations are allowed to emerge through the use of experiential learning obtained through project-based learning which is part of the mandate of the *merdeka curriculum* (Nafi'I & Shaifudin, 2021)

Significant challenges for schools, teachers, and students must be generated in the educational process because of the integral role they play in the process (Hidayat, 2020). According to the findings of Indarta et al. To answer these challenges, strategic efforts are needed, accompanied by an understanding of the various roles played by each component or topic. Students are responsible for actively engaging with the curriculum by studying diligently in accordance with the curriculum's emphasis on independent learning, and Teachers are in charge of raising educational standards offered by implementing the new curriculum (Suryaman, 2020). The school's role is to decide whether to stick with the current curriculum or adopt a new curriculum that better suits the needs of the institution.

From the perspective of innovative learning, the curriculum needs to follow the rules of the learning process, a variety of methods that accommodate individual differences between students, structuring levels of difficulty, managing student interaction and participation, emphasizing various variations of learning, and encouraging new abilities) and can further activate class interaction. To achieve this perspective, the learning model in the curriculum must have various learning alternatives, learning forms (responses/tutorials, seminars, and practicums), and learning methods (problem-based, project-based, research, and community service). This is in line with the nature of the curriculum that the curriculum is the main component of education and serves as a guide for learning. If the curriculum sub-components are well structured, the learning process will always refer to a good curriculum. It is these things that make curriculum change the essence that a future-oriented curriculum must make learning meaningful for the birth of quality human beings.

The new curriculum policy emphasizes the work educators do and their capacity to overcome challenges. This curriculum is believed to provide opportunities for teachers to return to a more adaptive position (Baharun, 2017).

In general, there are two categories of educational measurement instruments, namely input-based education and outcomes-based education. Input-based On the basis of indicators of ownership of the "assets" of an educational institution, such as finance, infrastructure, classrooms, libraries, number of teachers, and so on, while OBE relies on educational outcomes, such as the number of graduates and the success rate of graduates. That is, what is measured is the competence of graduates in accordance with the planned achievements. In a more popular language, the teaching process is not just overseeing the content, but how students can get predetermined learning outcomes.

For this reason, the curriculum is a crucial component of education. what students will learn and how they learn it, which in turn determines the

skills and knowledge that graduates will acquire (Marliana & Hikmah, 2013). The education system as a whole needs to progress in line with the changing trends of the times and the ever-increasing expectations of society. Educational innovation will be successful and will achieve its goals if educational programs are designed and practiced in a way that is according to the circumstances and requirements of the moment (Mursid et al., 2017). To understand the importance of educational innovation, we must first acknowledge the important role played by educators.

Because it is always adapted to account for changing conditions, the curriculum is considered as one that is in a state of continuous development. As a country's level of development increases, so does the complexity of the challenges it faces. To maintain its reputation as a respected nation, Indonesia must be able to compete in international scientific competitions along with other countries in the world (Efendi et al., 2021). As a result, there is an urgent need for a comprehensive curriculum and its implementation in order to improve educational performance, which is much lower than that of developed countries around the world, and to better prepare students for the challenges that will befall our global economy. future education system.

However, the curriculum development process often encounters a number of challenges, each of which requires unique analysis and strategies to solve them (Supartini, 2008). Throughout the history of Indonesian education, the country's curriculum has undergone a number of revisions and improvements, all with the same overarching goal: to produce the best possible outcomes for students. As a direct result of this, the discussion shifted its emphasis to the role educators play in independent curriculum development (Mulyasa et al., 2016). This research sets out to do just that by elaborating the teacher's part in creating student-centered lessons.

Changes to the curriculum must address the different issues that are now afflicting the field of education in order to raise the standard of instruction. This is so because education is the most efficient way for a nation's citizens to gain morality and wisdom. Herlambang asserts that the

introduction of education must occur as soon as feasible because it has the potential to create a communal society that is highly civilized, adaptive, progressive in thought, and has personality. from cultured people.

*Merdeka curriculum* is a program developed by Attempts of the Ministry of Education, Research, and Technology to address problems that arise in the education system. Many students have been unable to regain their academic footing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and others have found it difficult to focus on their studies (Lince, 2022).

Therefore, OBE is one of the orientations for the independent learning curriculum. A tangible objective is what OBE (outcome-based education) focuses on achieving (result-oriented knowledge, abilities, and behaviors). In order to reach high levels of learning success and mastery rather than credit accumulation, OBE entails designing the curriculum, assessments, and reporting processes in education.

On the other hand, this curriculum is an attempt to give the educational system its rightful prestige back. Faiz claims that the purpose of this curriculum is to address problems from their roots by integrating good moral and ethical teaching with technological means. This was done to address the problem down to its roots. As a result, there is still the possibility of acquiring knowledge despite the many challenges that prevent educational progress in this regard. There is room for progress, for example, in how knowledge is acquired through project completion.

Consequently, to create a curriculum, There are guidelines for developing curricula; these guidelines must take into account the linkages between the vision and mission (or mandate) of educational institutions, the advancement of knowledge, and the needs of stakeholders. The monitoring and review of the curriculum, which takes into account stakeholder feedback and the resolution of strategic concerns to ensure suitability, is a guideline for its implementation. and up-to-dateness.

In practice, before implementing *merdeka curriculum* for their students, teachers must first receive training on it themselves, as conveyed by Nadiem.

No matter how skilled a teacher is, students will not be able to learn from them unless there is a way to translate between the required skills and the current curriculum being taught (Suryaman, 2020).

*Merdeka curriculum* provides students with a variety of educational opportunities. The curriculum narrowly focuses on what is really necessary to give students sufficient time to fully understand basic concepts and hone their skills. Using *merdeka curriculum* helps develop independent thinking. This freedom places the most significant emphasis on the classroom teacher.

The *Merdeka Curriculum*, also known as Merdeka Belajar, is a form of the government's response to the condition of Indonesian education after the Covid-19 pandemic. This policy was proclaimed as the government's effort to help restore learning in Indonesia through project-based learning activities. Project-based learning is important in efforts to develop students' character because project-based learning can provide opportunities for students to learn through experience (experiential learning) ("Prototype Curriculum Prioritizes Project-Based Learning,". Merdeka Learning is also one of the programs intended to creating a happy learning atmosphere for both students and educators with the aim that educators and students and parents can get a pleasant learning atmosphere, because the principle of independent learning is to create a happy learning atmosphere without the heavy burden caused by achievement demands. In implementing the *Merdeka Curriculum*, each education unit is given the freedom to be able to innovate according to the area of each educational unit, both in terms of economic, socio-cultural, infrastructure, and also the local wisdom of the area.

The *merdeka curriculum* is a curriculum with various intra-curricular learning where the content will be more optimal so that students have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competence. Teachers have the flexibility to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be adapted to the learning needs and interests of students. Projects to strengthen the achievement of Pancasila student profiles are developed based on certain themes set by the government. The project is not directed to achieve certain

learning achievement targets, so it is not tied to subject matter content. The *merdeka curriculum* is a curriculum with varied structured learning where the content produced will be more optimal so that students have enough time to understand concepts and strengthen competence. From the teacher's side, they also have the flexibility to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be adapted to the learning needs and interests of students. The main concepts or characteristics of the *merdeka curriculum* are project-based learning for the development of soft skills and character according to the profile of Pancasila students, focusing on essential material so that there is enough time for in-depth learning for basic competencies such as literacy and numeracy, flexibility for teachers to carry out effective learning. differentiated according to the ability of students and make adjustments to the context and local content. The *merdeka curriculum* contains lessons that are more optimal so that students have enough time to explore the lesson concepts and strengthen their abilities. With this curriculum, teachers can choose a variety of teaching tools to suit our learning needs and interests as students.

In other words, *merdeka curriculum* gives high priority to providing space for teachers to create their own modules when the curriculum is seen in its most basic form. The government gives teachers access to various curriculum modules, from which they can choose one or more to use in their classes and even modify them. However, adjustments still need to be made in a way that suits the corridor.

This can be done by adjusting the material presented to the special needs of each student. Naturally, it lends itself well to use in Study Guides and Tests. According to the Learning and Assessment Guide, the primary purpose of the instructional module development process is to develop instructional resources. Visual aids serve their purpose of directing educators in the process of applying learning by passing a number of tests tailored to the specific requirements of each student. Autonomy is at the core of *merdeka curriculum*, which seeks to equip students and teachers with the tools

necessary to cultivate an independent mindset in preparation for the challenges they will face in the modern world.

It is only natural that the teaching modules for the *merdeka curriculum* need to be guided by the Learning and Assessment Guidelines, because this is the vision and mission of preparing teaching modules to guide The learning process is carried out by teachers. As a result, the goal and purpose of creating educational modules are evident here. It is plainly obvious from the teaching module's unique component viewpoints that tailored classroom education is necessary to fulfill each student's needs.

Teachers need to be more imaginative and inventive in the materials they produce to assist students in understanding the ideas and engaging in self-reflection. Someone must be able to make learning enjoyable in the classroom and give students opportunities to look for and read information from a variety of sources to develop the necessary skills. In this case, the research was conducted on English teachers. Where students in English subjects require students to be able to learn any information in their own unique way and in accordance with their individual understanding of the most efficient way to learn English.

The English course curriculum differs from other subjects in a number of ways. The significance of language in human interaction is the driving force behind this difference. It's not enough just to learn the words and grammar rules; Teachers must also be able to use what they have learnt to successfully communicate both orally and in writing.

Foundational abilities include speaking, listening, reading, and writing, whereas linguistic features like grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation are crucial for effective communication. the science component. Language skills almost always involve using English. As a result, we need teachers who are knowledgeable in the fields they teach and who are dedicated to enhancing and expanding the educational opportunities available to their students amid the introduction of *merdeka curriculum* in schools.

One of the benefits is that it allows students to be more open-minded regarding English language skills amid the implementation of *merdeka curriculum*. In this study, researchers will examine various challenges experienced by English teachers in Banyumas Regency in the Implementation of the *merdeka curriculum*.

## **B. Research Question**

This research as carried out to determine a potential response to the following questions:

1. How did the teacher understand *merdeka curriculum*?
2. What are the challenges teacher have in teaching English within *merdeka curriculum* ?
3. What are the teacher's strategies the teacher used in overcoming these challenges?

## **C. Research Objectives**

1. To describe the teacher's understanding of *merdeka curriculum*
2. To investigate the various challenges that occur to teachers in teaching English in *merdeka curriculum*
3. To investigate the teacher's strategy in overcoming these challenges

## **D. Research Contribution**

The findings of this study will give some additional information, especially for teachers, students, and institutions themselves. Based on the objectives of the research, the contribution of this research is.

### **1. Theoretical Benefits**

Theoretically, the findings of this study should be helpful in the following ways: a. The findings of this study should be helpful as references and

beneficial studies for other pertinent research investigations including other variables not included in this study.

b. Future researchers, particularly those looking at teacher performance, are anticipated to find this research beneficial as a reference.

## **2. Practical Benefits**

Practical applications of this research include the following: Teachers can utilize the findings as a resource during the learning process and to enhance their teaching abilities.

b. The findings of this study are anticipated to be used by schools as information in their attempts to effectively support and develop teachers, consequently assisting in the accomplishment of program objectives.

c. For researchers, it can provide knowledge and experience regarding teacher performance.

d. Research is also useful for writers to add insight and experience before going directly as a professional teacher.