

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Previous Study

There have been several previous studies conducted to observe the implementation of Merdeka curriculum and how English is taught. Researchers may compare how English is taught in various nations, how Merdeka curriculum is put into practice, and what challenges arise when putting the curriculum into practice in various areas thanks to this earlier research. Researchers can also draw conclusions from the results of research that has been carried out at SMAN 1 Godong with previous studies.

The first previous study conducted from Fan, (2019) with the research title "Chinese ESL Learners' Perceptions of English Language Teaching and Learning in Australia" aimed to investigate the perceptions of Chinese English as a Second Language (ESL) learners about teaching English in Australia and the problems they face while studying. The findings indicated that the participants displayed very positive attitudes towards the communicative approach and for the most part supported grammar instruction in communicative practice. This study showed that their previous exposure to Chinese learning and teaching styles largely influences their learning difficulties. Teachers must be aware of the need and learning experiences of students so that they can carry out more

effective interventions and help students create their own learning strategies for academic adaptation.

The second of previous study conducted by Rahman et al., (2019). This research contains English policy in education, factors that influence the implementation of English language teaching, curriculum, methods, and materials taught in Bangladesh as well as implicit policies and for planning policy makers, curriculum and materials developers, public exam takers, and future English teacher training program, keeping in mind the overall development of ELT in Bangladesh.

The third of previous study was conducted by Rohiyatussakinah, (2021). The study's findings have the goal to develop an English as a foreign language (EFL) program at University X which focuses on interactive language learning. Another aim of the research is to provide an overview of how students think and design a curriculum that can be adapted. The data presented in this research are presented using a qualitative research design. The results clearly showed that the curriculum discussed in this research is meant to serve as an illustration for teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) or other foreign languages in educational institutions utilizing the example of MBKM-related English as a foreign (EFL) education in Japan. This curriculum is still applicable for the implementation of Japanese education policies in our country. Most higher education programs require communicative language instruction to improve English proficiency at higher levels of education.

The fourth research was conducted by Hutami & Putro, (2023) with 73 participants following the language assessment literacy (LAL) investigation of teachers' self-perceptions, which included competency, frequency of practice, and knowledge assessment. This research used a quantitative methodology, in which this research used two data sources: questionnaires and language knowledge assessment tests. This quantitative method used Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and Pearson product moment correlation. The results showed the strengths and weaknesses of language assessment literacy (LAL) teachers, as well as the concordance and discrepancy between demonstrated assessment knowledge and teachers' self-perceptions. Overall, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Banyumas District have a moderate level of language assessment literacy (LAL). The factor that most impacted teachers' language assessment literacy (LAL) was in-service training in assessment.

The fifth research conducted by Chamisijatin et al., (2023). The subject of this study was a teacher of SMP Muhammadiyah 2 Kota Batu. The aimed of this research is to improve the profile of Pancasila students at SMP Muhammadiyah 2 Kota Batu simultaneously with the introduction of the Merdeka curriculum. In addition, this research also has several objectives, including understanding the project in order to increase the profile of Pancasila students, planning project implementation both in

terms of time and substance, as well as assessing and improving project performance. This research can help teachers better understand, design, document, report, evaluate, and follow up on projects that will develop the profile of Pancasila students.

The sixth research conducted by Supriatna et al., (2023). This research aimed to explain how teachers view the implementation of Merdeka curriculum in elementary schools. This study is qualitative in nature. Neither teachers nor elementary school children were respondents. The results of the study showed that teachers have a positive and good perception of the implementation of Merdeka curriculum in elementary schools, teachers are very important in the development and implementation of the curriculum in elementary schools, the teacher's intensity in implementing the curriculum affects the success of implementing the curriculum, and teachers can improve socialization and guidance through class design and curriculum development and implementation.

The seventh of previous study conducted by Bukaryo, (2023) aimed to enhance teachers' capacity to create lesson plans at SMAN 1 Asembagus through mentoring activities. The teachers at SMAN 1 Asembagus served as the topic of this research, which was done as school action research in 2021–2022. The research analysis was carried out using a qualitative descriptive method. Based to the findings of the observations and evaluations, only 6 teachers (21%) were able to create teaching

modules with Merdeka curriculum prior to mentoring. After phase two, however, 26 teachers (87%) were capable of creating lesson plans, and 20 of those teachers were more competent.

The eighth research conducted by Rohmah et al., (2023). This research used a qualitative literature method. The results of this study are that Merdeka Curriculum is more effective than the 2013 Curriculum, easier to implement, and offers many advantages compared to disadvantages. The 2013 curriculum itself is also less effective in teaching independently. Merdeka curriculum program obviously has a number of difficulties, including a variety of media.

The ninth of previous study conducted by Yulianti et al., (2023) showed that the strategic role of mobilizing teachers is as a driving force in schools based on teaching experience in schools, which basically encourages all components of education to be actively involved in improving the quality of education. Driving teachers in Merdeka Belajar are expected to be able to direct and shape students in developing their personalities as a whole.

The last previous study conducted by Jamilah et al., (2023). This research used a qualitative descriptive approach with 14 respondents from two elementary schools. School in Mojodedang District, Karanganyar, Central Java. The results of the study showed that teachers with a good medical history have physical readiness in welcoming the new curriculum

in their schools, regarding sufficient psychological readiness of a group of teachers who are interested and motivated to welcome the new curriculum, and about the readiness of knowledge possessed by a group of teachers who understand how to make RPP (module) and systolic.

The researcher concluded from the discussion of the previous research above that these journals discussed issues such as the perceptions of Chinese English as a Second Language (ESL) students about teaching English in Australia and Bangladesh, the difficulties they faced while pursuing their education, learning policies through the teacher's role, motivator, awareness of Pancasila students, and presentation of teachers' opinions about the implementation of Merdeka curriculum in elementary schools. Therefore, researchers are encouraged to conduct this research to fully understand how Merdeka curriculum is used and teacher problems, especially in teaching English at SMAN 1 Godong. A result of previous studies has showed that the description in research tends to be broad rather than deep.

B. Underlying Theory

1. Definition of Curriculum

A curriculum is an educational plan that is carefully created to direct the learning and teaching process at an educational institution, such a school or college. The curriculum is the combination of lessons that must be delivered by a teacher and understood by students (Sitika et al., 2020). The fundamental objective of the curriculum is to give

students an effective and productive learning environment. The program aims to direct learners as they develop in the knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and values expected of them.

The curriculum is an extremely significant element that provides a role in the educational system. The curriculum contains not only the goals that must be met in order to clarify the path of education, but it includes the interpretation of the learning abilities that each student is required to possess (Rahayu et al., 2023). The definition of curriculum involves a number of components, such as subject matter, instructional strategies, learning goals, and assessments of student progress. Learning materials are the topics, theories, concepts, and skills that students learn and gets to understand. The strategies, techniques, and processes that teachers employ to effectively communicate lesson content are referred to as teaching methods. The desired outcomes of learning are described in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values in educational objectives. The curriculum must also be updated with the most relevant social, economic, and technical advancements in order to best prepare students for the future. The roles and purposes of the curriculum are primarily focused on improving student learning (Muslimin et al., 2023). This provides a reminder of the important role that curricula possess in mentoring the education and development of both individuals and society in general.

2. The History of Curriculum in Indonesia

The history of curriculum in Indonesia has experienced various developments throughout the history of education in the country. Here is the history of curriculum in Indonesia according to Setiyorini & Setiawan (2023):

a. Old Order Period (1945 – 1965)

The Indonesian government started creating a more in charge educational system after the country learned independence in 1945. During this time, the foundations of national education were laid. The first national curriculum, known as the "Teaching Programme Outlines" (GBPP), was implemented in 1947 and Indonesian was chosen as the language of teaching. This curriculum is still inspired by Dutch principles during the Old Order era. The curriculum during the old order was divided into several periods, namely:

1) Curriculum 1947

The educational curriculum experienced significant revisions in 1947. This curriculum represents a significant changing moment in educational history. These significant changes came about as a result of a deeper comprehension of community and student requirements. The 1947 Curriculum established an emphasis on the development of social and critical thinking abilities as well as a more inclusive education. Additionally, it provided a more inclusive educational program

that offered chances for education to all social classes. An effective basis for a more comprehensive and long-lasting education was established as a result, laying the groundwork for future generations' intellectual growth and capturing the spirit of social change of the time.

2) Curriculum 1952 Rentjana Pelajaran Terurai

The 1952 Rentjana Pelajaran Terurai a ground-breaking educational program, was introduced in Indonesia in 1952. The requirements of Indonesian society, which is experiencing the reeper social and economic transformation, are being answered by this curriculum. This significant curriculum shift places more emphasis on teaching Indonesian, history, and national values in just 100 words. Local educational methods and cultural understanding are also beginning to integrate. Additionally, more emphasis is placed on science and technology education to encourage the growth of domestic industry. The 1952 outlined lesson plan represented a significant turning point in Indonesia's educational history, developing foundations for future generations to create a powerful and independent nation.

3) Curriculum 1964 Rentjana Pendidikan

The 1964 Curriculum often identified as the Rentjana Pendidikan was introduced in Indonesia in 1964. The

educational reforms under President Soekarno are reflected in this curriculum. The 1964 Curriculum focused an important focus on a more comprehensive national education that promoted national identity, patriotism, and character development. The government made an effort to integrate several facets of education, including as religious, moral, and scientific topics, through the 1964 education plan in an effort to produce a generation that was both more educated and deeply patriotic. This curriculum was criticized for being excessively idealistic and weighty, just given the aforementioned, it was a turning point in Indonesian education history that spurred other reforms.

b. New Order Period (1966-1998)

The national curriculum experienced significant revisions during the New Order era under President Suharto's direction. During this time, a focus was placed on topics that aided in the advancement of human resource quality as well as economic and social development. The following is the history of the curriculum during the New Order period:

1) Curriculum 1968

The 1968 curriculum is an important milestone in the history of Indonesian education. Launched by the government during the Suharto era, this curriculum aims to change national

education. This curriculum places a strong emphasis on obedience, discipline, and patriotism while emphasizing character development. Comprehensive courses like National History were improved. However, this curriculum has also received criticism for overly restricting academic freedom, reducing cultural plurality, and eliminating material that is considered controversial. Although controversial, the 1968 Curriculum remains an event that formed the foundation of Indonesian education, reflecting an era when the state wanted to control the national education narrative.

2) Curriculum 1975

The 1975 curriculum was a turning point in the history of Indonesian education. Known as the “Community Based Curriculum”, this curriculum changes the way education is delivered by emphasizing the development of students' abilities and character. This curriculum encourages independence, teamwork, and a deeper understanding of subject matter by combining academic knowledge with real-world skills. Teachers act as learning facilitators, inspiring students to investigate and find solutions. Even though it received a lot of criticism, the 1975 Curriculum became the basis for further curriculum improvements. This is a bold attempt to improve

the educational process and give students a better awareness of life outside the classroom.

3) Curriculum 1984

The traditional approach to education was replaced in 1984 with the revolutionary 1984 curriculum. This curriculum, which places great emphasis on developing critical thinking, creativity and in-depth knowledge, is truly changing the education system. Apart from studying information, students are also taught problem solving, critical thinking, and teamwork. Personality development, character education, and transdisciplinary teaching are highlighted in this curriculum. A more independent, creative and socially conscious generation is the end result. The 1984 curriculum continues to drive constructive change in education globally, laying the foundation for a better future, despite opposition and controversy.

4) Curriculum 1994

The Competency Based Curriculum (KBK), commonly known as the 1994 Curriculum, is an important turning point in the history of Indonesian education. KBK was introduced during the New Order era and placed great emphasis on fostering creativity, reducing memorization, and increasing student competence. This curriculum includes courses such as

Citizenship Education, Entrepreneurship, and Arts which are more applicable to everyday life. KBK has been implemented in several schools with varying results, and has also received criticism due to the lack of clear evaluation standards. Nevertheless, the 1994 Curriculum was an important starting point for the development of education in Indonesia, bringing a shift towards a more inclusive and contextual learning environment.

c. Reform Period (1999 – Present)

The educational curriculum received significant change since the Reformation in 1998. A new, more inclusive, competency-based curriculum was created, replacing the 1994 curriculum. The promotion of Indonesian character and cultural education as a crucial component of the curriculum. Indonesia is still striving to improve education standards by developing a curriculum that is up to date. As well as efforts to incorporate character education, 21st century skills, and digital literacy in learning, there have been advancements in integrating technology and digital education into the curriculum. During the reform period, the curriculum was divided into several periods, namely:

1) Curriculum 2004

An important turning point in Indonesian education history was the 2004 curriculum. The old educational system

was superseded by this curriculum, which was introduced in 2004. The 2004 Curriculum promotes students' development into capable, imaginative, and morally upright people by emphasizing character education, personality development, and all-encompassing understanding. The curriculum which employs a scientific methodology, competency-based evaluation, and active learning, has helped to shape the next generation of thinkers who can think critically, collaborate with others, and adapt to changing conditions. Indonesian students are well-prepared to take on global issues in the twenty-first century thanks in large part to the 2004 curriculum.

2) Curriculum 2013

The 2013 curriculum is a new era in Indonesian education. The curriculum, which was introduced in 2013, places great emphasis on character, literacy and developing student project-based learning. Students are encouraged to think critically, work in groups, and express their creativity by emphasizing active learning. The focus of this curriculum is the use of technology to improve learning and prepare students for the digital era. The 2013 curriculum has great potential to produce graduates who are better prepared to face future problems, although it has received mixed reviews. This is

important step in efforts to improve Indonesia's education standards and produce a young generation that is capable, tough and competitive. Students are expected to acquire the attitudes, skills, and information necessary to contribute to society, their country, and their nation through the 2013 curriculum (Rohimajaya & Hamer, 2022).

3) Merdeka Curriculum

The concept of the freedom of learning describes a method of teaching where students are given greater autonomy over their own education (Rambung et al., 2023). The Merdeka Curriculum is a revolutionary educational breakthrough in Indonesia that embodies freedom of learning. In this curriculum, students not only follow conventional subjects, but also have the freedom to choose material that suits their interests and potential. They can investigate a variety of artistic media, scientific fields, and useful skills. The Merdeka Curriculum prioritizes character development and upholding national ideals and encourages creativity, criticism and innovation. Students who receive instruction that emphasizes hands-on experience will be better prepared to handle real-world obstacles.

3. Merdeka Curriculum

a. Definition of Merdeka Curriculum

Merdeka Curriculum is a new educational method that aims to give students more freedom to choose their way of learning. Merdeka Curriculum is a learning method which relates to the approach of talents and interests (Tsuraya et al., 2022). Merdeka curriculum gives students the opportunity to explore their talents and interests in greater depth. The principle of independent learning is learning according to student conditions where learning is designed by considering the current stage of development and level of student achievement, in accordance with learning needs, and reflecting various characteristics and developments so that learning becomes meaningful and enjoyable (Wulandari et al., 2023). This concept encourages creativity and problem solving as well as learning that is more specific and relevant to everyday life. Merdeka Curriculum gives freedom to students to choose the subjects they want, therefore increasing learning motivation because students can be involved in the topics they like. They can also take responsibility for their own learning process, developing problem solving skills, initiative and independent skills. Therefore, teachers are responsible for creating learning programs and are tasked with facilitating interaction so that it can occur effectively (Hamdi et al., 2022).

This Merdeka curriculum encourages cross-disciplinary learning, which helps students gain a broader understanding of different aspects of life. This curriculum is designed to improve human resources and the quality of education in Indonesia (Sukmawati et al., 2023). The essence of freedom of learning is to explore the greatest potential of teachers and students to continue to innovate and remind the quality of learning independently (Rahmansyah, 2021). Merdeka curriculum also encourages the use of various learning approaches, such as research-based projects, hands-on experience in the field, and teamwork. Merdeka curriculum often employs problem-based learning, project-based learning, and learning inquiry as its teaching methods (Supriyano, 2022). This method assists students in improving interpersonal skills, creativity, and practical problem solving.

Merdeka Belajar Program aims to completely alter every area of the traditional educational system (Rafiq et al., 2023). Merdeka curriculum focuses on overall individual development, not just academic improvement. Students are expected to be critical, open-minded, independent, and ready to face the challenges of today's world with confidence. Hasanah (2022) states that learning that is instilled in kids with the goal of producing students who have a comprehensive understanding, originality, and creativity who are capable of facing the problems of the times is the key component

of education 4.0. Merdeka Curriculum offers an interesting and promising way to create learning that is more relevant and meaningful for future generations, although there are still challenges in its implementation and evaluation.

b. Objective of Merdeka Curriculum

Merdeka Curriculum is an educational initiative that aims to bring significant changes in the Indonesian education system. The goal of a more competitive, inclusive, and relevant education is to equip students for the challenges of the future. Teachers must understand the purpose of the curriculum if they want to help students reach their full potential according to their unique interests and talents (Utari & Muadin, 2023).

Merdeka Curriculum aims to improve Indonesian education standards. Teaching strategy known as "freedom of learning" allows students to have more control over their own education (Rambung et al., 2023). Students are encouraged to acquire knowledge and skills that are in line with current needs through a more contextualized and relevant approach. Furthermore, the program develops innovation and creative thinking in students. Merdeka Curriculum aims to help develop students' creative potential and empowering students and teachers more independence in choosing their own teaching strategies.

Merdeka curriculum aims to raise educational standards and help students reach their full potential (Wahyuni et al., 2023). Merdeka Curriculum seeks to develop moral principles that will produce a generation of people who are honest, compassionate, and accountable. Merdeka curriculum is dedicated to deleting disparities in schools, enable all societal strata including those living in distant areas to have access to high-quality education. The program also aims to make students prepared to participate in employment. Students can develop in accordance with their abilities and competencies (Susilowati, 2022). Merdeka curriculum aims to provide students with skills that are relevant to employment and make them better able to handle opportunities and difficulties there. As a result, it will be expected that Merdeka Curriculum would develop an inclusive and flexible educational system that can respond to the demands of the contemporary economy and society and help raise a generation of people who are better equipped to deal with a changing future.

c. Characteristics of Merdeka Curriculum

1) Learning Based Project and Characters

Education is more heavily emphasized throughout project creation. In a kind of learning known as project-based learning, students work with an educator to examine, assess, and record the knowledge they have learned through a

particular project (Tesalonika et al., 2022). As a result, students see phenomena associated with the learning idea in addition to memorizing it. The discovery or solution-based model is the most commonly used learning model. Students can develop soft skills including interpersonal relations, collaborative management, problem-solving, and time organization through experiments and projects. The Pancasila profile that motivates imparts them character. Implementing Pancasila student profile activity strengthening project can uncover students' hidden skills, boost their self-assurance in their work, and unlock their full potential (Usman et al., 2023). Students are supposed to uphold the six Pancasila principles of faith, piety, noble character, diversity, reciprocal cooperation, independence, and creative critical reasoning.

2) Flexibility for Teachers and Students

The flexibility of teachers and students is considered as the cornerstone of innovative learning in Merdeka Curriculum. The foundation of learning freedom is independence thinking for both students and teachers (Utami et al., 2023). Teachers have the ability to adapt methods and content to meet the needs of the classroom while fostering creativity and respect among students. In addition, students are given the opportunity to take part in learning programs that are most suitable for learning

methods. Collaboration between teachers and students creates an inclusive environment that supports holistic thinking. The Merdeka Curriculum's adaptability helps it to mirror contemporary developments and equips coming generations to handle new difficulties.

Ministry of Education affirms that the teacher's motivation for students to learn is their motivation for them to reflect and innovate (Nursalim, 2023). According to the abilities of each student, teachers can apply differentiated learning. In differentiated learning, teachers emphasize students' desires, interests, and learning when delivering material (Gusteti & Neviyarni, 2022). Every child's ability must be different. The sole purpose of a teacher is to help students develop their original skills and assist them in reaching their potential. Differentiated learning can be utilized to support diversity depending on student needs and take into account their background, curriculum, and learning profile in order to meet program objectives (Basir et al., 2023). Practical demonstrations or experiments will be crucial to learning if the majority of students are interested in learning about kinesthetics. Teachers can ask other students to help children who lack understanding of explanations with their lessons if necessary.

In his book "How to Distinguish Instruction in Mixed Ability Classroom," Tomlinson, (2001) states that differentiated learning is based on the following principles:

a) Learning Environment

The Indonesian educational system has undergone a dramatic overhaul thanks to Merdeka Curriculum. A creative and inclusive learning environment is one of Merdeka Curriculum's most significant components. This learning environment is made to offer a more applicable, long-lasting, and learner-cantered educational experience. The learning environment in Merdeka Curriculum is not just the classroom. Learning can also take place outside of the classroom, in the community, and through digital technology. Differentiation is one of the learning strategies that teachers should be able to use to get students more excited about learning and involved in the process (Suwandi et al., 2023). This gives students the chance to grow their knowledge and abilities in a more comprehensive way.

Collaboration, discussion, and problem-solving are also encouraged in the learning environment. Teachers must be adopt at creating lessons that can be understood by all students (Salassa et al., 2020). Students have the

opportunity to ask questions, explore their interests, and actively engage in the learning process. Every learner should feel welcomed and appreciated because Merdeka curriculum recognizes cultural and social diversity and promotes inclusion. The Merdeka Curriculum changes the classroom into a place where students can reach their full potential and develop into critical thinkers, creative thinkers, and problem solvers. This curriculum serves as an example of an educational philosophy that is more flexible and pertinent to fostering the growth of pupils in Indonesia.

b) Quality Curriculum

A quality curriculum with instructional modules and substantive learning goals is a key idea raised by Merdeka Curriculum, which takes an open-minded and forward-thinking approach. Teaching modules play a significant role in this curriculum by assisting students in accessing content in a more organized and thorough way. The teaching module of Merdeka Curriculum includes various media tools or facilities, techniques, directions, and guidelines that are methodically, engagingly, and unquestionably constructed to correspond with the expectations of the students (Setiawan et al., 2022). Teaching modules are carefully designed, incorporating a variety of resources and

instructional methodologies, to fit the specific needs of pupils. Learning outcomes in Merdeka Curriculum are clear goals that every student is expected to achieve. These achievements are designed to reflect desired skills, knowledge, and attitudes, with an emphasis on deep understanding and practical application. Learning outcomes provide clear guidance to teachers and learners, helping them measure progress and achieve expected outcomes.

Holistic and comprehensive assessment is also emphasized in Merdeka Curriculum. A variety of methods, including projects, presentations, and portfolios, are used to evaluate learning outcomes in addition to standardized assessments. This helps students to explore knowledge in many contexts, foster creativity, and pick up useful practical skills. As a result, Merdeka Curriculum develops an educational environment that integrates lesson plans, learning objectives, and impartial evaluation. Teachers must design the learning environment such that students collaborate in a cooperative learning style (Barlian et al., 2022). This offers a strong basis for high-quality education, helping students to reach their full potential and become prepared to meet the needs of a constantly changing global environment.

c) Continuous Assessment

Continuous Assessment in the Context of Merdeka Curriculum is a comprehensive and continuous evaluation approach, covering three main components: diagnostic tests, formative tests, and summative tests. Diagnostic tests are first-level evaluation instruments that help teachers analysed the knowledge, abilities, and conceptual readiness of their students. Diagnostic tests are assessments that are administered at the start of the learning process (pre-learning) with the goal of determining factors associated to learning, such as student characteristics, learning styles, interests, and preparation (I Kadek Mustika, 2022). This gives teachers an overview of each student's needs and helps them to create lessons that correspond perfectly to their needs. Formative assessments are used for evaluating students' progress during the learning process at frequent times. Formative assessment is a procedure used in continuing education, evaluation formative assessment aims to evaluate student learning outcomes (CP) after the implementation of instructional programs provided by teachers (Susilawati et al., 2023). Formative assessments allow teachers to assess students' comprehension of the subject that they are teaching, offer quick feedback, and

modify their instruction to be more effective. A summative test is a final assessment that evaluates student achievement at the conclusion of a unit of instruction. These exams are made to give a complete picture of the knowledge and abilities of the students as well as the degree to which learning goals have been achieved. Daily assessments, UTS, and PAS all demonstrate summative assessment in action (Arrohman & Lestari, 2023).

Assessment of learning outcomes is closely related to the objectives achieved during the learning process (Nasution, 2021). Merdeka Curriculum's continuous assessment promotes a comprehensive evaluation strategy through integrating diagnostic tests, formative tests, and summative exams into the instructional process. Evaluation is then implemented to help students in their development rather than just as a technique for evaluating their academic achievement. This method encourages continuous learning and profound comprehension by enabling teachers and students to collaborate for better learning results.

d) Responsive teaching

Merdeka Curriculum's responsive approaches to learning represent a revolution in Indonesian education. One of the key pillars in obtaining responsive and

appropriate education, in particular, is the project-based learning (PBL) approach. The PBL learning model is one of the instructional strategies that encourages students to work in groups to build on their prior knowledge and experiences and connect those to the teacher's provided learning issues (Sari et al., 2023). PBL creates the basis for education that is learner-focused and promotes students to become active learners. Teachers assist students in PBL by participating as facilitators to help them work on challenging assignments. Real-world problems that need creative solutions are frequently included in these projects. In appropriate situations, students must plan, work together, and solve challenges.

The responsive strategy used in Merdeka Curriculum also involves instructional differentiation in addition to PBL. The abilities, interests, and learning preferences of each student are unique, and teachers are encouraged to acknowledge this. They create learning opportunities that are tailored to the needs of each learner so that every child can reach their full potential. This responsive method includes the use of technology as a key component. Technology makes it possible to use innovative instructional technologies, improve online education, and

have access to a greater variety of materials. Technology in the classroom can increase learning's efficacy, flexibility, and accessibility (Prastiwi & Widodo, 2023).

Merdeka Curriculum supports collaboration, communication, and critical thinking through responsive education. Students are encouraged to highlight issues, have discussions, and work together to discover answers. They develop the ability to think critically, support arguments with facts, and collaborate to resolve complex issues. An educational setting that is engaging, pertinent, and equips students for success in a changing world is created via responsive teaching combined with a project-based learning methodology and other components of Merdeka Curriculum. This is a step in the direction of more flexible, inclusive education that allows each learner the chance to reach his or her full potential. Students need to be prepared for the future with abilities including critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, and teamwork (Sabilah, 2023).

e) Effective Methods

Effective teaching strategies are a crucial cornerstone of Merdeka Curriculum to creating an improved educational future. Teachers can design

interesting educational lessons with Merdeka curriculum (Halimah et al., 2023). A variety of innovative methods are employed in an effort to give students a more relevant and meaningful educational experience. The technique used in this method is focused on students. Teachers serve as facilitators who are aware of the individual characteristics of students and design the learning process depending on their preferences. As a result, learning becomes more personalized and suitable for students' interests and skill levels.

The main component of this system is a skill-oriented method. Students will have more chances to actively discover current problems including health, the environment, and other issues that support character development through project-based learning (Ashfarina et al., 2023). Learners are encouraged to cultivate important abilities like critical thinking, effective communication, teamwork, creativity, and digital literacy. This method helps students develop the abilities needed to succeed in a world that is constantly changing. Merdeka Curriculum effectively establishes a basis for future relevant and successful education through the construction of a student-

centered learning environment and a strong emphasis on skill development.

3) Focus on Essential Materials

This curriculum for self-directed learning was created as a more flexible framework, emphasizing the most important subjects and helping students develop as individuals and learners (Idhartono, 2022). Merdeka Curriculum's focus on basic subjects is a strategy for ensuring that students develop knowledge and skills that are actually important to them. This is a crucial phase if education is to stay effective and relevant. Merdeka Curriculum is aware that not all knowledge or subjects are equally valuable. Determining and prioritizing the fundamental information and abilities that students need to have in order to achieve in a world that is always changing is what it means to concentrate on key materials. This involves developing foundational knowledge in a variety of areas as well as acquiring transferable skills including literacy, critical thinking, communication, cooperation, and problem-solving.

Learning focuses on education and learning that is essential materials, vital, and meaningful so that parents can easily assist their children with their homework at home and teachers may work without pressure to meet curriculum requirements (Wiguna & Tristaningrat, 2022). Focusing on

essential materials also gives teachers the flexibility to bring learning closer to students in a more in-depth and relevant way. Additionally, this method gives students the chance to develop their own learning paths. Depending on their personal preferences and interests, individuals can decide how they want to investigate key materials. This promotes learning that is more relevant and enables students to develop strong interests.

Focusing on essential materials in Merdeka Curriculum is the key to creating a more adaptive, relevant, and efficient education. Merdeka curriculum should be flexible and dynamic to reflect changes in society (Kurniati et al., 2022). This ensures that each learner acquires the foundation of knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in their lives, while giving them the freedom to pursue their own interests and aspirations.

d. Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum

The implementation of Merdeka curriculum is defined as "allowing something to be intolerable" in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary. Implementation is defined as the process of activities that are carried out in person under strict supervision in order to achieve a specific goal (Aminah & Nursikin, 2023). Implementing curriculum involves implementing ideas, concepts, and rules from the curriculum into practice. Implementing the

curriculum will result in lessons on how to ensure that students are accurately and effectively mastering its contents. Teachers use Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in three different ways when conducting learning activities in the classroom: planning, implementation, and evaluation. This is based on the guidelines for the stages of implementing the Independent Curriculum in educational units issued by (BSKAP) of the Ministry of Education and Culture in curriculum implementation.

1) Planning

This planning stage is setting goals in the vision and mission of the educational unit. Some of them are designing Learning Outcomes (CP), Learning Objectives (TP), Learning Objective Flow (ATP), creating Teaching Modules, and creating teaching tools. Learning outcomes (CP) are learning competencies that students must achieve in each phase (Riswakhayuningsih, 2022). Learning at the high school level in Merdeka curriculum is divided into two phases, namely phase E for grade X and phase F for grades XI and XII. Learning objectives (TP) must be set by the government and contextualized by teachers according to the characteristics and school ecosystem that is developing in the education unit. Learning objectives (TP) are based on the needs and characteristics of students in the educational unit, not the

wishes of the teacher (Abd. Rahim Ruspa et al., 2022). After the Learning objectives (TP) is prepared, the learning implementation design is then made into a learning objectives flow (ATP). ATP has the same goal as the syllabus in the 2013 Curriculum, namely as a guide for teachers in compiling learning modules (Riswakhyuningsih, 2022). Learning is facilitated by teaching modules. The teaching module contains learning objectives, learning steps, student evaluations, dimensions of the Pancasila student profile to be achieved, and attachments (Abd. Rahim Ruspa et al., 2022).

2) Implementation

Since the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum, education in Indonesia has experienced a significant transformation. One of the main objectives of this curriculum is to form a generation that is not only academically intelligent, but also has strong character, in accordance with the values of Pancasila as the basis of the country. In implementing the Merdeka curriculum, the focus is on innovative learning methods, Pancasila student profiles, and various learning activities that stimulate students' holistic development.

a) Innovative Learning Methods

In the context of Merdeka Curriculum, learning methods are the key to achieving the goal of building

Pancasila character. Teachers play a central role in applying innovative methods that actively involve students. Innovative educational initiatives, like the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, can be crucial in equipping students to thrive in a world that is becoming more complicated and dynamic (Djaja et al., 2023). Some of the methods adopted include:

- Collaborative Learning: Emphasizes cooperation between students in solving problems, promoting values such as mutual cooperation and deliberation.
- Project Based Learning (PjBL): Presents assignments or projects that require critical thinking, creativity, and the application of moral values in solving them. Driving Schools must implement Project Based Learning (PjBL) as part of the Independent Curriculum program (Guo et al., 2020) .
- Active Learning: Involving students directly in the learning process, for example through group discussions, simulations, or role plays.

b) Pancasila Student Profile

Student profiles are no longer only determined by academic achievement, but also by mastery and application of Pancasila values. The Pancasila student profile strengthening project is a project-based co-curricular

activity that is structured and designed to strengthen efforts to achieve competence and character in accordance with the Pancasila student profile based on Graduate Competency Standards. Implementation (Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo, 2022). Every student is expected to have:

- Pancasila Personality Based Leadership: Able to lead with integrity, justice and courage, in line with Pancasila values.
- Ethical Problem-Solving Ability: Able to face moral dilemmas and make correct decisions based on the principles of Pancasila.
- Intercultural Communication Skills: Understand and appreciate cultural diversity, while maintaining unity as a nation.

c) Learning Activities

Learning activities under Merdeka Curriculum are designed to stimulate various aspects of student development. Thus, through the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum which is directed at innovative methods, Pancasila student profiles, and various learning activities, Indonesia is moving towards creating a generation that is intelligent, ethical, and embodied in the national spirit embraced by Pancasila.

3) Assessments

Learning process assessments look at how well students prepared overall, how the process went, and what they learned. The final part of the assessment will reveal student capacity, gender, and specific data related to the teaching and learning process. In accordance with applicable educational standards, each of these standards is categorized as a tool to improve the learning process. Assessment in Merdeka curriculum consists of diagnostic, formative and summative tests. Diagnostic tests are tests carried out before learning to determine students' readiness, learning style, interests or characteristics (I Kadek Mustika, 2022). Formative test is a procedure used in continuing education. The aim is to find out student learning outcomes (CP) after the program given by the instructor is completed (Susilawati et al., 2023). Formative tests are conducted throughout the course, providing ongoing feedback on student progress. Teachers use methods such as quizzes or discussions to get a better idea of what students are learning and help them adapt lessons on the fly. The summative test is carried out after the program ends and is considered complete (Adinda et al., 2021). Summative tests are carried out at the end of the learning period to evaluate final results and show overall

student achievement. End-of-semester exams or major projects are usually used as summative tests tools.

4. Problems faced by Teachers in Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum

a. Lack of Teacher Understanding in Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum

Merdeka Curriculum is an educational innovation that seeks to provide flexibility to schools and teachers in developing a curriculum that suits the needs of students and their environment. Teacher readiness is very important to implement the Merdeka curriculum, especially when teachers come to teach (Febrianningsih & Ramadan, 2023). Unfortunately, many teachers still struggle to adopt this idea because they don't fully understand it. The lack of understanding in Merdeka Curriculum is a serious problem because teachers are key in carrying out this change.

This is as discussed by Febrianningsih & Ramadan, (2023) regarding teachers' skills in implementing the independent learning curriculum, it shows that they still need training on the structure of the independent curriculum, learning assessment, and creating teaching modules. Apart from that, the success of an independent curriculum requires the readiness of facilities and infrastructure. Teachers still do not have a clear understanding of how this curriculum is implemented. To ensure that schools can respond to

teacher concerns, the level of preparation provided is critical. To achieve curriculum objectives and ensure optimal, effective and efficient implementation, this curriculum concept must be understood in relation to all components of educational institutions.

b. Curriculum changes too rapidly

Curriculum changes can have positive as well as negative impacts on the quality of education. On the positive side, students can learn by providing up with the more complex times, which is supported by principals, teachers, other staff members, students, and even the institution itself (Aprillia et al., 2023). The goal of the Merdeka Curriculum is to produce graduates who are more capable and equipped to handle difficulties that arise in the world. However, the implementation of this curriculum has been challenged with many of issues because of changes made too fast.

The curriculum must be able to develop people who are competent in any profession that are important to them, including the creation of new employment, and who can not only accept information but also compete through creating products of higher quality (Setiawati, 2022). However, many feel that these rapid changes have affected students and teachers as well as the educational system in general. Teachers have to quickly adjust to new materials and teaching strategies while students need to learn quickly in a variety of ways.

Effective evaluations of the curriculum's impact on student learning outcomes are frequently obstructed by significant shifts. This may make it difficult to determine whether the curriculum truly achieves its goals and raise assumptions about which one is a success or unsuccessful. Positive changes in the students' performance becoming apparent when they apply the Merdeka Curriculum. They are able to recognize that learning a theme or material they comprehend and its implementation includes outside the content to embrace application and execution (Rahmadhani et al., 2022). Furthermore, educators who have to constantly modify modules, teaching strategies, and educational resources may find that their workloads are increased by curriculum changes that occur too rapidly. This can drain human resources and education budgets that may not always be easily available. The importance of a balanced approach and in-depth consultation with stakeholders in implementing the curriculum is the key to success in facing the challenge of curriculum change too quickly. In the face of these changes, all parties need to work together to ensure that education continues to provide the best benefit for students, teachers, and society as a whole.

c. Teacher must upgrade the Digital Competency

The position of teachers has a significant impact on education in today's quickly growing era of digital media. Teachers

must always adapt to innovations in technology because they are not just educators but also learning facilitators. As a result, for teachers to implement Merdeka Curriculum, teachers have to improve their level of digital competency. The habits of using technology in the classroom must be followed by changes in the ways that both teachers and students learn (Nurrochman et al., 2023). Merdeka Curriculum is an educational concept aimed at giving teachers flexibility in managing materials for learning, instructional strategies, and learning outcomes. According to this framework, in order to effectively use technology to improve learning processes that focus an importance on the development of each individual student, teachers must have imposing digital abilities.

Teachers must first be experienced in the use modern digital technologies, including computers, mobile devices, educational software, and the internet. Computers, cell phones, televisions, VCRs, and other technology are employed in education today as a tool to support learning activities (Gusteti et al., 2023). Teachers that are competent in digital technology can design more interesting learning activities like simulations, project-based learning, and global connections. Additionally, teachers must learn how to teach digital literacy to students.

Teachers need to consistently advance their digital competence. Teachers must remain updated because the application of technology is always changing. Teachers must be competent with technology to maximize learning opportunities (Simorangkir et al., 2023). To continue improving their digital abilities, they may contribute to training sessions, conferences, or online resources. Teachers with excellent digital skills will be change agents in Merdeka Curriculum, able to provide students with greater variety and relevant learning experiences. They will assist in controlling education toward a future that is more flexible, dynamic, and technologically relevant.

C. Theoretical Framework

In this research, researchers analyzed the implementation of Merdeka curriculum in teaching English at SMA 1 Godong. Curriculum is an educational plan that is carefully created to direct the learning and teaching process in educational institutions. Currently, Indonesia uses Merdeka curriculum as a reference in its education system. According to the Educational Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Agency (BSKAP), there are 3 stages in implementing Merdeka curriculum, namely planning, implementation and assessment. In the planning process the teacher designs learning outcomes (CP), learning objectives (TP), learning objective flow (ATP), and teaching modules. Then the implementation process includes learning objectives, learning processes, learning

resources and materials. Lastly, the assessment includes diagnostic, formative and summative tests. Apart from that, researchers also examined the problems of obstacles faced in the process of implementing Merdeka curriculum at SMA 1 Godong. The theoretical framework for implementing the Merdeka curriculum is presented in the following diagram.

Figure 2 1 Theoretical Framework

