

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **A. Research Background**

The curriculum is the most important part in the world of education, which is used for the success of any educational process. Curriculum contains of plans and setting regarding objectives, content, and learning materials as well as the method used as a guideline for organizing learning activities for achieve the certain educational goals. The curriculum applies to schools and teachers as a reference and guideline for develop learning tools that will be used in class such as prota, promes, and Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran (RPP), as well as to prepare objectives and evaluating learning activities. This is an integral part of education goals in Indonesia so that the students in schools get equal education (Muyassarotul & Hafidzoh, 2022).

In the world of education, of course, the curriculum is very necessary for the learning process in the classroom. The good Education policy can be seen through implementation of the curriculum that is applied, this is because the curriculum becomes a determinant continuity of education and as the main guideline in preparing learning activities (Munandar, 2017). With implementation curriculum in schools as Educational Institutions, then the system in schools will become more organized where the educational curriculum itself contains goals and methods of education.

The curriculum is important for teachers, as a guide for compiling learning activity plan so that the process of learning takes place in class effective and purposeful. Curriculum development is an instrument to improve quality of Education (Rahayu et al., 2022). This is because the

curriculum is the essence of the success of the process education, which in the curriculum contains the formulation of objectives and the formulation of the content of learning activities that prepare students with abilities,

knowledge, attitudes, and various kinds of values needed to implement future assigned work.

In 2019, the Minister of Education, Research Culture and Technology (Mendikbud Ristek) Nadiem Makarim sparked the Curriculum Merdeka, as a form of evaluating the improvement of the 2013 curriculum, which trialed in 2020 and starting to be used in 2022. The Curriculum Merdeka is a curriculum that follows technological developments with a creative and innovative learning system. Based on Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan (BSNP), the Curriculum Merdeka is a learning curriculum approach that focuses on the talents and interests of students. Curriculum Merdeka is interpreted as a learning plan that provides opportunities for students to learn independently, relaxed calm not feeling pressured, happy without stress and paying attention of natural talents possessed by students. The focus of independent learning is giving freedom for students to think creatively and independently, and choose whatever they want the subject to be studied according to their talents and interests and the teacher as the subject the main who play a role are expected to be able to act as a driving force to take action which gives positive things to students (Khusni et al., 2022). Therefore, in the Implementation, the teacher has the freedom to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be adapted to the learning needs and interests of participants educate.

In Indonesia, the Curriculum Merdeka has not been implemented in all schools, due to the considerations of the school itself. In addition, the policies from Governments gives the flexibility to school in implementing the Curriculum Merdeka when school ready for this new curriculum. In West Kalimantan there are schools that have implemented the Curriculum Merdeka, one of them is a state of junior high school in Pontianak that subject become of this research in the 2022/2023 academic year for its new students, namely grade 7. The reason for choosing this school as subject of this research because this school have implemented this

curriculum for approximately one year, and based on initial observations as well as information from schools, the implementation of Curriculum Merdeka in school subjects has undergone a few changes where there is progress in learning, one of which is in English learning where students are more active and courageous in discussing using language English with friends and also the teacher, then the assessment process becomes more flexible.

In this regard, there have been many changes from the implementations of Curriculum Merdeka experience so that there are challenges that must be faced by school and also teachers especially in English lessons such as the preparation learning process takes a lot of time because it is more complex, prepare mindset of students for independent learning systems, must map student learning preparation, besides that the process of compiling learning outcomes is difficult and time-consuming. Apart from that challenge, there has been a lot of progress after the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka, namely growth student creativity, given the importance of optimal and innovative use of technology in the Curriculum Merdeka.

Several studies discussing the Curriculum Merdeka have been conducted. The first is from Damayanti et al (2022) found there were some challenges as well obstacles to the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka in Indonesian language subjects. Furthermore, research from Fitriah & Wardani (2022), found that paradigm Curriculum Merdeka for elementary school teachers is something new and requires readiness its application. In research from Rahayu et al (2022) found that by using the Curriculum Merdeka the changes were felt in schools and teachers more flexible to create.

Based on the previous study above, there has been no research related to the Curriculum Merdeka that focuses on English Learning so this is a novelty in this research. The Curriculum Merdeka is a new curriculum and in implementing this curriculum there have challenges, so

it is important to conduct this research as an evaluation of how the implementation of Curriculum Merdeka and to find out what progress and difficulties are being faced by teachers and students in particular in English learning which of course still have weakness in dealing with this new curriculum, so that they can create recommendation for future improvements. Therefore, researcher interested in doing research with the title “The Implementation Of Curriculum Merdeka In The Context Of English Learning At A State Of Junior High School In Pontianak”.

## **B. Research Questions**

Based on the background described above, the research questions in this study can be formulated as follows:

How is the implementation of Curriculum Merdeka in the context of English learning?

The sub-focus of the problem formulation as follows:

1. What is the progress of the implementation Curriculum Merdeka in school?
2. What are the challenges in the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka?
3. What are the recommendations for the implementation Curriculum Merdeka?

## **C. Research Purposes**

Based on research questions above, research purposes can be formulated as follows:

To find out the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka from an English learning context.

With sub-focus, to find out:

1. The progress in the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka at school.
2. The challenges in the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka.

3. The recommendations for the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka.

#### **D. Significances of Research**

1. Theoretical Significance

In theory this research is expected to provide knowledge and insight to know the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka at a state of junior high school in Pontianak. In addition, the results of this study can be use as a reference in the future information, and improvements for similar research.

2. Practical Significances

In practice, this research is expected to provide benefits:

- a. To Teachers

This research can be use as information and evaluation relate to the implementation of Curriculum Merdeka, and the result of the research in the form of challenges and improvement that teachers need to know to deal with the challenges so that English teachers will be assist in learning activities in the school.

- b. To Students

This research can be useful as knowledge about how to implement a Curriculum Merdeka, especially from the students' point of view in English learning activities, regarding the material they will learn and how learning concepts use the Curriculum Merdeka, so that they can prepare themselves and make improvements in the future for learning activities English can run well.

- c. To Other Researchers in the Future

The result of this research can be use as a reference for future research developments, and for the other researchers that will conduct relate research especially in every renewal of the curriculum which will continue to be update with the times.

## **E. Scope of Research**

This section will explain the provisions of this study, which consist of research variable and terminology.

### **1. Research Variable**

In this research, researcher indicated a single variable, namely the implementation of Curriculum Merdeka.

### **2. Research Terminology**

Research terminology in this research as follows:

#### **a. The Curriculum Merdeka**

The Curriculum Merdeka is a curriculum that focuses on development of students' interests and talents. This curriculum is conceptualized for maximizing all the potential of students so that they can deepen their interests and also his talent. In the Curriculum Merdeka, the learning process is more prioritized is a project-based learning strategy in a way apply the material learned in the project into the study case. By implementing a Curriculum Merdeka students will no longer be too focuses on the questions on the exam, so learning will be more emphasizing students' understanding of problem solving and solutions which are given.

#### **b. English Learning**

English learning is a subject that is taught in schools by interacting between teachers and students as a process classroom education aimed at learning a foreign language, namely English as an international language. English learning is a process that aims to increase knowledge and also students' skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing use a foreign language. In other words, learn English help students to improve their abilities in learn and master the language.