

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research is intended to analyze the cognitive readiness of the English teacher in implementing the Independent Curriculum. The focus is on exploring the teacher understanding, knowledge, and intellectual preparedness in designing and delivering instruction based on the principles of the Independent Curriculum. This research was conducted using qualitative methods, namely by using interview and observation techniques as data collection tools.

The research population is English teacher who teach at MIN 11 Banjar who have implemented the Independent Curriculum. Subject sampling was carried out by purposive sampling based on their participation in the implementation of this curriculum.

Observation is carried out to directly observe how teacher carry out learning in the classroom, including the use of learning resource, teaching strategies, and student involvement in the learning process. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted to gain further understanding of teacher experiences, the challenges they face, and the strategies applied in dealing with these obstacles.

A. Findings

The researcher found some findings and described the result of the analysis of the Independent Curriculum in English. In presenting the

findings of this study, the researcher noted the most prominent themes and categories that emerged from the analysis of the data collected. The data was obtained through observations and interviews of English teacher regarding their readiness to implement the Independent Curriculum. The themes and categories that emerged from the data collection and analysis process would be explained in detail in this section. The cognitive readiness of the English teacher is explored through several key indicators, including the use of learning resource, development of teaching modules, and implementation of assessments. These aspects reflect the teacher understanding and mastery of curriculum content, pedagogical design, and instructional evaluation all of which are essential components of cognitive readiness. Furthermore, here are the important findings of each variable studied, presented in a concise and meaningful manner, accompanied by sufficient explanation to make it more communicative.

Based on the observations made in MIN 11 Banjar, it was found that English teacher showed different levels of readiness to implement the Independent Curriculum. In general, teacher seem to be enthusiastic and motivated to implement this new curriculum in line with the findings of Nurzen, (2022) to support teaching and learning activities. Nevertheless, overall, the observations show a positive effort by the English teacher to implement the Independent Curriculum to the best of their ability Ben Gurion dan Nasir, (2024).

The researcher made observations of the implementation of the

Independent Curriculum during the teaching and learning process in the classroom as part of knowing the cognitive, physical, psychological and facility readiness of English teacher at MIN 11 Banjar. The researcher becomes a non-participant observer who is present where the action takes place, but does not interact or participate. Observations were conducted four times during the teaching and learning process.

1. Teacher Cognitive Readiness in Implementing the Independent Curriculum

a. Use of Learning Resource

The use of learning resource is one of the important aspects in the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Teacher is no longer trapped in one type of textbook, but are given the freedom to choose and customize learning resource that suit students. In this study, teacher use of learning resource was observed through direct observation in the classroom and in-depth interviews with teacher involved in implementing the Independent Curriculum.

During class attention, it was observed that the teacher used several learning resource to support English learning. The teacher does not only rely on one textbook, but combining them with teaching modules, digital media, and visual materials such as pictures, videos, and vocabulary cards.

In the early stages of the learning process, teacher use PowerPoint as a presentation media in delivering the subject matter.

The subject matter is used from several source, namely official reference books, online learning sites such as YouTube, and materials from independent teaching platform. In addition, teacher also use student worksheets (LKS) which are designed independently according to the students' ability level and characteristics.

In core activities, teacher show video conversations to hone students' listening skills, followed by discussions, while in other sessions, teacher use flashcards to introduce new vocabulary, as well as simple props to display the meaning of words directly. The combination of various learning resource adds enthusiasm to students' attention and understanding of the material, and makes the learning process more interesting and less monotonous.

This shows that Teacher is not only dependent on one source, but actively integrate several relevant learning resource to achieve more contextual and meaningful learning objectives.

During the interview session, the teacher stated that "The Independent Curriculum gives teacher the freedom to choose learning resource according to student needs. Without being tied to one book, teacher can customize the material to make it more relevant and interesting for students." She felt supported by the Independent Curriculum policy, which provides flexibility in choosing and developing learning resource. During teacher is not burdened with having to use one particular textbook, so she is more free to adjust

teaching materials according to the conditions and needs of students in the classroom.

The teacher explained that “It’s a good approach. Using textbooks as a foundation while adding varied resource like videos and interactive media makes learning more engaging and helps students understand the material better”. They use textbooks from government or private publishers as basic guidelines. However, to enrich the material and increase interest, they add other references such as video learning, audio listening, and interactive media from educational platforms.

She also announced that “I agree. Every student has a different learning style, so using varied resource like visuals, audio, or practical activities really helps make the material more accessible and easier to understand for everyone”. The use of these diverse learning resource is very important because it helps students understand the material from different perspectives. Some students are not comfortable with reading text; others understand better with pictures, sounds, or hands-on practice. With the flexibility of learning resource, teacher can reach the styles of a wide range of students and maximize their potential.

b. Understanding and Implementing of Independent Curriculum Principles

The observations and interviews revealed that the teacher showed a general understanding of the key principles of the

Independent Curriculum. These include student-centered learning, differentiated instruction, contextual learning, character education, and the flexibility to design instructional content. This understanding was demonstrated through both classroom practices and verbal reflections during interviews.

From classroom observations, the teacher did not merely deliver lessons in a one-way method but encouraged students to participate actively through discussions, questions, and group activities. Students were invited to express their opinions, share ideas, and work collaboratively in ways that reflected student-centered and participatory learning. This shows the teacher attempt to apply the fundamental philosophy of the Independent Curriculum.

However, in several sessions, teacher-dominated instruction still occurred. The interaction remained somewhat limited, and opportunities for student exploration were not always maximized. This indicates that while the teacher understood the basic principles, their application was still developing and required improvement for consistency and depth.

During interviews, the teacher stated that she had learned about the core concepts of the curriculum through formal training, peer discussions in KKG (Teacher Working Groups), and self-study. She acknowledged familiarity with key aspects like differentiated learning and the Pancasila Student Profile and expressed appreciation for the

curriculum's flexibility.

“The Independent Curriculum really helped me because it gave me flexibility. I can plan learning that suits the needs of students, because each student has a different level of understanding.”

The teacher also described strategies used to apply these principles in class. For example, she built connections between lesson content and students' daily experiences, such as relating speaking topics to food preferences or local events. She also grouped students based on ability and provided individualized support during group work, which aligns with differentiated instruction.

She also implemented reflection sessions at the end of lessons to assess student understanding and adjust future instruction accordingly. The teacher emphasized the importance of forming good relationships with students to understand their learning difficulties more deeply.

“I try to establish good relations with students to make it easier to find out the problems they face. Open communication makes the classroom atmosphere comfortable, and students are more courageous to convey their difficulties.”

Despite these efforts, the teacher admitted to some confusion regarding the application of differentiated learning and integrating multiple curriculum principles at once. She emphasized that practical experiences helped her understand more than theory alone and hoped

for ongoing guidance and hands-on training.

Overall, the findings indicate that the teacher has a developing but incomplete understanding of the Independent Curriculum principles and is actively working to implement them. While the teacher has embraced the student-centered mindset and contextual learning, the consistency of execution and integration of multiple principles in daily practice remain key areas for growth.

c. Teaching Module Development

From the results of observations made several meetings in the classroom, it appears that English teacher have implemented teaching modules that have been adapted to the principles of the Independent Curriculum. The modules implemented not only contain teaching materials, but also include teaching objectives, activity steps, formative assessments, as well as teaching reflections that support students' active engagement.

Teacher is considered to design learning activities systematically and are proven to be based on the needs of students in their classes. For example, in a learning session, the teacher issues role-play activities that are relevant to the student's daily life situation. This activity shows that teacher already understand the context of students' lives and apply them to learning, in addition to the paradigm of the contextual approach in the Independent Curriculum.

In addition, teacher also add local exploration activities, such as writing descriptions of locations around students' home environments

or talking about regional traditions. The teaching modules used support these activities and contain clear directions and resource. This indicates that teacher have tried to put together modules that not only refer to basic competencies, but also consider the social, cultural, and environmental backgrounds of students.

Through in-depth interviews, teacher reported that “This flexibility is very good. I can adjust the material and how to teach according to the condition of students in class. That way, learning can be more targeted and more easily understood by students”. They have the freedom to arrange and develop teaching modules according to the conditions of students in each of their classes. The teacher welcomed the flexibility offered by Independent Curriculum since it allows them to adapt content and learning approaches to the needs and characteristics of the students and surroundings.

The teacher said that “In compiling modules, I started by looking at the needs of students, such as initial abilities, interest in learning, and their background. After that, I chose the most suitable method and material. Sometimes I also take inspiration from the sample module from the Ministry of Education and Culture, then I adjust it to the condition of the school and the ability of students in my class”. In compiling the module, he first mapped the needs of students, such as initial language skills, learning interests, and cultural background. After that, he chooses the most suitable method and material. The teacher also

mentioned that he sometimes takes inspiration from the example teaching modules from the Ministry of Education and Culture, then adjusts them to school conditions and students' abilities.

d. Systematic Learning Implementation

From the observations made during the learning process, the teacher seems to have carried out learning in a systematic and structured manner. Learning activities begin with the delivery of learning objectives, warming-up to activate students' prior knowledge, and an explanation of the steps of the activities to be carried out. This shows that teacher design learning activities consciously and follow a clear learning flow.

Teacher use the teaching module as the main reference in designing learning. In the module, there is already material, core activities, formative assessment, and reflection, so it would make it easier for teacher to organize the learning flow from beginning to end. In addition, teacher also use learning media in the form of short videos, pictures, vocabulary cards to help explain the material. The use of these media not only arouses students' interest, but also clarifies the concepts taught, especially for students who have different understanding abilities.

The learning strategies used are also varied and adapted to the characteristics of students. Teacher apply group discussion, role-playing, and presentation methods as part of an active and participatory approach in accordance with the principles of Independent Curriculum.

During the core activities, the teacher also acts as a facilitator, actively traveling around the class, guiding students who are having difficulty, and asking leading questions to encourage deepening of the material.

Overall, the observed learning took place smoothly, systematically, and reflected the teacher efforts in adjusting learning materials and strategies to the needs of students.

The results of interviews with teacher show that “I realize the importance of systematic planning to support effective learning in accordance with the objectives of the independent curriculum. Before teaching, I planned a simple lesson design, which I later adjusted into a teaching module based on the context and student characteristics. In this plan, I chose the right material, determine the appropriate strategy, and design activities that can make students actively involved”. Teacher realize the need for systematic preparation of learning in supporting the learning process to take place effectively and according to the objectives of the Independent Curriculum. Teacher revealed that before giving lessons, teacher plans simply equate teaching modules that have been prepared by the government. In that planning, they choose the right materials, determine the most appropriate strategy, and design activities that invite active student involvement.

The teacher said, "If the material is only delivered in one direction, students get bored quickly. But if there are videos, pictures, or hands-on practice, they understand better and are more enthusiastic."

This shows that the teacher understands the importance of variety in the delivery of material to support student engagement.

However, she also admits that designing a systematic learning process takes more time and energy. Especially in choosing the right media and adjusting the strategy to the students' readiness level. Nevertheless, they still try to do their best so that the teaching and learning process runs according to the expectations and principles of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes meaningful and participatory learning.

e. Assessments Practices

During the observed learning process, teacher was seen conducting several forms of assessment directly in the classroom. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher conducts an informal diagnostic or initial assessment by asking students' understanding of the previous material and relating it to the new material. This activity helps teacher find out the extent of students' readiness and initial understanding of the topic to be learned.

In the learning process, the teacher also applies formative assessment by giving oral questions, short quizzes, and practice tasks that are done individually or in groups. The results of this assessment are then used as a reference by the teacher to provide direct feedback to students. The feedback given is not only in the form of answer correction, but also encouragement and direction to correct mistakes,

which is very helpful for students in improving their understanding gradually.

At the end of the lesson or at the end of a particular unit, teacher is seen conducting summative assessments through written tests or final projects. These assessments are conducted to evaluate students' overall learning outcomes and are used as the basis for student progress reports. Summative assessment is also equipped with an assessment rubric that shows indicators of student competency achievement.

Through interviews, teacher conveyed that "I began to understand that the assessment was not only to measure the final results, but also part of the learning process. Every time you start a new meeting or topic, I routinely make an initial assessment to see the extent of students' knowledge and readiness. Usually, I do this assessment through open discussions, trigger questions, or brief reflection sheets". They have begun to understand the importance of assessment as part of the learning process, not just as a means of measuring end results. Teacher mentioned that they routinely conduct initial assessments at the beginning of each meeting or at the start of a new topic to determine students' background knowledge and readiness. This initial assessment is usually done through open discussions, trigger questions or short reflection sheets.

For formative assessment, teacher revealed that "I made a continuous assessment through oral questions, observation, or light

assignments to see student development. Formative assessment is very helpful to provide direct feedback”. She does it continuously throughout the learning process. It can be in the form of oral questions, observations of student activities, or light assignments that are not formally assessed but are used to determine the development of student understanding. She considers that formative assessment is very effective to see students’ progress in real-time and provide immediate feedback.

Meanwhile, she divides summative assessments into end-of-chapter exams, final projects, and presentations. According to the teacher, she is trying to change the form of summative assessment so that it does not only emphasize cognitive aspects, but also affective and skills (psychomotor). This is in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum, which provides a holistic assessment. Through interviews, teacher conveyed that she has begun to understand the importance of assessment as part of the process

The teacher also conveyed that she is still learning to prepare assessment rubrics that are appropriate to the principles of Curriculum Independent assessment. Despite that, they show high commitment to continuously improve the assessment system to be more equitable, objective, and encourage meaningful learning processes for students.

2. Challenges faced by English teacher in implementing the Independent Curriculum

a. Limited Training

Based on the observation of classroom implementation, the teacher seemed to have applied several key principles of Independent Curriculum. This can be reflected through the way the teacher presented learning materials in context, provided room for exploration of students, and employed more flexible and student-centered methods of instruction. The teacher also seemed to be familiar with the use of module ajar, differentiated approaches to instruction, and formative assessment, showing that they understood the basic components and approach to Independent Curriculum.

Regularity in learning flow, the use of diverse teaching resource, and achieving the values of Pancasila Student Profile in activities in class as an indicator that the teacher has gained knowledge from official training or other professional development activities.

In interviews, most teacher shared that “I participated in training from the Ministry of Education and Culture and training in schools such as KKG (*Kelompok Kerja Guru*). This training is very useful because it gives me new insights about different learning, formative assessments, and how to make modules in accordance with the independent curriculum. The method is more flexible and humane than the old curriculum”. The teacher has participated in structuring training related

to the Independent Curriculum, both organized by the Ministry of Education using the Independent Learning platform, as well as through a series of Learning Communities, KKG (*Kelompok Kerja Guru*), and training at the school level.

During the training, some lecturers felt that the training instructions were very useful because it gave them a new perspective on the concept of differentiated learning, formative assessment which is very important, and the preparation of teaching modules that fit the independent curriculum. Trainees also spoke of how the training was able to present a more flexible and humanistic methodology compared to the conventional curriculum.

The teacher also said that the training they attended was still general in nature and did not fully equip them with sufficient technical skills to be applied directly in the classroom. She hopes for more intensive mentoring and further training that is more applicable and based on real classroom practice. From fellow teacher through communities and discussion forums is better for them to understand curriculum implementation in the field more realistically. Such socialization is seen as acting as a supplement to the official training they receive.

b. Challenges in Adapting Learning Resource

During the observation, teachers appeared to be trying to utilize various learning resource, including textbooks, teaching modules, and

visual and digital materials. However, in practice, it was evident that some learning resource were used directly without much adjustment to the needs and abilities of students. For example, some materials in the module were used in their entirety even though some students appeared to have difficulty understanding them.

When teachers presented learning videos or reading texts, not all students were able to follow optimally, especially those with low literacy skills or English language comprehension. This indicates that the adaptation of learning resource has not been fully carried out strategically, particularly in terms of simplifying content, strengthening local context, or modifying media to better suit student profiles.

Teachers also appear to have limited time and resource to develop their own teaching materials, so they rely more on existing materials without making in-depth adjustments.

In interviews, teachers stated that they recognized the importance of adapting learning resource to students' needs. However, they acknowledged that adapting learning resource was a challenge due to time constraints, technical skills, and appropriate references.

Teachers explained that “There are many resources, but I am often confused about which ones to choose and how to simplify the content so that my students can understand it.” Much of the material from the government, the internet, or textbooks is actually good, but it is too complex, too general, or not relevant to the local context of the

students. To simplify it, teachers need to sort and edit the material, which they say requires more time and energy than simply using the material as is.

Some teachers also complained that they did not have enough training on how to select, modify, or develop learning resource in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. They felt that most of the available training still focused more on curriculum theory rather than on concrete techniques for adapting learning materials in the field.

c. Challenges in Developing Teaching Modules and Assessments

During the observation process, teachers appeared to use existing teaching modules and assessment instrument, but these had not been fully developed independently or comprehensively adapted to the characteristics of the students. Some learning activities referred to standard teaching modules from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, and assessments were conducted using conventional methods such as written quizzes and individual assignments. This shows that teachers did use learning tools, but there was no further exploration or development that reflected differentiation or authentic assessment in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum.

In addition, the assessments given to students do not always appear to be rubric-based, and teachers give grades without providing

detailed explanations of the indicators to students. On several occasions, assessments are general in nature and do not accommodate the diversity of student abilities. This indicates that even though learning is taking place, teachers still face challenges in developing assessment instrument that are in line with the flexible and formative nature of the Independent Curriculum.

In interviews, teachers admitted that they still faced difficulties in developing teaching modules and designing assessments in line with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. Some teachers said that they were not used to developing modules from scratch, as they had previously relied on textbooks or fixed syllabuses. Although the government had provided sample modules, they found it difficult to adapt them to the real needs of students, especially in terms of differentiating content, processes, and learning products.

Teachers also said that developing formative assessments and assessment rubrics is not easy. They understand the importance of assessment as part of the learning process, but often feel confused about developing appropriate indicators, determining achievement levels, and providing effective feedback. Some teachers prefer to conduct general assessments because they feel they are not yet sufficiently trained in developing rubric-based or project-based assessment tools.

Teachers hope for practical guidance and technical training to deepen their understanding of how to develop teaching modules and

assessments that are truly contextual. They feel that the training they have received so far has been too theoretical and that they need concrete examples or hands-on practice to apply it independently in the classroom.

B. Discussion

The researcher conducts qualitative research through single case studies methods for collecting relevant data. This research is specifically to identify the structure of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in English subjects and analyze the cognitive readiness of English teacher, along with the challenges faced. In the discussion section, the researcher explained the findings obtained from the data collection and analysis process. The main purpose of this discussion is to provide answers to general and specific research questions that have been formulated in the context of this research.

The researcher focuses on the following research questions when explaining the findings:

1. Teacher Cognitive Readiness in Implementing the Independent Curriculum

In this research the researcher found there are five aspects about teacher cognitive readiness of independent curriculum implementation:

a. Use of Learning Resource

The findings indicate that the teacher at MIN 11 Banjar

utilized various learning resource, including textbooks, government-provided modules, and internet-based materials. While this shows basic cognitive readiness, the teacher still experienced difficulties in selecting and adapting materials that fully suit the students' needs and learning context.

According to Afitska and Said (2022), cognitive readiness involves the ability to critically evaluate and adapt learning resource to meet diverse student profiles. Pokhrel (2024) also asserts that curriculum literacy requires teachers to select meaningful and relevant resource to support differentiated instruction. In this case, although the teacher accessed available materials, her struggle to contextualize and modify content shows that her curriculum literacy is still developing.

Therefore, the teacher cognitive readiness in utilizing learning resource is evident but not yet optimal. Strengthening this area requires not only more training but also modeling and mentoring on how to adapt materials meaningfully.

b. Understanding and Implementation of Curriculum Principles

Findings showed that the teacher understood key principles such as student-centered learning, contextualization, and differentiated instruction. She attempted to apply these in classroom practices, including group work, reflection, and using

real-life examples. However, the application was inconsistent across lessons.

This partially reflects cognitive readiness. According to Nurzen (2022), understanding curriculum principles is not enough teachers must also apply them systematically. Pokhrel (2024) further states that successful implementation requires pedagogical reasoning and flexibility. The teacher at MIN 11 Banjar expressed understanding but admitted confusion in combining multiple principles in a lesson.

This suggests that her readiness is still emerging and would benefit from hands-on training and peer collaboration to internalize these curriculum shifts into consistent classroom practices.

c. Teaching Module Development

The teacher reported significant challenges in designing her own modules and assessments. She preferred to modify existing materials and felt unsure about making independent instructional decisions.

This confirms what Prasojo et al. (2017) describe as a common obstacle among teachers limited confidence in applying curriculum content without clear models. Marbun et al. (2022) also highlight that teachers often face difficulties in designing authentic assessments due to a lack of experience and guidance.

At MIN 11 Banjar, the teacher challenges reflect a gap between understanding the curriculum and transforming it into structured, actionable learning plans. This points to the need for more technical, school-based training.

d. Systematic Learning Implementation

Classroom observations showed that the teacher followed a basic learning structure consisting of opening, core activities, and closing. However, this structure lacked consistency in applying clear objectives, differentiated activities, and follow-up reflection. These findings point to limited mastery in systematic learning design.

According to Afitska and Said (2022), systematic instruction planning is a core aspect of cognitive readiness. Teachers need to manage time, select activities, and align tasks with learning outcomes. Pokhrel (2024) also highlights that pedagogical reasoning the ability to make thoughtful instructional decisions is central to effective implementation.

At MIN 11 Banjar, the teacher lesson delivery indicates a foundational understanding of lesson flow, but deeper instructional design skills are still needed to achieve curriculum goals.

e. Assessments Practices

The findings revealed that the teacher conducted assessments

but struggled with designing formative instrument, using rubrics, and aligning evaluation tools with learning objectives. The teacher often relied on basic written tests without performance-based assessment.

This is consistent with Marbun et al. (2022), who observed that teachers often lack assessment literacy under the Independent Curriculum. Supriatna (2021) states that cognitive readiness includes the ability to select and design appropriate assessments that reflect students' competencies and learning progress.

The teacher case reflects limited capacity in connecting assessment with instructional goals. More training in authentic and formative assessment design is necessary to enhance her ability to measure learning effectively.

2. Challenges faced by English teacher in implementing the Independent Curriculum

a. Limited Training

The teacher acknowledged that most training she attended was theoretical, with limited practical guidance. She also noted the lack of regular mentoring or peer collaboration, which made her feel unsure about applying the curriculum fully.

Prasojo et al. (2017) emphasize that training must be contextual and continuous for teachers to build real competence.

Pokhrel (2024) also supports the idea that without sustained support, cognitive readiness remains superficial.

At MIN 11 Banjar, the teacher experience reflects the broader issue of implementation gaps—where policy and curriculum design are not matched by adequate teacher preparation. To address this, more in-depth training and mentoring are needed to build teachers' instructional decision-making.

b. Challenges in Adapting Learning Resource

Although the teacher accessed digital and printed resource, she struggled to adapt the material to the language proficiency and context of her students. She expressed difficulty in simplifying texts or customizing content for different levels.

This is in line with Pokhrel (2024), who emphasizes that cognitive readiness requires teachers to exercise judgment in choosing, modifying, and adapting content. Afitska and Said (2022) also argue that instructional adaptability is essential in ensuring student engagement and relevance.

In this case, the teacher difficulty shows that her skills in adapting materials need further development through mentoring and contextual training.

c. Challenges in Developing Teaching Modules and Assessments

The findings at MIN 11 Banjar show that the English teacher faced challenges in developing teaching modules and

assessments independently. Although she used examples from the government, she found it difficult to adapt them to students' needs and learning levels.

This reflects limited cognitive readiness, particularly in planning instruction and designing appropriate assessments. As Supriatna (2021) explains, cognitive readiness includes the ability to interpret curriculum goals and turn them into effective learning tools. The teacher also expressed uncertainty in creating formative assessments with clear indicators, relying mostly on basic written tasks.

These challenges align with Marbun et al. (2022), who noted that many teachers lack practical experience in assessment design and module development under the Independent Curriculum. Without hands-on training, teachers may struggle to implement curriculum principles fully.