

**EXPLORING AN ENGLISH TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE ON
CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
MERDEKA CURRICULUM IN TEACHING ENGLISH**

**By
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**ANTASARI STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
BANJARMASIN
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**EXPLORING AN ENGLISH TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE ON
CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
MERDEKA CURRICULUM IN TEACHING ENGLISH**

Undergraduate Thesis

Presented to Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan

By

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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I, the undersigned, Nellyana, declare that this undergraduate thesis is my original work, gathered and utilized specially to fulfil the purposes and objectives of this study, and has not been previously submitted to any other university for any degree or other purposes. I also declare that the publications cited in this work have been properly acknowledged. If someday, it is proven otherwise, I understand that my degree will be revoked.

Banjarmasin, 15 Juni 2026

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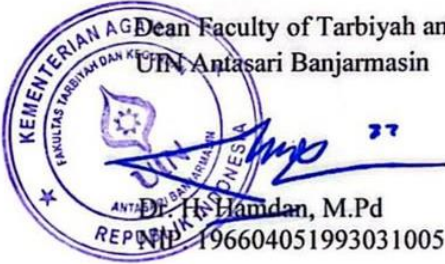
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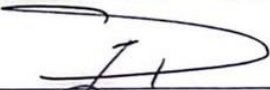
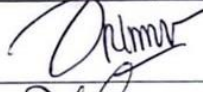
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ABSTRACT

Neliyana. 220101030458 2026. Exploring an English Teacher's Perspective on Challenges in the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Teaching English. Thesis. English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, Antasari State Islamic University. Advisor: Dr. Ridha Fadillah, M.Ed, 2026.

Keywords: Merdeka Curriculum, Challenges, English Teacher, English Language Teaching, Narrative Inquiry

This study aimed to explore an English teacher's perspective on the challenges of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in English language teaching at SMAN 2 Banjarmasin. The Merdeka Curriculum promotes student-centered and independent learning; however, its implementation may also present various challenges in classroom practice. Therefore, this study focused on identifying the challenges faced by the teacher and examining the strategies used to address these challenges in English language teaching. This research employed a qualitative approach with a narrative inquiry design. The participant was an English teacher who had experience implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in English language teaching. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted in two sessions and supported by documentation, including lesson plans and teaching materials. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The findings revealed several challenges in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, including students' lack of readiness for independent learning, dependence on mobile phones, unequal participation in group work, increased teacher workload, limited training opportunities, and inadequate facilities and internet connectivity. To address these challenges, the teacher applied several strategies, such as adapting learning materials to students' abilities, implementing peer teaching, using familiar materials, applying flexible teaching methods, and utilizing teaching experience to respond to classroom conditions. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is influenced by students' readiness, teachers' adaptability, and the availability of adequate support and facilities. These findings suggest that collaboration among teachers, students, and educational institutions is essential to support the effective implementation of the curriculum.

ABSTRAK

Neliyana. 220101030458 2026. *“Exploring an English Teacher’s Perspective on Challenges of the Merdeka Curriculum in Teaching English”* Skripsi. Program Studi Tadris Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan, Universitas Islam Negeri Antasari. Pembimbing: Dr. Ridha Fadillah, M.Ed., 2026.

Kata Kunci: Kurikulum Merdeka, Tantangan, Guru Bahasa Inggris, Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, Narrative Inquiry.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi perspektif seorang guru Bahasa Inggris mengenai tantangan dalam implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka pada pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di SMAN 2 Banjarmasin. Kurikulum Merdeka menekankan pembelajaran yang berpusat pada peserta didik dan pembelajaran mandiri, namun implementasinya juga menghadirkan berbagai tantangan dalam praktik pembelajaran di kelas. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini berfokus pada identifikasi tantangan yang dihadapi guru serta strategi yang digunakan untuk mengatasi tantangan tersebut dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain *narrative inquiry*. Partisipan penelitian adalah seorang guru Bahasa Inggris yang memiliki pengalaman dalam menerapkan Kurikulum Merdeka pada pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur yang dilakukan dalam dua sesi serta didukung oleh dokumentasi berupa modul ajar dan perangkat pembelajaran lainnya. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik yang dikemukakan oleh Braun dan Clarke (2006). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat beberapa tantangan dalam implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka, antara lain kesiapan peserta didik yang masih rendah dalam belajar mandiri, ketergantungan terhadap telepon genggam, partisipasi yang tidak merata dalam kerja kelompok, meningkatnya beban kerja guru, keterbatasan pelatihan, serta kurang memadainya sarana dan akses internet. Untuk mengatasi tantangan tersebut, guru menerapkan berbagai strategi, seperti menyesuaikan materi pembelajaran dengan kemampuan peserta didik, menerapkan *peer teaching*, menggunakan materi yang dekat dengan pengalaman peserta didik, menerapkan metode pembelajaran yang fleksibel, serta memanfaatkan pengalaman mengajar dalam menyesuaikan pembelajaran dengan kondisi kelas. Selain itu, temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keberhasilan implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka dipengaruhi oleh kesiapan peserta didik, kemampuan adaptasi guru, serta tersedianya dukungan dan fasilitas yang memadai. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa kolaborasi antara guru, peserta didik, dan institusi pendidikan sangat diperlukan untuk mendukung implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka yang efektif.

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الحمد لله رب العالمين. الصلاة والسلام على أشرف الأنبياء والمرسلين سيدنا
ومو لنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين. أما بعد.

Praise to Allah the Almighty who has been giving me guidance till the writer finished this thesis entitled “Exploring an English Teacher’s Perspective on Challenges of the Merdeka Curriculum in Teaching English”. Peace and salutation always be upon Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H and all his friends who struggle for Allah. The writer like to express appreciation and gratitude to:

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Finally, the writer hopes that this research will be useful for the next researchers. The writer admits that this research paper is not perfect yet. Therefore, suggestion will be expected to make it better.

Banjarmasin, 29 Dzulhijjah 1447 A.H
June, 15th, 2026 A.D



Writer

TRANSLITERATION

No	Surah/Verse	Indonesia	English
1	<i>Az-Zumar:9</i>	“Apakah orang yang dengan khusyuk beribadah di malam hari, bersujud dan berdiri dalam shalat, takut akan hari akhirat, dan mengharapkan rahmat Tuhannya, [sama dengan orang yang tidak demikian]? Katakanlah, ‘Apakah orang-orang yang berilmu sama dengan orang-orang yang tidak berilmu?’ Hanya orang-orang yang berakal yang akan mengambil pelajaran (9)”	"Is one who is devoutly obedient during periods of the night, prostrating and standing in prayer, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord, [like one who does not]? Say, 'Are those who know equal to those who do not know?' Only those who have understanding will take heed (9)"

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