

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of Study

Updating and enhancing the curriculum is very essential by keeping up with the changes of the era and the conditions of community development. The curriculum is the primary pillar of Indonesian education; it is a tool for achieving the best possible learning process and is appropriate for guiding actual learning (Dewanta et al., 2019). In this instance, the curriculum has to modify in order to be current and adaptable to the ever-changing demands of community. One of them is that the curriculum needs to be modified to better correspond with the post-pandemic learning system's conditions in light of the learning loss caused by COVID-19. To solve the learning crisis caused by learning loss in Indonesia, several kinds of extensive and related initiatives are required. The Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology is attempting to address curriculum shortcomings by implementing the Merdeka Curriculum policy.

The Merdeka Curriculum is a variety of educational initiatives supported by the Indonesian government is the Merdeka Curriculum, which provides which provides educational institutions the freedom and flexibility to design curriculum that are relevant according to the specific circumstances, according to the requirements of the students, and the issues faced by the world currently. The Merdeka Curriculum highlights a strong emphasis on a more

flexible based on competencies approach, which should make it simpler for teachers to create the lessons that will be presented. An additional element of the merdeka curriculum is contextual learning that takes into account students' needs and personal development. Tohir (2020) as cited by Novtian & Yavani (2022) state to carry out merdeka curriculum that is in line with 21st-century learning, students are required to become truly adaptable and independent learners.

The Qur'an surah Al-Baqarah chapter 31 is one of the passages connected to the concepts of implementing the merdeka curriculum, which describes the image of how merdeka curriculum is applied in the teaching and learning process:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي  
بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

The verse above educational objectives by fostering the freedom of speech and the absence of fear in gaining as much knowledge as possible in accordance with one's capacity. Therefore, this relates to the concept of merdeka curriculum that allows students and teachers to learn and teach according to their abilities.

According to Pratikno et al. (2022) as cited by Ferdaus and Novita (2023), the merdeka curriculum is outstanding, useful, and simple to create. The reality is that merdeka curriculum policy changes are not implemented in schools at the same time in the area. Considering this is an unfamiliar approach to education, it will take some time to adapt. Consequently, the government offers teachers and educational institutions the chance to adopt the merdeka

curriculum following their level of readiness. According to Sudarmiani et al. (2022), teachers and educational institutions must learn how to implement the merdeka curriculum learning following their level of preparation and gradually gain proficiency with utilizing it, similarly to what students learn according to their current stage of learning readiness. The pre-service English in Teaching Practice 2, particularly with the English students at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, is one of the educators affected by this curriculum transformation.

Pre-service teachers are UIN Antasari Banjarmasin English Department students who teaching practice in the classroom. Pre-service English teachers are students who are personally took classes in the Faculty of Teaching and Education, also known as the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FTK), and who have successfully completed the English Education Program to become certified educators (Fakhrunisa, 2021 as cited by Maulida, 2023). Pre-service teachers which have just begun their careers in the classroom, curriculum transformation shows a big difficulty. Pre-service English teachers must adapt for a variety of changes in the educational system, including new requirements for assessing student progress and subject matter and teaching approaches. According to Fitra & Tiarina (2023) five challenges faced by English teachers while adopting merdeka curriculum: creating teaching modules, lesson implementation, utilizing media, managing the classroom, and learning assessment. Furthermore, the experiences pre-service English teachers acquire when implementing their own merdeka curriculum

into practice will influence pre-service teachers' perspectives positively or negatively.

This research differs from previous research simply because the issue focuses on the experiences of pre-service English teachers concerning the challenges they face when implementing the merdeka curriculum in their teaching practice, and how these experiences impact their perceptions. Previous studies primarily addressed the issues faced by teachers in schools when implementing the merdeka curriculum. The novelty of this research is uses pre-service English teachers as research subjects. In particular, it focuses on 2020 English education department students who have received less attention in earlier research. The findings of this study may also be used to recommend future training or support for pre-service teachers who will be implementing merdeka curriculum.

This research is important to carry out, especially for English students class of 2020 who have not yet fully studied the implementation of the merdeka curriculum, especially in the curriculum material development course in third semester. Based on pre interview to several English students class of 2020 when teaching practice 2 program, reseracher find there are still many English students who experience difficulties in implementing the merdeka curriculum in teaching and learning process when teaching practice 2 program at school. So, in this background, the researcher interested in conducting research with the title: "*Pre service English Teacher's Experiences In Implementing Merdeka Curriculum in Teaching Practice 2 Program*".

## **B. Definition of Key Terms**

In order to clarify the key terms used in this study, some definitions are put forward :

1. Pre-service English teachers are students who are personally took classes in the Faculty of Teaching and Education, also known as the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FTK), and who have successfully completed the English Education Program to become certified educators (Fakhrunisa, 2021 as cited by Maulida, 2023). In this research refers to students majoring in English who are doing Teaching Practice 2 or Praktek Pengalaman Lapangan 2 at schools that use the merdeka curriculum.
2. Purnawanto (2022) state The Merdeka Curriculum Implementation is a curriculum which provides a variety of extracurricular activities and aims to make the method of learning adaptable. Furthermore, this curriculum strategy gives people the freedom to learn in accordance with their abilities. In this research, it refers to the new curriculum implemented in a school occupied by pre-service English teachers.
3. Teaching Practice program is a program which the main goal to offer pre-service teachers both theoretical and practical abilities in teaching (Taskin, 2006). In this research refers to one of the courses provided by the faculty to prepare students to become professional teachers.

Therefore, the definition of these key terms can be used as a reference on a solid basis for exploring and knowing this concept further in the context of this research.

### **C. Research Questions**

Based on the background described above, the researcher formulated the research problem through the following questions:

1. What is the challenges faced by pre-service English teachers in implementing the merdeka curriculum in teaching practice 2?
2. How is the perception of pre-service English teachers in implementing the merdeka curriculum in teaching practice 2?

### **D. Objectives Study**

According the research question, the research aims to invistigate:

1. To find the challenges faced by pre-service English teachers in implementing the merdeka curriculum in teaching practice 2.
2. To find the perception of pre-service English teachers in implementing the merdeka curriculum in teaching practice 2.

### **E. Significance of Study**

This study is useful for pre-service English teachers, government, and researchers:

1. Pre-service English Teachers or Teacher as generally, this study helps provide knowledge about the experiences of pre-service English teachers, especially those that focus on the challenges faced in implementing merdeka curriculum. in addition, through these challenge can be a reference for pre-service teachers to improve their in-depth understanding of merdeka

curriculum and prepare learning with creative methods to make students interested and active in class.

2. The Government or Curriculum Developers. this study helps the government or curriculum developers to further improve the readiness and training of pre-service teachers or teacher as general before implementing the merdeka curriculum, especially English subjects.
3. Researchers, this research will also contribute knowledge in the field of education, especially related to curriculum implementation and the challenges faced by teachers, especially pre-service teachers. The results can be used as a reference for further research in the context of education.