

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After completing the research, in this chapter the researcher will describe the results and discussions that have been found. The results of this discussion of findings on the overall research effort are very important. This discussion aims to provide a response to the description of the problem as well as an overview of the findings from the relevant theoretical review.

A. Findings

The data of this findings comes from interviews with 10 respondents 1 (R1), 2 (R2), 3 (R3), 4 (R4), 5 (R5), 6 (R6), 7 (R7), 8 (R8), 9 (R9), and 10 (R10). There are two problems that must be addressed in this study: (1) how is the challenges faced by pre-service English teacher in implementing the merdeka curriculum, and (2) asking how do they percieve the merdeka curriculum which is relatively new for 2020 students.

1. Challenges faced by Pre-Service Teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum during Teaching Practice 2

Respondents' problems in implementing the merdeka curriculum vary greatly in terms of teaching modules, classroom management, designing learning methods. The implementation of the merdeka curriculum since the change of ministers which was motivated by learning loss due to the covid-19 pandemic. In addition, this is also caused by the

factor of student needs or educational targets to be achieved. So, with this, the Minister made a new policy with curriculum changes.

Based on the respondents' statements, this curriculum change made them a little difficult, especially the 2020 English students who in theory in lectures they only studied 2013 curriculum and when they went to the field in the teaching practice 2 program they used the merdeka curriculum. The respondents explained that in the implementation of the merdeka curriculum that they experienced, they experienced several challenges such as: a) difficulty in designing teaching modules, b) difficulty in managing the class, c) lack of knowledge about the merdeka curriculum. d) readiness skills before teaching in lesson implementation, e) difficulty in making teaching media, and f) lack of IT facilities at school and understanding of IT.

a. Difficulty in designing teaching modules

Since the first time some students majoring for English class 2020 have implemented the merdeka curriculum, some respondents such as R1 have difficulty in making lesson plans or in the latest term for the merdeka curriculum called teaching modules. This is very relevant considering that the 20 class of English education department students in theory only learned the 2013 curriculum in the curriculum and development and instructional design courses. In addition, when teaching practice 1 they also use the 2013 curriculum lesson plan or what is commonly referred to as the RPP. As said by R1:

“I find difficult to design the teaching module as a whole because when in PPL 1 it uses k13 while in PPL 2 it uses the merdeka curriculum. so, I feel shocked too which is indeed the theory we only learned the 2013 curriculum in lectures.” (R1)

Based on the experience mentioned above, R1 felt shocked by the change in curriculum where the practice and theory he got were so contradictory that it made him feel confused in making lesson plans based on the new curriculum. While on the other hand R2 and R5 experienced difficulties in designing teaching modules especially in the component part of incorporating learning methods that are suitable for students, as said by R2 and R5:

“The challenges that I faced were more about how to make good and appropriate teaching modules, especially when designing teaching modules in the learning methods section because in this section I did not fully understand what types of methods were used in the independent curriculum. for example how to apply the types of PBL methods, PJBL and so on.” (R2)

“For me, the challenge is in making teaching modules in the section of adjusting appropriate classroom learning methods because we as teachers are faced with different children and we are also required to understand how they understand what we have explained. So, here I have to really effort or think hard to find suitable learning methods in class and material that suits them.” (R5)

In this case R2 and R5 explained that they had difficulty in making teaching modules in the section adjusting the learning method. For example, R2 revealed that he still did not understand the methods recommended in the merdeka curriculum, which in this merdeka curriculum requires students to be active. For example, in the PJBL

method, which he still did not understand about the application of these methods, especially in English language learning. Meanwhile, R5 explained that she was confused about incorporating learning methods that made students understand what she was explaining. Because in the teaching and learning process we as teachers must find different students or where the understanding captured by students will also certainly vary, it is necessary for the methods included by the teacher in the teaching module to be right on target. In addition, in designing the module teachers need to be creative in arranging or modifying activities that are interesting for students and this is a challenge for R3 and R8 as they said:

“In designing the teaching module, I had difficulty when I had to think about or modify the activities that would be carried out during the learning process, one of which was an example of an interesting brainstorming activity where I had to really rack my brains to make a brainstorm that was really interesting for students because yesterday I was also demanded by the guru pamong that every class must have a brainstorming in opening the class.” (R3)

“The challenge that often arises for me is when making a teaching module because I am not confused about how to make activities or activities in the teaching and learning process interesting and encourage students to be active in the classroom and understand what I explain. In addition, the activities given to students must be different from activities or activities in previous lessons.” (R8)

Based on the above statements, R3 and R8 both experienced difficulties in designing and modifying activities in the teaching and learning process. For example, R3 said that she was still confused

about thinking about brainstorming activities that attracted students to learn, while R8 was still confused in terms of compiling activities that made students in the classroom active and quickly understand what she had explained. In addition, in designing teaching modules it is necessary to have an extra understanding of the components contained within it so as not to be confused, as R4 said:

“The challenges or difficulties I faced during teaching practice 2 yesterday were probably in the design of the teaching module where I found it difficult to understand the learning outcomes in this independent curriculum.”(R4)

Based on this statement, R4 feels that she does not really understand the learning outcomes in the merdeka curriculum, which is indeed a component or a new thing in the term merdeka curriculum, where this CP is a substitute for basic competencies in the 2013 curriculum which in this independent curriculum no longer separates the aspects of knowledge, skills and attitudes which must be combined and integrated into one whole paragraph.

b. Difficulties in classroom management

Classroom management is a supporting factor in the successful implementation of the teaching and learning process in class. In carrying out teaching practices when implementing the merdeka curriculum, R5, R6 and R10 experienced difficulties in classroom management, especially in carrying out activities that had

been designed in the teaching module and also related to the time that runs throughout learning, as they said:

“For me, the difficulty is in the classroom management part of adjusting the time to match what has been planned because sometimes we as teachers we do not know what will happen in the field or in the classroom because in reality usually the activities that we have designed can be different from what is applied during the implementation of learning.” (R5)

“I feel a bit difficult in time because yesterday there was an intersection of time due to school renovations which initially went from 40 minutes to 20 minutes. So, it is very difficult to adjust to the activities that I have arranged. For example, when I want to hold a game with students the time is not enough, so the activities or activities that I have designed cannot be completed step by step. Therefore, yesterday I really rack my brains so that I can manage the class so that good learning is carried out.” (R6)

“I think the difficult challenge is when matching how the activities that have been designed with the time and situation that occurs in the field, whether the activities we designed are in accordance with the events in the field, for example, yesterday I was preoccupied with explaining the material in the core activities, so I forgot to provide assessments or questions in the final activities.” (R10)

Based on the statements above, R5 and R10 experienced difficulties in managing the class, especially when implementing the activities that had been designed. This happens because of the time mismatch that has been determined for each part, be it the time in the pre activities, while activities, and past activities. In addition, due to factors that are more inclined towards an activity. For example, taking too long to explain the material to students so that the next activity

cannot be carried out because the learning time has run out. Meanwhile, R6 had difficulty in managing time which was caused by the school factor which was being renovated at that time.

c. Lack of pre-service teacher knowledge of the merdeka curriculum

In implementing the merdeka curriculum, most of the pre-service teachers still do not understand more about the independent curriculum. This is because the theory they get is different from what they practice because this curriculum change occurred suddenly for English education department 20 students and this is also the first time they have implemented the merdeka curriculum, as stated by R6 and R9:

“I also still don't understand and don't know the terms in the merdeka curriculum and how they are applied in learning. This is because this is the first time I have implemented the merdeka curriculum.” (R6)

“I also find it difficult or do not understand new things in the merdek curriculum. For example, what I only found out during PPL 2 yesterday was that initially in learning English in the 2013 curriculum there were 4 skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing), while in the merdeka curriculum there are 6 skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing, viewing, and presenting). With this, I have to really learn how the skills are applied and match again with the learning material, so that I as a teacher must learn even more.” (R9)

Based on the statement above, R6 found that it is difficult with new terms related to the merdeka curriculum which made her a little confused which in fact she did not have any experience in implementing the merdeka curriculum. Meanwhile, R9 explained that

she still had minimal knowledge about the merdeka curriculum, especially in English language learning. For example, there were 2 additional skills, namely viewing and presenting, which previously in the 2013 curriculum were only four, namely listening, reading, speaking and writing.

d. Readiness skills before teaching in lesson implementation

Before conducting learning, certainly a teacher must prepare the materials or tools that will be used in learning. So, it is very important for teachers to have readiness skills in themselves. Because if a teacher is not prepared in this case, there will be many challenges that arise such as lack of knowledge about the material being taught or lack of briefing or preparation in applying certain methods in the classroom. R1 and R9 experienced difficulties or challenges in the preparation skills of a pre-service teacher. As they said:

“In addition to the teaching module, I also find it difficult when I as a teacher must really be required to have in-depth knowledge about the material I teach, because when there are students who ask about the material I must be ready to explain it in detail so in this case I must have a lot of preparation and knowledge in advance so that when students ask I can answer properly, because yesterday I taught material about simple present and students asked about the material because I did not understand it so I could not answer questions from my students.” (R1)

“Then, I find it difficult when I have to prepare myself in practicing certain methods, for example, I want to use jigsaw type cooperative learning, of course I have to put more effort into preparing tools and materials to support the success of the method I want to apply in provoking student activeness in class.

In my opinion, in the previous 2013 curriculum, in applying the lecture method, we only used books, while this merdeka curriculum we must really be required to be active in making interesting and creative media and in accordance with the methods we will use. Thus, students in the class feel happy in learning.” (R9)

Based on the above statement, R1 found it difficult to make preparations, especially when a teacher must really understand the material to be taught which will have an impact when students ask questions. If we are more mature and learn more and prepare ourselves for the material we will teach, it is easier to answer questions from students. while R9 finds it difficult when she has to prepare tools and materials in applying a particular method in this merdeka curriculum because the merdeka curriculum emphasizes student activity. So, she felt really required to create activities that encouraged students to be active.

e. Difficulties in making teaching media

Teaching media is a tool used to convey the content of learning materials, either through books, technology in the form of applications and so on. In this case, R3 had difficulty in matching the learning material with the media he would use. As she said:

“The challenges I face are also in the learning media section, for example yesterday it was on greeting material, so I was initially confused about what media was suitable for greeting material, whether to add learning videos or pictures of greeting examples, or maybe use certain platforms and so on. So it's more about adjusting the learning media to the material to be taught. In addition, sometimes I also as a teacher have not

prepared or the learning media is too difficult to obtain or process.”(R3)

Based on the statement above, R3 has difficulty in adjusting the teaching media to the material being taught. In the teaching and learning process, teachers need to make interesting teaching media. so that it can provoke students to be more interested in learning or listening to teacher explanations. Apart from that, teaching media usually also able to motivate students to learn.

f. Lack of IT facilities at school and understanding of IT.

In conducting learning, it is very necessary to have supporting factors for facilities and infrastructure in order to create learning success. In this case, R2, R5, R6, and R8 experienced difficulties with the IT facilities provided by the school. One of them when they want to use the LCD/Projector. As they said:

“Yesterday, I also experienced difficulties in the use of IT or technology where the VGA cable used in connecting the projector to the laptop was not available at my school in teaching practice 2 and there were also projectors that did not work such as not being able to display an image.” (R2)

“I think in terms of technology, the obstacle is the lack of availability of LCD. So, they have to take turns with other teachers, besides that, it is also from the condition of the laptop that cannot be used from me.” (R5)

“Maybe yesterday I felt that the LCD at school was still not available and there were also LCD that were not good. In addition, if you want to display ppt or use the LCD, the teacher usually has to bring their own power outlet.” (R6)

In my school yesterday, there was a lack of technology in the form of an LCD so that if you want to use ppt it is quite difficult.” (R8)

Based on the above statements, R2, R5, R6, and R8 explained that they both experienced difficulties in the availability of IT facilities at school. For example, the lack of projectors provided that did not work well, they could not bring up images and so on. In addition, the VGA cable is not available at school, the condition of the laptop is not working, and also the socket that must be brought from home. On the other hand, R7 experienced difficulties with understanding of IT or applications that would be used in learning. As she said:

“In terms of technology, I think the challenge is that teachers must be able to facilitate technology-based student learning so that they have no difficulty in using it, so that students do not experience difficulties when using technology, for example yesterday I used the Socrative application. Soocrative application usually all students can enter directly into their class and yesterday there was an incident where one student deleted all the parts that I had made in the socrative. I think this happened because the students were still confused about how to use the application and I did not provide instructions on the use of technology in the form of the application.” (R7)

Based on the statement above, R7 experienced difficulties in using technology where this came from a lack of facilities in providing students with an understanding of IT or applications that would be used before learning. Because indeed this is something new also for students so that they do not understand it, especially in their curriculum. Pre-Service English teachers are required to be able to use

varied applications or learning media. Pre-Service English teacher also required to be able to use media or platform application that are appropriate to the teaching materials. Therefore, before applying it, the teacher must understand the application that will be used so that make pre-service English teacher can easily explain to students how to use the learning application. So, as a teacher it is very important to explain to students before applying learning applications in class in order to prevent the desired learning success. Apart from that, this will also make learning in class fun if students understand how to use the application well.

Thus, it can be concluded that some pre-service English teachers experience some diverse challenges in implementing the merdeka curriculum at schools. it can be seen briefly in table below:

Tabel 4.1 challenges faced by Pre-Service Teacher in Implementing Merdeka Curriculum

Pre-service Teacher	Challenges In Implementing Merdeka Curriculum
R1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging to develop teaching modules. • The respondents' self-readiness to conduct learning; one example is their inability to master the subject.
R2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging for the respondents to create effective and relevant teaching modules. • The school's limited facilities such as projectors/LCD and VGA cables are unavailable.
R3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging making teaching module, especially designing or modifying interesting learning activities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to create teaching media.
R4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in creating teaching modules, especially in understanding learning objective.
R5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in classroom management during learning, especially managing time. • Lack of IT facilities in the form of LCDs are not available.
R6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in classroom management, especially managing time. • Lack of understanding merdeka curriculum. • Lack of IT facilities in the form of LCDs provided which were still not available.
R7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of IT facilities and understanding of IT.
R8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges in designing teaching modules, especially in terms of creating interesting activities. • Lack of IT facilities
R9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of understanding the concept of merdeka curriculum, • Lack of readiness skill or self-preparation in conducting class learning.
R10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges in classroom management, especially matching the activities that had been designed with the time and situation that occurred in the field.

Based on this table, half of the total number of respondents experienced challenges in designing teaching modules and the lack of IT facilities that affected their teaching and learning process. While some others experienced challenges in making teaching media and classroom management in the form of managing time with lesson plans that had been

designed. Besides that, the rest of the challenges were in not understanding the concept of an independent curriculum and lack of preparation before learning.

2. Pre-service teachers' perceptions in implementing the merdeka curriculum in Teaching Practice 2 program.

After the investigation, the perceptions of pre-service English teachers varied, which with this curriculum change they think there is something positive which will have an impact on the progress of the education system as well as a negative impact which can make teachers confused in implementing the existing curriculum. After an in-depth interview, it was found that the perceptions of all respondents towards the merdeka curriculum: a) have positive implications, and b) have negative implications.

a. Positive Implication

Based on the respondents' perceptions, the changes to the merdeka curriculum have positive implications. This cause is one of the right ways or policies in making the Indonesian education system better than before. In addition, with this policy it can be a way of developing student creativity and making students independent. As said by R1, R7, R8 and R9:

“In my opinion, the 2013 curriculum and the merdeka curriculum are the same, in fact I think it is even easier for the merdeka curriculum because here the teacher only acts as a facilitator. In addition, the merdeka curriculum has a positive impact or influence on students, for example, students are

required to be more independent. So, that they have the potential to develop themselves and makes students more creative.” (R1)

“In my opinion, the application or change of curriculum to the merdeka curriculum is better, because in this curriculum we are not only racing on students' understanding but also on students' interests or extracurricular activities which as we know we cannot adjust one child to another or they have different characters. With this interest, students will become more active in the teaching and learning process. In addition, the merdeka curriculum makes it easier for teachers because they only act as facilitators.” (R7)

“In my opinion, the implementation of this merdeka curriculum has a good effect because education can become more advanced and make children active in the teaching and learning process. In addition, children also become more independent and confident.” (R8)

“In my opinion, the implementation of the merdeka curriculum is better than the previous curriculum because it can make learning effective in an era that is growing every year and also the activities of students who become more active in learning.” (R9)

Based on the statements above, R1, R7, R8, and R9 have the perception that the merdeka curriculum has a good impact, especially in making students active in the teaching and learning process. This happens because the merdeka curriculum provides freedom for them to explore the knowledge or material provided and also the merdeka curriculum does not only race to understanding but students can develop their respective interests, which as we know, each child has a different character or interest. So, that through the freedom given,

children can become more independent and creative. In addition, this merdeka curriculum is very helpful for teachers because as stated by several respondents above, the merdeka curriculum is easier where teachers do not fully explain the learning material but in this case they are more of a facilitator. On the other hand, the merdeka curriculum also has a positive impact on teachers in determining the activities that will be carried out during the teaching and learning process. As stated by R3:

“In my opinion, I was a little confused by the change in curriculum from the 2013 curriculum to the merdeka curriculum. However, after seeing and experiencing firsthand how to implement the merdeka curriculum, I think the merdeka curriculum makes it more organized, especially in what activities we will do in learning it is more detailed and very helpful for teachers.” (R3)

Based on R3's experience above, she has perception that the activities in the teaching and learning process when implementing the independent curriculum are basically given a detailed description and are listed in the book or teaching materials. So that this really helps the teacher because the teacher already has an idea of what activities will be carried out, it is only a matter of developing and modifying these activities to make them more interesting for students. Meanwhile, the implementation of this merdeka curriculum also has a positive impact in terms of technology. As stated by R2 and R6:

“In my opinion, this merdeka curriculum change can be called a pretty good policy, because it has a positive influence. One

example is that students can be more creative when learning because they are given more freedom in exploring the material that has been given. In addition, this also has a positive impact on students who from childhood have been exposed to technology, because it can provide a positive space for them to use technology properly or more to a more positive use for children.” (R2)

“I think the implementation of the merdeka curriculum is very good, it will definitely have a positive impact. One example that I see now is that technology is more used in learning than before it was only fixated on books. So, now with the use of technology teachers can be more varied in making learning media that provoke students to be more active in the classroom. In addition, students and teachers can develop their knowledge of technology that often changes according to the times.” (R6)

Based on the statement above, R2 perceives that the application of this merdek curriculum is very helpful for children who have been exposed to technology from childhood to make good use of it. Because with the application of an merdeka curriculum which sometimes requires using technology, children can seek knowledge or learn with this technology, whether through any type of platform, so that they use it for good things, namely studying. Meanwhile, R6 has the perception that the existence of technology in the implementation of this merdeka curriculum will assist teachers in finding or creating interesting learning media to be used in the teaching and learning process. So, that they do not only rely on books. This can also make students interested in learning or not easily bored. In addition, she also believes that the implementation of this merdeka curriculum will

broaden the knowledge of teachers and students about the technology that is developing following the changing times.

b. Negative Implication

Some respondents stated that this has negative implications because it can make it difficult for teachers, students, and other educators to adapt to this new curriculum. As stated by R4, R5, and R10:

“In my opinion, the change by implementing this merdeka curriculum is quite arguably risky because if there is a change, automatically the school, wether teachers, students or other educators, must be able to adapt again properly, which sometimes makes teachers unprepared in implementing it. In addition, students have to buy books again, which as I know, books in this merdeka curriculum are expensive and also many or varied and in the implementation of this merdeka curriculum there is also something called P5, which requires a lot of money for these activities.” (R4)

“In my opinion, the change in policy by implementing this merdeka curriculum has made teachers dizzy, especially in terms of compiling teaching modules. In addition, this merdeka curriculum is student-oriented, where sometimes students are required to be able and active and confident in certain English materials, which in reality there are still many students who are too familiar with English or not too able to use English properly.” (R5)

“In my opinion, the changes in the merdeka curriculum can make teachers dizzy, especially in terms of preparing lesson plans because this is still new, the implementation is maybe 2 or 3 years ago we implemented this new curriculum which when the curriculum changes, it takes a long time to adapt to implement it properly, not to mention the preparation and knowledge of teachers, educators, and students regarding this merdeka curriculum.” (R10)

Based on the statements above, they perceive that the implementation of this merdeka curriculum is quite making it difficult for teachers and students to adapt to this curriculum. As stated by R4 and R10, in this merdeka curriculum, teachers and students must be able to adapt, which may take a long time because this independent curriculum has only been implemented for 2 or 3 years, while sometimes it can be seen that the 2013 curriculum that was implemented previously has not been implemented properly. So, in this case teachers are really required to be able to adapt again to the new curriculum which can make teachers dizzy with this change. In this merdeka curriculum change, sometimes it requires rather large funds because of the P5 activities and also the replacement of learning tools such as books. Meanwhile, R5 argues that in this change the teacher is really required to be able to adjust well, whether it is how to organize learning methods or see the condition of the student whether he has understood or not the material being taught which makes this a little ineffective and efficient because this change was also only implemented about 2 or 3 years ago. In addition, students are also required to be active and capable, which in reality does not necessarily mean that students can do this. Based on this, this really become a challenge for pre-service English teacher in teaching in the classroom. pre-service English teacher must create learning strategies that suit students needs and are also right on the target. Therefore, pre-service

English teachers are required to develop appropriate strategies to make students active and understand the learning in class well. This can be done by creating fun activities, whether including games or using interesting teaching media so that it is in accordance with the expected components of the merdeka curriculum. In addition, pre-service English teachers need support in adapting to this independent curriculum in order to reduce the challenges they face in the independent curriculum. this requires special attention for the government to provide training to prospective teachers or provide facilities that can support the implementation of the independent curriculum in the future.

Thus, it can be concluded that some pre-service English teachers experience some diverse perceptions whether it has a positive and negative perception in implementing the merdeka curriculum in teaching and learning process at schools when teaching practice 2 program in seventh semester. it can be seen briefly as table below:

Table 4.2 Pre-service Teacher perception in Implementing Merdeka Curriculum

Pre-service Teacher	Perception	
	Advantages/Positive	Disadvantage/negative
R1	It makes teacher flexible, students creative and independent.	-
R2	It makes students active and creative. In addition, this curriculum also able to make	-

	students make better use of technology.	
R3	Activities compiled in the merdeka curriculum are more organized and detailed.	-
R4	-	It make difficult for teachers to adapt and spent quite a lot of funds, especially P5 activities.
R5	-	It still not effective and efficient due to the unpreparedness of the school and makes it difficult for teachers to design lesson plan.
R6	It make provide varied teaching media or is not limited to books alone but can use technology. It makes students interested and active in learning.	-
R7	It easier for teachers and gives students the freedom to learn according to their interests which will certainly make students more creative.	-
R8	It makes students more advanced and confident.	-
R9	Learning activities in the classroom become more	-

	active.	
R10	-	It takes a long time to adapt and making teachers experience many challenges in carrying out the teaching and learning process.

Based on the table, almost all pre-service English teachers have a positive perception. This is because the independent curriculum has a good impact such as making it easier for teachers, making students creative and active, and teachers and students being able to develop technology. While the other respondents have a negative perception. This is because some respondents experience challenges and difficult adaptation in implementing the merdeka curriculum.

B. Discussion

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of pre-service English teachers in implementing the merdeka curriculum, especially to find out more about what challenges they face and how they perceive the implementation of the merdeka curriculum. The organization of this section is based on the research questions, including: 1) What are the challenges faced by pre-service English teachers in implementing the merdeka curriculum in teaching practice 2? 2) What are the perceptions of pre-service English teachers in implementing the merdeka curriculum in teaching practice 2?

1. Challenges faced by Pre-Service Teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum during Teaching Practice 2

a. Difficulties in designing teaching modules

Lesson plan or teaching module is a learning tool that must be made by a teacher such as a pre-service teacher or teacher before carrying out the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In designing teaching modules, pre-service teachers experience challenges and confusion because the merdeka curriculum is something new to them as experienced by R1. This conclusion is supported by the findings of Ningsih & Adnan (2023), who found that pre-service English teachers face difficulties in a number of areas, including designing teaching modules. Because the merdeka curriculum is unfamiliar to them, pre-service English teachers also face difficulties in implementing it because, during the micro teaching program, they only learn about and concentrate on the 2013 Curriculum, even though they will actually be teaching using the merdeka curriculum in the field. They are therefore startled by the changes that have taken place and need to adapt as a result.

In addition, in designing lesson plans, pre-service teachers have difficulty in designing teaching modules in the part of thinking about learning methods and activities that will be offered. this related with this argumen teachers are still struggling to find the best teaching techniques and methods for students so that learning becomes enjoyable

and pupils actively engage in the process (Wiguna & Tristaningrat, 2022). According to Wahyuni (2022), differentiated teaching can be used combined with other learning models, such as problem-based learning and project-based learning, that are adapted to each student's unique learning preferences, to improve student learning outcomes. According to R2 and R5, they have trouble understanding which techniques are included in the merdeka curriculum and which techniques can be utilized to entice student to learn.

According to Fitra & Triarina (2023), creating lesson plans for English teachers presents a difficulty because they must create resources and learning activities that are appropriate for the students' varying skill levels. This is in accordance with what R3 and R8 experienced who found it difficult to design activities that attract students' learning whether it is through brainstorming or other activities. This is consistent with the theory presented by Khoirurrijal in his book, which states that learning planning is an outline of the actions a teacher will take in the future in the classroom to successfully and efficiently accomplish predefined goals (Muin et al., 2022 in Husna & Rigianti 2023).

The results of Maulida (2022) in Ningsih & Adnan (2023) research supports this conclusion, indicating that teachers are still unable to fully produce teaching modules since a large number of them are still unfamiliar with the methods involved in creating and assembling

teaching modules for this curriculum. Teachers are unable to create ATP (flow of learning objectives) from TP because they do not know how to transfer CP into learning objectives. As a result, the offered material still makes reference to the prior curriculum while omitting important information. This is consistent with respondent R4 that state that she has experience in understanding CP in merdeka curriculum, which has different terms from those in the 2013 curriculum.

b. Difficulties in Classroom Management

One of the components in class management is that the teacher is able to start and end the learning process according to the specified time. Fitra & Triarina (2023) time limits are a barrier for English teachers while implementing the merdeka curriculum lesson plan. This refers to what R5, R6, and R10 experienced. They experience difficulties in time constraints when carrying out the teaching and learning process, even though they have designed the activities that will be carried out in class according to the predetermined time, however, sometimes they are too preoccupied or more inclined to certain activities either in the pre activity by providing motivation of all kinds, or in the while activity that takes too long to explain, or maybe in the post activity section.

This connection to the theory that follows, particularly for pre-service English teachers who spend an excessive amount of time in the pre-activity section. According to Usman (2019) teachers have

issues when it comes to pre-activities like planning, inspiring pupils to study, and making connections between the information they have already learned and what they are learning. As a result, many teachers find it difficult to find a balance between their need for time management and learning (Reza et al., 2023). In this case, pre-service teacher must prepare and can manage time based on teaching module that they design before.

c. Lack of pre-service teacher knowledge of the merdeka curriculum

The lack of knowledge and ability among teachers is one of the issues limiting Indonesia from implementing the merdeka curriculum (Zulaiha et al., 2022). However, this curriculum's goals prioritize student-centered learning, which makes it challenging for teachers to adjust. This was also experienced by R6 and R9 who stated that they still did not understand how the concept and application of independent learning, whether in terms of terms or components that changed in learning. This finding related with Damayanti et al. (2023), there are factors that contribute to the challenges faced by teachers when implementing the Merdeka curriculum, one of them Lack of knowledge the curriculum's structure and concepts.

The research was also connected carried out by Lestiyani, who discovered that not all of the teachers at her research location had a solid grasp of the Merdeka Curriculum. She discovered that the primary causes of teachers' lack of comprehension were fewer technical support,

workshops, and forums for teachers, as well as less distribution (Lestiyani, 2020). It is regrettable that educators, who are the ones who carry out the curriculum, are unaware of curriculum renewal. The results are consistent with earlier research that showed teacher may improve their comprehension of the Merdeka curriculum and its application by engaging in a variety of activities, including browsing the internet for information, conversing with colleagues, and attending seminars (Nurzen, 2022). In order to properly adapt the merdeka curriculum to the requirements and characteristics of the students, pre-service teachers must be aware of their responsibilities when implementing the curriculum (Hadi et al., 2023). Thus, in order to strengthen their preparedness for actual professionalism, prospective English language teachers need to be given comprehensive solutions pertaining to the themes, characters, and characteristics of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum (Prakoso et al., 2021). Thus, in implementing the merdeka curriculum, teachers do not find it difficult. this is because teachers already understand the concept of the merdeka curriculum before practicing merdeka curriculum implementation at school and also teacher also has background knowledge about merdeka curriculum.

d. Readiness skills before teaching in lesson implementation

According to Permendiknas No. 16 of 2007, teacher competency is a set of behaviors, abilities, and knowledge that educators must possess, master, and live in order to perform their professional

tasks. Before conducting learning, teachers must be prepared with things related to learning, be it how the teacher's knowledge, how to deliver lessons, or strategies to make the class fun. Based on the findings of this study, R1 experienced difficulties in implementing the merdeka curriculum during the teaching and learning process which originated from their personal, such as lack of mastery of teaching materials. This is corroborated by the theory of Rasam et al. (2019) in Hehakaya & Pollatu, 2022, which holds that a teacher's proficiency with teaching materials has a significant impact on how well students perform in the classroom. Teachers who are adept at organizing material to be given systematically, in line with student development, and in line with current demands, conditions, and facilities, will have a significant advantage over their peers.

In addition, teachers must teach students based on their level of understanding and readiness, whether it is planning fun learning strategies and so on. As experienced by R9 who stated that he had difficulty in preparing strategies or methods of learning in class to make it fun for students, so the level of success in learning comes from the teacher. This sentences supported by Cahyati, Parmawati, & Admawidjaja (2019) asserted that teaching English also promotes motivation and enjoyment for language acquisition, particularly when it is delivered in an entertaining manner and in line with their needs. Student can also foster an understanding of metalinguistics, improve

cognitive abilities, and encourage learning about different cultures. In this instance, the teacher plays the most significant part in fostering an emotionally positive learning environment in the classroom.

e. Difficulties in making teaching media

In order to develop pupils who can think critically, creatively, and with collaboration and communication skills, teachers must also act as facilitators. In this Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, teachers must prepare some relevant learning media in addition to relying on students' independence in their learning (Putri et al., 2022). Before doing learning, a teacher must prepare the learning media that will be used in class. In this case, teachers are always required to use diverse and interesting learning media either through certain platforms. However, sometimes this makes it difficult for teachers because they cannot use certain platforms or media. This relates to the natural R3 who still finds it difficult to use certain media, especially connecting it to the material. This statement relates to the findings of Fitria & Triarina (2023) the challenges faced by teachers in using media are that there are still many platforms that teachers cannot use. Thus, sometimes in the teaching and learning process it is very difficult to determine suitable teaching media, whether it is matching with learning material or how to create teaching media that is interesting for student. So, it can motivate the student to learn and make them active in teaching and learning process in the classroom.

f. Lack of IT facilities at school and understanding of IT.

The use of technology in the classroom advances the cause of learning assistance. This relates, if indirectly, to the PAKEM (Passive, Creative, Effective, and Fun) learning methodology (Mustafa et al., 2021). Furthermore, teachers face challenges in executing the Merdeka Curriculum due to inadequate facilities and infrastructure, particularly in relation to information technology (IT) infrastructure that facilitates learning even though IT is a crucial component of the Merdeka Curriculum (Deta, 2023; Harianto, 2023; Sriwulandari et al., 2023; Vica, 2023). This also state with Damayanti et al. (2023) finding there are factors that contribute to the challenges faced by teachers when implementing the Merdeka curriculum, one of them the readiness of facilities and infrastructure. Based on the R2, R5, R6, and R8 statements in implementing the merdeka curriculum, they experienced difficulties with the facilities offered by the school, especially in the field of technology. Pre-service teachers feel that there are still many facilities that are lacking, such as the lack of LCDs / projectors, unavailable VGA cables and sockets that still have to bring their own. This claim is supported by research by Nurkholidha et al. (2023), which found that a deficiency of instructional resources, including LCD projectors and other teaching and experimental equipment, was one of the challenges teachers faced when attempting to implement an merdeka curriculum. Therefore, schools need to increase the availability of infrastructure in

order to facilitate teachers in carrying out the teaching and learning process. so that in the learning process the teacher can use technology freely which will help the teacher's learning plan run smoothly.

In addition, in applying technology, sometimes teachers do not facilitate or provide clear instructions in using technology in the form of applications. This happens because teachers lack preparation in using technology. As experienced by R7 where he found it difficult when using technology before the application must really provide clear instructions so that in the implementation of learning students do not experience difficulties in applying the technology she uses. This relates to research by Alabba (2021), which found that teachers have a crucial role to play in facilitating information technology-based student learning so that students do not experience difficulty when learning. Specifically, teachers should provide apperception or initial understanding before assisting students in obtaining digital learning resources that are suitable for their age and learning level. Consequently, teachers are crucial in helping to determine whether technology is user-friendly for pupils.

2. Pre-service teachers' perceptions in implementing the merdeka curriculum in Teaching Practice 2 program

a. Positive Implication

Fatma & Ratmanida (2023) the majority of pre-service teacher have a positive or excellent perception of the Merdeka curriculum's implementation. In Addition, Teachers in Telaumbanua

(2024) have good and grateful views on the Merdeka Curriculum's implementation in schools. Based on the perceptions of R1, R2, R3, R6, R7, R8, and R9, they stated that they had a positive perception of the implementation of the merdeka curriculum. On average, the merdeka curriculum has a high impact on learning outcomes, especially making students creative or active in the classroom based on differentiated learning. Differentiated learning, as defined by Tomlinson and Imbeau (2011) is an instructional method that recognizes the variety of the students in the classroom. The teachers think highly of this quality. Students can get training based on their aptitude through differentiated learning (Purba., et al., 2022). It seems easy to the teachers to use this model of instruction and provide the students the freedom to learn in the way that suits them best. The Merdeka curriculum is known to be linked to differentiated learning. Several studies (Anggaira, 2023; Fauziyah, 2023; Hardianto et al., 2023; Indahwati et al., 2023; Mayasari et al., 2023; Nadia, 2022; Salsabila & Wusqo, 2022; Siregar, 2022) indicate that teachers' perceptions of the Merdeka Curriculum are typically positive.

The results of Anggaira's study indicate that high school English teachers in Metro Lampung City have a positive view of the Merdeka Curriculum (Anggaira, 2023). The similar sentiment found that the teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Banjarmasin enjoy and value the Merdeka Curriculum (Mayasari et al., 2023). Because she recognizes

how the merdeka curriculum allows pupils to engage in their education based on their distinctive qualities, the teacher appreciates the curriculum. In addition, the merdeka curriculum emphasizes IT-based learning a great deal, allowing teachers and students to keep up with developments in science and technology (Mayasari et al., 2023). Therefore, based on several theories above, it can be concluded that the teacher's perception of the implementation of the merdeka curriculum has very positive implications both in the development of technology, being able to give students freedom in learning so that they can make students creative or active and so on.

b. Negative Implication

Achadiyah & Azmi (2024) claim that teachers have a negative view of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum and how well it is implemented in their classrooms. They also claim that teachers are unable to conduct differentiated learning, understand how to integrate Profil Pelajar Pancasila into the teaching-learning process, and are incapable of designing learning objectives and teaching modules. Furthermore, the issue was exacerbated by the university's inadequate preparation of English pre-service teachers for the most recent curriculum. They stated that a great deal of teachers lack the necessary training, workshops, and other events to adequately prepare them for implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. Based on the statement above, it is slightly related to the statements of R4, R5, R10 have a

negative perception of the implementation of this independent curriculum. This is because the implementation of the merdeka curriculum makes teachers experience several challenges, such as teachers feeling dizzy when designing teaching modules or sometimes teachers feel unprepared for the implementation of the merdeka curriculum, so this must require a long adaptation for teachers.

Other than it, according to Sufirmansyah and Ahid's (2022) study on the efficiency of East Javan schools' use of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. It was found that many teachers are not receiving the seminars, training, and other events that are required to adequately prepare them for administering the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, according to teachers, was not yet prepared for use (Ahid & Sufirmansyah, 2022). Similarly, teachers' understanding of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum was determined lacking (Digna et al. 2023). In order to avoid creating negative impressions of potential teachers, they must receive merdeka curriculum preparation prior to entering the teaching profession. As for the solutions that can be offered according to some respondents who think negatively, the government must find more ways to introduce this merdeka curriculum more widely to teachers who still don't understand how to use it, besides that, the government must also facilitate training for teachers and prospective teachers either by holding workshops.