

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

One of the foundations for realizing educational goals is a curriculum. A curriculum is designed to assist and nurture teachers in meeting the academic needs of students. According to Pajarwati et al. (2021), a curriculum is students' interactions with materials, resources, instructional content, and processes to evaluate the achievement of planned educational goals. The learning interaction plans can guide teachers in facilitating student educational attainment. Therefore, the curriculum is fundamental and closely related to education.

In line with developments over time, the needs of every human being in achieving educational goals may increase. The government must design and develop a curriculum to achieve these human needs. Mulenga (2018) states that the curriculum embodies educational goals, namely educational programs, by conveying beliefs, values, attitudes, skills, knowledge, and everything about education. Knowledge, values to be taught, skills, desired outcomes, and what the teaching and learning process looks like are decided in curriculum development as the primary focus (Richards, 2001). A curriculum has a vital role in education, helping to achieve educational goals.

The curriculum also plays a significant role in achieving educational goals in English education. In this case, the curriculum is designed to help students master English and create more qualified students in their field. Despite its position as a foreign language, English is one of the languages that play an essential role in Indonesian education. As explained in Q.S. Ar-Rum verse 22:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاجْتِذَافُ الْأَسْتِثْكُمُ وَالْوَانِكُمْ ؕ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ

لِلْعَالَمِينَ

In this verse, it can be concluded that among the signs of Allah's greatness are the creation of the heavens and the earth, and also the differences in human race and language. A good *Muslim* will definitely try to keep communication going well even if it is hampered by language differences, and for this reason *Muslims* are advised to learn a foreign language such as English because it is not only a means of communication but also to increase their knowledge. It is also one of the efforts so that *Muslims* can build a sense of tolerance and communicate with other countries. This is in line with Nashruddin (2015), who states that if English can be mastered as an international language, *Muslims* can gain a lot of knowledge and understand people who speak different languages from various countries. It does not only applies to *Muslims* but is recommended for everyone. Therefore, to help

learners master the international language, institutions must be able to help by designing and developing learning curricula.

With the introduction of the most recent curricula, the education in Indonesia has begun a new initiative to enhance the educational system since the COVID-19 pandemic. Merdeka Curriculum is a new curriculum appointed by Nadiem Anwar Makarim, the Indonesian Ministry of Education, and centers around independent learning. It is the first step in creating a curriculum to help Indonesian educators meet education problems and turn out better-qualified pupils. As stated in verses 5–6 of Q.S. Asy-Syarh:

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۖ إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۗ

In this verses, it can be concluded that behind difficulties, there is an ease that will come after. Humans should not give up hope and must continue to try to face a problem; it is the same in education. Curriculum development, which has happened several times in Indonesia, is undoubtedly an effort by the institution to help all Indonesian learners carry out more effective and quality learning activities. Curriculum development should be continually studied and expanded to correspond to the condition and situation by considering the problems found so that the developments can fix future education challenges (Agustin & Puro, 2016). Therefore, a better and more appropriate learning curriculum is needed to help realize educational goals. The Ministry of Education has considered the circumstances surrounding Indonesia during the

COVID-19 epidemic in this regard. Ultimately, a new curriculum that could be implemented was established: the Merdeka Curriculum.

In implementing a learning curriculum, it cannot be separated from learning planning. Learning planning is a very important action and needs to be done by educators before starting class. As explained in Q.S. Al-Hasyr verse 18:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا

تَعْمَلُونَ

In this verse, it can be concluded that Allah commands humans to introspect themselves in order to prepare themselves for tomorrow. This can be attributed to planning carried out by humans. Planning must be done with careful thought and self-examination so that it can be carried out well in the future.

In related to the education, careful thinking and planning is needed by educators before making a learning plan to create a good learning. According to Pal et al. (2022), the learning objectives are achieved by learning plans that can be thought of as written directives. The learning process will run better if it has been well planned. In English learning, a learning plan is one of the essential instruments for teachers, and it is helpful in guiding teachers in teaching EFL students to learn English. Therefore, creating learning plans is

essential to realize effective learning. Teachers need to make good learning plans to carry out learning correctly and in line with the learning curriculum.

The writing of the learning plan of the Merdeka Curriculum can be using a teaching module. According to Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan (2022), a teaching module in the Merdeka Curriculum is intended to help educators teach more flexibly and contextually, not always using textbooks and it can be another choice or alternative learning strategy. Since a teaching module may be considered a learning plan, educators who utilize government-provided teaching modules or create their own no longer need to create separate RPPs (*Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran*). Even so, the RPP and teaching module must have the same concept: a learning planner designed based on the Merdeka Curriculum.

Implementing a good learning curriculum continues beyond preparing learning plans. The ability to implement learning plans is also essential and plays a significant role in successfully implementing learning. The teacher must comprehend the learning plan and carry it out as intended. A good understanding of learning plans can help teachers carry out learning activities smoothly. In addition, teachers will also be more professional in dealing with unexpected situations in learning because, previously, there has been thorough preparation for specific conditions. Harmer (2007) states that the form of learning and its framework can be provided through a plan. If appropriately developed, learning plans can direct and control teacher performance and help teachers remember what activities must be done during learning to help the

teaching process be effective (Ichsan et al., 2017). In conclusion, the learning plans need to be compiled systematically by the teacher because it can affect the teacher's performance in teaching in the classroom.

In practice, many schools have already implemented the Merdeka Curriculum. However, teachers in Indonesia, still need help designing learning plans, especially teaching modules according to the components of Merdeka Curriculum and implementing them in the classroom. One of the factors that caused this is the teachers still need to gain knowledge about the new curriculum and are not ready to implement it. According to a research conducted by Sarnoto et al. (2022), it showed that when independent learning was carried out, there was a significant obstacle, namely the need for more human and non-human resources. A study by Wicaksono (2022) also showed that several teachers still needed help determining learning plans, referring to *Merdeka Belajar* from various sources. Apart from that, a research conducted by Ariesanti et al. (2023) showed that teachers still experienced difficulties compiling teaching modules and carrying out summative and diagnostic assessments. One thing that can be concluded from the results of those studies is that implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia still needs to be optimal when designing learning plans or teaching modules and implementing them. If teachers do not understand the Merdeka Curriculum fully, making learning plans may be challenging. If the preparation of the learning plans are hampered, the teachers will also find it challenging to implement it in real classroom learning.

Due to the above problems, the researcher was interested in investigating the writing of the teaching module components and its implementation by the English teacher. Therefore, the researcher conducted research entitled **“An Analysis of the English Teaching Module and Its Implementation in the Merdeka Curriculum.”**

B. Definition of Key Terms

1. Teaching Module

A teaching module is a plan designed or written by teachers to assist in achieving learning objectives in the class. The teaching module in this study refers to the English teaching module of the Merdeka Curriculum.

2. Merdeka Curriculum

Merdeka Curriculum is a new guide for teachers in carrying out learning and achieving educational goals with the concept of independent learning and the *Merdeka Belajar* program. The Indonesian Ministry of Education, Nadiem Anwar Makarim, appointed the curriculum in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is still being applied.

3. Teaching Module Component

Teaching module component is component or content that must be contained and written in a teaching module. In this study, the teaching module component refers to the teaching module components of Merdeka Curriculum.

C. Research Questions

Based on the background above, the questions of the study are:

1. What are the components of the teaching module written by the English teacher of SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Banjarmasin using the Merdeka Curriculum?
2. How is the implementation of the English teaching module by the English teacher of SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Banjarmasin using the Merdeka Curriculum?

D. Objectives of Study

There are two objectives in the study, as follows:

1. To identify the components of the teaching module written by the English teacher of SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Banjarmasin using the Merdeka Curriculum.
2. To describe the implementation of the English teaching module by the English teacher of SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Banjarmasin using the Merdeka Curriculum.

E. Significance of Study

The finding of the study significantly contributes both theoretically and practically, including the following:

1. Theoretically

The result of this study is expected to give education and knowledge about writing the components of an English teaching module based on the

Merdeka Curriculum for teachers. This study is also likely to be a reference for those who want to research the writing and implementation of an English teaching module based on the Merdeka Curriculum.

2. Practically

This study is expected to help other English teachers implement English teaching modules based on the Merdeka Curriculum in the classroom.