

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents research that addresses the following topics: research background, phenomenon identification, study focus, research questions, research objectives, research importance, theoretical underpinnings, prior research, frame of mind, and research methodology. In addition, this chapter also describes the steps taken to collect and analyze data, resulting in relevant findings and contributing to the understanding of the topic being studied.

1.1 Background of the problem

There are still many teachers who have not been able to develop modules according to the Merdeka Belajar curriculum criteria (Indarti, 2023 p.2) many teachers do not fully understand the techniques of compiling and developing teaching modules, especially in the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. Education in Indonesia has undergone several changes to the curriculum system with the aim of improvement. The efforts made by the government to improve it are changing and providing curriculum innovation. These include the KTSP/2006 curriculum becoming the 2013 Curriculum and becoming the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. To improve the quality of education in Indonesia, the Ministry of Education and Culture has carried out several developments related to the curriculum. Curriculum development is an innovation step or renewal taken by the government in the field of national education to provide solutions to several cases or problems in education (Tricahyati & Zaim, 2023 p.1).

The development of the education curriculum in Indonesia has reached the development of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. Reform efforts and improving the quality of government education ensures its implementation The new curriculum is the Merdeka Curriculum which is an improvement on the 2013 curriculum which was running previously. The principle of this new curriculum is learning that is completely student-

centered by defining the terms freedom to learn. This term is defined as a method that allows students to choose lessons that are interesting to them. Schools have the right and responsibility to develop a curriculum according to individual needs and characteristics (Cholilah, 2023 p.2). The learning process that does not plan teaching modules properly results in the delivery of learning content that is not systematic, so that learning occurs unbalanced between teachers and students.

The purpose of the Merdeka belajar curriculum is for teachers, students, and parents to get a happy atmosphere. It can be said that the policy of providing school curriculum choices is one of the change management efforts (Anggaira, 2023 p.1). In this case, what needs to be developed is the teacher as the main key to the success of Merdeka Belajar for both students and teachers themselves. Freedom of learning is a process where a teacher can liberate himself first in the teaching and learning process and can provide a sense of comfort and a sense of learning freedom for his students.

One of the leads to Merdeka Belajar policies relating to effective teacher development is the quality of the lesson plan or in Merdeka Kurikulum Belajar namely the teaching module (Apriani et al., 2020 p.2). A high-quality teaching module serves as the foundation upon which subsequent teaching and Merdeka Belajar experiences are achieved. This carefully crafted plan not only facilitates a structured and engaging classroom experience but also empowers teachers to effectively cultivate Merdeka Belajar skills in their students, thereby fostering a more independent and empowered educational environment. However, in reality, teachers still have difficulty creating teaching modules with Merdeka Belajar Curriculum policies. Many factors cause difficulties for teachers in creating teaching modules. The first is changes to the curriculum. Teachers often face difficulties in creating modules due to constant changes in the educational curriculum. When the curriculum is updated, teachers have to adapt their materials and teaching methods, which requires additional time and effort in creating relevant modules. The second is student diversity. Students have

diverse learning styles. Creating modules suitable for different types of students can be a complex and challenging task. The third is limited resources. The teachers have limited access to resources, including textbooks, tools, and educational software, which may limit their ability to create varied and engaging modules. Then to present modules in digital form can require technology skills that not all teachers have. Additionally, accessibility to the device and internet connection can also be an issue.

Learning must have an impact and a goal of success. Therefore a teacher must plan every lesson and create the planning. The teacher's efforts are needed to prepare lesson plans properly so that the quality of learning as a fundamental principle in education is good (Yessa et al., 2023, p.5). To make good plans and be able to organize a good learning process ideally, every teacher must know the elements of learning planning. The willingness of teachers is still very lacking to fulfill each competency to achieve the learning objective in the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. Erviana (2016) explained that there were three types of readiness for implementing learning, namely: 1) emotive attitudinal readiness, 2) cognitive readiness, and 3) behavioral readiness.

Due to the importance of research in teacher's readiness, the researcher has areas of interest to explore in providing a more comprehensive understanding of successful teaching. Some clusters of research exist in this field on teachers' readiness to implement the merdeka belajar curriculum especially in making modules. There are teacher's readiness in implementing the merdeka belajar curriculum (Tricahyati & Zaim, 2023; S, Nurzen, 2022; Triayomi et al, 2022; Nikma et al , 2023; Ibrahim et al 2022; Jamilah et al, 2023; Saepuloh, 2018; Erviana, 2016; Yessa et al, 2023; Arief et al, 2023 & Friyatmi, 2023), and teacher's ability in making teaching module (Arum & Fathoni, 2022; Kasman & Lubis, 2022; Bukaryo, 2023; Siregar et al, 2022 & Sanjaya et al ,2022)

There is a lack of previous research that has similar areas of research. First, it is rare for English-language journals or theses to discuss

teaching modules in the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. It is recommended to research the constraints of mastering the creation of teaching modules in implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. Second, most journals or theses only contain strategies for creating teaching modules. It is recommended that there is a follow-up regarding the results of implementing the strategy. Third, most theses or journals discuss how to develop teacher abilities in compiling teaching modules without paying attention to the teacher's understanding of the teaching module itself. Therefore, the researcher aimed to make a difference by generalizing everything related to teacher readiness in creating teaching modules by the provisions of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. Finally, some journals or theses do not include the obstacles teachers face in creating teaching modules. It would be better if there was help for teachers to know what the factors are.

Based on observations made by the researcher at a junior high school in Cirebon regarding the new policy, namely the Merdeka Belajar system, the school has implemented the Merdeka Belajar system policy in classes VII and VIII. The Merdeka Belajar learning system is a new policy which of course has obstacles and obstacles to implementing it, especially for teachers who as an integral part of education and an important component in learning, definitely have problems that must be resolved. One of them is the teacher's readiness in designing teaching modules which is considered less than ideal. Based on the explanation that has been explained, the researcher was interested in conducting research with the title "English Teacher's Readiness in Developing Teaching Module in Implementation of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum".

1.2 Identification of the Problem

Based on the background above, the researcher found some problems. They are as follows:

1. They are still can not make the teaching module.
2. Teachers were still learning to implement the new curriculum.

3. Teachers did not understand the teaching module.
4. Teacher's readiness in teaching in the classroom was still lacking.
5. Teacher bought teaching modules in anticipation.
6. Teachers paid less attention to students with different learning styles.
7. Students did not focus on the learning process in class
8. Teachers often faced high workloads, including lesson preparation, grading, and administrative tasks.
9. Teachers still had difficulty managing the class effectively, including maintaining discipline and motivating students.
10. Teachers were often faced with changes in curriculum or educational policies that could give rise to uncertainty and require rapid adaptation in the preparation of materials and teaching approaches.

Those problems made the researcher want to know teachers' readiness in implementing the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, especially in making teaching modules.

1.3 Delimitation of research

Based on the background of the problem above, the researcher limited this research to teacher's readiness in designing teaching modules for the Merdeka Belajar curriculum at junior high school. In this case, the researcher only examined teachers' preparation in designing teaching modules used in implementing the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, including readiness in designing teaching modules, materials, LKPD, assessments, and teaching media that support the learning process in Merdeka Belajar curriculum.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the background, the researcher formulated the following research questions:

1. To what extent is the teacher's understanding of the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum?
2. How is teachers' readiness to design teaching modules at junior high school?
3. What challenges do teachers face in designing teaching modules?

1.5 Aims of the research

The aims to be achieved in this research are:

1. To describe and explain teachers' and prospective teachers' readiness in designing teaching modules for the Merdeka Belajar curriculum at junior high school.
2. To describe teachers' and prospective teachers' understanding in designing teaching modules at junior high school.
3. To describe obstacles do teachers and prospective teachers face in designing teaching modules at junior high schools.

1.6 Significances of the Research

The researcher expected that this research could contribute to English teaching and learning. This has two main meanings for theoretical and practical implications.

1.6.1 Theoretically

The material can serve both as a foundation for further study on the Merdeka Belajar system in junior high schools and as a reference for enhancing one's skills in developing this system, ultimately enabling teachers to implement learning more effectively.

1.6.2 Practically

The results of this research will be suggested to be able to expand the understanding related to the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum and teaching modules for teachers, researchers, and institutions.

a. Teacher

It is hoped that this study can provide teachers with an overview of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum as well as teaching modules that may be used to teach English. Additionally, the study aims to equip educators with practical strategies and resources to enhance their teaching effectiveness and engage students in meaningful learning experiences.

b. Researchers

Researchers will gain some understanding of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum as well as teaching modules, and gain some related knowledge and experience. Moreover, this exploration will enable researchers to critically evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and its implementation in diverse educational contexts.

a. Institution

It is hoped that this research can become educational references. Furthermore, it is intended that this research will inspire further studies and discussions within the academic community, contributing to the ongoing development of educational practices.

1.7 Theoretical foundation

This section outlines the theory underlying this research, by reviewing key relevant theories and concepts. Additionally, it aims to establish a framework that will guide the analysis and interpretation of the findings, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the research context.

1.7.1 Teacher Readiness

Teachers and the curriculum have a significant role in the learning process. Teachers and curriculum are considered as determining factors of success in a learning process.

1.7.1.1 Understanding Readiness

A teacher must have the necessary readiness to achieve goals in learning as a professional. Professional teachers will produce quality educational processes and results to realize intelligent and competitive students. Teachers must be cultivated as respectable and competent professionals since they play a crucial role in attempts to achieve national development goals, particularly in the sphere of education. According to Lynch et al., (2017 p.3), readiness is defined as the state in which the organizational condition is such that teachers are prepared to engage with an improvement process.

A person who is prepared to react or answer in a particular way to the situation is said to be ready. According to Nurzen (2022, p.4) readiness can be defined as an ability or condition that allows a person to act or face certain situations well. The developmental stage, the capacity to modify behavior, and the capacity to behave effectively and efficiently are all included in this state. A person's general state that prepares him to react or answer in a particular manner to a given circumstance is known as readiness. Teacher readiness can be interpreted as an attitude of willingness to be involved in the task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students (Saepuloh, 2018, p.3). Moreover, Arikunto (2015, as cited in Andika et al., 2018, p.54) mentioned that the readiness is a competency, so someone who has competence means that someone has sufficient readiness to do something. This preparedness begins with the teacher's knowledge, mindset, and capacity to carry out teaching and learning activities, which originate from within the instructor.

Teacher readiness can be interpreted as an attitude of willingness to be involved in the task of educating, teaching, guiding, training, assessing, and evaluating students (Bitjoli et al., 2017 p. 2).

There are some principles of readiness according to Idamayanti (2020, p. 2). These include the following:

1. All aspects of development interact,
2. In order to gain from experience, one must be mature both physically and spiritually.
3. Experiences positively impact preparedness,
4. During the period of formation in the period of development, a basic level of preparation for certain activities is developed.

Teachers must be a major issue because they are the ones implementing the curriculum on the front lines. The instructor is a person who works closely with students or who directly affects how well they complete learning assignments. The role of teachers in education is

fundamentally altered by the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum.

1.7.1.2 Teacher understanding

Teachers and lecturers are considered professional educators under Law Number 14 of 2005, and their primary responsibility is to instruct, guide, direct, train, assess, and evaluate pupils in elementary and secondary education. According to Sanjaya (as cited in Sanjani, 2020, p. 2), a teacher is a person who directly deals with a student with the learning system, the teacher can act as a planner, learning designer, implementer, or perhaps both. It is often said that teaching is organizing student activity in a broad sense. The role of the teacher is not only to provide information but also to direct and provide learning facilities so that the learning process is more adequate (Zein, 2016)

In learning, Teachers need to be aware of the type of learning materials they will be teaching in order to create lessons that will help students develop their critical thinking abilities. They also need to be aware of different learning models that, with careful preparation, can help students learn. The teacher in his position as an educator, teacher, and trainer is basically a manager (Buchari Agustini, 2018 p. 10). Teachers as educators become a determining factor for the success of any educational endeavor. Teachers are therefore at the center of every conversation regarding curriculum renewal and the acquisition of educational resources that meet the standards of human resources generated by educational endeavors always come down to teachers. This shows how significant (important) the teaching profession is in the world of education.

1.7.1.3 Teacher Duties in the Teaching and Learning Process

The The existence of teachers is crucial for a country, particularly for one that is developing and preserving its way of life as time passes with ever-more-advanced technology and all the changes and shifts in values that tend to give life a nuance that requires knowledge and art at a dynamic level in order to adapt. The teacher's duties in education are very

important. A teacher is the key that will open up the essence of knowledge and science both theoretically, practically, and empirically. “Teachers have duties, both tied to the service and outside the service, in the form of service. If we group them, there are three types of teacher duties, namely : (1) duties in the field of profession, (2) humanitarian duties, and (3) duties in the field of community affairs” (Sopian, 2016, p.1)

Society places teachers as more honorable people in the environment because from a teacher it is expected that the community can gain knowledge. The task of teachers is not only limited to society, but even teachers are also essential components of strategy that chooses an important role in determining the progress of national life. Buchari (2018, p. 5) said that, the four most basic roles in the teaching and learning process, namely: (1) teachers as demonstrators, (2) teachers as class managers, (3) teachers as mediators and facilitators, and (4) teachers as evaluators. These four teacher roles must be carried out optimally and consistently in order to achieve learning objectives effectively and with quality. According to Al-Yunusi et.al, (2023) to become a professional teacher, a teacher must have self-capacity, which is professional. Professional capacity in this case is having the teacher's expertise in mastering the study of learning material in depth, including knowledge of other academic matters which are the main factors supporting a teacher's professionalism.

As stated above, Since the function and competency of instructors play a major influence in determining the teaching and learning process and student learning outcomes, new advancements in the perspective of teaching and learning have implications for teachers to enhance their fundamental skills. According to Fajri et.al, (2024, p.7-8), there are main abilities that must be possessed by every teacher that will be used as a benchmark for the quality of teacher performance as follows:

1. Understanding students, organizing and carrying out learning activities, assessing learning outcomes, and helping students reach

their full potential are all components of pedagogic competence.

2. Teacher personality competence is required to teach students about self-discipline, learn to respect time, obey rules/rules, and learn how to do. All of that will work if the teacher is also disciplined in carrying out his duties and obligations.
3. Professional competence is an ability that must be possessed by teachers in the learning process. Teachers must master the learning material presented. In delivering learning, teachers have roles and duties as material sources.

There are several indicators of teacher readiness in carrying out learning. Pratiwi, et al. (2023), explained that there are 4 indicators of teacher readiness, including:

1. Readiness in understanding the curriculum structure, Teachers must know the form of the curriculum structure consisting of intracurricular activities, projects to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students, and extracurricular activities.
2. Readiness of lesson plans, Teachers must understand and know the format of the teaching module to be used.
3. Readiness of the learning process, Teachers must understand the learning process. The curriculum determines not only what is taught in the classroom but also how quickly and in what format lessons are delivered.
4. Readiness for learning assessment, Teachers must understand how the assessment flow based on the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is applied.

1.7.2 The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum

Effective administration of execution, planning, and assessment is necessary in the field of education. Education will not function as planned if it is not properly managed. The curriculum is being updated and improved as part of the government's efforts to raise educational standards. The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is one of the curricula being pursued.

1.7.2.1 Understanding The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum

To be able to analyze needs and run the curriculum in accordance with the reality of the field, the most crucial component of the curriculum itself must be at the foundation of the curriculum structure. Freedom to learn is interpreted as a learning design that gives students the opportunity to study in a relaxed and, calm manner, without feeling pressured, feel, happy without stress, and pay attention to the natural talents that students have. Nadiem said that the idea behind Merdeka Belajar was to allow pupils to discover their own passions and skills (Susilowati, 2022, p. 2). The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is a curriculum approach designed to provide freedom and flexibility for schools in determining learning materials that are relevant to the characteristics and needs of students (Zetriuslita et al., 2023 p. 2).

According to Maulida et al., (2022, p. 4), Merdeka Belajar is a new program from Kemendikbud launched by Nadiem Makarim, which was previously implemented by PT Cikal in Cikal schools. Actually, one of the most recent developments to bring outstanding human resources with a Pancasila Student Profile and Merdeka Belajar Curriculum targeted at all primary, secondary, and higher education units is the transformation of education through the policy of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. Teachers need independent thinking to be able to design learning according to students' needs. "The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum provides the widest possible opportunities so that teachers are free to choose the parts of the curriculum that they want to develop in learning according to students' needs" (Ningrum & Suryani, 2022, p. 5). Teachers can use effective teaching strategies and media, as well as enhance their academic skills and creativity, by implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum.

Valery (as cited in Maulida et al., 2022, p. 4) mentioned that The Ministry of Culture and Technology proposes the principle of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, which is divided into four principles of independent learning, including:

1) Converting USBN into a Competency Assessment

In the current Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, USBN which has been ingrained in Indonesian education units is replaced by a Competency Assessment. This seeks to give institutions the freedom to verify graduation in compliance with the National Education Law. The competency assessment can be done with two options, namely in the form of written tests or other forms of assessments that are more comprehensive to see other competencies possessed by students. These changes are fundamentally beneficial for schools, teachers, and students. In addition, the benefits for teachers is that they can make teachers independent in learning, they do the assessment according to the needs of students and schools, and develop their professional competencies. As for schools, it will be more independent because it has positive values in student learning processes and outcomes.

2) Replacing the National Examination with a Minimum Competency Assessment and Character Survey

The A minimum competency assessment and character survey took the place of the UN's primary goal in order to lessen the pressure on teachers, parents, and students to raise the standard of education in Indonesia. The competency assessment will measure critical thinking competencies such as literacy, numeracy, and character as personal and professional problem-solving based on practice at the international level. At the same time, the scope of character is measured from the element of applying the educational value of the Pancasila profile in schools.

3) Minimizing Learning Implementation Plan

This activity is carried out to optimize teacher performance in the classroom. In the previous curriculum, a lesson plan or RPP had too many segments, so if it was arranged it could reach more than 20 pages. But now, RPP can be made into 1 page which includes

three important elements, namely learning objectives, learning activities, and evaluation. The goal is to simplify teacher's administration so that teachers' time is more focused on learning and now RPP has been replaced with teaching modules that are more varied in nature.

4) Zoning New Student Admission Regulations

The zoning system has been applied to the New Student Admission regulations which are more flexible in nature. The 80% zoning road, the 15% merit path, and the 5% displacement path are the three divisions of the PPDB zoning system made in the previous draft rule. The four most recent draft regulations are the 0–30% achievement road, the 15% affirmation path, 5% transfer path, and 50% zoning path.

1.7.2.2 The Concept of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum

Technology can help students in doing assignments. The application of Education 4.0 is expected to produce characters who are honest, disciplined, tolerant, committed, and trustworth. Currently, learning concepts that have existed in education are education 4.0. Education 4.0 is what produces the Merdeka Belajar process. The curriculum that has been in place and is utilized by Indonesian formal education differs greatly from the idea of Merdeka Belajar. This novel approach to education considers each student's individuality and cognitive capacities. Therefore, the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is related to how an educator can deliver subject matter by relating to the formation of student character.

The following outlines the concept of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum according to Widyastuti (2022, as cited in Ningrum & Suryani, pp. 12-14):

1. Minimum Competency Assessment

The difference between this new educational concept and the curriculum used previously is that students are expected to be able to

demonstrate minimum proficiency in terms of literacy and numerical. The emphasis is on how well students can use their cognitive skills to think critically, not on how much they can learn from the teacher to earn good scores. For instance, in the literacy section of the prior curriculum, students memorized more and applied the material they read. According to the competency evaluation principle, students must be able to reason rationally in order to abstract the material's goal, likewise in numerical terms or other subjects such as physics, chemistry, especially mathematics. Students should not only memorize formulas but also discover basic concepts so that they can apply them to broader problem-solving.

2. Character Survey

Ultimately, the government acknowledges that education in Indonesia is a costly endeavor. Since every region has distinct human characteristics, it is hard to impose a single system with set indicators. The government will evaluate the overall quality of education in schools using the notion of a character survey. not just about learning objectives but also about the accessible educational infrastructure and ecosystem.

To put it another way, based on data from the most recent school survey, quality development is still present.

3. Expansion of Learning Outcomes Assessment

The extension of the evaluation of student learning outcomes beyond national test results to assignments and portfolios is one of the most intriguing aspects of the Merdeka Belajar idea. In the future, students will be given space to be able to develop themselves according to their interests and talents. Since people have a variety of innate abilities that cannot be assessed through formal testing, it is anticipated that the stigma associated with intelligent and sluggish students will soon be eradicated.

4. Equitable Education Quality Up to 3T

Merdeka Belajar can also refer to fairness in terms of all Indonesian students having equal access to education. As a result, the government established an affirmation policy and granted students residing in 3T districts a special quota (underdeveloped, frontmost, and outermost regions). Industry 4.0 is an important moment in the equity quality of education in Indonesia. because, 2030 will be the peak of Indonesia's demographic bonus, with 64% of the population being the labor force. Our ability to compete in Industry 4.0 will be significantly influenced by Indonesia's human resources' (HR) preparedness, particularly in the 3T regions where the birth rate is still quite high.

1.7.2.3 Disadvantages and advantages of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum

In every policy of implementation, of course, some advantages and disadvantages always exist. Such is the case with the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum at various levels of educational units. The most prominent advantage of implementing this curriculum is that certain projects must be carried out by students so that they can become more active to explore themselves. In addition, this curriculum is also more interactive and relevant following the times (Wiguna & Trisaningrat, 2022, p. 7).

Almarisi (2023, p.4) stated that every curriculum implemented in Indonesia has advantages and disadvantages when compared to the 2013 Curriculum. There are several advantages possessed by the Merdeka Curriculum, including:

1. The curriculum is simpler, but this curriculum is quite in-depth.
2. The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum focuses more on essential knowledge and student development based on stages and processes.
3. Learning is more meaningful, not rushed or impressed to complete the materials and learning feels more fun.
4. Students are more independent, for example in high schools, there are no longer specialization programs. Students can determine the subjects of interest according to their talents and aspirations.

5. The advantage of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum for teachers is that teachers can carry out teaching according to the assessment of the level of achievement and development of students.

Following an overview of the benefits of the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education's Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, some of its drawbacks are as follows:

1. In terms of implementation, the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is still immature.
2. The intended system of instruction and learning has not been fully implemented.
3. There is a lack of Human Resources (HR), as well as unstructured systems.

1.7.3 Teaching module

Designing teaching modules is the development of a teacher's pedagogical competency is necessary to ensure that their methods of instruction are more efficient and successful in the classroom and do not vary from the accomplishment indicators. These days, teachers in elementary, middle, and upper education institutions frequently debate instructional modules. "Teaching modules are learning materials that are arranged extensively and systematically concerning learning principles applied by teachers to students" (Maulida et al., 2022, p.2). Systematically can be understood sequentially, beginning with the introduction, content, and conclusion, making it easier for teachers to present the subject and for students to understand. Teaching modules are very important for teachers and students in the learning process. In fact, if they are not compared to full instructional modules, teachers will find it impossible to improve their effectiveness. Students are affected by this when the teacher's instruction is not methodical.

When it comes to helping teachers create learning, teaching modules play a significant role. The teacher is a key player in the creation of

learning resources. “Teachers will be honed in their thinking skills to be able to innovate in the teaching modules they make. According to Nurdyansyah” (as cited in Maulida, 2022, p.2), the teaching module is a learning tool or learning design based on the curriculum that is applied with the aim of achieving predetermined competency standards. “The teaching module is one of the learning tools or learning designs based on the applicable curriculum that is applied with the aim of achieving predetermined competency standards” (Salsabilla et al., 2023 p.2). In addition, It is possible to identify a learning process that lacks effective module planning when students are not receiving content in a systematic manner, which results in learning that is not equitable between teachers and students. Additionally, it is a given that if the teacher does not correctly prepare the teaching module, the learning process will appear less engaging.

1.8 Previous research

In this part, the researcher identifies previous studies that align with their current research. These studies, available in both thesis and journal formats, serve as evidence that similar research has been carried out in the past.

One cluster that is most relevant to my current research is the research is about “English Teachers’ Readiness in Implementing of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in Teaching English at Junior High School” by Tricahyati & Zaim, 2022. The purpose of this study was to examine the preparedness of English teachers as well as the challenges encountered when implementing the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. In order to measure the questionnaire and determine the average score, quantitative analyses were used in the study. Additionally, interview material was transcribed, categorized, and a conclusion was reached. The results of the quantitative analysis indicate that, with an average score of 3.20, teachers are prepared to apply the curriculum at level 3 or in the ready but need a little improvement category. According to the results of the interviews, teachers encounter challenges when developing

learning objectives and implementing differentiated instruction during the teaching and learning process. Teachers still require workshops and training that focus on assessment and IT use to assist them generate interactive material, even though they are category ready. This will make them more ready to execute the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. This research only explains the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum clearly and does not discuss the teaching module.

Another cluster that is relevant to my research is about *Teacher readiness in implementing the Free Learning System* (Giankeke et al., 2023). This study aimed to measure the readiness of teachers in implementing Merdeka Belajar systems. According to information gathered via interviews and observation, the teachers at SMK Negeri 4 Medan are prepared to put this new policy into effect. Three of the school's teachers made up the research sample. The results of this study indicate that some teachers lack expertise adopting autonomous learning while others are aware with earlier learning requirements. If they have the right assistance and instruction, they can get past these obstacles. Teachers working together is crucial for promoting experience sharing and problem resolution. Teachers can execute Merdeka Belajar effectively. This research only explains the teachers' abilities in previous guidelines and the current implementation of Merdeka Belajar.

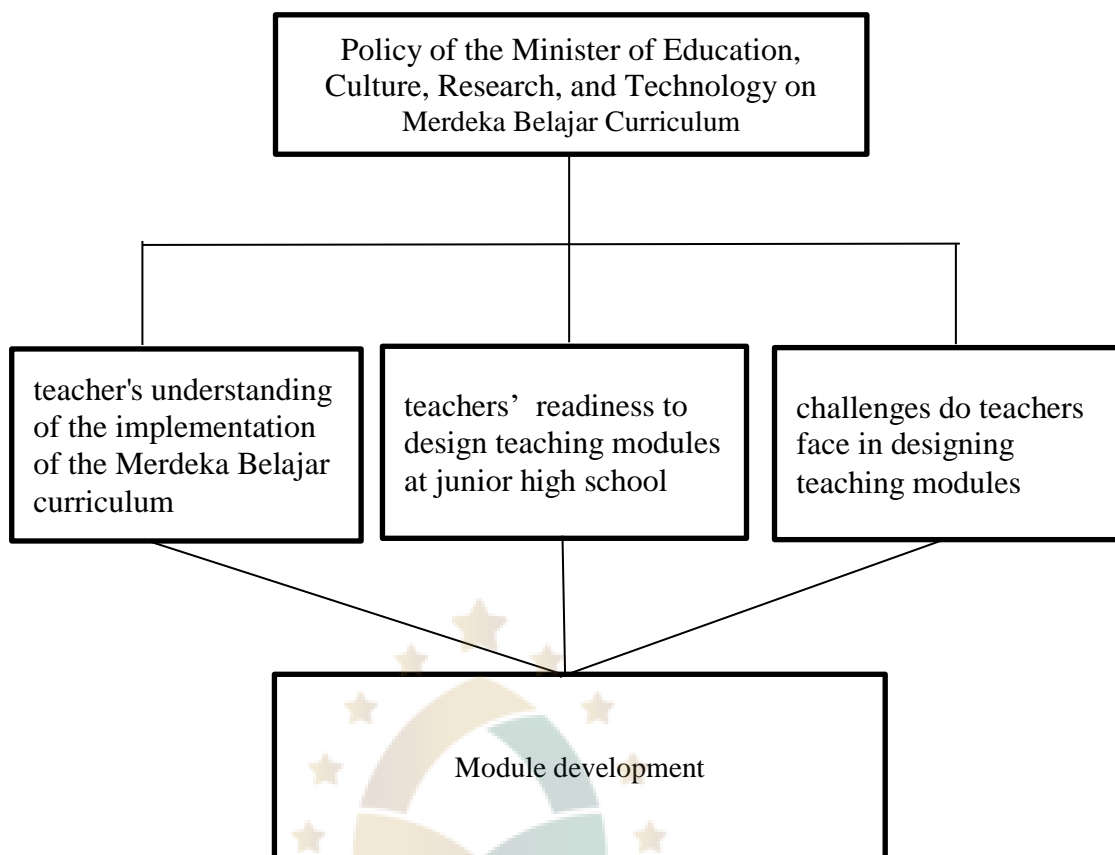
The last cluster that is relevant to my research of Readiness to Implement the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum Learning in the Era of Society 5.0 is the subject of this study. The application of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in state aliyah madrasahs in the era of society 5.0, teacher barriers to applying the curriculum in this era, and teacher efforts to overcome these barriers were the main topics of this study. According to instructors who have been using the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in grades X and XI for around two years, the research findings on its implementation in state aliyah madrasahs in Batanghari district during the era of society 5.0 are fairly positive. Teachers' facilities still lack enough information and communication

technology capabilities, which is one of the challenges they confront when implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in the age of society 5.0. Attending training or ICT training, working, and having better conversations with other educators are some ways to try to overcome the challenges.

Based on the previous studies, the researcher revealed several gaps. This study discusses teachers' understanding of the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in depth, including teachers' readiness in developing teaching modules, as well as the challenges faced in implementing the curriculum and developing modules to meet various needs. Additionally, the integration of technology into teaching modules may not be fully realized. Addressing these issues through targeted training, better resource allocation, and better support structures can improve teachers' readiness and effectiveness in implementing the Merdeka Belajar curriculum.

1.9 Frame of thought

Government policies related to the Independent Learning Curriculum aim to provide flexibility in education, which is highly dependent on teachers' understanding of the implementation of the curriculum. This understanding is crucial because it will affect the readiness of teachers in designing teaching modules that suit the needs of students. However, in the process of designing teaching modules, teachers often face various challenges, such as lack of adequate resources and training, as well as difficulties in adapting the material to the diversity of students' abilities. Therefore, it is important to evaluate and support teachers in overcoming these challenges so that the Independent Learning Curriculum can be implemented effectively.



1.10 Research method

In this chapter, the researcher outlines the precise steps or approach taken to find, pick, process, and evaluate the data related to a topic. This includes the study strategy and procedures, the data source and type, the data collection and analysis methods, and the research timeframe.

1.10.1 Research design and steps of the research

The research conducted includes qualitative research that produces descriptive data. Qualitative research is research that produces descriptive data in the form of written or oral where information is obtained from sources. Qualitative research is research carried out thoroughly on an object. The researcher becomes the main instrument in qualitative research and the results of the research are explained in the form of words obtained through valid data (Jaya, 2020, p. 110). The data analyzed are derived from observed symptoms that do not have to be in the form of numbers or coefficients between variables (Jaya, 2020, p. 111). Qualitative

research looks more at the quality of research objects such as values, maxims, human emotions, passion, diversity, historical values and others. “Qualitative research methods are research methods used to examine natural object conditions, where researchers are the key instrument, data collection techniques are triangulated, data analysis is inductive, and qualitative research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization” (Abdussamad, 2021, p. 79). Based on the explanation, it can be known that qualitative research is research that is more focused on describing the state, nature, or nature of the value of a particular object or phenomenon.

This researcher used a case study as the design of his research. Case study is research about people (can be a group, organization or individual), events and settings in depth (Jaya, 2020, p. 120). Case study is very useful for understanding a group/ person in depth. Therefore, the researcher used a case study research design to explore information about teachers’ readiness in designing teaching modules for the Merdeka Belajar curriculum.

The data in this research consist of several pieces of information (data) obtained from information related to teachers’ readiness in designing teaching modules based on the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. The data obtained in this research were from teachers at a junior high school in Cirebon who have currently implemented the Merdeka Belajar curriculum as well as prospective teachers (students) who are have studied the Merdeka Belajar curriculum and practiced it in PLP (*Praktik Lapangan Persekolahan*) or teaching practicum activities.

1.10.2 Source and type of data

In this study, data collection uses primary and secondary data sources.

1. Sources

Two data sources were used in this study. They were :

a) Primary Data Source

The specifics, proof, and descriptions of the desired event for research

can be found in primary data sources. Primary data are data that directly provides data to data collectors and primary data are obtained from questionnaires conducted (Sugiyono, 2016). Primary data are sources of data obtained directly from subjects related to research. recording of primary data sources through observation and interviews. A combination of listening, seeing, and asking questions will produce information. In this research, data sources were obtained through observations and interviews related to teachers' readiness in designing teaching modules from the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum.

b) Secondary Data Source

Secondary data are sources of data that do not directly provide data to the data collector e.g., through other people or documents and research supporting data obtained from documents (Sugiyono, 2016, p. 137). Secondary data sources are data sources that do not directly see objects or events but can provide information and images about those objects or events. (Maolani, 2016, p. 71). Secondary data in this study came from journals, articles, books, and documents.

2. Setting

The research was carried out in a junior high school in Cirebon that has implemented the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. In addition, the researcher also researched several seventh-semester students at a campus in Cirebon who had studied and practiced the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. This captivates the researcher's interest to examine the readiness of English teachers in designing modules for Merdeka Belajar Curriculum.

1.10.3 Data collection techniques and instruments

Data collection techniques are ways used by researchers in collecting information to obtain the desired data and in qualitative research is research where researchers are the main instrument (Sugiyono, 2016, p. 308). In this research, the researcher use observation, interviews, and documentation to collect data.

1. Observation

Observation is not restricted to people, but also includes non-natural objects. Observation is a technique collection of data that has specific characteristics when compared with another technique (Sugiyono, 2016, p. 229). Observation techniques are performed by examining the object of research directly into the field, then the results are recorded and analyzed. This technique was used in this research to observe the readiness of teachers in designing Merdeka Belajar Curriculum modules in a junior high school.

In addition, the researcher also conducted unstructured observations, where the researcher only came to the research site and observed the activities being researched without involving herself in the activities carried out by the research subjects. This technique was adapted from Jaya (2020, p.151) which states that unstructured observation is a method of collecting data that is not systematically prepared about what is observed and, researchers can make independent observations, record findings, conduct analysis and draw conclusions from what is observed.

2. Interviews

The next technique in collecting data that the researcher used was an interview. As said by Jaya (2020, p. 153), an interview is a data collection technique used to obtain information directly by asking a list of questions to data sources (informants). An interview is a dialogue between the interviewer and the informant or respondent in order to obtain the necessary information.

Therefore, in this technique, the researchers who act as interviewers obtain the information needed related to their research through interview answers from research respondents. This interview was guided by an array of interview questions needed to be answered by respondents regarding the teacher's readiness in designing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum modules. Good cooperation is needed

between researchers and respondents so that the data needed by researchers can really help researchers report their findings completely as desired.

This study uses a structured type of interview. Where the respondents in this study are three English teachers who are in junior high schools in Cirebon. The interview in this study was conducted directly as one meeting. The researcher records the information conveyed by the respondent.

3. Documentation

Written documents with significant information supporting additional data gathered from observations and interviews are employed. A document is a record of a phenomenon that occurs. Documents can be writing, drawings, and a person's work (Jaya, 2020 p. 157). Documents are very important in this study because they support the success of observation and interviews. Then the results of the study will be more accurate and credible because it has been supported by photos and small notes made by researchers. In addition, documents can make it easier for researchers to process their research data. The documents collected in this study were photos of research activities, interview results, assignment letters, and other records related to the Merdeka Belajar curriculum.

1.10.4 Data analysis technique(s)

In analyzing the data obtained, the researcher used Miles and Huberman model of data analysis (1984, as cited in Berlian et al., 2023 p.3). Miles and Huberman's model analysis covers the following steps:

1. Data Reduction

Data Reduction means summarizing, choosing the essentials, focusing on the things that matter, looking for themes and patterns and discarding the unnecessary. As a result, the condensed data will give a clear picture and facilitate the collection of further data and its retrieval when needed. The objectives will serve as a guide for researchers as

they reduce data. Findings are the primary focus of qualitative research, in this study the author focuses the problem on Teacher Readiness in designing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum module at the junior high school level. In this study, the researcher reduces by selecting data and entering the data based on the focus of the research, and compiling the data based on the categories that have been created.

2. Data Display

After the data reduction process, the step taken by the researcher is to display the data. Displaying data is displaying structured data in a way that allows users to make decisions and then go back and revise them. Views can be short descriptions, charts, or relationships between categories, but qualitative research data is usually displayed in a narrative. The data display aims to make the researcher understand what is happening in the plan and the next action to be taken. In this section, the researcher displays data in the form of a brief description of the interview results that have been reduced, and given an explanation to make it simpler to understand.

3. Verification

The last step in data collection is drawing conclusions and verification. From the beginning of data collection, the researcher summarizes things in the field and records them to conclude. Usually, conclusions from the start are still temporary and subject to data changes. However, conclusions can be credible if valid and consistent data support them.

1.11 Research timeline

NO	TARGETS	TIMELINE																								
		JAN			MEI			JUN			JUL			AUG			SEP									
1	Literatur e review	█	█																							
	Instrume nts						█	█	█	█	█	█	█													
2	Data Collectio n														█											
	Data Analysis															█	█									
3	Revision																					█	█	█		
4	Finishin g																									█

