

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of the Study

The primary responsibilities of teachers, as defined by Decree of Law No. 14 of 2015, are to educate, teach, guide, direct, train, assess, and provide evaluation at the conclusion of learning for all educational elements from elementary to secondary education. According to Zakiah Daradjat (2001), the teacher is a role model who explains how each teacher needs to be capable of comprehending the information they would be teaching. The teacher has a role in the learning process as a planner, executor, manager (organization), and assessor (evaluator). Teachers also act as nurturers who are involved and associated with the tasks of supporting and helping students, acting as supervisors, and enforcing rules for students to follow, both school rules and the norms of family and community life. (Sunarti *et al.*, 2020) Additionally, when pupils are learning a language, the teacher serves as a role model and engages in direct communication with them while using simple language.

English can be taught using a variety of techniques, such as the grammar translation method, the direct approach, the Audio Lingual Method, and the Total Physical Method. As a distinguishing feature of the autonomous curriculum in comparison to other curricula, the teaching methodology employed in the Merdeka curriculum is the Project Based Learning (PjBL) learning model. The project-based learning (PjBL) approach is a student-centered teaching strategy that fosters independence in learners. (Pertiwi *et al.*, 2022)

The notion to modify the curriculum, namely the Merdeka learning curriculum, was spurred by the presence of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Nadiem Makarim. One of the curriculum ideas that demands independence from pupils is the Merdeka learning curriculum. Every student has the freedom to access both official and informal educational resources, which is independence. This curriculum encourages both teacher and student innovation and does not set any restrictions on learning that occurs in or outside of the classroom. One of the top priorities in the Merdeka

Curriculum is the adoption of Project-Based Learning (PjBL), which provides engaging and interactive learning.(Pertwi *et al.*, 2022) As a result, many educators are doing so right now. Some of them used the online approach to apply it during the Pandemic era, and it is still used to administer the Merdeka curriculum for in-person instruction. The use of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) can be considered as an effort to minimize learning loss caused by the use of online learning techniques during the outbreak, so the use of PjBL in learning now meets the requirements needed as an educational solution in Indonesia.

A study written by Siti Malifah *et al*, titled *Manajemen Pembelajaran Matematika pada Kurikulum Merdeka di Pondok Pesantren*. This study tries to describe how mathematics learning is managed in the independent curriculum, including (1) planning mathematics learning, (2) putting it into practice, and (3) evaluating it. (1) Planning for mathematics instruction at SMP Negeri 1 Jumo Temanggung was created through discussion among mathematics subject teachers (MGMPM) at the school level and was inspired by the operational curriculum of the

educational unit (KOSP) (2) The mathematics learning plan serves as a guide for the implementation of mathematics learning at SMP Negeri 1 Jumo Temanggung, and it is integrated into the operational curriculum of the applied educational unit (KOSP). (3) The school principal evaluates the implementation of mathematics learning at SMP Negeri 1 Jumo Temanggung through observation, documentation, and observation at the end of each semester. (Malikah *et al.*, 2022) Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum can be implemented effectively, this is evidenced by mathematics learning which is guided by lesson planning and integrated into the operational curriculum of the education unit (KSOP) that is implemented.

Project-based learning, which is how the Merdeka curriculum is being implemented, allows for learning and collaboration space between students. By examining students' abilities through project learning, teachers can provide students with directions and solutions to challenges they encounter. It also tries to foster independence in the students. (Qomariyah *et al.*,

2022) There are several aspects that contribute to the development and implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, which are an important concern for every educational institution, especially schools. This Merdeka Curriculum inspires school leaders to develop fresh ideas for running institutions. In the concept of the Merdeka learning curriculum policy, one of the conditions is that the teacher is able to construct a learning process that stimulates students. A teacher must be able to become a tutor, facilitator, and inspiration for his school children. By referring to the completeness of books or learning resources that are in accordance with the objectives of the Merdeka curriculum, facilities and infrastructure can support the successful implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in schools.

Based on preliminary research, in an interview with Mrs. Dwi Apura M, M.Pd as the seventh grade English teacher at SMPN 5 Bengkulu on November 23, 2022, it is known that the curriculum used has changed from the 2013 curriculum to the Merdeka curriculum. This curriculum change is applied to grade VII while grades VIII and IX are still using the 2013 curriculum.

The Merdeka Curriculum was implemented because there were several problems found related to learning, namely the emergence of the phenomenon of students experiencing learning loss after the Covid 19 pandemic, teachers' unpreparedness in utilizing technology as a learning resource and media, the decline in the quality of student learning, and differences in the application of the Merdeka curriculum and the 2013 curriculum. The Merdeka curriculum is a newly implemented curriculum, therefore, it is important to deepen the perspective of teachers, especially English teachers, in implementing the Merdeka curriculum.

The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in class VII aims to improve learning loss due to online learning during a pandemic. The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum requires teachers to show creativity in making the learning atmosphere and media more attractive to students, especially English teachers. Class VII English teachers at SMPN 5 Bengkulu have done quite a good job in preparing their learning media. From the results of an interview with an English teacher, the teacher experienced some difficulties in managing English

learning from the 2013 curriculum to the Merdeka curriculum, so the teacher had to learn more aspects of learning using the Merdeka curriculum.

Based on the background that has explained, the researcher is interested in seeing and knowing in depth how the perspective of the English teacher is in implementing the Merdeka curriculum, so the researcher raises the research title English Teacher's Perspective in Applying the Merdeka Curriculum at SMPN 5 Bengkulu. This research was also carried out by researcher because the Merdeka learning curriculum is a curriculum that must be learned and understood by all educators who are directly involved in the world of education to create a golden generation that has morals, character, intelligence and culture.

## **B. Research Identification**

Based on the background of the problems above, the problems that can be identified are:

1. The emergence of the phenomenon of students experiencing learning loss after the Covid 19 pandemic.

2. Teachers' unpreparedness in utilizing technology as a source and learning media.
3. Declining quality of student learning.
4. There are differences in the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum and the 2013 curriculum.

### **C. Limitation of Research**

In order for this research to have a clear direction and avoid misinterpretation, the scope of the problem needs to be limited. Thus, it is hoped that the problem can be studied in depth to obtain maximum results. In this case the author limits the research to focus only on 2 seventh grade English teachers and 5 seventh grade students as additional data at SMPN 5 Bengkulu.

### **D. Research Question**

The formulation of the problem in this study are:

1. How is the English teacher's perspective in implementing the Merdeka curriculum at SMP Negeri 5 Bengkulu?



2. How is the English teacher's roles to provide learning motivation in the implementing of Merdeka curriculum at SMPN 5 Bengkulu?

### **E. Research Objectives**

The purpose of this research is to describe:

1. To describe the English teacher's perspective in implementing the Merdeka curriculum at SMP 5 Bengkulu.
2. To describe the English teacher's roles to provide learning motivation in the implementing of Merdeka curriculum at SMPN 5 Bengkulu.

### **F. Research Significant**

The benefits of this research are as follows:

1. Theoretical benefits
  - a. Adding insight and knowledge about the teacher's perspective in implementing the Merdeka curriculum, especially in learning English.
  - b. As basic information or guidelines for future research.

## 2. Practical benefits

For teachers and educators as information material and input to improve student learning achievement.

## G. Definition of Key Term

### 1. Teacher's Perspective

The teacher's perspective is the educator's perspective on something problems or phenomena that occur in carrying out the main task in educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, and evaluate students in the learning process.

### 2. Merdeka Curriculum

The Merdeka learning curriculum is one of the curriculum concepts that demands independence for students. Independence in the sense that each learner is given the freedom to access knowledge obtained from formal and non-formal education. This curriculum does not limit the concept of learning that takes place at school or outside of school and also requires creativity for teachers and students.