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# TEACHERS' TEACHING STRATEGIES IN IMPLEMENTING MERDEKA CURRICULUM AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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**ABSTRACT**

*Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intracurricular learning, so that students have enough time to learn concepts and strengthen their abilities. Teachers have the freedom to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be tailored to the learning needs and interests of students. Teachers utilize technology to design more creative and innovative teaching methods. Teachers must have strategies in teaching, such as applying various methods, media and games to develop students' interest in learning English. Creative and innovative teachers are teachers who are able to create various learning activities that are fun and not boring for students and teachers are able to create new learning activities for students. The subjects of this research were English teachers who taught grades one to six. The research method used by researchers is a qualitative method. The data collection techniques are interviews and questionnaires. The aim of this research is to analyze how the teaching strategies used by English teachers are implemented and to evaluate the reasons why teachers use certain English teaching strategies in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at SD Kreatif Khairu Ummah 'Aisyiyah Cilegon. Based on the research results, the teachers used the Project-Based Learning (PJBL) teaching strategy, Inquiry strategy, Problem Based Learning strategy, and Group Learning and Discussion strategy. The reason is, because the Project-Based Learning (PJBL) teaching strategy, Inquiry strategy, Problem Based Learning strategy, and Group Learning and Discussion strategy make students more active in participating in the learning process, students can learn together and share knowledge with each other.*

**Keywords**: *English Teacher, Merdeka Curriculum, Teaching Strategies*

**ABSTRAK**

Kurikulum Merdeka merupakan kurikulum dengan pembelajaran intrakurikuler yang beragam, sehingga siswa memiliki cukup waktu untuk mempelajari konsep dan memantapkan kemampuannya. Guru memiliki kebebasan dalam memilih berbagai perangkat pembelajaran sehingga pembelajaran dapat disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan belajar dan minat siswa. Guru memanfaatkan teknologi untuk merancang metode pembelajaran yang lebih kreatif dan inovatif. Guru harus memiliki strategi dalam mengajar, seperti menerapkan berbagai metode, media dan permainan untuk mengembangkan minat siswa dalam belajar Bahasa Inggris. Guru yang kreatif dan inovatif adalah guru yang mampu menciptakan berbagai kegiatan pembelajaran yang menyenangkan dan tidak membosankan bagi siswa dan guru mampu menciptakan kegiatan pembelajaran yang baru

bagi siswa. Subjek penelitian ini adalah guru Bahasa Inggris yang mengajar kelas satu sampai dengan kelas enam. Metode penelitian yang digunakan peneliti adalah metode kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah wawancara dan angket. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis bagaimana strategi pengajaran yang digunakan guru Bahasa Inggris diimplementasikan dan untuk mengevaluasi alasan mengapa guru menggunakan strategi pengajaran Bahasa Inggris tertentu dalam mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka di SD Kreatif Khairu Ummah 'Aisyiyah Cilegon. Berdasarkan pada hasil penelitian, guru menggunakan strategi mengajar Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek, Strategi Inkuiri, Strategi Pembelajaran Berbasis Masalah, dan Strategi Pembelajaran Kelompok dan Diskusi. Alasannya adalah, karena strategi mengajar Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek, Strategi Inkuiri, Strategi Pembelajaran Berbasis Masalah, dan Strategi Pembelajaran Kelompok dan Diskusi membuat peserta didik lebih aktif dalam mengikuti proses pembelajaran, peserta didik dapat belajar bersama dan saling berbagi ilmu.

**Kata-Kata Kunci**: Guru Bahasa Inggris, Kurikulum Merdeka, Strategi Mengajar

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesian curriculum changes since 1947 until the end of 2022. Curriculum changes and development in Indonesia are considered to determine the future of students in a nation. It is hoped that the curriculum can be implemented well so that a nation can produce a bright future. Curriculum changes and development must receive attention from various things, both the government and educational staff (Amalia & Asyari, 2023). Curriculum changes and development involve the direction and goals of education, as well as the learning experiences obtained by students. The independent curriculum was developed as a more adaptive curriculum framework as part of a learning reform initiative, with a focus on important material and developing students' character and skills (Khoirurrijal et al., 2022). So, the process of implementing the independent curriculum is; with diverse learning, the content will be more optimal so that students have enough time to deepen concepts and strengthen competencies. The independent curriculum gives teachers the freedom to design more creative and innovative teaching methods.

Teachers have strategy in teaching, a strategy in teaching is a lesson plan that includes structure, student behavior, teaching objectives, and an outline of tactics for implementing the strategy (Surayatika, 2022). Teachers must use many strategies in teaching, such as applying various methods, media and games to maintain students' interest in learning English. Teachers can adapt their approach to students' learning styles, teachers must also consider students' needs in the teaching and learning process. With this start, teachers are able to provide a more interesting and relevant learning experience. As a teacher, you not only make the material more meaningful for students but also increase student involvement in the learning process. Teachers can also use various kinds of interesting learning media, and teachers can also use technology as digital resources; such as online learning websites, applications in language learning, and social media platforms. Teachers can provide easier access for students to deepen their understanding of English.

Effective English learning plays an important role in preparing Indonesia's young generation to compete globally. Because in the era of globalization, English language skills are a key asset in communicating effectively at the international level. Implementing an independent curriculum that is integrated with the use of digital media in learning English can help

improve the quality of education in Indonesia. This not only develops students' language skills but also instills a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and global knowledge, preparing them to face future challenges and opportunities. In this research, the researcher will analyze how the teaching strategies used by English teachers are implemented and the reasons why teachers use certain strategies in teaching English in implementing the independent curriculum at SD Kreatif Khairu Ummah 'Aisyiyah Cilegon.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Teacher

Teacher are educators who become figures for students and their environment. Teacher means someone who gives instructions so that others know about an advice (Putri et al., 2019). Teachers must help students to learn something they don't know, and understand the material that students can learn. Therefore, teachers must have certain personal quality standards which include responsibility, authority, independence and discipline. Teachers must understand and act in accordance with values, norms, morals and society. Teacher role also refers to what teachers do in the classroom and teacher identity refers to the way teachers think about themselves and their class (Keiler, 2018). The primary role of a teacher is to deliver classroom instruction that helps students learn. Teachers must prepare effective learning, assess student work and provide feedback, manage class materials and curriculum productively. Elementary school teachers make a big contribution to student development. Teachers are tasked with being positive role models and mentors for their students every day. Because, students not only learn subjects at school, but students learn social skills such as how to be kind to other people and make friends, when to ask for help or be independent, how to differentiate between right and wrong.

### 2. Teaching Strategies

Teaching strategy is a systematic technique or strategy to planning and attaining educational goals that used by the teacher in teaching in the classroom. The teaching strategy is a way or path that must be gone through in the teaching process. Teaching strategies affect the achievement of learning objectives (Bagus et al., 2020). Based on the definition above, teaching strategies are ways in which teachers can teach students more effectively and help them achieve learning outcomes successfully, because if teachers use good and correct teaching strategies, then learning objectives will be achieved. Teachers usually prepare several strategies for teaching in class so that students can understand what the teacher explains in class.

According to Killen 1998 in (Sit, 2017) there are seven teaching strategies; direct instruction, classroom discussion, small group work, cooperative learning, problem solving, student research, and performance activities. According to Wehrli 2003 in (Kuamr, 2022) There are many kinds of teaching strategies that can be applied in teaching process; brainstorming, case-based small-group discussion, demonstration, games, independent study. Based on the understanding above, teachers are role models in the classroom, so teachers must be able to implement effective teaching strategies and inspire students to obtain and understand character education. Teachers can use various teaching strategies based on the students and the learning materials in the classroom to achieve the learning objectives in the classroom.

**3. Merdeka Curriculum**

Merdeka curriculum suggested by Minister of Education Nadiem Makarim during President Joko Widodo's (Istiantika et al., 2023). Merdeka curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intra-curricular learning when the content will be more optimal, so that students' have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competencies (Anwar, 2022). Based on the definition above, merdeka curriculum focuses on student activities and student growth, focuses on important content and flexible learning in the classroom up to the student's development phase, so that students have sufficient time to explore concepts and strengthen competencies. In an independent curriculum, teachers are free to develop learning according to students' needs, teachers can choose creative and innovative teaching methods, media and content. In the independent curriculum, teachers can choose various methods, media, strategies and content in learning, in order to achieve English learning objectives.

## METHOD

The researcher used qualitative research method, qualitative research method is design an interview study using focus groups as your data collection method, in qualitative method can collect rich data with descriptions and examples (Leavy, 2017). In qualitative research is generally appropriate when the purpose is to explore, describe, or explain. The techniques of data collection were interview and questionnaire. Interview is a common data- gathering instrument used by social scientists to expand their understanding of how humans perceive their social worlds and how they act within them (Philipps & Mrowczynski, 2021). Interview technique used by researcher to analyze on how the implementation of teaching strategies used by English teachers. Questionnaire is a data collection tool consisting of a series of questions or items that are used to collect information from respondents, questionnaires are frequently used instrumentally as a standardized and standardizing tool to ask a set of questions to participants (Ranganathan & Caduff, 2024). Questionnaire used by the researcher to evaluate the reasons of teachers using certain strategies for teaching English in implementing Merdeka Curriculum at SD Kreatif Khairu Ummah 'Aisyiyah Cilegon. The researcher analyzed on how the implementation of teaching strategies used by English teacher and the reasons teacher used certain strategies for teaching English in implementing Merdeka Curriculum at SD Kreatif Khairu Ummah 'Aisyiyah Cilegon. In this study, the participants are six English teachers at SD Kreatif Khairu Ummah 'Aisyiyah Cilegon.

## RESULTS

Overall, the interview results complemented the observational data. During the interview to the six English teacher, the teachers explained that the strategies employed in English classrooms are: In the first, third, and sixth grade of English teachers used Project-Based Learning (PJBL) strategy, second grade English teachers used Inquiry strategy, fourth grade English teachers used Problem Based Learning strategy, and fifth grade English teachers used Group learning and Discussion strategy. Based on several reasons from six English teachers used the strategies such as: For teachers who use Project-Based Learning (PJBL) strategy, the reason for using this method is because: 1. The students are given activities where they have to create works, through this activity it can encourage students to show creativity, because to achieve learning goals that are in accordance with students' abilities. 2. The students

are more interested in this strategy than doing assignments and the teacher lecturing in front of them. 3. The project based learning strategy is easy to apply for students. For teacher who used Inquiry strategy, the reason is: because it gives students the opportunity to develop thinking, critical and creative abilities. For teacher who used Problem Based Learning strategy, the reason is because it triggers children to tell stories freely. For teacher who used group learning and discussion, the reason is the students can apply Pancasila values into everyday life not only during learning and trigger students to be active and participate during learning when using group learning strategies.

Based questionnaire results complemented the observational data, on the implement Project-Based Learning (PJBL) strategy in class one, encouraging student communication, finding out appropriate learning techniques, creating a happy atmosphere, triggering student motivation. To implement Project-Based Learning (PJBL) strategy in class three, collaborative learning strategy, children are divided into teams and we give questions and the children discuss, work together as a team to solve the problems. And the project-based strategy is to invite children to go directly into making a product, in this way children are able to apply the knowledge they have. To implement Project-Based Learning (PJBL) strategy in class six, implementing the several strategies such as follow the strategy steps. To implement inquiry strategy in class two, using observation, question and answer, then discussion. To implement Problem Based learning in class four, implementing the story telling and games strategies to the students in the classroom using discussion with students. To implement group learning and discussion in class five, making a learning lesson plan first, as well as carrying out evaluations.

In the process of teaching, the teachers always prepared the teaching modules before their taught English in the classroom. The teacher has a different answer, there are some teachers who use modules from the government, there are teachers who make their own learning modules, and there are also the teachers who make their own teaching modules and use teaching modules from the government. The Teachers use various interesting learning media for students. Each teacher uses different learning media. There are teachers who use learning media such as image media, properties, story books, in focus, visual or audiovisual media, video, and flashcards. Learning in the classroom does not always use textbooks, so that students do not feel bored and fed up when learning English. When learning in class, teachers always use the best methods, strategies and teaching modules for students. Because every teacher definitely wants the best for students.

Several teaching strategies used by teachers, there are several advantages of the teaching strategies used: is that children easily understand the lessons delivered by the teacher in classroom. it is easier for children to grasp the material being taught. is that the strategy of collaborating with games triggers children to want to learn in class and is not boring. The students always want to learn using games. more easily understand the material and can participate actively in learning. Teaching strategies used by teachers, there are has several disadvantages of the teaching strategies used: is that the media required is inadequate. Sometimes there are students who lack focus, it takes quite a long time. There are children who still depend on their friends so they are passive in the learning process. It requires more intensive preparation, longer learning time, difficulty in managing the class because the teacher must be able to monitor and guide all students in their group.

**DISCUSSION**

From the six English teachers answers, can conclude the strategies used by English teacher in the classroom are: project based learning, inquiry, problem based learning, group learning and discussion. First, third, and sixth grade of English teachers used Project-Based Learning (PJBL) strategy, second grade English teachers used Inquiry strategy, fourth grade English teachers used Problem Based Learning strategy, and fifth grade English teachers used Group learning and Discussion strategy.

The researcher will analyze how the teachers implemented of several strategies in teaching English in the classroom. In first grade, English teacher applied the Project Based Learning (PJBL) strategy by encouraging student communication, looking for appropriate learning techniques for students, creating a happy atmosphere for students, and teachers triggering student motivation. In the third grade, English teacher applied the Project Based Learning (PJBL) strategy by providing collaborative learning for students, students are divided into several teams and the teacher asks questions and students discuss to solve problems. The teacher implements the project based learning strategy by inviting students to be directly involved in making a product, in this way students are able to apply the knowledge they have. In sixth grade, English teacher applied the Project Based Learning (PJBL) strategy by implementing the several strategies such as follow the strategy steps. According to (Ismuwardani et al., 2019) Project Based Learning (PJBL) strategy also provide students become creative students because in the learning process will produce a project that has been set at the beginning of lesson.

In second grade, English teacher applied the inquiry strategy by using observation, question and answer, then discussion. According to (Wahyuni Putri et al., 2021), the teacher used six inquiry strategy procedures such as: stimulation, problem statement, data collection, data processing, verification, and generalization. In fourth grade, English teacher applied the Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy by using storytelling and games to the students in the classroom and using discussion with the students. According to (Othman & Shah, 2013) the teacher facilitates the process by putting the students in groups, scheduling presentations and preparing evaluation forms for the students to evaluate themselves and their peers, in addition to teacher evaluation. In fifth grade, English teacher applied the group learning and discussion strategy by making a learning lesson plan first, as well as carrying out evaluations. According to (Rosadi et al., 2020) students can share their knowledge and opinions by completing and discussing exercises.

From the six English teachers answer, can conclude and evaluate English teachers' reasons of using certain strategies for teaching English in implementing Merdeka Curriculum. Based on several reasons for English teachers such as: For teachers who use Project-Based Learning (PJBL) strategy, the reason for using this method is because: 1. The students are given activities where they have to create works, through this activity it can encourage students to show creativity, because to achieve learning goals that are in accordance with students' abilities. 2. The students are more interested in this strategy than doing assignments and the teacher lecturing in front of them. 3. The project based learning strategy is easy to apply for students. According to (Turyati et al., 2020), Project Based Learning (PJBL) can improve the problem-solving skill to the complex problem by involving the students to make observations, to hold discussion, and to create some works to clarify the lesson materials.

For teacher who used Inquiry strategy, the reason is: because it gives students the opportunity to develop thinking, critical and creative abilities. According to (Setiani, 2023), inquiry strategy has been proven to be very effective in improving learning outcomes, critical

thinking skills, and student learning motivation in elementary schools. For teacher who used Problem Based Learning strategy, the reason is because it triggers children to tell stories freely. According to (Ghani et al., 2021), Problem Based Learning is a pedagogical approach that makes use of the principles of collaboration in small group learning, Problem Based Learning use a systematic approach, starting with a real-life problem scenario to make learning integrated with practice as students work together and learn. For teacher who used group learning and discussion, the reason is the students can apply Pancasila values into everyday life not only during learning and trigger students to be active and participate during learning when using group learning strategies. According to (Fadlul et al., 2023), group discussions with the goal of enabling students to solve problems related to the topic as well as problems that they encounter in everyday life.

Based on my evaluation, the teachers reason used the strategies because in teaching and learning in the classroom must use strategies that are appropriate to the student's grade. So, that the students feel comfortable and enthusiastic about learning English in the classroom. The teachers utilized a variety of strategies to fulfil the needs of students with different learning styles. Each learner learns in a unique way, whether visually, auditorily, kinesthetically, or a mix of these. The strategy utilized by teacher varies depending on the learning objectives. Some strategies are more effective at attaining specific goals, such as comprehending fundamental concepts, honing analytical skills, or encouraging critical thinking. A multitude of strategy can help students become more motivated and engaged. Using multiple strategy can make learning more engaging and relevant to pupils, increasing their motivation to study.

## CONCLUSION

The researcher can conclude how the English teacher implementation the teaching strategies used in the classroom. To implement Project-Based Learning (PJBL) strategy: 1. Encouraging student communication, finding out appropriate learning techniques, creating a happy atmosphere, triggering student motivation. 2. Collaborative learning strategy, children are divided into teams and we give questions and the children discuss, work together as a team to solve the problems. The Project-Based Learning (PJBL) strategy is to invite students to go directly into making a product, in this way students are able to apply the knowledge they have. 3. Implementing the several strategies such follow the strategy steps. To implement inquiry strategy in class two, using observation, question and answer, then discussion. To implement Problem Based learning in class four, implementing the story telling and games strategies to the students in the classroom using discussion with students. To implement group learning and discussion in class five, making a learning lesson plan first, as well as carrying out evaluations. Based on my evaluation, the teachers reason used the strategies because in teaching and learning in the classroom must use strategies that are appropriate to the student's grade. The reasons of the teacher those strategies because those strategies made students more actively on follow the learning process, students could learn together and share their knowledge each other.

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