CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter elaborates on the literature to support and strengthen this study's main area. It starts with the curriculum, curriculum in Indonesia, *Merdeka* Curriculum, challenges, and strategies.

A. CURRICULUM

The main topic of this research is the education curriculum. The researcher will discuss a little about the curriculum, starting with the definition of the curriculum and its functions in his sub-chapter,

1) Definition of Curriculum

The word "curriculum" actually derives from the Latin word *curriculae*, which refers to the required running distance. However gradually, the term "curriculum" is being used to refer to the range of courses that students must take in order to graduate. This understanding is in line with Null (2023) opinion that the reason the curriculum is the heart of education is one of them because the curriculum combines thoughts, actions, and goals.

The current curriculum is a learning plan that contains objectives, content, and learning materials that serve as guidelines for the implementation of learning activities to achieve certain educational goals. Every school must use the curriculum in order to achieve learning objectives. According to Government Regulation Number 32 of 2013 concerning National Education Standards, the curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding objectives, content, and learning materials, as well as the methods used as guidelines for implementing learning activities to achieve certain educational goals.

There is also a definition of curriculum according to Armstrong (1989) which states that curriculum is a master plan for choosing content and managing learning experiences for the purpose of changing and developing the behaviour and insights of students. This statement indicates that the curriculum created and regulated by

educators must have the aim of broadening students' knowledge for those who initially do not know. Then, change student behaviour for the better and develop good behaviours. The curriculum is also described by Tyler (1957) as all student learning that is organized and guided by the school to achieve its educational goals. As a result, educational institutions create and implement curriculums that include learning for students to attain educational goals.

The curriculum should be designed by experts or educators in order to educate students and also overcome problems in the field of education. Therefore, the designed curriculum must have goals to be achieved. This is in accordance with the definition of curriculum is a set of academic constructs drawn systematically by experts in their fields to educate students, students, or individuals about problems that arise in certain fields of teaching and learning that are intended to achieve the desired goals (Okon, 2018).

From the several definitions that have been presented, it can be concluded that the curriculum is a design made by educators and used as a reference when teaching that contains objectives, content, and materials related to learning. This understanding is in line with the basic concept of the curriculum, namely that all planned learning is the responsibility of the school (Marsh, 2004).

2) Function of Curriculum

The function of the curriculum is serving as a road map for educators, outlining the content to be discussed, teaching methods to be used, and assessment strategies to evaluate student learning (Rawle, Bowen, Murck, and Hong., 2017). The framework in the curriculum can include materials, strategies, media, or evaluation, and in essence, all learning activities are made within the curriculum framework. It sets clear learning objectives and defines the scope and sequence of topics to be taught.

Curriculum mapping is a useful technique for curriculum planning and implementation. Documenting, realigning, visualizing, and evaluating curriculum data, such as learning objectives, assessment tools, teaching strategies, and student

performance, are all required. (Rawle et al., 2017). The curriculum's coherence, consistency, and alignment with the desired learning goals may be ensured with the use of this mapping. Educators can find gaps, redundancies, and places for improvement in the curriculum. Teachers can spot disciplinary-specific variations in approaches to curriculum design and delivery by mapping out the curriculum. (Rawle et al., 2017).

The success of a curriculum depends on many different things. The curriculum's internal goals, which may include enhancing students' knowledge, attitudes, and abilities, must first be met. When putting the curriculum into practice, it must also adhere to internal environmental standards, such as making the environment interactive for the beneficiaries. The curriculum must also exhibit internal coherence and flexibility and be in line with the objectives, the content, the teaching and learning strategies, and the evaluation strategies. The curriculum's coherence, consistency, and alignment with the desired learning goals may be ensured with the use of this mapping (Torkzadeh and Keshavarzi, 2019). In order to be inclusive, the curriculum must take into account the needs and variety of students, including those with disabilities. (Pugach, Blanton, Mickelson, Boveda., 2019).

Finally, the curriculum's role is to offer a framework for teaching and learning, to lead the educational process, and to guarantee that students acquire the requisite information, skills, and attitudes. A useful technique for curriculum creation and implementation, curriculum mapping promotes coherence, consistency, and alignment. In order for a curriculum to be effective, it must achieve internal goals, satisfy internal environmental conditions, improve students' knowledge, attitudes, and abilities, foster an interactive environment, show internal coherence and flexibility, and take into consideration student variety.

B. CURRICULUM IN INDONESIA

The topic of this research is the education curriculum in Indonesia. The researcher will discuss a little about changes to the existing curriculum in Indonesia, the *Merdeka* Curriculum, the Implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum, and the differences between the *Merdeka* Curriculum and the previous curriculum.

1) Curriculum Changes in Indonesia

Currently, the curriculum in Indonesia has undergone many changes. These changes must have a deficiency in their implementation so that curriculum changes continue to occur and cannot be avoided in order to achieve better goals. There have been several curriculum changes in Indonesia, including in 1947, 1952, 1964, 1968, 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2006, 2013, and *Merdeka* Curriculum (Hikmawati & Hosnan, 2022). The researcher will elaborate a little on the education curriculum in Indonesia from the 1994 period to the 2013 Curriculum.

The 1994 Curriculum is a refinement of the previous curriculum, which is intended to answer social needs in the future so that it requires specific skills as part of the capital to live independently. So that education is directed at the formation of the character of children who have basic abilities and are ready to work with good skills so that they can be used in companies or factories, or more precisely, education aims to produce educated personnel who are prepared to use (Hikmawati & Hosnan, 2022).

The 1994 Curriculum was created as a refinement of the 1984 Curriculum and was implemented by Law No. 2 of 1989 concerning the National Education System. This impacts the lesson time distribution system, namely by changing from a semester system to a quarterly plan. With a quarterly system that is divided in one year into three stages, it is hoped that it will provide an opportunity for students to receive quite a lot of subject matter. Learning in schools emphasizes solid subject matter. The 1994 Curriculum was populist; that is, it imposed one curriculum system for all students throughout Indonesia. This curriculum is a core curriculum so that particular regions can develop their own teaching according to the environment and the surrounding community's needs. The implementation of the 1994 Curriculum, several problems emerged, which prompted policymakers to perfect the curriculum by enacting the 1994 Curriculum Supplement (Hikmawati & Hosnan, 2022).

The 2004 curriculum, also known as the Competency-Based Curriculum or abbreviated as KBK, is a curriculum concept that emphasizes the development and mastery of competencies for students through various activities and experiences in accordance with national education standards so that the results can be felt by students, parents, and society. Good for continuing higher education, entering the world of work, and socializing with society. A competency-based education program must contain three main elements, namely: selection of appropriate competencies; specification of evaluation indicators to determine the success of competency achievement; and learning development (Sanjaya, 2005).

KBK has the following characteristics: Emphasizes the achievement of student competencies both individually and classically, oriented towards learning outcomes (learning outcomes) and diversity. Learning activities use a variety of approaches and methods, and learning resources but also other learning resources that fulfill educative elements. Assessment emphasizes the process and learning outcomes to master or achieve a competency. The KBK basic competency structure is detailed in aspect, class, and semester components skills and knowledge in each subject, arranged and divided according to the elements of the issue. Statements of learning outcomes are set for each aspect of the lesson cluster at each level. The formulation of learning outcomes is to answer the question, "What should students know and be able to do as a result of their learning at this level?". Learning outcomes reflect the curriculum's breadth, depth, and complexity expressed in verbs that can be measured with various assessment techniques. Each learning outcome has a set of indicators. The formulation of indicators is to answer the question, "How do we know that students have achieved the expected learning outcomes?" (Hikmawati & Hosnan, 2022).

The implementation of KBK is still in limited testing, but in early 2006, the limited testing was discontinued. And then with the issuance of ministerial decree number 24 of 2006 which regulates the implementation of ministerial regulation number 22 of 2006 concerning curriculum content standards and ministerial regulation number 23 of 2006 concerning graduation standards, the 2006

curriculum was born which is basically the same as the 2004 curriculum. The difference that stands out lies in the authority in its preparation, which refers to the spirit of the decentralization of the education system (Hikmawati & Hosnan, 2022).

In the 2006 curriculum, the central government sets competency standards and essential competencies, while schools, in this case, teachers are required to be able to develop syllabus and assessments in accordance with the conditions of the school and the region. The results of the development of all subjects are compiled into a device called the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP). In the National Educator Standards (SNP Article 11, paragraph 15), it is stated that the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) is an operational curriculum that is prepared and implemented by each educational unit. The preparation of KTSP is the responsibility of schools under the guidance and monitoring of regional and regional education offices by taking into account and based on competency standards and basic competencies developed by the National Education Standards Agency (BNSP) (Asri, 2017).

The government is mapping a competency-based curriculum that was tried out in 2004 (competence-based curriculum). Competence is used as a reference and guideline for the implementation of education to develop various educational domains, knowledge, skills, and attitudes at all levels and educational pathways, particularly in the school education pathway (Alhamuddin, 2014).

The 2013 competency-based curriculum focuses on acquiring specific competencies by students. Therefore, this curriculum includes a number of competencies and a set of learning objectives that are stated in such a way that their achievement can be observed in the form of students' behaviour or skills as a criterion of success. Learning activities need to be directed to help students master at least a minimum level of competence so that they can achieve the goals that have been set. In accordance with the concept of complete learning and talent development. Each student must be given the opportunity to achieve goals according to their abilities and learning speed.

The main theme of the 2013 curriculum is to produce Indonesian people who are productive, creative, innovative, and effective through integrated observation of attitudes, skills, and knowledge. To realize this, in implementing the curriculum, teachers are required to professionally design effective and meaningful learning, organize learning, choose the right learning approach, determine learning procedures and develop competencies effectively, and set criteria for success (Hikmawati & Hosnan, 2022).

The curriculum is not merely changed. However, the curriculum needs to be changed because there are several factors that require the curriculum to change. Pajarwati, Mardiah, Harapah, Siagian, and Ihsan (2021) mention several factors, such as changes in societal demands, new understandings of the teaching-learning process, political challenges, and developments in business and technology. Some of these factors affect change, including the most influential factor, namely technological developments. Technology continues to develop as well as education, therefore the curriculum will continue to experience changes to keep up with the times and technology that is increasingly rapid.

The curriculum is always being improved and updated. This is affected by a number of causes, one of which is the need to keep up with the rapid advancements in science and technology, which have a significant impact on the area of education. Now that technology has improved, several nations are engaged in international competition. In order for Indonesian students to compete with students from other nations in the future, a curriculum that aims to educate the country's youth must constantly adapt to the times.

Thus, curricular revisions are aided by shifting social needs, new understandings of the teaching-learning process, political problems, and advancements in business and technology. As more nations compete worldwide, technological developments are also driving curricular modifications. As a result, the curriculum has evolved to educate the nation's youth so that it can compete worldwide with other countries.

2) *Merdeka* **Curriculum**

Every nation on earth has been stunned by the COVID-19 epidemic. All citizens of the pandemic-affected nation must stay inside until an unspecified period. Many employees and students must complete their work from home. The school system has also been impacted by the COVID-19 epidemic, particularly in Indonesia.

The altering curriculum is what has had an impact on education in Indonesia as a result of the epidemic. Implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum as prototype curriculum, is one way to fulfill the educational rights of Indonesian residents, particularly school children, under the COVID-19 pandemic situation (Hadi, Marniati, Ngindana, Kurdi, and Kurdi 2023). Implementing a prototype is hard and takes considerable planning, especially for teachers. It is not a straightforward process. This is so because the curriculum was created with the students' health and safety in mind.

The most recent curriculum to be used in Indonesian schools is the *Merdeka* Curriculum. The *Merdeka* Curriculum allows instructors the opportunity to present urgent and important content while allowing schools the ability to explore their faculties in accordance with the methods, input, and resources available. The *Merdeka* Curriculum also offers students a large and open area to further optimize their ability in order to achieve the best possible educational outcomes, which is the most crucial factor.

The *Merdeka* Curriculum includes a range of intra-clical learning activities where the material will be ideal so that students have enough time to explore ideas and build competency. In order to tailor instruction to students' skills, learning requirements, and interests, teachers can pick from a variety of teaching instruments. (Kemedikbud).

The *Merdeka* Curriculum is presented as a learning recovery option designed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kememdikbudristek). The Merdeka to Learn development policy option is given to educational units as an additional effort to carry out learning crisis recovery

during 2022–2024 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Hadi et al., 2023). The Ministry of Education and Culture's policy regarding the National Curriculum will be reviewed in 2024 based on an evaluation during the learning recovery period, referring to conditions where the COVID-19 pandemic has created significant obstacles and impacts on the Company's learning process in education units (Ariga, 2022; Nugraha, 2022).

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, in an effort to support Indonesia's educational vision and as a learning effort, the Merdeka curriculum or previously known as the prototype curriculum was developed as a flexible curriculum framework while also focusing on essential material and developing the character and competence of students. There are also main characteristics of the *Merdeka* Curriculum that support learning recovery, including:

1) Focus on essential material so that learning is more in-depth.

2) More time for competency and character development through group study around real contexts (Pancasila Student Profile Improvement Project).

3) Learning outcomes per phase and flexible lesson hours encourage learning that is fun and relevant to the needs of students and the conditions of the educational unit.

4) Provide flexibility for educators and support for teaching materials and training materials to develop educational unit curricula and implement quality learning.

5) Prioritizing mutual cooperation with all parties to support the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum.

Teachers such as *Merdeka* learning facilitators, creative and innovative instructors, characteristic teachers, and Penggerak teachers play a part in the learning process. (Iqbal, Winanda, Sagala, Hasibuan, and Wirahayu., 2023). The *Merdeka* learning policy's implementation promotes the teacher's involvement in curriculum creation and learning. The teacher is a learning facilitator in the

Merdeka Curriculum, supported by professional, pedagogical, personality, and social competencies. These skills will enable the teacher to carry out the goals of implementing the *Merdeka* learning policy (Iqbal et al., 2023).

Implementing learning innovations to fulfill students' requirements and create an enjoyable learning environment is one of the teacher's responsibilities. Students should be able to think independently, innovate independently, learn independently and creatively, and learn independently for happiness with the support of learning innovation (Iqbal et al., 2023). The contribution of innovative and creative teachers in implementing *Merdeka* learning may be recognized in the design of learning programs, particularly in the use of applied learning methodologies. As an innovative teacher, the teacher is responsible for assisting students in learning and behaving in new and diverse ways. This implies that instructors must have the necessary knowledge, abilities, and values. Furthermore, teachers must know the most recent learning techniques, strategies, and media. Teachers additionally are adept at using technology to promote learning.

The Ministry of Education and Culture launched an Activator teacher program due to the *Merdeka* to Learn policy. Through student-centred learning, the objective is to increase teacher competency. The *Penggerak* teacher performs their responsibilities as a facilitator of teaching practice for teachers, as an instructor and facilitator of leadership for students, and as a facilitator of the learning community for teachers in the school or region. They also engage in discussions and collaborations with other teachers and various parties to enhance the quality of learning as a leader that facilitates the benefits of the educational community (Iqbal et al., 2023).

It can be concluded that the *Merdeka* Curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intracurricular learning where the content will be more optimal so that students have enough time to deepen concepts and strengthen competencies. Teachers have the freedom to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be tailored to the learning needs and interests of students.

The *Merdeka* Curriculum gives educators the freedom to create quality learning that suits students' needs and learning environment. There are also characteristics of the *Merdeka* Curriculum including, soft Skills and character development, focus on essential material and flexible learning.

Projects to strengthen the achievement of *Pancasila* student profiles are developed based on certain themes determined by the government. The project is not directed at achieving specific learning achievement targets, so it is not tied to subject content.

3) Implementation of *Merdeka* Curriculum

Curriculum implementation is the action or implementation of a plan that has been prepared in a mature and detailed manner. (Barlian, Solekah and Rahayu., 2022). To ensure that the curriculum is adequately communicated, implementation of the curriculum requires an intermediate. The teacher is the one who provides the curriculum. In order to encourage student development and advancement contend the teacher must be at the center of offering a consistent, effective, and efficient curriculum. Likewise, with Indonesia's introduction of the *Merdeka* Curriculum.

The implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum seeks to restore learning in order to realize the transformation of education in Indonesia in a better direction. For educational units that will implement the *Merdeka* Curriculum, they can choose one of the three levels of options. Following are the levels of options, from beginner to advanced level:

a) *Mandiri Belajar*

The education unit develops its curriculum using the 2013 Curriculum Structure and incorporates various the *Merdeka* Curriculum tenets when putting learning and assessment into practice.

b) Mandiri Berubah

The Education Unit uses the *Merdeka* Curriculum structure in developing its education unit curriculum and applies the principles of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in implementing learning and assessment.

c) Mandiri Berbagi

The Education Unit uses the *Merdeka* Curriculum Structure in developing its education unit curriculum and applies the principles of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in carrying out learning and assessment, with a commitment to sharing its good practices with other education units. The following is the recommended level for implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum with the *Merdeka* Curriculum and *Merdeka* Sharing options:

a) For educational units in the first year of implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum, it can start in class I, class IV, class VII, or class X.
b) For educational units in the second year of implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum, they can continue in class I, class II, class IV, class V, class VII, class VIII, class X, or class XI.

However, for schools that are not ready to implement the *Merdeka* Curriculum there are still other options, namely continuing to use the 2013 Curriculum, or continuing with the Emergency Curriculum until an evaluation of the learning recovery curriculum is carried out in 2024 (Kemendikbud).

Then, the Ministry of Education and Culture provides six supports in implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum for education units: the *Merdeka Mengajar* Platform, Learning Community, Resource Persons Sharing Good Practices, Webinar Series, Development Partners, and Assistance Service Centres.

First, the *Merdeka Mengajar* platform provides a variety of training topics about the Merdeka curriculum to various teaching tools Guidelines et al. as well as other

learning resources that can be accessed independently or in groups anytime and anywhere.

Second, the Learning Community can facilitate the process of reflection, learning, and sharing in learning and implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum. Educators at the Education Unit level, Regional Level and Online Community can form learning communities jointly.

Third, resource persons share good practices (recommendations from the centre). The resource persons come from educators who have implemented the *Merdeka* Curriculum and have been selected. Resource persons sharing good practices can be contacted via the *Merdeka Mengajar* platform.

Then, a webinar series (from Central and Regional) organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture and Technical Implementation Units in the regions on the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum to share good practices and the latest information for teachers, heads of education units, and elements of education stakeholders.

There are also development partners, such as organizations/institutions/business world/industry, that independently and voluntarily support community learning processes at the regional level and educational unit level.

Finally, namely the assistance service centre, (Helpdesk), educators, and heads of education units can submit questions and confirm understanding through the assistance service centre.

The conclusion is that there are three options for implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum Independently, including *Mandiri Belajar, Mandiri Berubah, and Mandir Berbagi.* Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Culture provides six supports in implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum for education units: the *Merdeka Mengajar* Platform, Learning Community, Resource Persons Sharing Good Practices, Webinar Series, Development Partners, and Assistance Service Centres.

4) The Differences Between the *Merdeka* Curriculum and the Previous Curriculum

The curriculum is always changing, and the change is intended so that the curriculum can adapt to the times in order to create intelligent human beings. The curriculum usually changes according to the needs of the time. Same thing with the current curriculum. The *Merdeka* Curriculum has been upgraded according to the times. Changes to the curriculum must have differences or similarities with the previous curriculum.

The *Merdeka* Curriculum changes policies regarding local content. In a *Merdeka* Curriculum, local content can be taught in three ways: by integrating local content into existing subjects, integrating local content into projects to strengthen Pancasila student profiles, or developing special local content subjects such as the 2013 curriculum. This option is given to educational units. or local governments in order to consider the needs of students. The operational curriculum development policy for this educational unit has been designed in the 2006 curriculum, known as the education unit level curriculum (KTSP). The operational curriculum policy in the *Merdeka* Curriculum is a continuation of the existing policies (Irawati, et.al 2022).

The *Merdeka* Curriculum is different from the 2013 curriculum. In the 2013 Curriculum there is a regulation on the number of hours of lessons per week, while the *Merdeka* Curriculum sets a target of accumulated study hours in one year. This can provide flexibility for educational units to arrange a more flexible schedule of learning activities (Irawati, et.al 2022). There are also differences between the 2013 curriculum and the *Merdeka* Curriculum in terms of the basic framework, intended competencies, curriculum structure, learning, assessment, teaching tools provided by the government, and curriculum tools. The following is a comparison table between the *Merdeka* Curriculum and the 2013 curriculum.

Table 2.1 Comparison between the *Merdeka* Curriculum and the 2013 Curriculum

	Merdeka Curriculum	2013 Curriculum
Basic framework	The main design basis for the *Merdeka* Curriculum is the objectives of the National Education System and national education standards. Developing *Pancasila* student profiles for students.	The main design basis for the 2013 Curriculum is the objectives of the National Education System and national education standards.
Target competency	Learning Outcomes are arranged per phase. Learning Outcomes are stated in paragraphs that frame knowledge, attitudes, and skills to achieve, strengthen, and improve competence. Phase division: - PAUD: 1 phase, namely the Foundation Phase - Elementary school/equivalent: Phases A, B, and C - Middle school/equivalent: Phase D - - High school/equivalent: Phases E and F.	To achieve Content Standards, the Government provides scope and sequence in the form of Basic Competences (KD), which are grouped into four Core Competencies (KI): Spiritual Attitudes, Social Attitudes, Knowledge, and Skills. KD is expressed as points sorted to achieve KI which is organized annually. KD on KI 1 and KI 2 is only found in the subjects of Religious and Moral Education and *Pancasila* and Citizenship Education. KD-KD in special education is made according to class by referring to regular education

| | | Students with special needs without intellectual barriers can use the KDs that are the same as regular education by applying the principle of curriculum modification.

Students with special needs with intellectual barriers can use KD-KD in the Decree of Director General of General Affairs No 10/D/KR/2017 |
|---|---|---|
| **Curriculum structure** | Class Hours (JP) are set annually. Education units can flexibly manage the allocation of learning time to achieve the set JP.

Education units can use a subject-based, thematic, or integrated approach to organizing learning. (New subject matter according to level) | Class Hours (JP) are set annually. Education units can flexibly manage the allocation of learning time to achieve the set JP.

Education units can use a subject-based, thematic, or integrated approach to organizing learning. (New subject matter according to level) |
| **Learning** | Strengthen differentiated learning according to the stage of student achievement.

A combination of intra-curricular learning (about 70-80% of lesson hours) and co-curricular through a project to strengthen the Pancasila lesson profile (about 20-30% of lesson hours). | The learning approach uses one approach, namely a scientific approach for all subjects.

In general, learning is focused only on intra-curricular (face-to-face), for co-curricular, a maximum learning load of 50% is allocated outside of face-to-face hours, but it is not required in the form of specially planned activities so that it is generally left to the |

		creativity of the supporting teacher.
Evaluation	Strengthening the formative assessment and using the assessment results according to the stage of student achievement. Strengthen the implementation of authentic assessments, especially in projects, to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. There is no separation between the assessment of attitudes, knowledge, and skills.	Formative and summative assessments by educators monitor learning progress, monitor learning outcomes, and detect the need to improve student learning outcomes on an ongoing basis. Strengthen the implementation of authentic assessments in each subject. Assessment is divided into attitudes, knowledge, and skills assessment.
Government-provided teaching aids	Textbooks and non-textbooks Examples of teaching modules, flow of learning objectives, examples of projects to strengthen Pancasila student profiles, and examples of educational unit operational curricula.	Textbooks and non-textbooks
Curriculum tools	Guide to Learning and Assessment, guide to the development of the school operational curriculum, and guide to developing projects to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. For special education, there is also a teacher's guide in selecting and developing appropriate materials, media, and	Curriculum implementation guidelines, Assessment Guidelines, and Learning Guidelines for each level.

	learning methods. Assessment and Learning Guidelines, guidelines for developing school operational curricula, guidelines for implementing inclusive education, guidelines for preparing Individual Learning Programs.	

The conclusion is there are differences between the 2013 curriculum and the *Merdeka* Curriculum in terms of the basic framework, intended competencies, curriculum structure, learning, assessment, teaching tools provided by the government, and curriculum tools.

C. CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH

This sub-chapter will discuss the challenges faced by teachers when teaching, especially in English subjects. This is in accordance with the title of this research, namely, exploring the challenges faced by teachers when teaching.

1) Challenge in Teaching

Teaching is not an easy thing to do. As a teacher, they will definitely find challenges when teaching. Teaching challenges can vary depending on the context and subject taught. However, there are general challenges that teachers usually experience, such as the challenge of adapting to changes in the curriculum and educational standards (Pakpahan & Prima, 2023). The curriculum is constantly changing to fit the demands of the students and educational standards. Thus, in order to comply with new criteria, teachers need to stay up to date on recent curricular revisions and modify their pedagogical approaches.

The next challenge is maintaining student engagement and motivation (Pakpahan & Prima, 2023). Motivation is an important thing in teaching and learning activities because, with learning motivation, students can participate in

learning activities well and can absorb knowledge well too. Therefore, this is one of the challenges experienced by a teacher because the teacher must create interesting learning systems and materials so that students remain motivated and focused on their learning goals.

Apart from that, there is also another challenge, namely integrating technology effectively (Velle, 2020). Technology has transformed education, offering unprecedented learning opportunities. However, integrating digital tools and online resources into the classroom can be difficult, and teachers must be adept at leveraging technology to engage and empower students while ensuring responsible and ethical use of technology.

In conclusion, there are several common challenges faced by teachers when teaching. These challenges, among others, include adapting to changes in curriculum and educational standards, maintaining student involvement and motivation, and integrating technology effectively.

2) Challenge in Teaching English

English is one of the most important subjects to learn. English proficiency is required not only for academic purposes but also for everyday life. Relations between nations are currently intensifying in the era of globalization. English proficiency is required, as communication with each other is very important.

English is now a compulsory subject to be taught in schools. Indonesia is a country that requires English as a subject in schools. Teaching English as a foreign language is also known as TEFL. Students learn English as a second or foreign language at school. Teaching English as a foreign language is more complicated than teaching English as a second language because English rarely uses in Indonesia (Pertiwi et al., 2020). As a result of their inability to understand instructions because they do not speak English fluently, students sometimes feel lazy and unmotivated to learn English. This becomes a challenge for teachers when teaching English in class.

Teaching English in Indonesia is not always a simple process. English teachers in Indonesia often experience difficulties when teaching English. According to (Copland, Garton, and Burns., 2014), there are three general obstacles faced by English teachers in teaching English, which are as follows: a) teacher skills; b) classroom management; and c) government policies and curricula.

The first difficulty is the ability of the teacher. There are still some teachers who are inexperienced and lack confidence when teaching English. This inexperienced teacher was discovered when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred which required students to study from home and required online learning. Because of this online learning, there are still many teachers who have difficulty adjusting learning because they are unfamiliar with technology.

Second, Classroom management is an activity for a teacher to grow and maintain an effective class organization, namely setting class goals, setting time, selecting equipment rooms, and grouping students. However, classroom management is more challenging than imagined. Teachers often find students in noisy classes, teachers with difficulty mastering subject matter, inappropriate strategies and methods, more class capacity, etc.

Government policy and curriculum are one of the challenges for teachers, as it is well known that the curriculum is constantly changing with the times. Therefore, the government in one country needs to improve or replace the curriculum so that students can compete globally. However, these changes are not always easy to do. For teachers, this becomes a difficulty because they have to adapt to the new curriculum, change learning styles according to the new curriculum, apply lesson plans according to the new curriculum, etc.

According to the results of research conducted by Utomo, Kusakabe, Sultoni, and Setyowati (2020) there are several challenges faced by teachers in teaching English in the classroom. These challenges come from various factors which not only come from teachers but are also influenced by students, schools, and parents.

Challenges arose from the teacher's side such as; they were lack of teaching material, teaching design, classroom management, ICT skill, many teaching administration, job loaded, and memory decrease. Also, they are still difficult to adjust to the curriculum changes. Teachers seemed not ready to apply nowadays curriculum because they did not receive enough training.

Challenges came from the student's perspective; the teacher found decreased student interest in studying English, fewer vocabulary terms, and juvenile delinquencies. Because they did not receive an English lesson while attending primary school, the results may have been influenced by their prior experiences. Furthermore, because English was not their first language, they perceived English to be extremely challenging.

While on the school condition, many schools lacked enough media and infrastructure to assist the lesson, such as a suitable dictionary, projector, and language laboratory. These resources were essential in assisting students and teachers in their English language acquisition.

In result of research Lestiyanawati (2020) about the problem faced by teacher in conducting e-learning during COVID-19. The first problem is the inability of teachers to access technology. Teachers who have difficulty accessing technology are old teachers. They choose not to use technology for learning activities because of difficulties in accessing technology.

Second, the school facilities. The interviews' findings indicate that the majority of teachers and students have free internet access from the school. However, some of them must individually control their internet allowance.

Third, the online method had an influence on how challenging it was to convey the materials. It was challenging for teachers to ensure that students understood the materials they were being taught online. We could use chemistry, physics, and other numerical topics as examples since they were difficult for students to understand and comprehend.

In Indonesia, there are some students who start learning English at a young age. English lessons are taught when children enter kindergarten or elementary school. Learning English for young children is not easy.

In result of research conducted by Pertiwi et al., (2020), shows that the first difficulty in teaching children is managing the class. Because children have different characteristics, teachers have difficulty managing when children start making noise in class. Second, children have different characteristics, and the teacher has difficulties focusing on some students. There are children who are difficult to adapt to, and there are also children who are hyperactive.

In conclusion, in teaching activities, teachers face various challenges, especially in teaching English. There are several common challenges that are usually faced by a teacher, including adapting to changes in curriculum and educational standards, maintaining student involvement and motivation, and integrating technology effectively. In addition, there are also challenges faced by a teacher when teaching English, including the ability of the teacher, classroom management, government policy and curriculum, lack of teaching material, teaching design, ICT skills, many teaching administrations, job load, memory decrease, student interest in studying English, vocabulary terms, juvenile delinquency, and a lack of media and infrastructure to assist the lesson.

D. STRATEGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH

This section discusses strategies in teaching, especially strategies in teaching English. Teachers who experience problems when teaching in class often use this strategy to overcome these problems.

1) Teaching Strategies

A teacher is responsible for educating his students in one class. Teachers must ensure that each student gets an effective and optimal learning process. Therefore, in order for teachers to be able to handle student learning in class, they need to use teaching strategies to achieve the desired learning objectives.

An approach, plan, or sequence that is explicitly organized and incorporates a number of actions created in order to accomplish educational objectives is referred to as a strategy (Oktafiani, 2022). From this understanding of the strategy, it is stated that the strategy is designed to make the learning process more active through teaching and learning activities.

There is also an understanding of various teaching strategies, such as learning strategies, plans of action, or classroom interactions, all of which are meant to accomplish certain teaching or learning goals (Ayua, 2017). The learning strategy becomes one of the positive behaviors that can achieve effective learning and teaching.

From some of the meanings above, it can be concluded that a teaching strategy is a technique, method, or plan that aims to make learning and teaching activities successful and effective. This teaching strategy is implemented by the teacher so that students in class become more active and learning objectives are achieved.

2) Strategies in Teaching English

As previously explained about the definition of strategies in teaching, this section will discuss strategies in teaching English. Moreover, English is a foreign language taught in Indonesia. Therefore, teachers need to implement strategies so that students are active and able to improve their English skills. In teaching and learning activities, the teacher must use interesting strategies and media so that students are active in activities while studying.

There are four English skills that students need to master: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. English in Indonesia itself is a foreign language, and the teaching and learning process is not easy, even though some students learned English when they were in kindergarten (Endarto dan Subekti 2020).

In order to master English, students must at least acquire as much English vocabulary as possible. Because vocabulary is the most basic thing in mastering English (Widiawitasari, Simamora, and Oktaviani, 2020). In learning English,

students also need to practice listening skills because listening skills go hand in hand with learning vocabulary.

Interesting listening activities will be one of the best choices for learning vocabulary because they can provide interesting activities with the opportunity to acquire new vocabulary and also get used to recognizing the spoken forms of the words being studied (Widiawitasari et al., 2020). This listening activity can be assisted with media in the form of music, films, or short stories from YouTube. Therefore, interesting listening activities can be a learning strategy that is considered capable of increasing students' understanding of English vocabulary.

There are other strategies that involve games or can be called game-based learning strategies. Game-Based Learning involving the games in the educational process, aiming to enhance learning activities (Trajkovik, Malinovski, Vasileva-Stojanovska, & Vasileva, 2018). The game-based learning strategy itself is a kind of instructional activity that incorporates games into teaching to help achieve educational goals (Zhang, 2018). By involving play, teachers can help and teach students in fun, meaningful, and purposeful ways.

According to White and McCoy (2019), most game-based learning strategies fit into the educational curriculum because students work towards a goal, choose appropriate learning activities, and get results from learning actions. This will create an active learning environment where students can practice and learn effectively.

Students may develop their language abilities in a pleasant and entertaining way by playing games. Kostikova et al. (2021) discovered that game-based instruction in English classrooms with university students may successfully build soft skills. The study found that gaming activities can help kids develop soft skills including cooperation, problem solving, and communication.

Teaching English using games may be beneficial in online learning environments in addition to increasing motivation and fostering soft skills. In order to encourage students, Suputra (2021) underlines the significance of applying suitable and alluring tactics when offering online English classes. Online platforms

may be modified to play games, which offer dynamic and captivating activities that encourage participation and learning.

Another strategy that teachers can use is project-based learning. Project Based Learning is a model based on the constructivist approach that involves students in learning materials through a self-regulating inquiry process. The project-based learning can increase students' motivation to learn. Through this project-based learning, students are required to be active since the students have to choose topics, search for information, form concepts, and develop ideas to present the project until they evaluate and reflect on their work by themselves.

As in the results of research conducted by Susanti & Trisusana (2017) regarding project-based learning that influences the motivation of vocational school students, this study shows that project-based learning can increase students' motivation to learn English. Students become excited to learn English because they want to get decent jobs by learning English.

Another strategy used in teaching English is technology-based learning. Current developments have an influence on the field of education by using technology in learning activities. Technology has always played a significant role in the teaching and learning process. It is a crucial component of teaching, and teachers may utilize it to aid students' learning through it (Yasseen Shukr & Adnan Jameel, 2022). Technology has many advantages in the world of education, including the ease of access to materials, the stimulation of students' communication skills, the extension of students' knowledge gained from advanced pedagogical cultures, the increase of teaching effect, the expansion of interaction between teachers and students, the creation of a context for language teaching, and the provision of flexibility in course content (Yasseen Shukr & Adnan Jameel, 2022).

A teacher's role is to ensure effective and optimal learning for their students. To achieve these objectives, they use teaching strategies, which are organized approaches that incorporate actions to achieve educational goals. These strategies, such as learning strategies, plans of action, and classroom interactions, aim to make

the learning process more active and successful. By implementing these strategies, teachers can make students more active and help them achieve their learning objectives. Strategies such as game-based learning, project-based learning, and technology-based learning can be used to overcome problems that occur when teaching in class.