

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The chapter reveals the background of the study, the research question, the purposes of the research, the significance of the research, the research scope, the research framework, and previous studies.

A. Research Background

This study aims to find out novice teachers' perception of applying classroom management in their English for Young Learners class. English teachers in Indonesia use the Merdeka curriculum (*kurikulum Merdeka*) as the basis for the English language learning system. Zidan and Qomariah (2023) state that the Indonesian education system has substantially transitioned towards a more progressive and student-centered approach by introducing the Merdeka curriculum. Teachers starting their careers, usually in their first few years of teaching, are known as novice teachers (Sözen, 2018). In addition, novice teachers often have to introduce a Merdeka curriculum into their classrooms. This study also focuses on how novice teachers employ classroom management because they have little experience with the Merdeka curriculum. This occurs because their lecturers are their primary source of information; they have never been trained in or given practice using the Merdeka curriculum (*curriculum Merdeka*).

Classroom management is a skill English teachers require to create an efficient and effective English language learning environment. It supports the development of students' English skills in the learning process. Slavin (2009) states that classroom management is a method to effectively organize classroom activities, teaching, physical structure, and other things. Classroom management aims to create a productive and enjoyable learning environment and reduce behavioral problems and distractions. Apart from that, Classroom management can also affect student achievement if it is adequately implemented in the classroom (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). Furthermore, various aspects, including the classroom's physical arrangement, student behavior management, communication, and interactions between teachers and students, are also covered in classroom management.

Meanwhile, strategy in teaching is an important thing that the teacher must consider to achieve the learning objectives. It also includes how teachers can plan to achieve the learning objectives mentioned earlier. Moreover, teachers must consider developing learning strategy areas that target students and resources that will apply to the learning strategy. In addition, strategies are also related to strategic classroom management strategies for achieving learning objectives. Based on Attabi (2022), effective classroom management can create a good learning environment for teachers and students. The learning environment will emerge when the teacher has prepared a good classroom management strategy.

English for Young Learners or EYL refers to early childhood or primary school-age children learning English. They learn through games, fun activities, and activities that suit their active and playful nature. Young learners are often more enthusiastic and energetic than adults and are often less shy when speaking a new language. As explained earlier about the characteristics of young learners, teaching English to young learners also has many challenges in adapting the learning to their characteristics (Putra et al., 2022). Nevertheless, teachers must have many varied teaching methods and ways so that young learners are not quickly bored in learning English.

However, the difficulty of classroom management for young learners in English has many challenging aspects. It includes the challenges of student characteristics, different ability levels, appropriate learning methods, learning activities, and the classroom's physical organization, which is very complicated. Teachers must find effective classroom management due to the difficulty of managing classrooms for young learners. Simanjuntak (2020) states that effective classroom management can help teachers plan activities, maintain student discipline, and provide clear instructions for learning activities. This is especially important for young learners with short attention spans and fluctuating energy levels in learning.

Additionally, preliminary observation was conducted as supporting material to collect primary data and information to prepare a more comprehensive research project. This initial observation aims to facilitate the researcher in exploring and

clarifying the problem to be studied and discover the reasons for, benefits of, and implementation of the research. The preliminary observation was conducted by a researcher at the school, taught by the teachers who became participants, namely at SDN Cijati 01 and SDN 262 Panyileukan. Based on preliminary observation, the researcher found the problem that teachers are challenging to manage students in class because of EYL's diverse characters.

Several studies are relevant to this research. The first is research by Putra, Putri & Haqiqi, who investigate classroom management in EFL for young learners. This research focuses on the English level of students, particularly young learners, in strategic aspects and challenges. However, the research gap between this study and the current research is different in the focus of the research because the researcher only focuses on classroom management strategies. Soraya et al. conducted the second relevant study in 2022 that investigated classroom management. This research focuses on implementing effective teaching strategies for young learners in the classroom. Also, a difference between this study and the current research is in the instrument part, which uses a questionnaire. In contrast, the current research does not use a questionnaire instrument; it only uses interviews and observation.

B. Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research problems are formulated as follows:

1. What classroom management strategies are applied by novice teachers in the EYL class in the differentiated curriculum (curriculum *Merdeka*)?
2. What are the novice teachers' perceptions of the EYL classroom management strategies in the differentiated curriculum (curriculum *Merdeka*) they practiced?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the background of the research above, the study is intended to:

1. To find out classroom management strategies applied by novice teachers in the EYL class in the differentiated curriculum (curriculum *Merdeka*)
2. To find out the novice teachers' perceptions of the EYL classroom management strategies in the differentiated curriculum (curriculum *Merdeka*), they practiced

D. Research Significances

1. Theoretical Significances

This research has theoretical significance in filling the literature in the context of classroom management for young learners of English. By exploring teachers' perspectives, this research is expected to detail and investigate theoretical aspects of teacher and student interactions during English learning, classroom management strategies, and effective teaching methods for young learners. Apart from that, the results of this research is expected to be useful for:

- a) Teachers must apply classroom management strategies properly in English Young Learners classes to help students gain knowledge and comprehension.
- b) Future researchers, to be helpful for future researchers as a reference or insight about classroom management in EYL classes.

2. Practical Significances

In this study, the researcher focused on research and analysis of strategies used in classroom management in English for young learners class, so hopefully, this research would be beneficial for several groups in English learning, including:

- a) It is hoped that it can be used for teacher reflection on whether classroom management is effective in the taught class.
- b) Teacher educators should practice classroom management more so that teachers are accustomed to managing classes with many variations.

E. Research Scope

This study discusses novice teachers' perception of classroom management strategies they practice in English for young learners. This study focuses on knowing the classroom management strategy in the differentiated curriculum

(curriculum *Merdeka*). The students' level in this research is English for Young Learners (EYL). Second-grade students and English teachers are chosen as the limited number of participants for this study.

F. Conceptual Framework

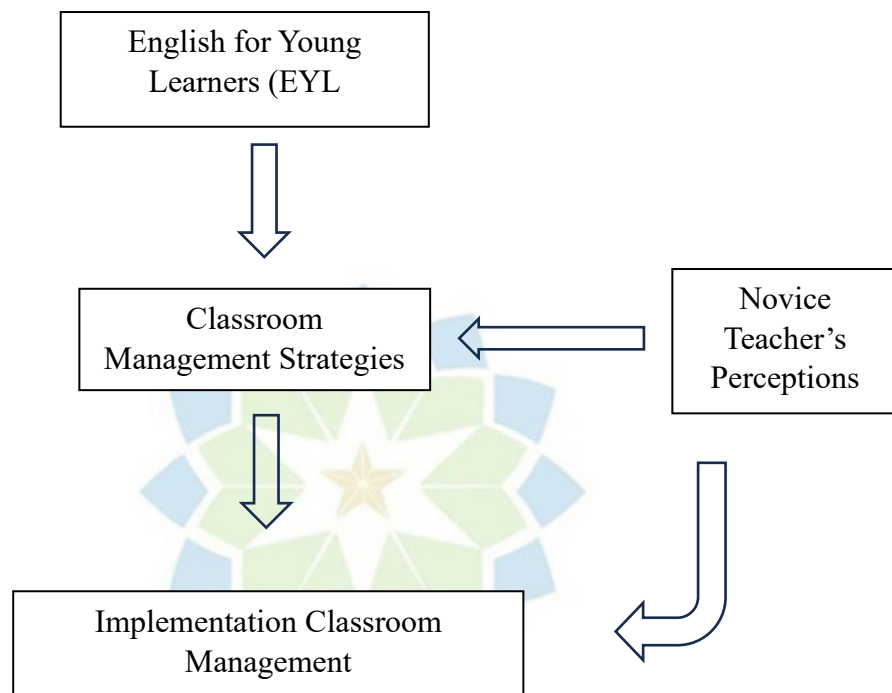


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

English for Young Learners (EYL) has specific characteristics that differ from those of other learners. However, their English language acquisition would also differ from these characteristics. According to Fajarina (2017), teachers must understand how to teach foreign languages to young learners. Thus, teaching methods cannot be separated from classroom management. This classroom management adapts to students' needs according to their development level (Nurhadi, 2018).

Classroom management strategies play an essential role in teaching English to young learners. In young learners' classes, each student has many behavioral differences depending on the level of development stages (Soraya et al., 2017). Therefore, novice teachers must understand and apply classroom management to English for Young Learners (EYL) development differences. Teachers must prepare

classroom management in English for Young Learners (EYL) classes more thoroughly in a management that is calculated to adjust to the needs of students in the class so that English learning becomes practical and comfortable for EYL.

In 2020, the Merdeka curriculum was launched by the Indonesian Ministry of Education as an educational initiative to replace Curriculum 13 (K13). Ndari et al. defines the Merdeka curriculum as offering various extracurricular learning opportunities, with content organized to maximize student time for conceptual exploration and competency building (2023). This curriculum stimulates students' participation in their education through a learner-centered approach. Furthermore, Merdeka describes an essential component of the curriculum in students' profiles (Zidan & Qomariah, 2023). It means The student profile is also one of the focuses of the independent curriculum as part of the independent curriculum.

Managing a classroom means managing the complexity of the class, thus requiring a variety of classroom management strategies to manage the complexity. According to Brown (2001:192-194), one type of classroom management in teaching is the physical environment. The physical environment has several elements, including sight, sound, comfort, seating arrangements, and blackboards and equipment needed in the classroom.

Meanwhile, in classroom management, teachers have a vital role as a resource that EYLs use to learn a foreign language. Teachers' perception is also an essential part of the implementation. Perception is a process that selects, organizes, and interprets input information to create a meaningful picture (Alter, Walker & Lander, 2013). In addition, teacher perception is a person's ability to perceive something in question in a different environment and is seen as distinct from reality (Alter et al., 2013). It should be noted that the personality characteristics of the perceiver can influence perception. It can also be influenced by the features of the object/object being perceived (Simonsen & Dick, 1997). According to Kreitner and Kinichi (2007), perception is a cognitive process that allows us to analyze and understand the surrounding environment. One of the main functions of this process is object recognition, which enables us to identify and understand the objects around us.

They implement classroom management in EYL classes tailored to EYL students' characteristics to create a conducive learning environment. Fajarina (2017) states that young learners have a concentration line of no more than 90 minutes for study. In addition, implementing classroom management helps create a conducive learning environment. Moreover, teachers must have many varied teaching methods and ways so that young learners are not quickly bored in learning English.

G. Previous Studies

Several studies have been conducted related to the topic of classroom management. The first previous study about classroom management in EFL for young learners at SDIT Syahiral' ilmi: The Strategies and Challenges was conducted by Putra, Putri, and Haqiqi (2022). This research focuses on the level of students' English for young learners in strategic aspects and challenges. The research subjects in this study are two SDIT Syahiral Ilmi English teachers in Bukittinggi City. In contrast, this study used qualitative methods with interview and observation instruments. Significantly, the research design used is a case study design to explore challenges and strategies in classroom management. The results showed that teachers used the rolling seating strategy and qualified students according to pronouncing ability. The gap between this study and the current research is different in the research focus because the current study only focuses on EYL classroom management strategies in curriculum Merdeka by novice teachers, and this research focuses on two variables, namely strategy and challenges.

Soraya conducted the second previous study. et al. in 2022 investigated classroom management strategies for teaching English to young learners at elementary schools. This study used two English teachers and twelve elementary school students as research subject participants. Besides that, this research uses qualitative methods with questionnaires, observations, and interviews. This research focuses on implementing effective teaching strategies for young learners in the classroom. The research site of this study was a private primary school in West Java. The researcher used to design a qualitative case study design dealing with social phenomena in an English language teaching situation. This research

found that young learners' classes can be applied to the physical environment, psycho-social management, and classroom activity.

Nevertheless, there is also a difference between this study and the current research, which is in the instrument part, which uses a questionnaire. In contrast, the researcher uses only interviews and observation, not a questionnaire instrument. Additionally, the gap is also different in research focus, including the current research focus on classroom management strategies in the differentiated curriculum (*curriculum Merdeka*)

The third previous study was conducted by Fowler and Sarapli in 2010, which revealed classroom management: what ELT students expect. The research focus of this study is what ELT students expect about classroom management. Furthermore, the research was conducted at the European University of Lefke in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in the Department of English Language Teaching in the second semester of the academic year 2009-2010. The study participants were voluntary and consisted of 88 English students. This study used a quantitative research design method with a questionnaire instrument. The results of this study show that classroom management is more important for students than the teachers themselves. However, two research gaps are different from the current research. First, this study focuses on students' classroom management expectations, while the current research focuses on novice teacher's perceptions of classroom management strategies in EYL classes. Second, this study used a quantitative method, while the researcher used a qualitative method with a case study design.

The fourth discusses beliefs, attitudes, and classroom management: a study on prospective teachers was researched by H. Ayse Canera and Nese (Isik) Tertemizb in 2015. The participants and sites of this study were 280 third- and fourth-year students attending the English Language Teaching program at the faculty of education at a public university in Ankara, Turkey. This study focused on teachers' beliefs and attitudes in classroom management. The results of this study showed that gender is significantly related to prospective teachers' classroom management beliefs on both the Instructional Management and People Management subscales. The gap between this study and the current research is in

the focus on beliefs and attitudes. In contrast, the researcher's study only focuses on novice teachers' perceptions of classroom management in the differentiated curriculum (curriculum *Merdeka*).

