

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Research

In Kudus, several schools have implemented a new curriculum that was Curriculum as the new policy in teaching. Independent Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka), It's made to catch up with the lesson on covid-19. An Independent Curriculum is a simple curriculum that focuses on the essential material students need and the student's passion. According to Aulia in Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, teachers now can concentrate only on three main components; teaching and learning objectives, learning process, and assessment that can be shortened into a page of the lesson plan, while the other components are complementary (Tricahyati1 & Zaim, 2023). The curriculum, students, and teachers are related to education. The EFL teachers become the participants in this research because teachers are roles to the students; they understand how well this curriculum is implemented in schools. When the researcher did PLP, they felt the teachers didn't understand this new curriculum.

Previous studies that have been done, referring to Prastowo et al., (2020), describe how the autonomous learning curriculum allows pupils to study anything. According to the study's findings, Imam Zarkasyi's curriculum in Pesantren is relevant to the Independent Learning curriculum idea created by the Ministry of Education and Culture. It means this curriculum is flexible to the student's learning. Similarly, Lestaringrum et al.,(2022) applying an independent curriculum with learning process characteristics will be maximized because students will have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen their competencies based on their respective abilities rather than class group achievement targets. The following related study is by Tricahyati1 & Zaim, (2023) This research investigated English teachers' readiness and the obstacles faced in implementing the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. The results from the quantitative analysis showed that teachers' willingness to implement the

curriculum in level 3 or the category ready needs a slight improvement, with an average score of 3,20.

The advantage of this topic was to make the researcher find the teacher's perception of implementing an Independent Curriculum in their teaching-learning. The researcher will be able to compare the teacher perception from each school in Kudus about the types contained in the Independent Curriculum. It could also be the reference for another study during their research if it is related. The curriculum also makes the teacher more creative. Some teachers in Kudus still need clarification, but fewer teachers understand this new curriculum. The researcher hopes this research allows teachers to share their perception of Independent Curriculum.

The difference between this research and the previous research was that the researcher focuses on teacher perception of implementing an Independent Curriculum with different types used by the teachers who participate in this research. The researcher also compared their perceptions of implementing this new curriculum. It made this research different from previous studies. Hopefully, this research will be helpful to others during their research. Also, this research will be a reference to those that have the same topic.

B. Statements of the Problem

In this research, the researcher wants to find out teachers' perceptions of independent curriculum programs in several schools in Indonesia. How are the perceptions towards Independent Curriculum perceived by teachers who have implemented Independent Curriculum?

C. The Objective of This Research

Based on the statement above, the researcher explains the objective of this research was to know the perceptions towards Independent Curriculum perceived by teachers who have implemented Independent Curriculum.

D. Significance of The Research

1. The writer hopes this research can contribute to teachers in teaching and learning.
2. This research addresses teachers' obstacles when implementing this new policy.
3. The result of this research can be used as a reference to others with the same topic in their research.

E. Scope of The Research

The researcher wants to get the teacher's perception of the new curriculum that applies in Indonesia. The focus of this research was teacher perception of Independent Curriculum. The population in this research is three teachers from three schools in Kudus. There were SMK N 1 Kudus, SMK NU Ma'arif Kudus, and The last was SMK Raden Umar Said. This study was conducted in three schools because the government created three types of Independent Curricula. It was Independent Learning (Mandiri Belajar), Independent Changing (Mandiri Berubah), and Independent Sharing (Mandiri Berbagi). The researcher has compared the teacher's perceptions of the new curriculum.

F. Operational Definition

From the statement above, there was some definition that the researcher has:

1. An EFL Teacher is a person who teaches an English Foreign Language in school.
2. Teachers' Perception was a process of sharing their message or information about a phenomenon.
3. An Independent Curriculum was created and adapted to the situation that happened here. The curriculum is focused on students' soft skill development suitable for the projects in the curriculum that is referred to as the Pancasila Students Profile.