



AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH TEACHER'S LESSON PLAN REFERRING TO MERDEKA BELAJAR PROGRAM AT SMK PGRI 2 OF PALEMBANG

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ABSTRACT

The aims of this study was to know the ways or the stages use by the English teachers to design Merdeka Belajar lesson plan and to find out the difficulties face by the English teachers in designing the Merdeka Belajar lesson plan. The method of this study was qualitative descriptive method. The techniques of collecting data was using triangulation, which are observation, interview and also documentation. The interview conducted with three English teachers at SMK PGRI 2 of Palembang. After the data was obtained, the next step that the process of reducing the data occurring repeatedly. The results showed that for the first year, teachers were still confused about implementing Merdeka Belajar curriculum. So, teachers at SMK PGRI 2 Palembang have already join In House Training (IHT), in 2021 and 2022. Although the teacher faced some difficulties and obstacles such as lack of experience, inadequate infrastructure facilities from school, and there are some still confused about the learning system. To overcome that difficulties, teacher's at SMK PGRI 2 of Palembang learn from the Merdeka Mengajar platform and collaborate with each teacher.

Keywords: *English Teacher, Lesson Plan, Merdeka Belajar Curriculum*

1. INTRODUCTION

A celar curriculum is important as a reference that will create an affective learning process. The curriculum contains many constructive elements so that learning runs optimally. Good and bad education outcomes are determined by the curriculum, wheter able to build critical awareness of students or not (Marleni, Jaya, Hidayad, 2023). As noted by Khoirurrijal et al. (2022), the Merdeka curriculum is characterized by diverse intra-curricular learning experiences, optimizing

content delivery to provide students with ample time for exploring concepts and reinforcing competencies. This curriculum grants teachers a significant degree of flexibility, empowering them to select from a range of teaching tools. This adaptability ensures that the learning process can be tailored to meet the specific needs and interests of students, fostering a more personalized and effective educational experience.

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According to (Mortini, Jaya, & Zam, 2023) teaching is a profession conducted by using a combination of art, science, and skill. In the process of teaching English, educators should possess the ability to craft engaging and enjoyable classes through the development of effective lesson plans. This is crucial because students often become bored quickly, making it challenging for them to grasp the learning materials. To create successful lesson plans, teachers need to exhibit skills, creativity, and innovation. According to Anggraini et al. (2020), these attributes are essential for ensuring that students can easily comprehend the lessons, fostering a dynamic and stimulating learning environment.

In accordance with Ministry of Education and Culture No. 22 of 2016 regarding lesson planning, the traditional lesson plan typically comprised thirteen components. However, in 2019, the current Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, Nadiem Anwar Makarim, introduced the Merdeka Belajar program, which included a policy aimed at simplifying the lesson planning process. As outlined in Circular Letter No. 14 of 2019 from the Indonesia Ministry of Education and Culture, Merdeka Belajar has streamlined the lesson plan to incorporate only three essential components. These components are the learning objectives, the learning steps, and the assessment, marking a departure from the more intricate

structure outlined in the previous educational guidelines.

Teachers should craft a captivating and engaging syllabus and lesson plan to enhance the learning experience. The syllabus, designed in accordance with pertinent curriculum standards, carefully outlines the learning activities scheduled for an entire semester. A lesson plan, serving as the instructional roadmap for a single session, is a crucial component for teachers. It holds significance as it delineates the steps teachers need to follow during each class, aligning with the applicable curriculum. These well-structured plans contribute to effective teaching and ensure that the educational objectives are met consistently.

Teachers often encounter a challenge when developing a Merdeka Belajar lesson plan, specifically in devising learning activities that prove genuinely effective, efficient, and student-centric, ultimately leading to the attainment of educational objectives. The focus of the research will be on exploring the obstacles faced by English teachers, particularly those at SMK PGRI 2 Palembang, when crafting Merdeka Belajar lesson plans. The emphasis is on understanding the difficulties they encounter and delving into the intricacies of creating instructional strategies that align with the principles of Merdeka Belajar.

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Implementing the Merdeka Belajar lesson plan in schools is regarded as a novel challenge. Teachers frequently encounter challenges in the compilation of Merdeka Belajar lesson plans, particularly struggling with the confusion surrounding the creation of learning steps that are genuinely effective, efficient, and student-oriented, all aimed at realizing the desired learning objectives. The research will delve into the intricacies of these challenges, with a specific focus on English teachers at SMK PGRI 2 Palembang. The investigation aims to shed light on the hurdles faced by educators when designing Merdeka Belajar lesson plans and understanding the underlying factors contributing to their difficulty in establishing learning processes that align seamlessly with the principles of Merdeka Belajar.

English teachers are tasked with the challenge of crafting concise lesson plans that not only facilitate efficient learning but also retain a focus on the inherent purpose of education. This is crucial for ensuring that language learning classes are not only well-prepared but also engaging and enjoyable. It's worth noting that not all regions have embraced the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. However, in Palembang, SMK PGRI 2 stands out as one of the schools that have already implemented the Merdeka Belajar curriculum.

Despite being part of the Merdeka Belajar program and adhering to the 2013 curriculum, English teachers at SMK PGRI 2 in Palembang continue to grapple with challenges in formulating lesson plans aligned

with the Merdeka Belajar framework. This has sparked the writer's interest in conducting research at this institution. The aim is to investigate whether English teachers at SMK PGRI 2 in Palembang have effectively integrated the principles of Merdeka Belajar into their lesson plans, considering the unique challenges associated with its implementation in the context of language learning classes.

Based on the explanation above, in this case, the writer conducted research under the title "An Analysis of English Teacher's Lesson Plan Referring to Merdeka Belajar Program".

2. LITERATURE REVIEW**Concept of Lesson Plan****a. The definition of Lesson Plan**

As emphasized by Ayres, lesson planning plays a pivotal role in the foundational process of organizing individual lesson outcomes in alignment with the overarching course objectives. This practice, as cited in Damayanti (2018, pp. 68-78), involves structuring lesson outcomes and coordinating corresponding activities to ensure a cohesive educational experience. Essentially, a lesson plan serves as a valuable tool for creating a specific framework within the classroom. By doing so, it ensures that all activities remain on a designated trajectory, contributing to the overall success of the teaching and learning process.

b. Principle of Lesson Plan

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According Hanafiah and Suhana (2012), the principle factors in lesson planning are :

1. Paying attention to individual student needs, including the initial ability, intellectual level, talent, potential, interest in learning, motivation, special needs, learning speed, cultural background, norms, values, and the classroom environment, are all taken into consideration.
2. Active participation of students.
3. Focusing on students to encourage enthusiasm for learning, their motivation, interest, creativity, initiative, inspiration, innovation and independence.
4. Development of a reading and writing culture at cultivating interest in reading, comprehension of various texts, and expression in many forms of writing.
5. Providing positive feedback, reinforcement, enrichment, and remedies, following lessons.
6. The importance of basic competencies, learning material, learning activities, competency achievement indicators, assessment, and learning resources are emphasized.
7. Thematic-integrated learning, cross-subject integration, cross-learning aspects, and cultural diversity are all taken into consideration.
8. In line with the context and conditions, the use of information and communication

technology in an integrated, methodical and effective manner.

The function of Lesson Plan

According to Richards, the pre-teaching process of planning a lesson is deemed crucial for delivering an effective instructional session. This assertion, as cited in Damayanti (2018, pp. 68-78), underscores the significance of crafting a comprehensive lesson plan as the initial stride in the teaching endeavor. The development and implementation of a lesson plan not only aid teachers in managing the classroom more effectively but also provide a clear roadmap, ensuring educators have a thorough understanding of their instructional objectives. The effectiveness of a lesson plan is contingent upon the inclusion of several key elements, such as learning objectives, thought-provoking questions, necessary supplies, and engaging activities. These components collectively contribute to the seamless execution of an impactful teaching and learning experience.

Concept of Merdeka Belajar

Merdeka Belajar curriculum is applied with the aim of exercising freedom in the minds of learners, the most important core of freedom of thought goes to the teacher (Khoirurrjal et al., 2022). Within this curriculum framework, educators have the flexibility to select teaching tools that cater to the unique learning needs and interests of individual students. The Merdeka Belajar program is anticipated to usher in

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transformative changes to the educational system by extending the learning environment beyond traditional classroom boundaries. The aspiration is that fostering a learning atmosphere outside the classroom will enhance student comfort, encouraging more dynamic discussions and contributing to the character development of each student.

According to Nadiem, Merdeka Belajar Curriculum must be preceded by teachers before they teach it to students. In teacher competence at any level, without a process of translating the basic competencies and the existing curriculum, learning will never occur (Sabriadi, 2021). The Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim said that Merdeka Learning is a concept of educational development in which all stakeholders are expected to become agents of change. These stakeholders include families, teachers, educational institutions, industry, and society.

Advantages of Merdeka Belajar

According Khoirurrijal et al. (2022), the advantages of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum are as follows.

- a) Simpler and more profound
- b) More independent
- c) More relevant and interactive

Disadvantages of Merdeka Belajar

According to Desrianti and Nelisma (2022), the disadvantages of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum are as follows.

- a) Requires a lot of time and money with the free expression of students in learning, of

course, it takes a lot of time and costs because in the process students have different understandings.

b) Lack of independent teachers to realize students who are independent in learning, of course requires teachers who are independent in teaching as well, but the experience of independent teachers is only a little mostly seen from the experience of teachers in their college days, this is due to the lack of experience of the teachers, because the program merdeka belajar was recently published.

c) Lack of references to run the independent learning program, of course, you need references or referrals such as books as learning tools, the books that are currently available are rated low, therefore need books that are more efficient to carry out learning and realize this independent learning program.

3. METHODS

In the course of this research, a qualitative approach with a descriptive design was employed. As delineated by Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012), qualitative research is characterized by its focus on exploring the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials. This methodological choice allows for an in-depth examination and description of the intricacies within the subject matter, aligning with the overarching goal of the study.

Technique Collecting the Data**1. Observation**

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Observation entails acquiring firsthand data by closely examining activities within a process or involving an object. The primary objective is to engage the senses, fostering a deep understanding of a phenomenon based on pre-existing knowledge and ideas. This method is employed to gather essential information that fuels ongoing studies and activities, allowing for a comprehensive exploration and analysis of the subject under consideration.

2. Interview

According to Creswell (2012), qualitative interview occurs when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record their answers. The interview was run in a semi-structured interview that made the condition as usual as possible to make the students felt comfort. Fraenkle, Wallen, and Hyun (2012) state that structured and semi structured interviews are verbal questionnaires. The writer transcript and type the data into a computer file for analysis. Then the writer analyzed the data to find the difficulties do the English teacher face in designing the Merdeka Belajar. The last, the writer interpret the result of the study.

3. Documentation

Documentation serves as a significant and rich source of information in qualitative research. According to Sugiyono (2008: 240), documentation encompasses written records and visual materials created by individuals, serving as valuable resources

for acquiring information. In the implementation of the documentation method, various mediums such as magazines, books, and documents can be utilized. The primary purpose of employing the documentation method is to enhance the credibility of the results obtained through observation or interviews, ensuring a robust and comprehensive research outcome.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this research is to explore the methodologies or stages employed by English teachers at SMK PGRI 2 in Palembang when formulating Merdeka Belajar lesson plans. Additionally, the study aims to identify and understand the challenges encountered by these English teachers in the process of designing Merdeka Belajar lesson plans.

Description of Research Data

In this research, to collect data the researcher took data at SMK PGRI 2 of Palembang which is located at Sumatera Selatan, Address: Jl, Saptu Marga No. 30, Bukit Sangkal, Kec. Kalidoni, Palembang. The data was obtained by conducting interviews were 3 teachers with 10 questions. The researcher also took some documentation as a source to support the results obtained in this study. The process when the researcher took the data went smoothly and was well analyzed. The researcher did observation, interviews and documentation on 07 Agust 2023 until 09 Agust 2023.

Vol 7, No 1 (2024): ESTEEM**Description of observation and interview data**

Based on the findings derived from the research observations, it is evident that teachers face challenges related to the Merdeka Belajar curriculum system. Furthermore, there is a notable scarcity of learning facilities and resources, coupled with insufficient infrastructure. A significant barrier arises from the widespread confusion among teachers about the Merdeka Belajar curriculum and a lack of comprehension about technology.

A prevalent obstacle identified is the uneven distribution of supportive facilities for the learning process. Not all schools possess comparable and sufficient infrastructure and learning resources. Additionally, there exists a knowledge gap among teachers regarding technology. The shift towards utilizing digital media for learning resources and media necessitates specific supporting facilities, including internet access, LCD screens, laptops, and smartphones. Moreover, educators are required to familiarize themselves with digital media to effectively incorporate these resources into their teaching methods.

Based on the results of interview above, it can be concluded that some teacher already receive detail about Merdeka Belajar curriculum and designing lesson plan or teaching module referring to Merdeka Belajar curriculum by the government, though IHT training (In House Training) in 2021 and 2022. They also search for more information from

internet such as google, youtube, and *Merdeka Mengajar* platform. This is because the Merdeka Belajar curriculum is a new curriculum for teachers.

The teacher concurs with the educational philosophy set forth by the Minister of Education and Culture, wherein the Merdeka Belajar curriculum places students at the core of the teaching and learning process. Emphasizing the priority of students, this curriculum revolves around the idea of student-centered education. Furthermore, the Merdeka Belajar curriculum incorporates project-based learning, a valuable approach aimed at fostering the holistic development of students' character.

The way or the stages use by the English teachers to design Merdeka Belajar lesson plan.

As gleaned from both observational data and interviews conducted with teachers responsible for crafting Merdeka Belajar curriculum lesson plans at SMK PGRI 2 in Palembang, it is evident that they are well-prepared to execute the curriculum's instructional plans. This preparedness stems from the fact that the school has proactively organized in-house training sessions twice – once in 2021 and again in 2022. These training sessions were specifically designed to enhance the teachers' comprehension of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum and equip them with the skills necessary to effectively implement it in their teaching practices, ensuring a comprehensive understanding and

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application of the curriculum among the teaching staff at SMK PGRI 2 in Palembang.

The difficulties or the obstacles face by the English teachers in designing the Merdeka Belajar lesson plan.

There are several factors that become teachers in SMK PGRI 2 of Palembang in implementing the curriculum learning independence curriculum are as follows:

a. Human Resources

It is imperative for a teacher or any educational professional to actively and innovatively grasp the nuances of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum when integrating it into their teaching practices. This is particularly crucial considering the undeniable reality that a teacher's proficiency and competence can be impacted by their limited experience in fostering learning independence. Some educators face challenges in acquiring or utilizing fundamental skills essential for the contemporary classroom environment, further emphasizing the importance of adaptability and continuous learning in the face of evolving educational paradigms.

When it comes to implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum at SMK PGRI 2 in Palembang, there are notable shortcomings in the realm of human resources. Numerous teachers, particularly those of advanced age, face challenges in comprehending the utilization of technology and applications. Consequently, this lack of technological proficiency hampers the smooth operation of the learning process, leading to suboptimal

performance in the implementation of the educational system.

b. Infrastructure

Educational infrastructure encompasses learning facilities that play an indirect yet crucial role in supporting the teaching or learning process. On the other hand, infrastructure facilities constitute the tools and supplies directly employed to bolster the educational process, specifically within teaching and learning environments such as buildings, classrooms, and furniture like tables and chairs. In the context of the freedom offered by certain educational programs, it becomes evident that some schools may not be adequately equipped or prepared. This poses a significant challenge as they lack the necessary resources to develop their own assessment systems, highlighting a hurdle that must be overcome for effective program implementation.

Derived from the interview findings, it has been observed that there is a scarcity of facilities and learning resources, coupled with insufficient infrastructure. Moreover, there is a noticeable lack of technological proficiency among teachers. A considerable number of students and parents are without essential technological devices like cellphones and laptops, posing a limitation on available means for teaching and learning. Additionally, some educators lack familiarity with technology, necessitating efforts to enhance their understanding of digital media. Despite these challenges, some teachers persist in

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implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, making attempts to utilize available facilities and infrastructure, albeit constrained.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion as well as the theories that have underpinned on this research, it can be concluded that :

1. The way that used by English teacher in designing lesson plan.

The teacher and school already prepared everything well to implementing the Merdeka Belajar curriculum lesson plan, because they have already join in house training (IHT), in 2021 and 2022. The teacher makes a lesson plan which begins with understanding the student's CP, making ATP and making good teaching modules, included media tools and source, develop teaching activity and determine the assessment.

2. The difficulties or obstacles face by English teacher in designing lesson plan.

There are several factors that become teachers in SMK PGRI 2 of Palembang in implementing the curriculum learning independence curriculum are as follows:

- a. Human Resources
- b. Infrastructure
- c. Teacher are still confused about the Merdeka Belajar curriculum learning system.

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