

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF 'KURIKULUM
MERDEKA' IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' READING
INTEREST**

THESIS



**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for
Bachelor Degree**

**By :
Farida Ni'matul Udhma
20120014**

**ENGLISH EDUCATIONAL DEPARTEMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAE AND ARTS EDUCATION
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO
2024**

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APPROVAL SHEET

Thesis With Title Teachers' Perception Of 'Independent Curriculum' In Enhancing Students' Reading Interest Prepared By:

Name : Farida Ni'matul Udhma

NIM : 20120014

Departement : English Education

to be approved by the thesis advisor and submitted to the thesis trial stage

Bojonegoro, 25 July 2024

Advisor I



Fitri Nurdianingsih, S.Pd., M.Pd

NIDN. 0729058701

Advisor II



Dr. Refi Ranto Rozak, S.Pd., M.Pd

NIDN. 0702058403

LEGITIMATION

Thesis With Title Teachers' Perception Of 'Independent Curriculum' In Enhancing Students' Reading Interest Prepared By:

Name : Farida Ni'matul Udhma

NIM : 20120014

Departement : English Education

It has been defended in the thesis session at the English Education Departement, Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro on, date

Bojonegoro, July 2024


Chairman,



Fitri Nurdianingsih, S.Pd., M.Pd.

NIDN. 0729058701

Secretary



Chyntia Heru Woro P, M.Pd.

NIDN. 0728017903


Examiner I,



Okhta Ika R., S.Pd., M.Pd.

NIDN. 0701108602

Examiner II,



Moh. Fuadul Matin., S.S., M.Pd.

NIDN. 0727028703

Rector,

Dr. Junarti, M.Pd.

NIDN. 001401651

MOTTO

قـيـقـحـتـ يـلـ حـاـتـفـمـلـاـ يـهـ ةـيـوـقـلـاـ ةـدـارـلـاـ فـ،ـ اـعـقـاـوـ اـهـلـ عـجـتـ وـ كـمـالـ حـ اـرـتـخـتـ نـ اـكـيـلـ عـ)
الـ نـجـاحـ وـالـ سـعـادـةـ)

Meaning:

You have to choose your dream and make it real, because you want it

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated with love and grateful heart to my beloved parents who always support and love me whoever I am.

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I, the undersigned, hereby:

Name : Farida Ni'matul Udhma
ID Number : 20120014
Departement : English Education
Faculty : Language and Arts Education

In order to uphold academic integrity, sincerely and without any coercion from any party Anyway, I declare that the thesis with the title:

Teachers' Perception Of 'Independent Curriculum' In Enhancing Students' Reading Interest

This is my own original work and all sources of information used are mine include it clearly in the reference list based on the scientific code of ethics. I realized that if a violation of scientific ethics related to authenticity is found this work, I am personally willing to accept the consequences according to the regulations valid and ready to bear legal sanctions.

Bojonegoro, 25 July 2024



Farida Ni'matul Udhma

20120014

ABSTRACT

Ni'matul Udhma, Farida, 2024. Teachers' Perception Of 'Independent Curriculum' In Enhancing Students' Reading Interest. Departement English Education, Faculty of Language and Arts Eduaction. IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Fitri Nurdianingsih, S.Pd., M.Pd. Dr. Refi Ranto Rozak, S.Pd., M.Pd

Keywords: Kurikulum Merdeka, Teachers' perception, Reading interest, Indonesia education

Previous studies on curriculum changes in Indonesia have often pointed out the inflexibility of older curricula, such as the 2013 Curriculum, which restricted teachers' ability to be creative. The 'Kurikulum Merdeka' aims to solve these problems by giving teachers more freedom, focusing on student-centered learning, and emphasizing literacy and critical thinking. This research used a qualitative descriptive method, conducting semi-structured interviews with three English teachers at MTS Nurul Huda Bojonegoro. The results show that teachers generally have a positive view of the 'Kurikulum Merdeka', seeing its potential to improve students' reading habits and critical thinking skills. Teachers used strategies like including reading in daily activities, creating reading-friendly spaces, and organizing reading competitions to spark interest. However, they also faced challenges such as students preferring digital content over traditional reading materials and the difficulty of changing existing reading habits. These findings suggest that while the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' is promising, its success largely depends on overcoming these challenges and continuously supporting teachers. The study adds to the discussion on educational reforms in Indonesia, offering practical suggestions for policy changes and teacher support.

ABSTRAK

Ni'matul Udhma, Farida, 2024. Persepsi Guru terhadap Kurikulum Merdeka dalam meningkatkan Minat Membaca Siswa. Program studi Bahasa Inggris. Fakultas Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni. IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Fitri Nurdianingsih, S.Pd., M.Pd. Dr. Refi Ranto Rozak, S.Pd., M.Pd

Keywords: Persepsi guru terhadap kurikulum merdeka, minat membaca, pendidikan Indonesia

Kajian-kajian sebelumnya mengenai perubahan kurikulum di Indonesia sering menunjukkan tidak fleksibelnya kurikulum lama, seperti Kurikulum 2013, yang membatasi kemampuan guru untuk berkreasi. 'Kurikulum Merdeka' bertujuan untuk memecahkan masalah ini dengan memberikan kebebasan lebih kepada guru, berfokus pada pembelajaran yang berpusat pada siswa, dan menekankan literasi dan berpikir kritis. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan melakukan wawancara semi terstruktur terhadap tiga orang guru bahasa Inggris di MTS Nurul Huda Bojonegoro. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa guru secara umum mempunyai pandangan positif terhadap 'Kurikulum Merdeka', melihat potensinya dalam meningkatkan kebiasaan membaca dan kemampuan berpikir kritis siswa. Guru menggunakan strategi seperti memasukkan membaca dalam kegiatan sehari-hari, menciptakan ruang ramah membaca, dan mengadakan kompetisi membaca untuk membangkitkan minat. Namun, mereka juga menghadapi tantangan seperti siswa yang lebih memilih konten digital dibandingkan bahan bacaan tradisional dan sulitnya mengubah kebiasaan membaca yang ada. Temuan-temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun 'Kurikulum Merdeka' cukup menjanjikan, keberhasilannya sangat bergantung pada upaya mengatasi tantangan-tantangan ini dan terus mendukung guru. Studi ini menambah diskusi mengenai reformasi pendidikan di Indonesia, dan menawarkan saran praktis untuk perubahan kebijakan dan dukungan guru.

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Finally, the writer realized that this thesis still have not been perfect yet. Therefore, the researcher wishes for the correctness, criticism and suggestion for

improvement this thesis. Hopefully this thesis would be useful for the readers and many people who need it.

May almighty, Allah SWT blesses us all now and forever. Aamiin.

Bojonegoro, 25 July 2024

Farida Ni'matul Udhma

20120014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER	i
APPROVAL SHEET	ii
LEGITIMATION	iii
MOTTO	iv
DEDICATION	iv
STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY	v
ABSTRACT	vi
ABSTRAK	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
CHAPTER I	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Research Questions	3
1.3 Research Objectives	3
1.4 Research Significant.....	4
1.5 Definition of Key Terms	5
CHAPTER II	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1 Theoretical Review.....	6
2.1.1 English Teaching and Learning.....	6
2.1.2 Merdeka Curriculum	8
2.1.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of Merdeka Curriculum	12
2.1.4 Perception	14
2.2 Research Framework.....	17
2.3 Previous Study.....	19
CHAPTER III	22
METHOD OF RESEARCH	22
3.1 Approach and Type of Research	22
3.2 Objects of the Research	23
3.3 Instrumentation of the Research.....	23
3.4 Data and Sources of Data	23
3.5 Data Analysis	24
CHAPTER IV	26
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	26
4.1 Findings	26
4.1.1 Teachers' Perceptions of the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' in Enhancing Students' Reading Interest	26
4.1.2 Specific Strategies Used by Teachers to Foster Reading Interest Among Students	29
4.1.3 Challenges Faced by Teachers When Implementing the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' to Promote Reading Interest	31
4.2 Discussion	34

4.2.1 Teachers' Perceptions of the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' in Enhancing Students' Reading Interest	34
4.2.2 Strategies Used by Teachers to Foster Reading Interest Among Students	36
4.2.3 Challenges Faced by Teachers When Implementing the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' to Promote Reading Interest	39
CHAPTER V	41
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION	41
5.1 Conclusion.....	41
5.2 Suggestion	42
REFERENCES	44
APPENDIX	47

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The ability to read proficiently is fundamental to academic success and personal development. Reading not only serves as a cornerstone for acquiring knowledge across various subjects but also enhances critical thinking, empathy, and creativity. Despite its importance, fostering a sustained interest in reading among students remains a significant challenge for educators worldwide. In Indonesia, concerns about students' reading habits have prompted educators and policymakers to seek innovative solutions within the educational framework.

Education in Indonesia has experienced significant curriculum changes over the years, reflecting the nation's evolving educational goals and socio-economic needs (Alhamuddin, 2014). From the post-independence era to the present day, the Indonesian curriculum has undergone several revisions aimed at improving the quality of education and aligning it with global standards (Sadewa, 2022). Each iteration of the curriculum has introduced new subjects, pedagogical approaches, and assessment methods to better prepare students for the challenges of the modern world. One such change is the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' or Freedom Curriculum, introduced by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. This curriculum aims to provide greater autonomy to schools and teachers, allowing them to tailor educational content to better meet the needs of their students (Riyanto, 2019). The 'Kurikulum Merdeka' emphasizes a student-centered approach, promoting critical thinking, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning. A

key component of this curriculum is its focus on enhancing students' reading interest and literacy skills.

Previous curricula in Indonesia have often been criticized for their rigid structure, which left little room for flexibility and creativity in teaching methods. The 'Kurikulum Merdeka' seeks to address these issues by empowering teachers to design and implement instructional strategies that are more engaging and relevant to their students. This shift is expected to not only improve academic outcomes but also to foster a deeper appreciation for reading among students.

The urgency of replacing the 2013 Curriculum with the Independence Curriculum can be seen for several reasons. The 2013 Curriculum is considered inflexible and unable to adapt to changes in the educational and societal landscapes. A curriculum that adjusts to social changes, technological advancements, and the needs of the workforce is essential in today's digital and global era. The Independence Curriculum aims to cultivate resilient, independent, and creative students through a more open and inclusive approach. In this regard, curriculum plays a crucial role in educational success, so the government must align it with the changing times (Marisa, 2021).

However, the success of 'Kurikulum Merdeka' in achieving these goals largely depends on the perceptions and practices of teachers who are at the forefront of its implementation. Teachers' beliefs about the curriculum, their experiences in applying its principles, and the challenges they encounter can significantly influence its effectiveness in promoting reading interest. Understanding teachers' perceptions of 'Kurikulum Merdeka' is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it provides insights into how the curriculum is being interpreted

and utilized in classrooms. Secondly, it highlights the practical challenges and barriers teachers face, which can inform future policy adjustments and support measures. Finally, it reveals the strategies and best practices that are emerging as effective in fostering a love for reading among students.

This study aims to explore these aspects in detail, providing a comprehensive analysis of teachers' perceptions of 'Kurikulum Merdeka' and its impact on students' reading interest. By examining both the successes and the challenges experienced by teachers, this research seeks to contribute to the ongoing development of educational practices that support literacy and lifelong learning in Indonesia.

B. Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulates the problems as follows:

1. How do teachers perceive the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' in terms of its potential to enhance students' reading interest?
2. What specific strategies do teachers use to foster reading interest among students?
3. What challenges do teachers face when implementing the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' to promote reading interest?

C. Research Objectives

Based on the research questions above, the objective of the research are as follows:

1. To understand how do teachers perceive the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' in terms of its potential to enhance students' reading interest
2. To analyze the strategies that the teachers use to foster reading interest among students
3. To understand the challenges that teachers faced when implementing the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' to promote reading interest

C.Research Significant

Based on the research objectives that have been explained above, the significant of this research are as follows:

1. Theoretical benefits

This study aims to contribute to the theoretical understanding of curriculum implementation and its impact on student engagement, particularly in the context of reading interest. The study will provide insights into how increased autonomy and flexibility in curriculum design can influence educational outcomes, especially in enhancing reading interest among students.

2. Practical benefits

The practical significance of this study lies in its potential to inform and improve educational practices and policies. The findings will offer valuable insights for various stakeholders, including:

- a. Teachers can benefit from understanding the successful strategies and practices their peers employ to enhance reading interest. This knowledge can guide them in developing more effective teaching methods tailored to their students' needs.

- b. The research will provide school leaders with an understanding of the challenges teachers face in implementing the 'Kurikulum Merdeka.' This can help in designing better support systems, professional development programs, and resource allocation to facilitate curriculum implementation.

D. Definition of Key Terms

1. Kurikulum Merdeka

An educational framework introduced by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture that emphasizes greater autonomy for schools and teachers, aiming to create a more flexible and student-centered learning environment.

2. Reading Interest

The enthusiasm and motivation that students have towards reading activities, which is crucial for developing their literacy skills and fostering a lifelong love of learning.

3. Teacher Perception

The beliefs, attitudes, and experiences of teachers regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the 'Kurikulum Merdeka' in enhancing students' reading interest.