

**AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHER OBSTACLES IN
TEACHING ENGLISH AT VOCATIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
MERDEKA CURRICULUM**

SKRIPSI



Presented to
IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Sarjana in English Education

By:
Juniar Salsabila
21120065

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND ART EDUCATION
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO**

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APPROVAL SHEETS

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LEGITIMATION

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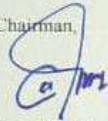
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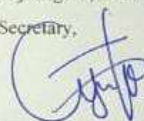
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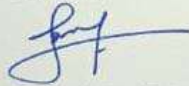
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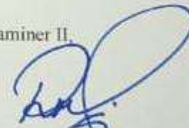
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MOTTO

“Every person we meet is a teacher,
every place we go is a class,
every moment we experience is a lesson.”

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All praise and gratitude to Allah SWT for all the abundance of his grace. Secondly, peace and salutations to Muhammad SAW, the final prophet in the world. The researcher was able to complete the preparation of this skripsi. The title of the skripsi the researcher proposes is “An Analysis of Teacher Obstacles in Teaching English at Vocational High School Regarding the Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum”. The researcher would also like to give special thanks to:

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- c. Ayu Fitriarningsih, M.Pd., as Head of the English Language Study Program.
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- f. The headmaster of SMK Trucuk, who has given researcher permission to conduct research.

With humility, the researcher realizes that the preparation of this skripsi is far from perfect. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are highly expected from dear readers. Finally, the researcher can only pray that Allah SWT will reward all the charity assistance, and hopefully, his good deeds will be recorded as righteous deeds. Hopefully, this work is useful for researchers in particular and for readers in general.

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

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I, the undersigned below:

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In order to uphold academic integrity, sincerely and without coercion from any parties, I hereby declare that the thesis entitled:

AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHER OBSTACLES IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MERDEKA CURRICULUM

Is the result of my own original work, and all sources of information used have been clearly cited in the reference list according to the scientific and academic code of ethics. I am aware that if any violations of scholarly ethics regarding to the authenticity of this work are found, **I personally** accept the consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations and am prepared to bear legal sanctions.

Bojonegoro, 7 July 2025



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ABSTRACT

Salsabila, Juniar. 2025. An Analysis of Teacher Obstacles in Teaching English at Vocational High School Regarding the Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum Thesis, English Education Department Faculty of Languages and Art Education IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Advisor I: Dr. Ima Isnaini Taufiqur Rohmah, M.Pd., Advisor II: Ayu Fitrianiingsih, M.Pd.

Keywords— Obstacles in Teaching English, Vocational High School, Merdeka Curriculum

Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum that frees teacher to choose teaching methods. Merdeka Curriculum encourages teacher to be facilitators so that learning is student-centred by implementing differentiated learning. However, in the classroom, teacher still find it difficult to implement differentiated learning coupled with the difficulty of adjusting to students' vocational materials. So, in this research, the researcher will look for what are the barriers and how to overcome the barriers experienced by English teacher in teaching English at SMKN Trucuk. Through this research, English teacher in other vocational schools can add references and even help solve the obstacles experienced. This research was qualitative with a case study approach. The data collected by observation, interview and documentation with English teacher at SMKN Trucuk. The result of this research is that in addition to obstacles in implementing differentiated learning, teacher also have obstacles in managing time where students are prioritized to learn vocational skills compared to other subjects such as English.

ABSTRAK

Salsabila, Juniar. 2025. An Analysis of Teacher Obstacles in Teaching English at Vocational High School Regarding the Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum Thesis, English Education Department Faculty of Languages and Art Education IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Advisor I: Dr. Ima Isnaini Taufiqur Rohmah, M.Pd., Advisor II: Ayu Fitrianiingsih, M.Pd.

Kata kunci— Hambatan dalam Mengajar Bahasa Inggris, Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan, Kurikulum Merdeka

Kurikulum Merdeka adalah kurikulum yang membebaskan guru untuk memilih metode pembelajaran. Kurikulum Merdeka mendorong guru untuk menjadi fasilitator agar pembelajaran berpusat pada siswa dengan menerapkan pembelajaran berdiferensiasi. Namun, di dalam kelas, guru masih merasa kesulitan dalam menerapkan pembelajaran berdiferensiasi ditambah dengan sulitnya menyesuaikan dengan materi kejuruan siswa. Maka dalam penelitian ini, peneliti akan mencari apa saja hambatan dan bagaimana cara mengatasi hambatan yang dialami dalam mengajar bahasa Inggris oleh guru di SMKN Trucuk. Melalui penelitian ini, guru-guru bahasa Inggris di SMK lain dapat menambah referensi dan bahkan membantu menyelesaikan kendala yang dialami. Penelitian ini bersifat kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi dengan guru bahasa Inggris di SMKN Trucuk. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah selain kesulitan dalam menerapkan pembelajaran berdiferensiasi, guru juga mengalami kesulitan dalam mengatur waktu dimana siswa lebih diprioritaskan untuk belajar keterampilan kejuruan dibandingkan dengan mata pelajaran lain seperti bahasa Inggris.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Merdeka Curriculum is the latest curriculum tool in Indonesia that has been launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbud Ristek RI) in February 2022. In order to improve the quality of learning, this Merdeka curriculum was launched with an independent learning program (Sari & Gumindari, 2022). Merdeka curriculum contains a set of plans and arrangements related to learning materials, objectives, and content.

Merdeka curriculum, which is a new curriculum has several characteristics, namely: 1) Profil Pelajar Pancasila as character development and project-based soft skills; 2) Deepening basic competencies such as literacy and numeracy by focusing on essential material; 3) Differentiated learning adjusts the context and local content so that teacher has the opportunity to implement learning flexibly. Based on this, it can be concluded that Merdeka curriculum focuses on essential materials, character development, and learner competencies (Wiguna & Tristaningrat, 2022). Through such characteristics, this Merdeka curriculum has been implemented at the primary and secondary education levels, especially in vocational high schools.

Vocational High School (VHS) is school which are prepared the graduates to become experts who can compete internationally. Therefore, students must be able to communicate in English to fulfill the objectives of the VHS (Mulyah &

Aminatun, 2020). English learning at VHS is implementing the Merdeka curriculum since 2022 until now. Through this implementation, teacher must understand how the new scheme in Merdeka curriculum.

Implementation in teaching English with Merdeka curriculum at VHS have some differences with 2013 curriculum. In the 2013 curriculum, which used to have basic competencies (KD), it has now changed to competency achievements which are written from several paragraph sentences (Rindayati et al., 2022). Afterwards, the curriculum structure which previously consisted of intracurricular and extracurricular activities is now added to the application Profil Pelajar Pancasila. After that, in the 2013 curriculum, lesson hours are arranged weekly while in the Merdeka curriculum they are set annually (Nugroho & Narawaty, 2022).

In addition to some changed terms and learning hours, in the 2013 Curriculum, teacher involve a logical methodology for all subjects. Meanwhile, in the Merdeka Curriculum, teacher use a differentiated approach that suits students' capacities. In terms of evaluation in terms of assessment, in the 2013 curriculum, grades are taken from developmental assessments and summative assessments. Meanwhile, in Merdeka curriculum, developmental assessment and summative assessment are reflections to shape students' understanding according to their capacity. Most notably, now in the Merdeka curriculum there is an evaluation in the form of strengthening Profil Pelajar Pancasila, which was not there before. But the previous evaluation in the 2013 curriculum was divided into 3, namely attitude assessment, information assessment, and ability assessment, now eliminated and applied to one assessment (Rohimajaya et al., 2022).

From some of the differences between the Merdeka curriculum and the 2013 curriculum, it can be concluded that some things are more simplified. There are already guidelines which help teacher to make learning fun. In teaching English, teacher are advised to use a genre-based approach. In applying the genre based approach, teacher present several types of texts by using teaching methods or methods that are considered sufficient to help students' understanding of text types in English. Teacher will give freedom to students in how they learn to understand the text. In addition, teacher should also use technology and help students utilize technology as a form of digital literacy. By utilizing technology, students will find it easier to gather information and can keep updated on the latest things related to knowledge. To do all this, teacher must have in-depth knowledge of the material and be able to customize teaching methods that are appropriate for students. Through that, teacher can create appropriate syllabus, modules and lesson plans then students can achieve maximum learning outcomes (Muslim & Sumarni, 2023).

Based on the phenomenon above, the researcher is particularly interested in examining the obstacles faced by English teacher and how teacher overcome these obstacles at SMK Negeri Trucuk. SMK Negeri Trucuk is a school that has implemented the Merdeka curriculum for 3 years since February 2022. SMKN Trucuk is a school with five majors. One of the majors is Visual Communication Design which has a vision and mission of being able to communicate with customers using English.

Based on pre-interview with the English teacher at SMKN Trucuk there are several obstacles in teaching English with the Merdeka curriculum. One of the obstacles teacher experiences is the practice of differentiated learning, students

have difficulty recognizing their way of learning. Teacher are faced with challenges that hinder learning, such as obstacles in identifying students' learning styles and students' dependence on translators. In addition, English learning at SMKN Trucuk uses English in general rather than specifically. This is due to the condition of the school, which is in the rural area, therefore it is not possible to teach English specifically. Hence, the title “An Analysis of Teacher Obstacles in Teaching English at Vocational High School Regarding the Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum” was made.

B. Formulation of the Problems

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulates the research problem as follow:

1. What are the obstacles faced by the teacher in teaching English at Vocational High School related to the implementation of Merdeka curriculum?
2. How does the teacher overcome obstacles to teaching English at Vocational High School related to the implementation of Merdeka curriculum?

C. Objectives of the Study

As mentioned in the background, the objectives of the research are:

1. To find out the obstacles faced by the teacher in teaching English at Vocational High School related to the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum.
2. To find out how the teacher overcome obstacles to teaching English at Vocational High School related to the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum.

D. Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

This research will help to achieve the successful implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in teaching English at VHS.

2. Practical Significances

a. For the Researcher

This research describes the obstacles and ways to overcome English language teacher at VHS in the implementation of Merdeka curriculum.

This research can help other researchers in writing down the obstacles in the implementation of Merdeka curriculum at VHS.

b. For the Teacher

As a reference for teacher in analyzing obstacles and how to overcome the obstacles in teaching English at VHS with Merdeka curriculum.

3. Pedagogical Significance

This research describes the obstacles teacher face in teaching with Merdeka curriculum. It is hoped that teacher can overcome obstacles and can be used as a reference in teaching with the Merdeka curriculum. Specifically in teaching English at VHS.

E. Definition of Terminologies

1. Obstacles in Teaching English

Obstacles can be conceptualized as forces that interfere with and impede standard actions and must be removed or overcome if the desired end state is to be

achieved (Ferdaus & Novita, 2023). In the paper from Gunawan (2017) stated that an obstacle is a difficulty in making progress or achieving a goal. In Indonesia teach English not based on English for Specific Purpose but in general (Septiana, 2018). In this research, obstacle is the difficulty faced by teacher to achieve learning objectives.

2. Teaching English at VHS

English teaching at Vocational High Schools is required to teach English components that are closely related to the students' field of study (Muliyah & Aminatun, 2020). Therefore, English for Vocational High School plays an important role in equipping students with the language skills necessary for success in their vocational careers (Syahida & Siminto, 2023). In Indonesia, Teaching English at VHS have a general rather than specific curriculum and flow of learning objectives (Pranoto & Saadah, 2023). From some of these definitions, the researcher take data at VHS which using a general curriculum with the same level.

3. Merdeka Curriculum

Quoting from Kemendikbud website, Merdeka curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intracurricular learning where teacher can determine their own learning tools according to students. Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum that has varied internal learning (Nasution et al., 2023). Merdeka Curriculum is a set of curricula designed to allow teacher to be more flexible and adapt to students' learning needs in teaching (Zidan & Qamariah, 2023). From this definition, Merdeka curriculum implemented in this research has the characteristic that teacher has the flexibility to teach according to students.