

Problematic of Implementing The Independent Curriculum In

Elya Shafiira Setyawan Putri^{1,*}, Markhamah¹

¹Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia

* Corresponding author: a310210014@student.ums.ac.id

Abstract

Purpose: This study seeks to address challenges encountered in Indonesian language teaching under the Independent Curriculum at the Stage E (class X) level at SMA Negeri 1 Polanharjo. Specifically, it examines teacher readiness, the extent of school support, facilitating and hindering factors in curriculum implementation, and potential strategies to overcome identified obstacles.

Methodology: Adopting a descriptive qualitative design, researchers collected written data from recorded, semi-structured interviews with Indonesian language teachers responsible for Stage E instruction. Interview recordings were meticulously transcribed and then analyzed to map out recurring themes related to preparedness, institutional backing, enablers, barriers, and proposed remedial steps.

Results: Analysis revealed a spectrum of teacher readiness—ranging from enthusiastic early adopters to those uncertain about curriculum shifts—often correlated with the level of in-school professional development provided. School support varied: some departments offered regular workshops and resource materials, while others lacked clear guidance. Key supporting factors included strong leadership commitment and peer collaboration; major obstacles centered on insufficient training time, limited instructional resources, and ambiguous assessment guidelines. Teachers proposed concrete steps—such as targeted in-service training sessions, development of clear teaching modules, and establishment of a teacher-mentoring network—to bridge these gaps.

Applications/Originality/Value: y systematically documenting real-world readiness levels, support structures, and both facilitators and inhibitors of curriculum change, this study offers actionable insights for school administrators and district policymakers. Its findings can inform the design of focused professional-development programs, allocation of teaching resources, and creation of collaborative support networks, thereby enhancing the fidelity and effectiveness of Independent Curriculum implementation in Indonesian language classrooms.

Introduction

Indonesian is one of the communication tools used by Indonesian people for activities such as learning, collaborating and interacting. As a communication tool taught from elementary school to university, Indonesian is a means of scientific communication, reasoning and critical thinking for students. Therefore, the growth and development of the Indonesian language cannot be separated from the development of culture, science, technology and art, which are related to the growth and development of education and technological progress.

Currently the Independent Curriculum was launched on February 11 2022 and this curriculum is only being implemented in a few schools in the 2022-2023 academic year. The Independent Curriculum is a series of improvements to the curriculum that was introduced in 2006, namely the Teaching Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) and the 2013 Curriculum. Therefore, changes to the educational curriculum must be implemented.

We will continue to carry out text-based Indonesian language learning for the 2022/2023 academic year, especially at the high school/vocational school level, using the independent curriculum. Text-based learning is learning that uses text as a basis, subject matter, basis and foundation.. (Sufanti, 2013).

An independent curriculum is a curriculum where intracurricular learning is varied, and the content is more tailored to ensure students have sufficient time. The independent curriculum deepens concepts and builds skills. Freedom to learn encourages the creation of unique intellectual personalities that enable teachers and students to explore the knowledge, attitudes and skills of their environment (Daga, 2021).

The independent curriculum provides teachers with the opportunity to create learning and learning that is fun. Today's teaching staff also includes teachers who can model and implement the learning process. Teachers also act as agents for planning, implementing, evaluating and following up on these assessments (Sotrisno, 2022).

Similar to the 2013 Curriculum, learning Indonesian is included in the independent secondary education curriculum. Students are expected to be able to use and create different texts depending on their goals and social activities.

However, the implementation of the independent curriculum has not been implemented optimally. Most teachers are still unable to teach using the Independent Curriculum because there are no specific Independent Curriculum guidelines for teachers. Therefore, teachers still face many obstacles when adapting learning to an independent curriculum. One obstacle, such as teacher incompetence, may be related to the lack of social activities and teacher training. In addition, the

availability of learning opportunities and infrastructure required by an independent curriculum is still lacking. He added that both teachers and students consider this subject to be very difficult. Apart from that, as professional independent curriculum providers, the average school is not ready to use the curriculum.

The aim of this research is to determine the problems of learning Indonesian in the Independent Curriculum for N High School teachers. This includes teacher readiness, internal factors that hinder the implementation of the independent curriculum at Polanharjo 1 Public High School as well as steps to overcome obstacles to implementing the independent curriculum.

According to Abd. Muhith (2018:47) Problem comes from English, namely "problematic" meaning problem or problem, in the Indonesian dictionary a problem is something that cannot be resolved. a problem arose. A problem is an obstacle or problem that needs to be overcome. In other words, the problem is the gap between reality and the expected results. Jauhari et al (2021) state that a problem is defined as something that prevents the achievement of goals. Meanwhile, Ardianti (2022) states that an independent curriculum is a curriculum that is in accordance with the ideals of national education figure Ki Hajar Dewantara, which focuses on the freedom of independent and creative learning that has an impact.

Research on the problems of implementing the independent curriculum has also been researched by relevant previous research conducted by Wardana (2023), Suaroyo (2023), Zikhri (2024), Melani (2023). In its implementation, one of which is in terms of applying the concept of independent learning and applying the use of digital technology in Indonesian language learning. The results of this research are the inhibiting factors, including factors inhibiting the implementation of the independent curriculum, including not all teachers have received training, so many of them have not been able to implement it. thematic and scientific learning. This is the main factor inhibiting the implementation of the independent curriculum.

This is different from the opinion of Septiana (2022), (Redana & Nyoman. 2023), (Rita. 2023), (Suryani et al. 2023), (Samsudduha & Alfi. 2023). Regarding the implementation of the independent curriculum, the reference to this research is the implementation of the independent curriculum. The results of the research are that the implementation of the independent curriculum makes learning at school more enjoyable and makes students less bored with learning. And in implementing this independent curriculum, the role of teachers is very important. From the results of this research, there are several schools that have implemented the independent curriculum optimally. However, there are still schools that have obstacles in implementing the independent curriculum. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMA Negeri 4 Singaraja is influenced by several factors, namely: communication, resources, disposition and bureaucratic structure. The supporting factors for implementing the Independent Curriculum at SMA Negeri 4 Singaraja are: the availability of adequate resources, in this case the existence of a learning committee and driving teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Singaraja.

Method

This research uses qualitative research methods. Qualitative research involves processing descriptive data such as interview results, field notes, documentation in the form of photos, videos, recordings of interview results (Poerwandari, 1998:29). This research is categorized as qualitative because the aim is to examine objects in a natural environment without manipulation, and the results are sought not based on quantitative measures but on the meaning or quality of the phenomena observed.

In qualitative research, data is collected in a natural environment using primary data sources. Data collection techniques include participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation (Sugiono, 2008:63). The data analysis method used is interactive, where data from interviews, notes and documents are arranged systematically first paragraph of a section or subsection is not indented..

Results and Discussion

The curriculum, which continues to change from time to time, is actually not really approved by all schools and also teachers, where teachers are the main actors in implementing the curriculum (Isthofiyani et al. 2014). There are schools that simply accept these curriculum changes and take the positive side that the government need to think more about the education system, especially in terms of the curriculum, but there are also those who feel the curriculum has changed. There are many changes that occur varying from implementation to implementation. Moreover, not all schools simultaneously change the curriculum implemented in their schools, because different geographical locations also affect teacher competence.

The Ministry of Education and Culture states that the independent learning curriculum focuses on essential content and developing students' skills at each stage, so that students can learn more deeply, meaningfully and happily without rushing. Learning becomes more relevant and interactive through project activities which provide opportunities for students to be more active in addressing current problems such as the environment, health and other problems, as well as

the nature of the Pancasila student profile and skills development. The goal of this lesson is to strengthen students' reading, writing, and math skills as well as individual subject knowledge

As with what factors are obstacles to implementing the independent curriculum and the results obtained are that the obstacles are understanding the characteristics of different students, limited student abilities, infrastructure, short time allocation. Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers, several obstacles were found in implementing the independent curriculum, including:

1. It is difficult for educators to understand the characteristics of students

In the world of education, understanding student characteristics is a complex challenge. Teachers must be able to adapt their teaching approaches because each individual has a different background, experience and learning style. In this context, to create an inclusive and effective learning environment, it is important for educators to not only know the general characteristics, but also understand the individual needs and potential of each student. Teachers at SMA N found that some of the students they taught had characteristics that were difficult to understand. This can be understood in the following interview excerpt:

”kalo menurut saya ya mbak yang paling sulit itu memahami karakteristik peserta didik dalam satu kelas mbak, karena beraneka ragam. Terkadang saya sebagai pendidik harus berupaya memahami karakter terlebih dahulu, ada yang aktif ada yang pasif, setelah itu saya baru menentukan metode pembelajaran yang tepat” (guru SMA N)

The teacher's obstacles or obstacles are the difficulty of understanding the different characteristics of students, which causes teachers to have difficulty implementing less than optimal learning because in one class students have different characters and behavior.

“kalo yang sering dijumpai di sma sini itu ya mba yang pertama itu sering mengganggu teman lain (terutama anak laki – laki), aktif, senang berkelompok, ngobrol sama temen saat dijelaskan.” (guru SMA N)

From the results of the interview above, there are several characteristics that are often found in SMA N, namely:

1) Likes to disturb friends during learning: this character is commonly possessed by students, especially male students, who want to stand out and be the center of attention. Disturbing friends during learning can refer to behavior that disrupts the concentration or learning activities of other people in the classroom or learning environment. Examples could be:

- a) Disrupts by talking or joking continuously while the teacher is explaining.
- b) Disturbing by babbling or making noises that disturb other friends' study focus
- c) Distract friends' attention in ways that are not relevant to the learning material.
- d) Annoying friends by throwing rubbish or small annoying objects around them.
- e) Disrupting by asking or giving answers without permission from the teacher

2) What is meant by being active is liking to walk around while learning is taking place, liking to say things that are not important.

3) Likes working with groups (collaboration): the collaboration referred to is if the teacher gives independent assignments to students who often work on them in groups (cheating)

4) Likes to chat when the teacher explains the material: this character clearly hinders learning because it can disturb the teacher's concentration when explaining and can disturb other students

In one hour learning occurs repeatedly more than 3 times. Performed by students (M.T.S) and (F.A.P). And these two students often disturb the concentration of other students

The solution to overcome difficulties in understanding student characteristics can be stated as follows

“yaa kalo saya mengatasi siswa yang seperti itu (ngeyel suka ngobrol sendiri suka mengganggu) yaa saya tegur dan saya nasehati sekali dua kali mbak kalo masih seperti itu saya diamkan.” (guru SMA N)

When the teacher encounters a student's character who is difficult to manage or is annoying, the teacher reprimands and gives advice to the student once or twice. If the student is still annoying, the teacher just leaves him alone because if he is reprimanded many times, it will hinder learning.

2. Limited Students' Ability to Understand the Material

In the learning process, understanding the material is the main key for students to achieve their educational goals, but students often encounter various limitations that affect their ability to understand the subject matter. These limitations can be caused by various factors, including differences in learning styles, lack of motivation, and the influence of the social environment. . Apart from that, the complexity of the subject matter and inappropriate teaching methods also cause students to have difficulty absorbing information. Limited understanding can have a negative impact on students' academic achievement and reduce their interest in learning. Therefore, it is important to analyze the factors that influence these limitations and find the right solution to improve students' understanding. With the right approach, it is hoped that all students will be able to overcome these obstacles. these obstacles and achieve their maximum potential in the teaching and learning process. The limited abilities of students at SMA N can be proven in the following interview excerpt:

“ kan ada ya mbak siswa yang cepat menangkap materi yang diajarkan ada yang harus diulang berkali kali baru paham.” (guru SMA N)

Students' limited ability to understand the material explained or given by the teacher in one class varies, while learning time is limited. So repeating it many times really hinders learning.

From the problems above, a solution was found to overcome them, which can be seen from the following interview excerpt:

“ biasanya siswa yang kurang paham saya suruh tanya sama temennya mbak biasanya malah kalo dijelaskan temannya malah bisa faham, kalo nggak saya kasih katihaan soal itu bisa memancing pemahaman siswa” (Guru SMA N)

The way to deal with students who have difficulty understanding the material explained by the teacher is to explain it repeatedly. If students still don't understand, the teacher also asks fellow students who already understand to help explain it because according to the teacher, that way students who don't understand can understand. because if you ask a friend, students usually don't hesitate or feel embarrassed. However, there is another event carried out by Mrs. Istiqomah to increase students' understanding of the material being taught, namely by giving practice questions to students because according to her, by providing practice questions, students who do not understand can stimulate their understanding

“ Tapi ada cara lain yang saya juga sering lakukan untuk meningkatkan pemahaman siswa mbak, misalnya menandai hal penting seperti digaris bawah atau distabilo, membuat catatan kecil.” (Guru SMA N)

Apart from asking for help from students to help explain the material and provide practice questions, educators also do this;

1) Marking Important Things: Students can mark important things in the material presented, with highlighters or by underlining important things so that they can more easily remember and understand the material

2) Make Small Notes: Students can make small notes of the material presented, focus on important points and use sticky notes to make it easier to re-member.

3. Lack of Infrastructure

Indonesian language learning is learning that is not just about delivering material, but Indonesian language learning is learning that requires practice after delivering material in certain chapters. Facilities and infrastructure really support learning, incomplete facilities and infrastructure become obstacles for teachers in carrying out practicum in learning Indonesian. With the existence of facilities and infrastructure that can support the smooth teaching and learning process, in Indonesian language lessons there are several chapters or materials that require practicum, with supporting facilities certainly making things easier for teachers and students. The infrastructure at SMA N is considered complete but there are still some deficiencies, as can be seen from the following interview excerpt:

“Untuk sarana prasarana di SMA N, sudah termasuk kategori lengkap dan baik mbak, namun pada saat ini masih belum ada lab bahasa, dan hal ini menjadi penghambat juga dalam pembelajaran bahasa Indonesia.” (Guru SMA N)

Infrastructure is an important factor in the learning process, the infrastructure at SMA N 1 Polanharjo itself is included in the complete category, but currently at SMA N 1 Polanharjo itself there is still no language lab.

“ Hubungannya dengan kurikulum merdeka itu mbak, kan kalo kurikulum merdeka itu pembelajaran berbasis proyek (PjBL) Nah kalo dalam pembelajaran bahasa Indonesia saya biasanya memberikan proyek kepada peserta didik untuk membuat video drama mbak, itu yang paling mudah dan simpel menurut saya.”(Guru SMA N)

The relationship between facilities and infrastructure in implementing the independent curriculum is in the independent curriculum project-based learning, so if there is a language lab it will make it easier for students to work on projects given by the teacher, for example in making drama videos if there is a language lab students can use it to find references – references to create interesting videos.

The solution commonly used by educators at SMA N to face problems regarding the lack of infrastructure can be seen from the quote:

“ tapi untungya sekarang internet itu sudah canggih mbak, jadi jika mencari informasi atau mencari referensi tidak harus menggunakan komputer mbak, bisa menggunakan HP anak – anak sekarang malah lebih canggih ketimbang gurunya mbak. Jadi mereka mencari referensi menggunakan HP mbak.” (Guru SMA N)

But with the development of internet technology, this is not a big problem because students can look for references using cellphones. And today's students are even more adept at using the internet than their educators

4. Too much time allocation

Study time allocation is an important aspect in the educational process that influences student efficiency and learning outcomes. By determining the appropriate time for each learning activity, educators can ensure that students gain the in-depth understanding and skills required. In an increasingly complex educational environment, the importance of time management in learning is becoming increasingly clear, especially considering the demands of a dense and varied curriculum. Therefore, a good understanding of time management not only helps in achieving academic goals, but also promotes the development of students' personality and social skills. This introduction explains the importance of allocating

study time and its impact on the overall educational process. Teachers at SMA N often experience the problem of allocating too short a time, which can be seen in the quote below:

“ yang menjadi hambatan saya di kurikulum merdeka ini adalah mengatur waktu atau manage waktu mbak, seperti yang kita ketahui hari hari senin sampai jumat mata pelajaran full mbak, banyak tugas dari mata pembelajaran yang lain juga, sehingga dalam proses pembelajaran kurang begitu maksimal.” (Guru SMA N)

What is an obstacle for teachers in learning Indonesian is arranging time or managing learning time, because in one week the learning subjects are full and there are lots of assignments from other learning subjects, so the learning process is not very optimal.

“apa lagi di kurikulum merdeka ini kan berbasis proyek ya mbak, jadi saya sendiri di akhir pembelajaran siswa itu saya suruh membuat video drama, puisi dll mbak sesuai minat mereka mbak. Nahh itu kan membutuhkan bimbingan dengan waktu yang cukup panjang ya mbak.” (Guru SMA N)

In this independent curriculum, learning is project-based, so Mrs. Istiqomah gives assignments to students to upload videos of drama or poetry or other things according to the student's interests. However, it requires a long time and guidance so it is an obstacle or problem for educators.

The solution that educators at SMA N usually take to deal with the problem of short time allocation in learning can be seen from the quote below:

“Nahh untungnya sebagian besar siswa bisa diajak kerjasama mbak, jadi disekolah saya jelaskan tekniknya nanti kalo masih ada waktu sisa siswa lanjut mengerjakan dengan pengawasan saya nah kalo blm selesai siswa melanjutkan dirumah.” (Guru SMA N)

However, this is not a big problem for educators because most students can collaborate. Like the way educators explain first, if there is still time left for students to start working on it, if they haven't finished, students can continue at home.

Conclusion

Based on the results of research regarding the problems of implementing the independent curriculum in SMA N, it is concluded that there are several problems and solutions to overcome them. The first problem is that educators have difficulty understanding the characteristics of their students, especially students who are difficult to manage. The solution is that the teacher reprimands them after that, if the students do not experience changes, the teacher just ignores them. The second problem is that students are limited in understanding the material provided by the teacher. The solution is that students are asked to make small notes and mark important material. The third problem is the lack of facilities, a solution was found in the form of students being able to do the assignments given by the teacher using cellphones. The final problem is the short allocation of learning time at school, the solution is that students can complete assignments at home.

References

- Ardianti, Y., & Amalia, N. (2022). Kurikulum Merdeka: Pemaknaan Merdeka dalam Perencanaan Pembelajaran di Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Pendidikan*, 6(3).
- Armadani, P., Sari, P. K., Abdullah, F. A., & Setiawan, M. (2023). Analisis Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Pada Siswa-Siswi SMA Negeri 1 Junjung Sirih. *Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan*, 9(1), 341-347.
- Daga, A. T. (2021). Makna merdeka belajar dan penguatan peran guru di sekolah dasar. *Jurnal Educatio Fkip Unma*, 7(3), 1075-1090.
- Jauhari, M. I., Hartanto, S., & Mudzakkir, M. (2021). Problematika Pembelajaran Daring di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 3 Magetan. *Journal of Education and Religious Studies*, 1(01), 9-15.
- Krulik, Stephen & Rudnick, Jesse A. (1995). *The New Sourcebook for Teaching Reasoning and Problem Solving in Elementary School*. Needham Heights: Allyn & Bacon.
- Ledia, S. L., & Bustam, B. M. R. (2024). Implementasi kurikulum merdeka dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan. *Reslaj: Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal*, 6(1), 790-816.
- Melani, A., & Gani, E. (2023). implementasi kurikulum merdeka dalam pembelajaran bahasa indonesia di SMP negeri 16 padang. *Educaniora: Journal of Education and Humanities*, 1(2), 23-32
- Miladiah, S. S., Sugandi, N., & Sulastini, R. (2023). Analisis Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Di SMP Bina Taruna Kabupaten Bandung. *Jurnal Ilmiah Mandala Education*, 9(1).
- Muhith, A. (2018). Problematika pembelajaran tematik terpadu di MIN III bondowoso. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Teaching*, 1(1), 45-45.
- Poerwandari, E. K. 1998. *Pendekatan Kualitatif Dalam penelitian Psikologi*. Jakarta: Lembaga Pengembangan Sarana Pengukuran dan Pendidikan Psikologi (LPSP3) Fakultas Psikologi Universitas Indonesia.
- Redana, D. N., & Suprpta, I. N. (2023). Implementasi kurikulum merdeka di sma negeri 4 singaraja. *Locus*, 15(1), 77-87.
- Samsudduha, A. (2023). Implementasi kurikulum merdeka belajar Di SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Jabung Timur. *Implementasi kurikulum merdeka belajar Di SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Jabung Timur*.

- Septiani, A. (2022). Implementasi kurikulum merdeka ditinjau dari pembelajaran matematika dan pelaksanaan P5 (studi di SMA Negeri 12 Kabupaten Tangerang). *AKSIOMA: Jurnal Matematika dan Pendidikan Matematika*, 13(3), 421-435.
- Suaryo, A., Lurina, R. O., & Isnaini, H. (2023). Problematika Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Pada Kurikulum Merdeka Di SMA Negeri 1 Pamanukan, Kabupaten Subang. *Bhinneka: Jurnal Bintang Pendidikan dan Bahasa*, 1(3), 101-110.
- Sufanti, Main. 2013. Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Berbasis Teks: Belajar dari Ohio Amerika Serikat. FKIP Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta
- Sugiono. 2008. Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R&D. Bandung: ALFABETA.
- Suryani, N., Muspawi, M., & Aprillitavivayarti, A. (2023). Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar di Sekolah Penggerak. *Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Batanghari Jambi*, 23(1), 773-779.
- Sutrisno. (2022). Guru Melaksanakan Evaluasi Pembelajaran Di Era. *ZAHRA: Research And Tought Elmentary School Of Islam Journal*, 3(1), 52–60
- Wardana, M. A. W., Indra, D. P., & Ulya, C. (2023). Problematika Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka pada Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di SMP Surakarta. *PTK: Jurnal Tindakan Kelas*, 4(1), 95-114.
- Zikri, A., & Novio, R. (2024). Problematika Guru Dalam Menerapkan Kurikulum Merdeka di SMA Negeri 1 Tilatangkamang. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 8(1), 3842-3850.