

# The Educational Curriculum Reform in Indonesia: Supporting “Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM)”

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**Abstract.** Curriculum reforms in Indonesia are now allowing students to become independent learners in the sense that they are central to the teaching and learning process. This change is a new requirement for teachers and school lecturers to support students with educational strategies that allow them to actively participate in the learning process. This is in line with the new curriculum idea for self-study and independent campuses launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology to better prepare students to face the challenges of the world of education. Due to this change, Indonesian English teachers are strongly encouraged to overcome the challenges faced by their students and find the best teaching methods to achieve the best learning outcomes. However, teachers and students have different views on the implementation of English language teaching, so the results do not always meet expectations. Thus, this literature review discusses several issues related to English, including English for teaching, English strategies for teachers, independent self-study on campus, and issues of teaching English. Moreover, the main purpose of this article is to acknowledge to the reader that mainly teachers and students need English, because English is important for the development of education in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** English Language Teaching, Independent Learning Independent Campus, Problems of English

## 1 Introduction

Indonesian educational programs are needed to design and manage innovative learning processes to achieve optimal learning outcomes and develop skills that are always in line with new demands and changes in a dynamic world [1]. This new curriculum has improved every aspect of learning outcome, from knowledge, attitudes and skills. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, when applying for the MBKM program, students can earn free non-curricular credits for three semesters, take non-curricular courses for one semester, and study outside the university for the remaining two semesters [2].

Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) has developed student-based or active learning theory of learning. This is similar to presidential regulation 57 of 2021, which states that learning will be delivered in an interactive, fun, stimulating, stimulating and challenging way., a learning environment in which students can actively participate. Teachers encourage a rational ability for initiative, creativity and independence in accordance

with the talents, interests, physical and psychological development of students [3].

Implementation of learning is done by providing examples, help and functionality. Therefore, all components involved in learning in schools should pay attention to this in order to create an environment conducive to learning. In other words, teachers must be competent enough to be facilitators of active learning, primarily through project-based learning, discovery-based learning, and problem-based learning. Active learning is an educational approach in which all students are asked to participate in the learning process [4].

## 2 Methods

The purpose of this study is to clarify the status of the introduction of English education in Indonesia. This type of study was a qualitative library research design, requiring the authors to collect material from previous studies related to the teaching of English. According to experts, qualitative research design uses the methods of data collection, description, classification and analysis of data, as well as the formulation of conclusions [5].

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Key references to this paper include: English Curriculum, English Language Teaching Strategies, Independent Campus Learning, and English Teaching Issues. However, this white paper only focuses on the implementation of English language teaching and how students adapt to the curriculum change from KKNi to Independent Learning Campus (MBKM).

### 3 Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 English Language Teaching

Theoretically, it was believed that children needed serious guidance from adults in learning. Even though there has been a shift in manifestation in learning at the present time. Learning is seen as a two-way communication by providing a situation and means that help students build concepts and understand a topic actively and independently [6]. In the Indonesian education system, the process of teaching English in the classroom is highly dependent on what type of curriculum is being implemented [7]. English is seen as a point-to-point means of communication, as it is used not only as an education in higher education institutions, but also as a way to improve one's social status. Thus, the teaching of English has been an integral part of the Indonesian education system.

From 2004 to 2013, the focus of English language teaching changed from year to year. It all started from the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) to Critical Thinking. The Grammar Translation Method is an old method originally used to teach dead languages. I felt that this GTM brought a number of disadvantages: 1). The grammar translation method can make language learning fun and boring 2). Grammar translation methods can also be frustrating for students when they travel to countries where the language they have learned is used (they cannot understand what people are saying and at the most basic level you have to work very hard to express yourself), 3) This method does not approach or encourage students' communication skills. In fact, the shortcomings of GTM are evident from the guidelines of the method.

However, from the point of view of the educational process, this method is considered effective for learning for three reasons. (2) This method does not require much professional skill on the part of the teacher. (3) Students are used to explain conceptual issues and discuss the use of specific grammatical structures in a second or foreign language during instruction because the student's native language is the medium of instruction. I have some difficulty understanding the lesson.

In-depth translation of sentences to and from the target language. More attention is paid to the form of the translated sentence than to its content. No listening or speaking is usually practiced, and little attention is paid to pronunciation and the communicative aspects of the language. The exercise is a reading skill and is used only in the context of translation. Based on the facts, they claim that this method is good at teaching a language, not a language. In practice, this means that GTM is well suited for teaching language rules, rather than teaching

language skills such as speaking and listening. This method usually creates a teacher-centric class. In other words, the teacher controls all activities in the class from the lesson description. Although it cannot correct students' mistakes, the lessons do not provide opportunities for conversational practice, and the study of tedious grammar rules and long lists of vocabulary does not prepare students for real-life communication [8].

GTM did not meet the goals of our new curriculum reform, which focused on meaning and communicative functions. Thus, the English teacher has been forced to adjust to the new requirements in order to meet the national target of the Indonesian curriculum. Problem Based Language Teaching (PBL) and critical thinking are considered to be in line with the new curriculum. The use of higher order thinking has been one of the desired outcomes in education for many decades. This is in line with the new era of digital technology that has brought critical thinking to facilitate learning students' thinking skills [9].

Critical thinking had several benefits when both high-order thinking skills (HOTS) and low-order thinking skills (LOTS) were used in the learning process. Helps teachers improve student literacy and encourages students to develop critical thinking skills. Indeed, in many countries, including Indonesia, cognitively developed students have become an important component of the curriculum and a desirable goal in higher education. The goal of educational reform in these countries today is to reduce the traditional learning style of memorization and allow students to acquire high cognitive abilities that allow them to think independently [10].

#### 3.2 Independent Learning Independent Campus Curriculum (MBKM) and KKNi Based Curriculum

The ongoing higher education curriculum reform in Indonesia focuses on the proper articulation of learning outcomes by adapting backward curriculum design and incorporating national qualifications frameworks into expected outcomes [11]. The Indonesian government through the Minister of Education and Culture, annually for a certain period of time, develops changes in the curriculum with a wording and a goal that will certainly contribute to the progress and implementation of learning. The curriculum can be interpreted as a teaching aid designed to achieve a national educational goal that each educational unit must achieve within a certain period of time. Among other curricula, the Merdeka campus is a policy launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture to encourage students to master various sciences that will help them cope with the world of work. The Merdeka Campus is the development of an independent learning concept. Permendikbud No. 3 of 2020 on National Higher Education Standards states that there are four main policies related to Merdeka education – Merdeka Campus. Ease of launching new programs of study, changes in the higher education accreditation system, changes in which university to include, the right to study at the university for three

semesters. Outside the curriculum. On January 24, 2020, the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiy Makarim, approved a program called "Merdeka Belajar" for colleges/universities with the term "independent campus". This curriculum provides autonomous and flexible learning in higher education and creates an innovative, free and student-friendly learning culture. Freedom of learning includes the conditions for the independence of both teachers and students in achieving the goals, methods, materials and evaluation of training. Learning assessment is the main activity for finding out how well a student's abilities are being achieved. This step is necessary as it can be used as a guideline in determining future learning strategies [12].

In contrast, the Qualification Framework National Indonesia Curriculum (KKNI) curriculum is defined as a research-oriented curriculum in a specific area of specialization. In addition, the focus on learning allows students to develop such skills so that they can solve specific tasks depending on their focus on learning. This curriculum forced students to have certain skills after graduating from college or technical school. This provision requires an educational institution or university to refer to the three core competencies when designing curricula. It aims to facilitate access to state and local authorities for both educational developers and practitioners, as well as to develop educational programs that are appropriate to local conditions. This highlights the need to develop curricula based solely on local needs and strategies to enable learners to become an integral part of human empowerment, taking into account specific conditions and local geographic contexts [13].

### 3.3 Teachers' strategies

Today, critical literacy is being studied as an actual problem of English education in both English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries [14]. In the context of EFL, some researchers have pointed out that there is a reason why critical literacy touches on marginal topics in the context of ESL. Critical literacy has several key dimensions that link every level of work and social situations.

First, teachers need to change the perspective of teaching within the curriculum to capture a broader perspective, rather than as units of instruction based on specific topics. It would be better if we consider critical literacy, which includes unique critical perspectives and ways of being that guide us through an ongoing critical orientation to texts and practices. Advertisements from magazines by collecting wrapping paper and bringing it to class to help them read the message. They are critical of everyday texts. The strategies mentioned above can shape students into behaviors that allow them to think critically about the world.

Secondly, you need to establish your knowledge of the cultural background of your students in order to cover different curricula in different content areas, spaces and places. By asking children to establish a culturally significant remnant at school, you encourage meaningful discussion of the issue and empower them to understand what is important to their unique community.

Third, students learn more when they receive something important in their lives. Thus, the use of problems, the themes and the questions they pose is essential to develop a comprehensive and critical curriculum. By mindful of student discomfort and student reactions to picture books, teachers can learn how students read and question their world. Our duty is to protect agencies and show them how to use them to create contrasts.

Next, the text is not socially neutral, created from a certain point of view. Theoretically, the text is built on the basis of a certain idea or point of view, designed to convey a specific message. Lyrics make us think and understand certain things in a certain way. In addition, it is necessary to ask the point of view given by the author. The actual map is a social structure based on your choice of what to include and what to exclude, whether to put north at the top and Africa at the center.

Finally, "critical literacy is the restructuring and reworking of texts, images and practices to convey more socially just and equitable messages and lifestyles that have real impact and impact on the real world. It is the creation of a thoughtful way of thinking for" [15].

### 3.4 Problems of English Language Teaching

The education system in education is changing during the Covid-19 outbreak. The minister instructed to transfer the process of teaching and learning from offline to online classes. Online classes have become an option that teachers have taken to teaching during the covid-19 outbreak. Students are not allowed to go to school, but they must go to school at home and use the LMS for classroom activities. Students were required to use specific applications such as Zoom, Google Classroom, and Google Meetings to study and view materials and assignments given by teachers. Stakeholders are creating a new management system to support the school system. Stakeholders should encourage new rules related to school systems [16].

The use of the media is an important part of any teaching and learning process in this era. Using the media as a learning process requires skill and creativity. The use of the Internet and supported applications has become a major factor in delivering online classes. There are also many challenges and restrictions in conducting online classes during the Covid-19 outbreak. Based on the context, the learning aids and the use of strategies were beneficial to the students in that the diverse characteristics of the students, the diverse skills, the diverse backgrounds and families were the main factors that were considered when choosing the learning strategies.

On top of that, the use of technology is unacceptable in the education system as the way we learn and communicate has changed a lot. New technologies are being massively integrated into the world of education to aid the learning process in many fields of study, including English. In addition, technology can increase and improve student engagement as a positive impact of technology. In fact, technology is much more useful than traditional methods of teaching and learning, allowing students and teachers to reach their potential and skills. Educators can reach a new level of teaching

and learning, as technology is the main means of creating conditions for learning activities in crisis situations [17].

## 4 Conclusion

As an international language, English plays an important role in many areas to meet different needs in education, society and business. In addition, English is taught in Indonesia in full accordance with the Regulations on the Curriculum adopted by the Ministry of National Education. At that time, Indonesia's curriculum policy changed regularly from KKNi to Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM). The previous curriculum, KKNi, was developed in accordance with Presidential Decree No. 8 of 2012. This requires universities to produce graduates with relevant qualifications related to core skills or competencies, supporting and complementary competencies and professional skills. The working world [18].

The KKNi based curriculum had nine levels of qualifications as shown below.

- Level 1: Elementary Education
- Level 2: Secondary School
- Level 3: D1
- Level 4: D2
- Level 5: D3
- Level 6: D4/S1
- Level 7: Professional education
- Level 8: Magister
- Level 9: Doctor

The bachelor's degree belongs to the sixth level of qualification. The 6th level of KKNi, described in the annex to Presidential Decree No. 8 of 2012, requires the following capabilities:

1. Students should be able to share their experiences and use knowledge, skills and art to solve problems and adapt to emerging situations.
2. As a general rule, graduate students should have a deep understanding of the theoretical concept of specific knowledge and one of the specific knowledge areas and be able to present solutions to procedural problems.
3. Graduate students should be able to correctly evaluate information and data analysis, and be able to give recommendations on the choice of alternative solutions individually and in groups.
4. Undergraduates are responsible not only for their own work, but also for the results of the work of the organization [19].

In colleges, both in offline and online classes, students must actively master the lecture material in the learning process. Learning with LMS or blended learning should continue to focus on learning activities outside the classroom, using LMS or networked online media, and in class. Growing learning in the digital age where all learning activities in the classroom are unlimited. So hopefully we can improve the quality of the learning process [18].

This is similar to the Independent Campus Independent Study (MBKM) curriculum, which promotes learning freedom. However, the freedom of

learning policy focuses on the basic and secondary education levels, with the latter seeking to regulate higher education levels. The four main policy points of the MBKM are:

1. Natural recertification of educational programs
2. the independence of the student to study for three semesters outside the training program;
3. independence in establishing the qualification program of study at the university;
4. Independence to include public universities.

These four programs are mainly aimed at giving higher education institutions the freedom to be more autonomous, independent, less bureaucratic and innovative [20].

In terms of these curriculum goals, most teachers and lecturers struggle to adapt the new curriculum because they fail to use the media to motivate students to learn. In addition, during the pandemic, teachers struggle to cope with complex curriculum requirements, including ineffective teaching strategies, limited LMS and online media for learning, and lack of access to learning. In addition, the various discussions that students encounter through their teachers' learning styles during the learning process. Some students like the new style of teaching and learning process. The attitude towards learning, the availability of sufficient materials, the use of appropriate learning strategies and the use of interesting media make learning satisfactory [21].

On the other hand, some students show negative attitudes, such as being passive and struggling to adjust to the new teaching method. Students are also struggling with new curriculum requirements. In short, we hope that both students and teachers or professors will be able to adapt to the new rules and policies [22].

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