

Suitability of the Independent Curriculum Teaching Modules with National Education Standards

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ABSTRACT

On February 11st, 2022, the Minister of Education in Indonesia has formulated a new curriculum, named the Merdeka Curriculum. Therefore, the development of learning modules based on the new curriculum standards is necessary. Additionally curriculum development must adapt to the current era, which is the era of digitalization. Whereas teachers must continue to follow changes following the current curriculum as a form of adjustment. This study aims to determine the extent of teachers' understanding of the suitability of teaching modules under the Merdeka Curriculum. This study thoroughly explores the suitability of teaching modules made by teachers under the Ministry of Education and Culture's Merdeka Curriculum teaching modules. This research approach model uses case studies to be examined thoroughly. The data in this study were obtained through interviews and content analysis checklists with one 8th grade English teacher at SMPN 1 TALUN. The findings show that the conformity between the teaching module made by the teacher and the teaching module under the Ministry of Education and Culture can be declared appropriate because many components have been fulfilled. There are only a few that are not attached.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since change is defined as something that is inevitable and natural, everything in this life—including the field of education—will undoubtedly alter in the future. The rise of several innovations in the fields of education, including those related to learning, learning media, and systemic changes, is indicative of the ongoing changes in the field (Nugraha, 2022). Students' linguistic competency is measured using the Merdeka curriculum. In 2022, during the COVID-19 epidemic, the Merdeka curriculum was implemented as a means of optimizing national education, with a particular focus on the English language (Pujiyanto et al., 2023).

According to Sapitri (2022) in (Reza et al., 2023) the Merdeka curriculum program is centered on giving schools the autonomy to design their curriculum in accordance with the unique needs of their students. It is therefore required to create a learning module based on current curriculum standards. Since Nadiem Anwar Makarim, the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, spoke about learning freedom, the Indonesian educational system has entered a new era. "Giving freedom and autonomy to educational institutions, and independence from bureaucratization, lecturers are freed from complicated bureaucracy and students are given the freedom to choose the fields they like."

In 2023, Jannati et al. The curriculum needs to change quickly to keep up with the digital age. wherein the instructor needs to stay current on changes in order to make adjustments. According to Arifa, 2022:26 in (Andina et al., 2023), instructional modules under the Merdeka Curriculum are in conformity. The Emergency Curriculum's adoption aims to facilitate learning in classrooms so that students can comprehend the information more easily. Arifa claims that the Emergency Curriculum Implementation is designed to make it easier for schools to manage their content learning. In just a single year, the lessons from the emergency curriculum exceeded those from the 2013 curriculum.

But in practice, there are a number of issues that arise, one of which is that teachers are ill-prepared to adjust to the new curriculum and are unaware of the most recent modifications. The Merdeka Curriculum's ajal module is still filled with several errors.

1.1 Teaching Module

A number of things can affect how well learning activities work. One of them is the appropriate teaching module that facilitates learning activities. Teaching modules are a versatile form of instructional materials. As per (Azizah Nafi'atul, 2023) and (Kosasih 2021: 19–20), the teaching module is the smallest unit of the educational program and provides a detailed description of the following: a) the overall learning goals that will be reinforced by their accomplishment; b) the kind that will serve as the foundation for instruction and learning; c) the particular learning goals that students must meet; d) the subject matter that will be covered in class; and e) the location and function of the unit (module) within the larger program unit; f) the teacher's role in the teaching and learning process; g) the tools and resources to be used; h) the learning activities that students must complete and experience in order; i) the worksheets that students must complete; j) the assessment program that students must complete while they are learning.

When creating teaching modules, the function that educators play is crucial. However, in practice, a large number of educators continue to lack a thorough understanding of the methods involved in creating and organizing lesson plans. When a teaching module is poorly planned, there is little doubt that students will not systematically get knowledge, leading to an uneven learning process between teachers and students. It is also a given that if the teacher does not properly prepare the teaching module, the learning that is done will seem less exciting. Fetra Bonita Sari (2020) claims that in (Rahayu et al., 2022)

1.2 Merdeka Curriculum

Highlights the unique qualities of every student. As a result, it is anticipated that the new policy structure pertaining to the independent curriculum will develop students' life skills. A new strategy announced by the Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud RI) includes independent learning. Before being taught to or implemented by students, Nadiem contends that instructors must first adopt the curricular policy pertaining to independent learning. Furthermore, Nadiem noted that learning cannot take place in relation to the competency of instructors at any level if there is no framework in place for translating the basic competencies that now exist and are intimately linked to the curriculum.

The implementation of a learning system that emphasizes the character building of students, the form of assessment that occurs is also not only limited to academics but can be implemented in social life (Cholilah et al., 2023). Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum with a variety of extracurricular learning opportunities, where the content will be more suitable, allowing students enough time to explore ideas and develop skills (Senowarsito et al., 2023).

The curriculum was changed due to changes in the school leadership structure and the demands of education. When viewed further, each curriculum has advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, educators' understanding of understanding and mastering the curriculum is very important so that the goals of the teacher and the curriculum are aligned to achieve the goals of the current curriculum. Educators must be able to create creative learning, which can create an effective learning atmosphere so that students can concentrate on learning to achieve educational quality standards (Pavita & Nirmala, 2021).

Merdeka Curriculum, a new curriculum created to address Indonesia's education crisis post-pandemic due to the current scenario, was introduced by the Ministry of Education.” According to (Ariga 2022) in (Riskianto et al., 2023).“The curriculum must be changed to adapt to the times and technological advancements. According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, the Merdeka Curriculum will incorporate various learning options outside the classroom. This will give students sufficient time to learn concepts and ideas and acquire skills.”

Based on the above explanation of how the Merdeka Curriculum can be applied to English language learning, there are several issues related to its implementation. First, the program was created in a short period. Family, community, teachers, and media are one of the many elements that need to be improved. Therefore, any curriculum design will be useless if teachers do not support the current curriculum.

2. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the study, it shows that the suitability of teaching modules designed by English teachers under the Merdeka Curriculum is as follows:

The information whose components are analyzed consists of general information sections, learning outcomes and objectives, usage design details, and module lists (meeting details). Indicates that the teaching module is quite relevant under the ministry of Culture's standard independent curriculum. Although there are some that are not attached, some core components that are at least required to be attached to the teaching module according to the website of the ministry of culture, are attached to the teaching module that the teacher makes. There are 6 components included in the core component, namely:

a. Learning Objectives

Contains information about important things in learning. The preparation of learning objectives must adjust to the available resources, the diversity of students, and the assessment methods used. There are several forms of learning objectives that teachers can use. They range from knowledge in the form of facts or information, conceptual understanding, procedural, thinking or reasoning skills, to collaborative and communication strategies.

b. Meaningful Understanding

The Merdeka Curriculum module must also contain information about the benefits that will be obtained by students after participating in the learning process. Later, these benefits are expected to be applied in students' daily lives.

c. Thematic Questions

Thematic questions are expected to be a means of fostering curiosity and critical thinking skills in students. On the other hand, thematic questions prepared by teachers must also be relevant to the expected learning objectives.

d. Learning Activities

Learning activities need to be elaborated and detailed in the learning module. In general, learning activities are divided into three stages. They are the introduction stage, the core stage, and the closing stage. Each stage is carried out based on active learning methods. The existence of a learning activity plan in the Merdeka Curriculum lesson plan can help teachers optimize the predetermined learning duration. In some conditions, teachers can also include alternative learning activities that adjust to the needs and conditions of students.

e. Assessment

There are forms of assessments that can be given to students. They are diagnostic assessments given before learning begins, formative assessments given during the learning process, and summative assessments given at the end of the learning process.

f. Enrichment and Remedial

Students with high achievements can be encouraged to take part in enrichment. That way, student potential can be optimally developed. On the other hand, students who need additional guidance can be assisted through remedial. Thus, students have additional time to understand the material provided.

This study aims to analyze the suitability of the teaching module components created and used by a grade VIII English teacher at SMPN 1 TALUN in the 2023/2024 academic year, semester two concerning the Merdeka Curriculum.

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Second, Learning Outcomes and Objectives consist of Learning Outcomes (Learning Outcome Elements, Sentence snippets of the Intended Learning Outcome Elements), Learning Objectives of the entire Teaching Module, Choosing references to the Learning Objective Flow provided, Dimensions of the Pancasila Learner Profile to be achieved through learning.

Third, Total Allocation of Lesson Hours (determining the number of meetings to complete the objectives), Determination of Learning Model (Online, Offline, Mixed), Infrastructure Facilities (which consists of equipment for the entire learning), Prerequisite Competencies that students are expected to master before learning begins.

Fourth, Allocation of Learning Hours (JP) per Meeting, Details of Learning Activities or Learning Design (which is recommended to consist of: Learning Objectives at the meeting, Indicators of Success, List of Teaching Supplies, List of Supporting Material Attachments as a reference for attachments to the Supporting Material section, Complete Learning Steps / Activities, Assessment Plan, Differentiation Plan for students with diverse abilities), Supporting Materials or Attachments, which can be: (Reference Materials / Teaching Materials, Student Worksheets / Assessments that can be done by students during learning, Reflection Instruments. Several components are not attached by one grade VIII English teacher, such as;

General information: “Based on the findings of the analysis on the module conducted by the researcher, it can be concluded that there is one component that is not attached to the teaching module made by the teacher, namely the general description of the teaching module. There is but not attached according to the source.”

Section 4: Module List (Meeting Details) Based on the findings of the analysis on the module conducted by researchers, it can be concluded that there is one component that is not attached, namely learning objectives per meeting. According to the source, the learning objectives at the beginning have covered everything, so there is no need to attach them again per meeting. Then two components are not attached, namely indicators of success and differentiation plans for students with diverse abilities. They are there but not attached.

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