

**CHALLENGES FACED BY ENGLISH STUDENT TEACHERS IN  
IMPLEMENTING *KURIKULUM MERDEKA* DURING THE TEACHING  
PRACTICUM PROGRAM**

**Thesis**

*Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements to Obtain Bachelor of  
Education (B. Ed) in English Language Education*



**Written by:**

**LISA KURNIA NINGSIH**

**18018066**

**Advisor:**

**Dra.ARYULIVA ADNAN, M.Pd.**

**NIP: 19630701 198803 2 001**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT**

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS**

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**HALAMAN PERSETUJUAN SKRIPSI**

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During The Teaching Practicum Program

**Nama** : Lisa Kurnia Ningsih

**NIM** : 18018066

**Program Studi** : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

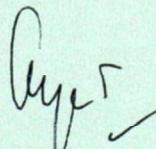
**Departmen** : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

**Fakultas** : Bahasa dan Seni

**Padang, Mei 2023**

**Disetujui oleh,**

**Pembimbing**



**Dr. Aryuliva Adnan, M.Pd**  
**NIP. 196307011988032001**

**Mengetahui,**

**Kepala Departemen Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris**



**Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D**  
**NIP. 19710525.199802.2.002**

## HALAMAN PENGESAHAN LULUS UJIAN SKRIPSI

Dinyatakan lulus setelah dipertahankan di depan Tim Penguji Skripsi  
Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Departemen Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni Universitas Negeri Padang dengan judul

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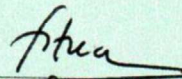
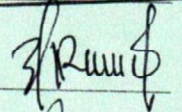
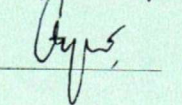
Nama : Lisa Kurnia Ningsih  
NIM : 18018066  
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Departemen : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, Mei 2023

#### **Tim Penguji**

1. Ketua : Dr. Fitrawati, S.S, M.Pd
2. Sekretaris : Witri Oktavia, S.Pd., M.Pd
3. Anggota : Dra. Aryuliva Adnan, M.Pd

#### **Tanda Tangan**

:   
:   
: 



### SURAT PERNYATAAN TIDAK PLAGIAT

Saya yang bertanda tangan dibawah ini:

Nama : Lisa Kurnia Ningsih  
NIM / TM : 18018066 / 2018  
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Departemen : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

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Diketahui oleh,

Ketua Departemen Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

Desvalini Anwar, S.S, M.Hum, Ph.D

NIP. NIP.19710525.1999802.2.002

Saya yang menyatakan,



Lisa Kurnia Ningsih

NIM. 18018066

## ABSTRACT

**Ningsih, Lisa. (2023). Challenges Faced By English Student Teachers In Implementing *Kurikulum Merdeka* During The Teaching Practicum Program. Thesis. Padang: English Language and Literature Department. Faculty of Languages and Arts. Universitas Negeri Padang**

This research is motivated by the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka which replaces the Kurikulum 2013. The implementation of new curriculum es various challenges that faced by the educators. The purpose of this research is to find out the challenges faced by English student teachers on implementing Kurikulum Merdeka during teaching practicum program. This study used qualitative research using interview methods with 13 student teachers who were in teaching practicum program. The results showed that student teachers who had been interviewed showed clear and convincing evidence about the challenges that they faced on implementing Kurikulum Merdeka during teaching practicum program. According to the student teachers, they faced challenges on implementing Kurikulum Merdeka because Kurikulum Merdeka is new for them. When they learned micro teaching they only focused on the Kurikulum 2013, but it turned out that when they were in the field they had to teach based on the Kurikulum Merdeka. Almost all the respondent faced challenges in implementing Kurikulum Merdeka such as, challenges in designing teaching modules, challenges in teaching and learning process, challenges in learning projects, and doing assessments based on Kurikulum Merdeka.

**Key Words:** *Student teachers , challenges , teaching practicum program , Kurikulum Merdeka*

## ABSTRAK

**Ningsih, Lisa. (2023). Challenges Faced By English Student Teachers In Implementing *Kurikulum Merdeka* During The Teaching Practicum Program. Skripsi. Padang: Departemen Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang**

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka yang menggantikan Kurikulum 2013. Implementasi kurikulum baru memunculkan berbagai tantangan yang dihadapi para pendidik. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui tantangan yang dihadapi calon guru Bahasa Inggris dalam mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka selama program praktikum mengajar. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif dengan menggunakan metode wawancara terhadap 13 mahasiswa calon guru yang sedang mengikuti program praktikum mengajar. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa calon guru yang diwawancarai menunjukkan bukti yang jelas dan meyakinkan tentang tantangan yang mereka hadapi dalam mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka selama program praktikum mengajar. Menurut para calon guru, mereka menghadapi tantangan dalam mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka karena Kurikulum Merdeka merupakan hal baru bagi mereka. Saat belajar micro teaching mereka hanya fokus pada Kurikulum 2013, namun ternyata saat di lapangan mereka harus mengajar berdasarkan Kurikulum Merdeka. Hampir semua responden menghadapi tantangan dalam mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka seperti, tantangan dalam merancang modul pengajaran, tantangan dalam proses belajar mengajar, tantangan dalam proyek pembelajaran, dan melakukan penilaian berdasarkan Kurikulum Merdeka.

**Kata Kunci :** *mahasiswa guru, tantangan. Proram praktek mengajar, Kurikulum Merdeka*

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Finally, the writer realizes that this thesis is not perfect yet. However, the writer hopes this thesis can be useful for himself and for all people. Furthermore, any critic and comment are acceptable for improving this thesis from the weaknesses.

Padang, Mei 2023

Writer



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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Background of the Problem**

The Covid-19 pandemic worsened the education sector through a learning crisis (Learning Loss). According to Andriani (2021), the pandemic period had forced 1.7 billion students to undergo learning that is done indirectly and encounters various difficulties and losses in learning. Learning loss results in a loss of sensitivity of communication between teachers and students in collaborating actively in a learning process. The problems and dilemmas that must be passed and addressed require various strategic policies and solutions. To overcome learning loss, the education unit needs a learning recovery policy with curriculum implementation.

According to Jojor, A., & Sihotang, H. (2022), the leading causes of learning loss during online learning are changes in schools to become online and the unpreparedness of educational units and educators to accept changes due to Covid-19. The learning system from face-to-face to online requires adequate technology so that material transfer and creating a pleasant atmosphere occur in the (online) school environment. With many curriculum demands, educators and students do not meet common goals. Educators will achieve learning objectives based on the completeness of the essential competencies provided while students struggle to understand the learning material presented. Limitations in adjustments to changes cause the learning process to run less effectively and cause learning

loss. The demands of Curriculum 13 for the completeness of essential competencies and the learning load causes students to experience a loss of interest in learning

In response to the learning crisis, Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (*Kemendikbudristek*) Nadiem Anwar Makarim launched Merdeka Learning Episode Fifteenth: *Kurikulum Merdeka* (KM) and the Merdeka Teaching Platform, Friday (11/2/2022). Minister Nadiem revealed, referring to various national and international studies, the learning crisis in Indonesia has been going on for two years. The learning crisis is increasing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which causes learning loss and increasing learning gaps.

The government launched KM to revive education from adversity due to various realities of the educational problem. KM provides an overview of the implementation of project-based learning with exciting themes. In addition to project-based learning, KM also focuses on providing essential material, considered important material to be studied in depth. By focusing on essential material, educators and students have a longer time to carry out the learning process in the classroom so that there is no heavy learning load for students. According to Fikri & Hasudungan (2021), the basic competencies (KD) contained in the previous syllabus during normal times were not relevant during the Covid-19 period, so adjustments were needed to use essential KD in mandatory history subjects so that it would not make it difficult for students.

Moreover, according to Suryaman (2020), KM focuses on achieving concrete learning outcomes, namely the achievement of behavioral knowledge, abilities, and results. In addition, this curriculum is considered suitable for adapting to existing problems because the nature of this curriculum is carried out with flexibility.

The implementation of KM continues to be carried out at all levels of education to improve the learning and teaching process. In implementing KM, the government offers three options for schools, including (1) *Merdeka belajar* (independent learning), (2) *Merdeka berubah* (independent changing), and (3) *Merdeka berbagi* (independent sharing). KM certainly brings impacts and challenges for teachers and stakeholders of education. Learning administration, teaching strategies, and assessment will change, and some challenges will occur (Rahimah, 2021).

The concept of KM, a new curriculum, faces various educational challenges. One of them is the readiness of educators. According to Mulyasa (2021), in KM policy, it is necessary to self-reflect to answer the challenges of education following the times. Curriculum changes should be accompanied by teacher readiness in implementing the curriculum. Teachers are the spearhead in the success of achieving a curriculum. Teacher readiness in teaching is essential before teaching, which includes making teaching modules, material to be studied, preparing teaching materials, and teaching media.



KM is considered suitable for restoring the position of teachers with such flexibility. In line with this, Daga (2021) states that the freedom of teachers in the learning process is the meaning of independence in real learning. The system of this curriculum is to provide the most comprehensive opportunity for teachers to design learning according to the characteristics of students.

Based on the results of preliminary interview research made by a researcher with the 3 teachers in Padang, there are still many challenges the teachers face. The challenge is that it is still at the beginning of the implementation of KM. Teachers still do not fully understand the design of KM teaching modules because they have never received training on the procedures for developing teaching modules. Teachers, especially 7th and 10th-grade teachers in the first semester of 2022/2023, still feel confused about developing teaching modules using KM. In line with this, Indarwati (2021) states that several changes in teaching modules make it difficult for teachers to develop teaching modules due to internal and external factors. The external factor is that the teachers are used to being fixated on teachers' and students' books, so teachers must be creative and innovative in developing teaching modules. Meanwhile, the internal factor is a lack of understanding of KM in developing principles and procedures for developing teaching modules, so teachers have difficulties developing integrated teaching modules.

According to (Zulaikha, et al., 2022) teachers faced problems in the format of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments which are still made

manually because there is no format from the government, and in implementing and strengthening the profile, this is something new and teachers must apply in learning. Thus causing some confusion for teachers in implementing and strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile.

Suhandi et al. (2022) discuss teachers' challenges of Kurikulum Merdeka. The result shows that KM affects the role of teachers and requires teachers to instill some self-competence in developing learning with KM. The implementation of KM in schools is inseparable from various challenges. In dealing with KM policy, teachers must have competencies in designing teaching modules that can offset the burden of KM. In addition, Maulida (2022) states that in designing teaching modules, the teacher must first conduct a diagnostic assessment by categorizing students' conditions from a psychological and cognitive perspective. This demand becomes a challenge for the teacher to design learning according to the characteristic of students. Many teachers still have not been able to develop a good teaching module in KM (YouTube Vox Populi Institute Indonesia, May 8, 2022).

Those challenges are not only faced by the teacher but also by university students who join teaching practicum programs as temporary teachers at the chosen school. Those students are majoring in education in higher education, also called student teachers. Student teachers from the English Education program of Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP) also participate in implementing KM during their teaching practicum program. Student teachers who are in the teaching

practicum program in the period of July-December 2022 never learn about KM. KM had not been implemented in the previous semester when they studied Micro-Teaching. Some of them in the teaching practicum program teach based on KM, so it becomes a challenge for them.

The teaching practicum program is one of the main subjects all English education students in UNP must carry out. In general, the purpose of implementing a teaching practicum is to provide genuine involvement for English education students regarding actual situations and conditions of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In teaching the real student in the real classroom, student teachers will undoubtedly have various challenges. As a student teacher teaching students is one of the most challenging roles that student teachers face in their teaching practicum program. Grossman & McDonald (2008) mentioned that teaching practicum programs is challenging for student teachers.

There is no research related to the challenges faced by student teachers during the teaching practicum program on KM. So, this research focuses on the challenges student teachers face during teaching practicum programs whose schools implement Kurikulum Merdeka. Several schools in West Sumatera Province have implemented Kurikulum Merdeka for grades 7 of Junior High School and 10 in Senior High School.

Thus, the reason for choosing this topic is that student teachers are not yet professional teachers. In teaching practicum programs, they are already faced

with the new curriculum, namely KM. So, the researcher tried to conduct a research entitled “Challenges Faced by English Student Teachers in Implementing Kurikulum Merdeka During the Teaching Practicum Program.”

### **B. Focus of the Research**

Based on the background of the problem above, the researcher found that student teachers faced challenges in their teaching practicum program. The researcher focuses on challenges faced by English student teachers in the teaching and learning process based on *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

### **C. Formulation of the Problem**

Related to the focus of the problem above, the researcher can formulate the problem as follows: What are the challenges faced by English student teachers from UNP in implementing *Kurikulum Merdeka* during the teaching practicum program?

### **D. Research Question**

The questions proposed for this study are as follows:

1. What are the challenges faced by English student teachers from UNP in designing teaching modules based on *Kurikulum Merdeka* during the teaching practicum program?

2. What are the challenges faced by English student teachers from UNP in teaching and learning process based on *Kurikulum Merdeka* during the teaching practicum program?
3. What are the challenges faced by English student teachers from UNP in project based on *Kurikulum Merdeka* during the teaching practicum program?
4. What are the challenges faced by English student teachers from UNP in doing assessment based on *Kurikulum Merdeka* during the teaching practicum program?

#### **E. Purpose of The Research**

Regarding the research questions above, the study aims to: Know the student teachers' challenges from UNP in implementing *Kurikulum Merdeka* during the teaching practicum program.

#### **F. Significance of the Research**

The result of this study are expected to provide several benefits for both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the research findings are expected to give significant description about student teachers challenges in implementing *Kurikulum Merdeka*. Practically, this research is expected to be consideration for university lectures in conducting Micro-teaching class in order to prepare student teachers in teaching practicum program. Finally, the researchers expect that this study is going to be source of information for

another for future research about student teachers' challenges in implementing *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

## **G. Definition of Key Terms**

### 1. Challenge

The challenge, according to Toynbee, is something difficult that requires great effort and determination, something that tests strength, skill, or ability. In this research, challenges are student teachers' difficulties in the teaching practicum program based on KM.

### 2. *Kurikulum Merdeka*

*Kurikulum Merdeka* is a substitute for Kurikulum 2013 which has just begun to be implemented in early 2022.

### 3. Student Teachers

Student teachers are university students who take part in teaching practice programs for a certain period to prepare and develop their teaching skills and teacher professional development.