

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ENGLISH TEACHING STRATEGIES IN THE CONTEXT OF CURRICULUM CHANGES IN INDONESIA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The curriculum used plays a crucial role in determining the approach, methods, and practices of classroom learning. However, several challenges emerged during its implementation, such as the heavy administrative workload for teachers and limited flexibility in accommodating students' diverse learning needs. A country certainly understands and recognizes that curriculum reform is a viable effort to improve education in that country. In recent years, many countries have implemented curriculum reform with the goal of equipping children with the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for tomorrow. In Indonesia, the purpose of this study is to explore how teachers perceive the transition from a K-13 curriculum to an independent curriculum. And this study is a literature review which analyzes curriculum reform in Indonesia with the aspects contained therein..

Keywords: English Language Teaching, Teachers Strategies, Curriculum Reform.

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum change is an important element of the reform in an education system. Curriculum reform create opportunities of creativity among teachers (Zhao, & Watterston, 2021), it can create cultural and societal change especially in educational community contexts (Kalimaposo, 2022), and it can create opportunities for teachers to be an agent of change (Jenkins, 2020) and curriculum change can support the change of teaching strategies among teachers. As a result, curriculum change, as indicated by Fullan (2007), has been a common event in non-native English-speaking countries, mainly due to the curricular innovation based on communicative language teaching (CLT) in these Asian contexts (Nunan, 2003).

Curriculum in Indonesia has a crucial role in shaping a competent and competitive young generation. As the foundation of education, the curriculum determines the learning objectives, direction, and materials taught at each level of education (Akmalur et al., 2023; Alvina et al., 2020; Muhammad & Waton, 2023). A good curriculum must be able to adapt to the times and the needs of the labor market, so that graduates can have relevant skills and be able to adapt to changes. In addition, the curriculum also serves as a tool to instill cultural values, morals, and national character, which are essential for creating a civilized society with integrity (Indah et al., 2021; Shashank, 2022).

Curriculum 2013(K-13) emphasizes the importance of character, creativity and critical thinking skills, and encourages collaboration between students and teachers in the learning process. Through K13, students are expected to be more independent, innovative, and ready to face future challenges. K13 is designed to integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes through thematic approaches and project-based learning (Neza et al., 2019; Ulil et al., 2023). Curriculum 2013 was introduced as a response to perceived shortcomings of the previous competencies-based curriculum, it aimed to integrated character education, promote critical thinking, and align more closely with international educational standards.

Recognizing the need for further innovation and flexibility, the Indonesia givernment introduced the Merdeka Curriculum, the Merdeka Curriculum is an educational initiative designed by the Indonesian government to give teachers and schools greater freedom to

manage the teaching and learning process. This curriculum emphasizes flexibility and relevance, with the aim that education is more in line with the wishes and potential of students in the local environment. The implementation of new curriculum and its impact on human resources (Pratikno, Hermawan, & Arifin, 2022), through Merdeka Curriculum, teachers are given the freedom to develop creative and innovative teaching materials and learning methods, while students are encouraged to be more active and critical in learning (Canter, 2019; Winarno et al., 2022). From these studies, it can be seen that these studies focus on the impact of curriculum on several areas, challenges and teachers' responses on coping with curriculum change. From the studies above, the research on teachers' perceptions of the teaching strategies in the new curriculum change seems to be neglected in the curriculum change. Consequently, there is not much information on how teaching strategies are created during the new curriculum and how they respond to these changes. Therefore, this paper aims to explore teaching strategies of English teachers in the new curriculum change.

METHODOLOGY

This study is Literature review research design in order to examine, how teachers perception and their strategies in teaching English during the curriculum reform in Indonesia, particularly in 2013 curriculum (K-13) to Merdeka curriculum (Independent curriculum), A literature review was chosen because it allows the researcher to synthesize existing empirical and theoretical studies, identify research trends, gaps, and patterns, and provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue without conducting fieldwork, researcher also took some accurate data on how, and teachers' responses to curriculum changes in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result of the current study implies that teachers can adapt the teaching strategies in the contexts of curriculum reform. With this adjustment, English teachers are able to use technologies and digital tools for their teaching. Such instruments of teaching strategies can motivate and encourage students to improve their language abilities (Sakkir & Abdurrahman, 2022). As the result, the change does not hamper English teachers to deliver effective and successful teaching and learning in their schools. The effective delivery of teaching may end up with the improvement of students' language abilities, grammar, and vocabulary both prior and post the Covid-19 pandemic era.

Based on the reviewed literature, curriculum reform in Indonesia, particularly the transition from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum, presents complex challenges for teachers. These challenges include limited readiness to adopt new pedagogical paradigms, insufficient professional training, infrastructure constraints, heavy administrative workloads, difficulties in implementing differentiated learning, and limited parental support. Such conditions often hinder teachers' ability to fully implement innovative and student-centered approaches as mandated by the new curriculum.

This research demonstrates that literature studies can be conducted in diverse geographic settings and involve a wider range of participants, including policymakers, trainers, prospective teachers, researchers, parents, and the community. These studies are important for this theme because they can provide diverse perspectives on similar issues and inform the government about the effective implementation of curriculum changes.

CONCLUSION

This literature review has examined teachers' perceptions of English teaching strategies during curriculum reform in Indonesia, particularly the transition from the 2013 Curriculum (K-13) to the Merdeka Curriculum. Based on the synthesis of relevant studies published between 2010 and 2025, the findings indicate that curriculum reform in Indonesia

has brought both opportunities and challenges for English teachers in adapting their teaching practices.

The reviewed literature reveals that teachers generally demonstrate positive attitudes toward curriculum change, showing openness, willingness, and enthusiasm to implement new approaches promoted by the Merdeka Curriculum, such as differentiated learning, project-based learning, and student-centered instruction. Teachers recognize that the new curriculum provides greater flexibility and autonomy, allowing them to design more creative, contextual, and meaningful learning experiences for students. These changes are perceived as supportive of developing students' critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and independence, which align with the goals of 21st-century education.

However, the findings also highlight persistent challenges that hinder effective curriculum implementation. These challenges include limited teacher readiness, insufficient professional development and training, heavy administrative workloads, inadequate infrastructure, particularly in rural and remote areas, and difficulties in implementing differentiated instruction and authentic assessment. In addition, many teachers experience uncertainty and confusion due to unclear guidance and frequent curriculum changes, which often lead them to revert to traditional teaching methods.

Despite these obstacles, the literature shows that teachers have employed various adaptive teaching strategies to cope with curriculum reform. These strategies include conducting diagnostic assessments, implementing differentiated instruction, integrating project-based and problem-based learning, utilizing digital tools and learning media, applying continuous formative assessment, encouraging student reflection, and managing classrooms flexibly. Such strategies indicate that teachers play a crucial role as agents of change in ensuring the success of curriculum reform.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that while curriculum reform in Indonesia presents significant challenges, English teachers are capable of adjusting their teaching strategies to align with new curricular demands. The success of curriculum reform largely depends on sustained teacher support through continuous professional development, clear policy guidance, reduced administrative burdens, and equitable access to educational resources. Future research is recommended to explore teachers' classroom practices through empirical studies and to investigate the long-term impact of curriculum reform on teaching quality and student learning outcomes.

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