

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses several topics, including the research background, the research questions, the problem definition, the research objectives, the research importance, the research scope, and the assumption and limitation.

1.1 Background of the Study

Education is something that cannot be separated from human life. Everyone certainly has the right to get the same and proper educational facilities. Education can be said as a means that aims to develop the potential of each individual so that they are able to become educated person (Jannah et al., 2022). In the educational process, it will involve many parties in it, starting from the government, schools, teacher and also the students themselves. Education is also a long process so that the results obtained cannot be seen instantly. This will be seen over time when an educated person succeeds in carrying out his role in the future. In Education, the learning process will greatly affect the final results that will be obtained by students. Because of this, education cannot be implemented without curriculum. According to Aini Qolbiyah et al., (2022) curriculum is the main point in the process of running an education. Indonesia as a country that upholds an education, also tries to always develop and modify the curriculum continuously, this is done so that the education process can run in accordance with the country's social dynamics. The curriculum also called as a fundamental for determining the quality of education in a country.

Curriculum is the key, reference, basis in the process of carrying out the education itself. According to Nasution(2021) the curriculum will always be updated, this is of course based on several factors, one of which is to be able to balance with the times and also the technology that is so massive in the world of education. That is

why, changes in the curriculum are needed. The change in curriculum is also inseparable from the change of ministers. Currently in Indonesia, the 2013 curriculum has been changed to a new curriculum called the *Kurikulum Merdeka*. Jannah et al (2022) stated that *Kurikulum Merdeka* can be said to be a new breakthrough for education in Indonesian which aims to produce superior next generations. This is in line with (Saleh, 2020) explain that one of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* programs, namely independent learning, is a program held with the aim of exploring the potential of students, and making Student learning process in the classroom more innovative.

Main key of *Kurikulum Merdeka* is "*Merdeka Belajar*", which means all students can utilize their learning preferences. The preferences refer to materials, strategies, management, target, sources, mode, and platforms. The main goal of this curriculum is to promote 21st-century learning skills, one of which is creative thinking. On the other hand, one of the most noticeable differences of *Kurikulum Merdeka* as advised from the Ministry of Education and Culture, is the newly adapted curriculum intended to provide flexibility for the students to learn.

After learning activities were disrupted for almost 3 years due to the pandemic, which has had a significant impact on the world of education. The Covid19 pandemic has forced educators to immediately make drastic changes in learning patterns in the classroom where during the pandemic learning is done from home (online) (Kahfi, 2021). Closing schools has become a common tactic in the fight against COVID-19. In order to bypass traditional face-to-face (offline) educational practices, instruction is delivered concurrently online. In fact, the Indonesian population's reliance on schooling has an influence on students' learning capacities, which might lead to learning loss (Azmi, 2020). At this time, where learning has now

begun to enter a normal period and one of the efforts to counter learning loss, the Kurikulum Merdeka has begun to be introduced.

Kurikulum Merdeka is the outcome of adjustments made to Indonesia's national educational framework to address long-term developments (Yamin&Syahrir, 2020). Similar sentiments were expressed by NadiemMakarim, the minister of education, who stated that "education reform cannot be carried out solely using an administrative approach, but must carry out culture transformation" (Satriawan et al., 2021). This is also consistent with Sibagariang et al.'s assertion that "in the future, it is hoped that the concept of independent learning can be well received, this is related to the vision and mission of Indonesian Education, that is to form human beings who have quality and are able to compete in various fields of life" (Sibagariang et al., 2021).

The main objective of the *KurikulumMerdeka* is to provide freedom of Learning and teaching for students and teacher. This curriculum does not intend to replace the existing curriculum but to improve it. Therefore, several changes were made, one of which is the Lesson Plan (RPP) which is lighter and less complicated than before(Satriawan et al., 2021).In the *Kuriulum Merdeka* the teacher role in implementing the *KurikulumMerdeka* is very significant. The teacher here is a facilitator in the class. Teacher not only teaches and manages classes but can also build relationships with students and the school so that the learning process can be more effective. Therefore, a strategy is needed to support this role which requires a process in its implementation. This strategy will assist teacher in obtaining learning outcomes and also in assessing learning outcomes. Teacher can achieve learning goals and determine students' understanding abilities through the right process.

The Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture said that the free learning program included the National Standardized School Examination (USBN) the National Exam (UN) Curriculum Plan (RPP) and the Separate Student Registration Regulation (PPDB). Also, regarding the assessment process in 2022 the Merdeka Curriculum prioritizes a diagnostic assessment process related to cognitive and non-cognitive aspects (Supriyadi et al. 2022). Diagnostic assessment is an independent assessment/evaluation of the curriculum which is carried out specifically to find out or understand the characteristics of the conditions of the strengths and weaknesses of the student's learning patterns in order to design learning according to the differences in the student's abilities and conditions (Kepmendikbud No.719/P/2020).

The implementation of diagnostic assessments in schools has provided many positive things to the enthusiasm of teacher, so that teacher can adjust and design learning methods, models and media according to students' abilities to convey learning outcomes.

The diagnostic assessment maps the ability of all students in the class quickly, to find out who already understands, who understands somewhat, and who does not yet understand. The teacher can adjust the learning material to the abilities of students. Diagnostic assessment can be divided into two, namely cognitive diagnostic assessment and non-cognitive diagnostic assessment. Cognitive diagnostic assessment refers more to cognitive based procedures to show students strengths and weaknesses related to their knowledge and skills. In this case the non-cognitive assessment focuses more on the readiness of students both emotionally and psychologically in accepting learning (Hadi, 2021).

The *Kurikulum Merdeka* can be used in all stages, from PAUD, SD, SMP, SMA, SMK, Special Education, and Equality education units. At the Elementary

School level, there are changes in the subjects of Natural Sciences (IPA) and Social Sciences (IPS). Both will be combined into one subject called Natural and Social Sciences (IPAS). Another subject that has also changed is English, which was previously only local content in elementary school, and is now a permanent subject. However, the school can reconsider this by adjusting the circumstances and interests.

SDN 4 Pupuan is one of the elementary schools in the Tegallalang District; Gianyar Regency is one of the elementary schools that implement the *Kurikulum Merdeka*. This school also become a reference for other schools in the Tegallalang sub-district in implementing educational programs. Regarding the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* at SD 4 PUPUAN the researchers are interested to conduct research related to teaching and assessing strategies in the implementation of *kurikulum Merdeka* in elementary school: a case study in SD N4 PUPUAN.

Assessment, according to Permendikbud No. 23 of 2016, is the process of collecting and processing information to measure the achievement of student learning outcomes. This process is carried out through various assessment techniques, using various instruments, and originating from various sources to make it more comprehensive. Assessment must be carried out effectively. Therefore, the collection of information that will be used to measure the achievement of student learning outcomes must be complete and accurate in order to produce the right decisions. Assessment is more than just finding out the achievement of student learning outcomes. Assessment can improve students' abilities in the learning process. Often assessments tend to be carried out only to measure student learning outcomes. Thus, assessment is positioned as an activity separate from the learning process. Assessment should be carried out through three approaches: assessment of learning, assessment for learning, and assessment as learning.

According to Viernes (2022), an Assessment of learning is an assessment that is carried out after the learning process is complete. The learning process is complete but only sometimes occurs at the end of the year or at the end of students completing education at a certain level. Each educator conducts an assessment intended to provide recognition of the achievement of learning outcomes after the learning process is complete, which means that the educator conducts an assessment of learning. National exams, school/madrasah exams, and various forms of summative assessment are assessments of learning. Assessments for learning are carried out during the learning process and are usually used as a basis for improving the teaching and learning process. In the assessment for learning, educators provide feedback on students' learning process, monitor progress, and determine their learning progress. Educators can also use assessment for learning to improve student performance. Assignments, presentations, and projects, including quizzes, are examples of forms of assessment for learning.

1.2 Problem Identification

In accordance with the changing times, entering the Revolution 4.0 and the existence of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, SD N4 Pupuan is one of the schools that implement the use of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in its teaching and learning process, including in English subjects. For a long time, learning English, especially in elementary schools, was accustomed to teaching and learning in accordance with the curriculum in 2013.

According to Faridatuunisa (2020), learning the curriculum 2013 uses a scientific approach and students are asked to find out for themselves what is being taught and makes it difficult for students to learn and prioritize learning in the classroom, while it is different from the *Kurikulum Merdeka* where in the *Kurikulum Merdeka* learning can be done anywhere and anytime according to the needs and

abilities of the teacher and students being taught. The *Kurikulum Merdeka* is designed to provide opportunities for students to learn in a relaxed, calm, and happy way without pressure and provide freedom to think creatively and independently. Where by using the curriculum, the teacher can focus more on essential material and the teacher can teach according to the stages of student achievement and development. Therefore, researchers are interested in researching; what strategies are used by teacher to teach English and assessments in using the *Kurikulum Merdeka* Considering that the *Kurikulum Merdeka* is a new curriculum, the authors want to examine the English teacher perceptions about the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SD N4Pupuan.

1.3 Limitation of The Study

The scope of this research is limited to how the teacher strategy in teaching and assessing using the *Kurikulum Merdeka* and perceptions about the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka*, especially for elementary school students at SD 4 PUPUAN. Strategy is an overall approach related to the idea of planning and executing an activity within a certain period of time. This school can be considered as an example of the efforts of English teacher in implementing the *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

Based on the background as well as the limitation of the study, this present study is aimed at answering the three research questions as presented below.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What strategies are used by the teacher for teaching English using *KurikulumMerdeka* in SD N4 Pupuan?
2. What strategies are used by the English teacher in assessing students' learning through the implementation of *KurikulumMerdeka* in SD N4 Pupuan?
3. What is English teacher' perceptions about the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SD N4Pupuan?

1.5 Research Objectives

1. This study aims to analyze teacher strategy for teaching English using *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SD N4 Pupuan
2. This study aims to describe teacher strategy for assessing students using *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SD N4 Pupuan
3. This study aims to Discuss the teacher perceptions about the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SD N4 Pupuan.

1.6 Research scope

This study analyzes the teaching strategies used by English teacher as well as assessing strategies based on the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in the teacher book, lesson plans (*Modul Ajar*) for grade 4 English teacher at SDN 4 Pupuan and the perceptions of English teacher about the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* at SDN 4 Pupuan.

1.7 Research Significance

1.7.1 Theoretically

The results of this study are expected to broaden teacher knowledge regarding the assessment and teaching strategy using *Kurikulum Merdeka* for Elementary School. Moreover, this research can also be used as a reference for other researchers who want to study in the same field related teaching and assessing strategy for Elementary school students.

1.7.2 Practically

The results of this study are used to help English teacher to be aware of the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka*, especially in the implementation of strategies for teaching and learning to meet the requirements of the new curriculum. The results of this study are expected to be beneficial for the following.

1. For the teacher

The results of this study can be used to help English teacher understand the commonly used strategies for teaching and assessing that meet the requirement of the implementation the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, this research can also be considered as a starting point for EFL teacher' reflection about what appropriate assessment instruments are needed for teaching and assessing processes in English classes.

2. For the students

This research is expected to enable the students to become aware of the importance of learning activities that apply the *Kurikulum Merdeka* and to be more responsible for their learning in the classroom.

3. For other researchers

Hopefully, this research can be an inspiration for other researchers to conduct similar research so that new ideas will emerge to improve our educational standards.

