CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Previous Study

A study conducted by Rahma Khoerunnisa Innayatullah and Afifah Kusuma Dewi (2022) entitled: **The Impact of the Independent Curriculum on Seventh-Grade English Learning at MI Muhammadiyah Piyungan.** This study aims to determine the impact of implementing the independent curriculum on seventh-grade English learning at MI Muhammadiyah Piyungan. The methods used were observation and direct interviews with seventh-grade English teachers. The interviews were semi-structured. And the research results show that the implementation of the independent learning curriculum requires teachers to adapt in conducting diagnostic assessments and differentiated learning based on student characteristics, even though this aims to optimize the potential of each student.[1]

Both studies examined the implementation of the independent curriculum in English in seventh grade. Both employed qualitative methods, with data collection techniques including observation, interviews, and documentation with English teachers. Furthermore, the results of both studies indicate that teachers are required to conduct diagnostic assessments and

[1] Innayatullah, RK, & Dewi, AK, (2022). The Impact of the Independent Learning Curriculum on English Learning for Grade VII at Muhammadiyah Piyungan Middle School. Proceedings of the National Seminar on the Results of the Implementation of the School Field Introduction Program, 3 (1). 1269

implement differentiated learning according to the needs and characteristics of students. The differences, however, lie in the scope of the studies. The former focused on the impact of the independent learning curriculum on teacher adaptation in the assessment and differentiated learning process. Meanwhile, the current study discusses the forms of independent curriculum implementation used by teachers in English teaching and the challenges faced in the field.

Diah Yuliani (2022), with the title: **Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Improving Student Learning Independence at SMP Negeri 5 Bandung.** The aim is to examine the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP Negeri 5 Bandung and its impact on student learning independence. The results of the study indicate that this curriculum encourages students to be more active and responsible in learning through the freedom to choose topics and methods according to their interests.[2]

Both studies examined the implementation of the independent curriculum at the junior high school level and aimed to determine how it impacted the learning process. Both Diah Yuliani's study and the current study demonstrate that the independent curriculum provides space for more flexible, contextual, and student-centered learning. Both also highlight the changing role of teachers in guiding students to become more independent and active in

[2] Diah Yuliani. "Implementation of the Independent Curriculum to Improve Students' Learning Independence at SMP Negeri 5 Bandung." Journal of Education. Vol. 3, no. 9 April 2022

learning. Furthermore, both used a qualitative approach to gather data from field practice. The difference lies in the impact of the independent curriculum on student learning independence in general, without limiting it to specific subjects. Meanwhile, the current study focuses specifically on the implementation of the independent curriculum in English learning in seventh grade, including the forms of implementation used by teachers and the obstacles encountered in its implementation.

Nurlailah, et al (2024) with the title: **Implementation of the Independent Curriculum for English Subjects in Developing Student Creativity at An-Nahl Iman Integrated Islamic Junior High School, Jambi.** This study aims to explore the implementation of the independent curriculum in English subjects at An-Nahl Iman Integrated Islamic Junior High School, Jambi and its impact on student creativity. This study uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the independent learning curriculum at the school has a positive impact on increasing student creativity in English learning. However, there are obstacles such as teachers' lack of understanding of the curriculum, limited facilities and infrastructure, as well as uneven digital access, busy time management, and minimal teacher digital competence[3].

[3] Nurlailah, et al (2024) "Implementation of Independent Curriculum for English Subject in Developing Student Creativity at An-Nahl Iman Integrated Islamic Middle School, Jambi". 3 (5), 199

These two studies address a similar topic: the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in English language learning in junior high schools. Both used a qualitative approach and collected data through observation, interviews, and documentation. Findings from both studies indicate that the Merdeka Curriculum encourages more adaptive learning, is relevant to the student's context, and emphasizes student-centered learning through differentiation strategies. Furthermore, both studies also identified similar challenges, such as teachers' poor understanding of the curriculum and limited supporting facilities in schools. The difference lies in the focus on the research objective, namely the influence of the Independent Curriculum on student creativity in English learning, while the current study focuses on the form of curriculum implementation and the challenges faced by teachers in teaching English in seventh grade. The previous study highlighted aspects of developing teachers' creativity and digital competence, while the current study emphasizes diagnostic assessment, differentiated learning, and low student engagement.

Minati Rina Hardiyana, et al. (2025), title: **Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in English Subjects at MI Al-Mahad An-Nur Yogyakarta.** This study aims to determine the implementation of the independent curriculum in English subjects at MI Al-Mahad An-Nur. The approach used is descriptive qualitative. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the independent curriculum in English learning at MI Al-Mahad An-Nur has been implemented well. MI Al-Mahad An-Nur teachers have carried out learning planning by analyzing student needs, compiling

teaching modules and participating in training related to the implementation of the independent curriculum. MI Al-Mahad An-Nur teachers have also used fun learning methods in implementing learning. Although there were several obstacles found during the evaluation, these obstacles could be overcome so that the implementation of the independent curriculum in English learning at MI Al-Mahad An-Nur could run well.[4]

These two studies examined the implementation of the independent curriculum in English lessons using a qualitative approach. Both showed that this curriculum gives teachers the freedom to teach according to student needs and encourages student-centered learning. Teachers were also required to conduct initial assessments to adjust learning. However, both studies identified obstacles such as a lack of facilities and teachers' understanding of the curriculum. The differences lie in the educational level and focus of the studies. The previous study focused more on basic English language introduction and student learning interests. Meanwhile, the current study focuses on teacher implementation, assessment, and student engagement.

Putri Fabela, et al. (2024), entitled: **Analysis of the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in English Learning at SMPN 14 Bengkulu.** This study aims to analyze the implementation of the independent curriculum in English learning at SMPN 14 Bengkulu City and what challenges and opportunities they face in the learning process. This study uses descriptive

[4] Minati Rina Hardiyana, et al (2025) "Implementation of Independent Curriculum for English Subject at MI Al-Mahad An-Nur Yogyakarta", Ideguru: Journal of Teacher Scientific Work 10, no. 1 (January 2025), https://doi.org/10.51169/ideguru.v10i1.1282.

qualitative. The results show that the implementation of the independent curriculum in English learning has a positive impact on student motivation and participation. Teachers have more freedom to design and change learning materials according to students' wishes and needs. However, this study also found several challenges and opportunities. One of them is limited resources and technical support, as well as the need for further training for teachers to understand and apply the principles of the independent curriculum effectively. On the other hand, teachers must be proficient in using digital and be able to use it well in classroom learning.[5]

The two studies share a similar focus: they both discuss the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in English learning in junior high schools. Their objectives also appear similar: to determine how the Merdeka Curriculum is implemented and its impact on the English learning process. The difference lies in the fact that the previous study did not specifically mention grades, while the current study focuses on seventh grade. Furthermore, in terms of approach, the previous study's title uses the word "analysis," suggesting a possible evaluative approach, while the current study's title emphasizes the practical implementation of the curriculum.

[5] Fabela, P., Zasrianita, F., & Febriani, H. (2024). Analysis of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in English learning at SMPN 14 Bengkulu. JKIP: Journal of Educational Science Studies, 5(2), 180–188.

Therefore, the researcher is very interested and wants to conduct further research related to the title: Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in English Learning in Class VII of SMP Negeri 10 Huamual Belakang.

B. Theoretical Framework

1. Definition of Curriculum

The curriculum is a fundamental element in education, serving as a guideline for implementing learning activities. It is a structured plan that establishes objectives, content, and strategies to achieve targeted learning. This emphasizes the curriculum's role as a structured educational guideline.[6] According to researchers, the curriculum must be designed in such a way that the learning process and plans are in line with the directions and are structured.

From a broader perspective, the curriculum encompasses formal and informal educational experiences aimed at meeting the needs of individuals and society. This perspective highlights its role in shaping character and supporting community development.[7] Through the curriculum, education plays a role in shaping students' character while contributing to overall social development. Furthermore, the curriculum serves as a tool to direct educational experiences toward the achievement of systematically designed goals. In this context, the curriculum aligns students' needs with contemporary demands.[8] Finally, he emphasized the dynamic nature of the

[6] Utami (2020): Basic Concepts of Modern Curriculum, (Depok: Kencana 2023) p.7
[7] Dewi, R., & Hidayat, A. Curriculum Reform in the Digital Era (Bandung: Alfabeta 2022)
[8] Hasanah, S. Holistic Curriculum Development (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar. 2021)

curriculum, which must adapt to social, cultural, and technological changes, transforming it into a relevant and transformative educational tool.

2. Curriculum Components

The curriculum consists of interrelated elements designed to achieve educational goals. In Putri, these elements include educational objectives, content, strategies, and evaluation. These elements function cohesively to ensure an effective learning process.[9] Educational objectives serve as a foundation for developing students' needs and addressing global challenges. Meanwhile, learning content encompasses material that is important and relevant to advances in science and technology.

Effective teaching strategies are also crucial. As mentioned, these methods must accommodate diverse learning styles and encourage student engagement. Evaluation serves to measure achievement, emphasizing comprehensive assessment that encompasses cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects.

3. Curriculum Principles

Curriculum development must adhere to important principles. The core principles that need to be identified are relevance, flexibility, continuity, and balance.[10] Relevance ensures alignment with societal needs and global trends. Flexibility, as Arifin noted, allows the curriculum to adapt

[9] Putri, A, Main Components of the Educational Curriculum. (Surabaya: Erlangga 2023) p. 8

[10] Dewi, R., & Hidayat, A. Curriculum Reform in the Digital Era (Bandung: Alfabeta 2022)

to ongoing developments in science and technology. Continuity underscores the importance of ongoing development across all levels of education, as Hasanah emphasized. Finally, balance ensures equal attention to cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, thus producing well-rounded individuals.

4. Curriculum Objectives

The primary goal of the curriculum is to develop individuals who are academically, socially, and emotionally competent. The curriculum aims to maximize students' potential by developing knowledge, skills, and attitudes relevant to contemporary needs.[11] It can be concluded that the curriculum is a series of learning objectives that not only emphasize material but also the attitudes and character of students.

In addition, it can be emphasized the importance of instilling moral and ethical values through the curriculum by emphasizing social responsibility.[12] As stated, the curriculum is the foundation for character formation and moral values. From a global perspective, the curriculum must enhance national competitiveness by equipping students with technological skills, critical thinking, and communication skills.[13] Thus, it can be concluded that the curriculum provides social awareness, instills national pride, and a sense of patriotism in students.

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[11] Utami, Basic Concepts of Modern Curriculum, (Depok: Kencana 2023) p. 9

[12] Dewi, R., & Hidayat, A. Curriculum Reform in the Digital Era (Bandung: Alfabeta 2022)

[13] Rahmawati, L. Evaluation of Technology-Based Curriculum (Malang: State University of Malang 2022)

5. Independent Curriculum

a. Definition of Independent Curriculum

The independent curriculum provides flexibility for educational institutions and teachers to develop learning tailored to students' needs and characteristics. This curriculum focuses on essential competencies, project-based learning, and Pancasila character development.[14] In short, the curriculum provides freedom for students and teachers in learning according to their needs and characteristics, and contains Pancasila values.

It has been defined thatThe independent curriculum is a form of innovation that places students as the main subject of learning, with a more contextual, participatory, and differentiated approach to accommodate students' individual needs.[15] An independent curriculum focuses primarily on student learning tailored to their needs. Furthermore, an independent curriculum aims to give teachers the freedom to design learning activities appropriate to the school context and environment.[16] This curriculum encourages active and meaningful learning that is learner-centered.

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[14] Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (2022), Guidelines for Implementing the Independent Curriculum. Jakarta: Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology.

[15] Sanjaya W (2022), Curriculum Development in the Era of Independent Learning. Jakarta: Kencana

[16] E. Mulyasa, (2022) Independent Curriculum: Concepts, Strategies, and Learning Implementation. Bandung: Pemuda Rosdakarya

b. Principles of Independent Curriculum

The independent curriculum operates based on three core principles, namely: flexibility, relevance, and integration:

1. Flexibility

   Flexibilityis a key principle of the independent curriculum, which provides ample room for teachers and schools to adapt the learning process to the needs, interests, and characteristics of students. Furthermore, flexibility empowers students to participate in various learning activities, such as student exchanges and project activities.

2. Relevance

   Relevance emphasizes aligning students' learning outcomes with their needs, interests, and the realities of their lives. This ensures that learning becomes meaningful, enjoyable, and beneficial, not only for grades but also for real life and the future.

3. Integration

   Integration is a learning approach that combines various important elements, such as inter-subject content, character values, and alignment with the Pancasila Student Profile. Thus, integration is key to achieving flexible, contextual, and student-centered education.

c. Components of Independent Curriculum

The independent curriculum consists of key components, including the CPL design, learning activity matrix, and evaluation framework:

1. Learning Outcomes (CPL)

   CPL is a core component that guides the entire learning process to be more focused, relevant, flexible, and meaningful. With CPL, teachers are no longer tied to rigid ATP but are instead given the space to innovate and adapt learning to the real needs of their students.

2. Learning activity matrix

   A learning activity matrix is a table or systematic format that contains detailed learning activity planning, from learning objectives, materials, methods, media, learning resources, to assessment formats. This helps teachers organize and integrate all learning components within a clear and structured framework.

3. Evaluation framework

   Evaluation frameworkIt serves as a systematic guide for measuring student learning achievement comprehensively, encompassing knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It focuses not only on final results but also on a flexible and contextual learning process tailored to student needs and characteristics.

d. Objectives of Independent Curriculum

Developing students' basic competencies:

1. Providing freedom to learn: Students are given space to develop their unique interests, talents and potential.
2. Encouraging relevant and contextual learning: Through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) and cross-disciplinary learning.
3. Improving the quality of teachers and learning:The teacher acts as a facilitator, not just a deliverer of material.
4. Reducing the administrative burden on teachers: Learning planning is simpler and focuses on learning outcomes.

Furthermore, this curriculum also addresses the growing demand for lifelong learning. Supriyadi (2021) emphasized that a self-directed learning approach encourages independent learners who can adapt to the dynamics of the evolving global job market, ensuring graduates remain relevant and competent in a competitive environment.

e. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum In English Teaching

1. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum of Planning In English Teaching

Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 16 of 2022 concerning Process Standards in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, and Secondary Education in Chapter II explains learning planning.

Lesson planning is the activity of formulating:

a) Learning objectives as the targets of a learning unit;
b) Methods for conveying learning objectives; and
c) How to assess the achievement of learning objectives.

Flexible lesson planning documents are not tied to a specific format and can be adapted to the learning context. Clear documents are easy to understand, while simple documents contain only basic and crucial elements as a guide for implementing learning activities.

In the Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 347 of 2022, concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Madrasas, Chapter V concerning Learning in Madrasas, states that the learning process in Madrasas is a series of integrated activities which include planning, implementation, and assessment/evaluation of learning.

Lesson planning this process involves educators designing learning activities that ensure the effective and efficient achievement of learning objectives. Planning ensures that teachers are adequately and qualitatively prepared before implementing learning. High-quality learning planning is characterized by innovative ideas that lead to effective learning. Learning plans should be as simple, practical, and realistic as possible. One form of learning planning is the Learning Flow and Objectives (ATP) or teaching module. Learning itself is an

interactive process between students, educators, and learning resources in a learning environment.

2. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum of Implementing In English Teaching

Successful implementation of the independent curriculum requires thorough preparation and collaboration among stakeholders in secondary education. One key aspect is the development of a Learning Agreement (PPL), which outlines the roles and expectations of students, teachers, and external partners. Harsono (2022) emphasized that this agreement ensures alignment between after-school learning activities and established Graduate Learning Outcomes (CPL).

Supriyadi (2021) noted that the availability of facilities such as laboratories, digital devices, and access to industry partnerships significantly impact curriculum success. Institutions are encouraged to develop collaborative ecosystems involving programs, students, and external stakeholders. Monitoring and evaluation are integral to the implementation process. Regular assessments of student progress and program implementation allow institutions to identify challenges and adapt appropriately.

It can be said that feedback mechanisms, both from learners and external partners, play a vital role in improving the relevance and

outcomes of the curriculum.[17] Both subjects should be equally represented in their respective roles, in accordance with this curriculum principle. Implementing interdisciplinary projects and engaging students in community-based programs helps integrate real-world experiences into the academic framework, thereby enhancing the overall impact of the curriculum.[18] Student involvement in the world of education such as project implementation and cross-learning can develop them to integrate experiences in real life.

a) Method

Learning methods are the means or strategies used by teachers to convey material to students in order to achieve learning objectives. Learning methods encompass not only delivery techniques but also reflect the philosophical, psychological, and pedagogical approaches used in the learning process. In practice, teachers must be able to adapt methods to the characteristics of students, the subject matter, and the learning environment. As in the independent curriculum, learning methods are increasingly diverse and emphasize student-centered learning.

[17] Rahmawati, L. Flexible Learning System in Higher Education (Malang: State University of Malang 2023) p.21

[18] Rahman, S. Experiential Learning: Theory and Practice (Bandung: Alfabeta 2021)

b) Media

Learning media is anything that can be used to convey messages, stimulate the thoughts, attention and interests of students so that the learning process takes place effectively and efficiently.

In the context of English language teaching, media plays a crucial role because it can help students understand and master language skills in a contextual, interactive, and engaging way. The use of media in English learning not only helps explain abstract material but also creates a more lively learning environment. Media can include:

3. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum of Assessment In English Teaching

Assessment is the process of systematically collecting, processing, and interpreting information to understand students' learning outcomes, and providing meaningful feedback to support their learning process.

The types of assessment in this independent curriculum include:

a) Diagnostic Assessment

This assessment encompasses both cognitive and non-cognitive aspects to understand the student's initial condition. As explained, non-cognitive diagnostic assessments focus on understanding the student's psychology, social emotions, home activities, family circumstances, and social context to determine their interests, character, and learning preferences. The purpose of

cognitive diagnostic assessments is to provide a comprehensive understanding of student learning motivation. This goal allows teachers to implement educational activities tailored to the student's abilities and characteristics and implement necessary modifications.[19]

b) Formative Assessment

This assessment is the collection of information during the learning process, with the aim of monitoring student learning progress, providing meaningful feedback, and adjusting learning strategies to be more effective. This assessment can be defined as an assessment conducted during the learning process to determine student learning progress, identify learning needs, and provide feedback to improve the learning process.[20]

c) Summative Assessment

This assessment is used at the end of a lesson, semester, or academic year to evaluate student learning outcomes. Its primary purpose is to assess the extent to which students have understood the material taught and to measure the achievement of final competencies. The opinion expressed is that summative assessment in early

[19] Lubis, M., & Syawalina, F. (2025). Implementation of Diagnostic Assessment in the Independent Curriculum for Initial Mapping of Student Abilities. Journal of Innovative Education and Teaching, 12(1), 45–58.

[20] Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) 2022. Learning and Assessment Guidelines. Jakarta: Kemendikbudristek.

childhood education aims to determine children's developmental achievements, not to determine graduation.[21]

f. Challenges Faced by Teacher In English Teaching

The independent curriculum offers many benefits, but it also presents significant challenges. The main problem is a lack of understanding among educators and students regarding the curriculum's objectives and implementation.

Harsono (2022) identified the need for comprehensive outreach and training programs to address this gap. The resource gap between institutions in urban and rural areas further complicates implementation. Supriyadi (2021) highlighted limited access to infrastructure and industry partnerships in remote areas, which hinder the equitable implementation of the independent curriculum. Solutions include providing additional government funding and leveraging digital technology to bridge this gap.

Cultivating an innovative mindset among teachers is crucial. Providing professional development opportunities and showcasing successful examples of independent curriculum implementation can foster acceptance and engagement among educators. Furthermore, logistical challenges, such as coordinating after-school activities and managing

[21] Sari R., Mastikawati, Fitriah, Azwir, Reni, Amiroh, and Gurung L. "Optimizing Formative and Summative Assessment in Early Childhood Education: A Case Study of Sekolah

student workloads, require careful planning.[22] Teachers are more innovative and creative in developing their mindset and professionalism and making detailed plans to manage learning well.

1) Challenges of Planning In English Teaching

Planning is the process of developing learning strategies, objectives, materials, methods, and evaluations to help students develop their English language skills effectively. English teachers face five main challenges when designing learning for the 2022 prototype curriculum in Indonesia: student conditions, learning methods, learning scenarios, learning media, and assessment.[23] Meanwhile, it was found that teachers experienced difficulties in preparing appropriate lesson plans for online learning. This was driven by technological limitations, challenges in student interaction, and how to create effective materials in online media.[24] Next, it can show that teachers experience obstacles due to a lack of understanding of the new curriculum concept, minimal preparation, and adjustment to learning loss.[25]

2) Challenges of Implementing In English Teaching

Challenges in implementation are any obstacles or difficulties that arise during the process of carrying out a previously planned activity. This

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[22] Rahmawati, L. Flexible Learning System in Higher Education (Malang: State University of Malang 2023) p. 22

[23] Sakiruddin, N. Bte Abdul, & S. Maryam Hamid (2023), English Teachers' Challenges in Designing English lesson Plans for 2022 Prototype Curriculum. JLTA: vol.3 no.2

[24] Jayantari & Agustini (2021),*English As A Foreign Language Lesson Plans During Covid-19 Pandemic In The Senior High School.*JPBI: Vol. 9, no. 1

[25] M. Paramesthi & T. Suwartono (2023), Challenges and Strategies of English Language Teaching Within the Freedom-to-Learn Curriculum in Indonesia. PICONESS: vol.12

suggests that teachers experience difficulties implementing learning due to a lack of training, high administrative burdens, and school facilities that do not support active learning strategies.[26] Furthermore, it was highlighted that implementing online learning during the pandemic presents serious challenges for teachers, particularly in managing student participation, developing interactive materials, and conducting evaluations fairly and objectively.[27]

3) Challenges of Assessment In English Teaching

Assessment challenges encompass all obstacles teachers face in designing, implementing, and assessing the learning process, whether diagnostic, formative, or summative. Teachers face challenges in classroom assessment practices, particularly in designing valid instruments, assessing student abilities fairly, and managing assessment data to improve learning. There are also challenges related to student motivation and characteristics, which influence how they respond to assessment.[28] Furthermore, it was also highlighted that teachers experience difficulties in ensuring student participation in online assessments, ensuring the authenticity of their work, and using online assessment applications effectively. Furthermore,

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[26] Putra, R. Hidayat & A. Arifin (2023), Teacher Challenges in Implementing Learning in the Independent Curriculum. JPI: vol. 4, no. 2 150–160.

[27] Jayantari, M. Sri, & N. Putu Agustini (2021), English as a Foreign Language Lesson Plans during COVID-19 Pandemic in the Senior High School. JPBI: Ganesha University of Education. vol. 9, no. 2 85–94.

[28] S. Kamran Ali Shah, M. Butt, A. Saleem, and M. Usman Rafique (2023), Exploring the Challenges in Classroom Assessment: A Mixed Method Study of Secondary Schools in Pakistan. JIERE. vol. 12, no. 4: 20932100.

challenges arise in aligning assessment strategies with students' diverse learning styles and providing feedback.[29]

[29] H. Joyce Agtarap, A. Carmela Januto, K. Alvin Aglibot, & C. Mae Toquero (2024), Assessment Strategies and Challenges of Teachers in Evaluating Students during Online Learning. JDET, vol. 4, no. 2:ep2418,https://doi.org/10.30935/jdet/14863

Table 2 Theoretical Framework

