

## MAJOR STEPS IN CURRICULUM MERDEKA DESIGN FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

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**Abstract:** *This research aims to analyze the main steps involved in designing a self-directed curriculum for English language learning. The research methodology used is library research, which involves the analysis and synthesis of data collected from written sources such as books, journals, articles, and other documents. The research utilizes relevant keywords such as "self-directed curriculum design," "English language learning," and "approaches to English language learning" in searching for relevant sources. The research steps include identifying the research objectives, searching for relevant sources through databases, online libraries, and academic websites, as well as filtering sources based on their relevance and quality. The selected sources are then carefully read and analyzed to identify themes, findings, or approaches related to the design of a self-directed curriculum for English language learning. The data collected from these sources is then synthesized to identify similarities, differences, or patterns that emerge in the design of a self-directed curriculum for English language learning. The research report is prepared by presenting the steps taken in qualitative library research and the relevant findings. Through this research, it is hoped to provide a better understanding of the main steps in designing a self-directed curriculum for English language learning. This research also encourages critical evaluation of the sources used and the application of qualitative library research methodology. The results of this research can make an important contribution to the development of an effective self-directed curriculum for English language learning in the current educational context.*

**Keywords:** *merdeka curriculum design, English language learning, learning approaches, library research, data analysis.*

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis langkah-langkah utama yang terlibat dalam desain kurikulum merdeka untuk pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Metodologi penelitian yang digunakan adalah library research, yang melibatkan analisis dan sintesis data yang dikumpulkan dari sumber-sumber tertulis seperti buku, jurnal, artikel, dan dokumen-dokumen lainnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan kata kunci yang relevan seperti "desain kurikulum merdeka," "pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris," dan "pendekatan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris" dalam pencarian sumber-sumber yang relevan. Langkah-langkah penelitian meliputi identifikasi tujuan penelitian, pencarian sumber-sumber yang relevan melalui basis data, perpustakaan online, dan situs web akademik, serta penyaringan sumber-sumber berdasarkan relevansi dan kualitasnya. Sumber-sumber yang dipilih kemudian dibaca dan dianalisis secara cermat untuk mengidentifikasi tema, temuan, atau pendekatan yang berkaitan dengan desain kurikulum merdeka untuk pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Data yang dikumpulkan dari sumber-sumber tersebut kemudian disintesis untuk mengidentifikasi kesamaan, perbedaan, atau pola yang muncul dalam desain kurikulum merdeka untuk pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Laporan penelitian disusun dengan menyajikan langkah-langkah yang dilakukan dalam penelitian kualitatif library research serta temuan-temuan yang relevan. Melalui penelitian ini, diharapkan dapat memberikan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang langkah-langkah utama dalam desain kurikulum merdeka untuk pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini juga mendorong evaluasi kritis terhadap sumber-sumber yang digunakan dan pemilihan metodologi penelitian kualitatif library research yang diterapkan. Hasil penelitian ini dapat menjadi kontribusi penting dalam pengembangan kurikulum merdeka yang efektif untuk pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris dalam konteks pendidikan saat ini.

**Kata Kunci:** desain kurikulum merdeka, pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, pendekatan pembelajaran, library research, analisis data

## INTRODUCTION

The education system in Indonesia has undergone curriculum changes 11 times, starting in 1947 with a very simple curriculum and culminating in the latest curriculum, which is the 2013 curriculum. Despite the changes in curriculum, the goal has always been to improve upon the previous curriculum. Each change that occurs is a policy decision made by responsible parties involved in education in Indonesia. The current curriculum, known as "Kurikulum Merdeka" or the concept of independent learning, aligns with the aspirations of the national education figure, Ki Hajar Dewantara, and focuses on the freedom to learn independently and creatively. This ultimately contributes to the development of students with independent character.

There are several policy changes within the "Kurikulum Merdeka" including the transition from National Standardized Final Examinations (USBN) to competency assessments, the replacement of national exams with minimum competency assessments and character surveys. Additionally, there is a streamlining of lesson implementation plans, which previously spanned 20 pages but now only require one page encompassing three components: learning objectives, learning activities, and assessments.

The design of "Kurikulum Merdeka" represents a new approach to learning in Indonesia introduced in 2021. This curriculum aims to enhance student independence and creativity in learning. In the context of English language learning, there are several key steps to consider in the design of "Kurikulum Merdeka".

Effective learning occurs when there is a connection between learning objectives and learning outcomes. Mastery of learning outcomes indicates the achievement of planned learning objectives, thereby making the learning process effective. The level of achievement in learning is a measure that students must reach in their learning. The assessment of the effectiveness of learning becomes important as it provides an overview of how well the learning process is able to achieve its objectives.

These steps will ensure that students can develop English language skills comprehensively and effectively. 1) Determining Core Competencies, The first step in designing the Merdeka Curriculum for English language learning is to determine the core competencies to be achieved by students. These core competencies should encompass key aspects of English language proficiency, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The main objective of this step is to ensure that students can master the fundamental English language skills proficiently. 2) Developing Learning Objectives, After determining the core competencies, the next step is to develop specific and measurable learning objectives. These learning objectives should reflect the abilities that students are expected to achieve upon completing English language learning. For example, learning objectives could relate to students' ability to comprehend English texts, write essays, or communicate effectively in English. 3) Selecting Materials and Learning Resources, The next step is to select materials and learning resources that align with the established learning objectives. These materials and resources can include textbooks, online materials, audio, videos, or other relevant learning sources. It is important to choose materials that are engaging, up-to-date, and suitable for students' proficiency levels. 4) Implementing an Active Learning Approach, The Merdeka Curriculum encourages the implementation of an active learning approach, where students are at the center of the learning process. This approach involves creating a student-centered classroom environment where students actively participate, collaborate, and engage in meaningful learning activities. It emphasizes hands-on experiences, problem-solving, discussions, and critical thinking to enhance students' English language skills. By following these steps, educators can design a curriculum that promotes holistic and effective English language development among students.

In the context of English language learning, this approach can involve students in speaking and interacting in English, collaborative projects, or real-life situation simulations. This active learning approach will help students develop their English language skills more effectively. Implementing Authentic Assessment, Authentic assessment is an important step in designing the Merdeka Curriculum for English language learning. Authentic assessment focuses on evaluating skills that can be applied in real-life situations. For example, students can be assessed based on their ability to present a specific topic in English, write letters or emails. The author must ensure that their writing does not contain any elements of plagiarism. Articles that have already been published as proceedings will not be accepted for publication in this journal without undergoing further processes to complete the writing and finalize the research data.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the author employed qualitative research with the method used for data search and collection being library research, which relies on various written sources in literature studies. The technique used by the author is descriptive analysis method to gather and examine data by reading and reviewing books, journals, and articles related to the major steps in curriculum design for learning English. Once all the data is collected, it will be followed by analysis.

The qualitative research aims to understand the phenomenon of curriculum changes in Indonesia, focusing on the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes of learning that align with the new curriculum in English language teaching. The chosen research design aims to uncover the essence and nature of the events related to curriculum changes in Indonesia in detail, based on the facts obtained in the research. Additionally, through this qualitative approach to data collection, it is expected to reveal the situations and challenges faced in the analysis between the researcher and the examined data.

After identifying the issues in the definition phase, the next step is the design phase. The design phase aims to create a learning media that can be used in English language teaching. The design of this English language teaching design takes into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of the analyzed learning media.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the obtained data, in realizing a new differentiated learning paradigm that focuses on learners, educational institutions must implement stages of lesson planning and assessment. There are seven main steps in the Merdeka Curriculum design for English language learning in the intracurricular lesson planning and assessment:

1. Analyzing Learning Outcomes (LO) to formulate learning objectives and the flow of learning objectives.

Learning Outcomes (LO) are the learning competencies that learners must achieve at each developmental stage for each subject, especially English language learning in early childhood education, primary education, and secondary education. Learning outcomes consist of a set of competencies and a comprehensive scope of material organized comprehensively in narrative form. Adapting to learners' developmental stages, the mapping of learning outcomes is divided into age phases.

2. Planning and implementing diagnostic assessments

Diagnostic assessment plays a crucial role in understanding students' level of understanding and individual needs before starting the learning process. Diagnostic assessment helps teachers in planning learning activities that are tailored to students' characteristics and abilities.

Diagnostic assessments also aim to identify students' competencies, strengths, and weaknesses. The results are used by educators as a reference in planning learning activities that meet students' learning needs. In certain circumstances, information related to students' family background, readiness to learn, learning motivation, interests, and other relevant information can be taken into consideration when planning the learning activities.

3. Developing teaching modules

The development of teaching modules aims to create instructional materials that guide educators in delivering lessons. The developed teaching modules should be essential, engaging, meaningful, and challenging. They should also be relevant, contextual, and continuous. For example, in English language learning, using YouTube videos is common nowadays to enhance vocabulary, listening, speaking skills, and even gain insights into grammar information within those videos.



Figure 1 : English vocabulary visual learning media  
Source: Pinterest language center (LC)

The example image above is a Visual Media, which is a learning medium that can only be seen and analyzed for its meaning. This media can be used as one of the English language learning tools. Using relevant pictures or illustrations related to the topic being taught can help students understand new words, phrases, or concepts. For example, if students are learning animal vocabulary, pictures of animals can assist them in associating words with the corresponding images.

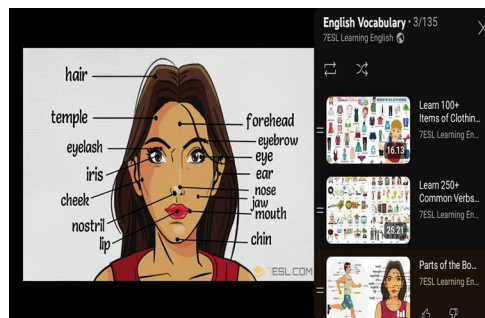


Figure 2. English vocabulary video learning media  
Source : YouTube 7ESL Learning English.

The example image above is an Audio-Visual Media. Audio-visual media refers to media that can be seen and heard, and there are many videos that can be used for learning English, such as podcasts, songs, audiobooks, instructional videos, and more. When compared to the previous media, audio-visual media indeed appears more engaging. By utilizing audio-visual media in English language learning, students can enhance their listening skills, improve pronunciation, expand vocabulary, and have a more interactive and engaging learning experience.

#### 4. Adjusting learning to the stage of achievement and characteristics of learners

New paradigm learning revolves around the learners. Therefore, this learning is tailored to the stage of achievement and characteristics of the learners. The scope of learning materials refers to what the educator will teach in the classroom or what the learners will learn in the classroom. Furthermore, the educator adjusts the learning process, adapts the learning outcomes, and creates a conducive learning environment. These adjustments are also made to ensure effective and relevant learning. Each student has different needs and levels of development, so it is important for teachers to understand the individual characteristics of students and integrate appropriate approaches.

#### 5. Planning, implementation, and processing of formative and summative assessment

In planning and implementing assessments, there are five principles of assessment that should be considered. The first principle is that assessment is an integral part of the learning process, facilitating learning and providing holistic information as feedback. The second principle is that assessment is designed and conducted according to its functions, allowing flexibility in determining assessment techniques and timing. Third, assessment is designed to be fair, proportionate, valid, and reliable. Fourth, progress reports and student achievements are presented in a simple and informative manner. Lastly, assessment results are used by students, educators, educational staff, and parents.

#### 6. Reporting learning progress

An effective form of reporting learning outcomes involves the involvement of parents, students, and educators as partners; reflects the values embraced by the school; is comprehensive, honest, fair, and accountable; and is clear and easily understood by all parties.

The approach to reporting learning progress in the Merdeka Curriculum encourages active student participation in the evaluation process and monitoring their progress. This allows students to have control over their learning, engage in self-reflection, and take necessary actions to achieve their goals.

#### 7. Learning evaluation and assessment

The learning and assessment that have been conducted are then evaluated. Educators reflect on the learning and assessment in each teaching module. They identify what has been successful and what needs improvement. By identifying these aspects, teaching modules can be further enhanced. It is also done to monitor students' progress and ensure the achievement of learning objectives. However, the evaluation and assessment approach in the Merdeka Curriculum tends to be more flexible and adaptable to students' needs and interests.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Conclusion

The main conclusion of the Kurikulum Merdeka's major design steps in English language learning is to provide freedom and flexibility to students in determining their learning paths. The Kurikulum Merdeka prioritizes empowering students to manage their own learning process, with teachers playing the role of facilitators and supporters in the learning journey.

Through the use of visual and audio media, students can actively engage in the English language learning process. Visual media such as images, videos, or presentations can help visualize concepts, reinforce understanding, and spark students' interest. Audio media such as audio recordings, podcasts, or songs can enhance students' listening and speaking skills.

Furthermore, adjusting the learning process according to students' achievement levels and characteristics is an important aspect of the Kurikulum Merdeka. By understanding students' individual abilities and needs, teachers can implement appropriate learning strategies, provide diverse learning resources, and offer choices and independent projects to develop students' interests and skills.

Planning and implementing diagnostic assessments also play a significant role in the Kurikulum Merdeka. Diagnostic assessments help teachers understand students' needs and level of understanding before starting the learning process. By utilizing assessment results, teachers can plan tailored learning

experiences based on individual students' needs, identify students' strengths and weaknesses, and provide constructive feedback.

Overall, the Kurikulum Merdeka provides an inclusive approach that considers students' individual needs and abilities, while offering freedom and flexibility in the English language learning process. This allows students to become more engaged, motivated, and achieve better learning outcomes.

### Recommendations

Character, as an expression of ethics, should aim to preserve and develop the ethics of every individual as members of society, the nation, and part of the nation. Ethics needs to be implemented extensively to instill good moral values, especially in students who are the future generation of the nation. Higher education institutions, as dignified and intellectual educational institutions, have a responsibility to instill good ethics in students. These ethics are derived from the religious and cultural values of Indonesia and should adapt to the demands of changing times.

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