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AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ABOUT CURRICULUM INDEPENDENT IN TEACHING READING ENGLISH

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui persepsi siswa terhadap Kurikulum Mandiri dalam pengajaran membaca di kelas 3 SMAN 1 Simeulue Cut. Metodologi penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan subjek penelitian adalah siswa kelas 3 SMA SMAN 1 Simeulue Cut. Instrumen penelitian menggunakan kuesioner yang diisi oleh 38 responden. Penelitian ini berfokus pada tiga aspek utama, yaitu Kesesuaian, Efektivitas, dan tingkat kekerasan dalam Kurikulum Mandiri, khususnya dalam konteks pengajaran membaca dalam bahasa Inggris. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas siswa mempunyai persepsi positif terhadap kesesuaian kurikulum dengan kebutuhannya, efektivitas pencapaian tujuan pembelajaran, dan tingkat kekerasan dalam penerapan kurikulum tersebut. Kesimpulannya, mayoritas siswa mempunyai pandangan positif terhadap Kurikulum Mandiri, meskipun terdapat variasi persepsi terhadap kemampuan beradaptasi. Hal ini menekankan pentingnya pemantauan dan evaluasi penerapan kurikulum secara berkelanjutan, serta memberikan ruang penyesuaian agar lebih memenuhi kebutuhan dan harapan siswa.

Kata Kunci: Persepektif siswa, Kurikulum merdeka, Pengajaran Menulis Bahasa Inggris

Abstract

This study aims to investigate students' perceptions of the Independent Curriculum in teaching reading in class 3 of SMAN 1 Simeulue Cut. The research methodology uses a qualitative approach with the research subjects being 3rd grade high school students at SMAN 1 Simeulue Cut. The research instrument used a questionnaire filled in by 38 respondents. This research focuses on three main aspects, namely Suitability, Effectiveness, and rate of hardness in the Independent Curriculum, especially in the context of teaching reading in English. The research results show that the majority of students have a positive perception of the suitability of the curriculum to their needs, effectiveness in achieving learning objectives, and the rate of hardness in implementing this curriculum. In conclusion, the majority of students have a positive view of the Independent Curriculum, although there is variation in perceptions of adaptability. This emphasizes the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of curriculum implementation, as well as providing room for adjustments to better meet student needs and expectations.

Keyword: Students' Perception, Curriculum Independent, Teaching Reading English

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INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia always experiences curriculum changes from time to time (Badan Penelitian Diknas, 2014:12). Curriculum changes, of course, cannot be avoided and passed, but must always be lived and adapted to the needs and principles (Sadewa, 2022). Plate revealed that the failure of education is influenced by a curriculum that is not able to meet the demands of the times (Satriani dkk, 2021). Therefore, the curriculum must always be evaluated and then adjusted to the knowledge, progress, and demands of the market. Reporting from CNN Indonesia Nadiem Makarim stated that the Independent curriculum was launched in order to catch up with education during the covid-19 pandemic, which with this curriculum will make learning activities more flexible. Although it has been inaugurated, this curriculum is not necessarily implemented in all schools, this depends on the readiness of each Each school.

The independent curriculum will be run as an additional option first during 2022-2024 in the context of post-pandemic learning recovery. Furthermore, it is hoped that this independent curriculum can be implemented thoroughly in all educational units. Currently, there are three curriculum options implemented, namely the 2013 curriculum, the emergency curriculum, and the independent curriculum.

The Indonesian Government has changed 2013 curriculum to the newest curriculum named Curriculum Independent Belajar. In this curriculum focuses at material essestial, character development and the students' competence. Curriculum Independent Belajar can be used at all level such elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, vocational school, and college. At school, it is found some changes such English subject.

The students have wide opportunity to make an interaction using various text. The students will gain knowledge and various skills, which is required to be able to live in a diverse world culture. Learning English offers ability to get an access about the world and different point of view. Students' understanding of this socio-cultural and intercultural knowledge can improve critical thinking skill. In this new curriculum, English learning is focused on strengthening the ability to use six language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting in various text. The learning achievment refers to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment (CEFR). CEFR reflects specifications that can be seen from the ability of students: (1) maintain interaction and convey something desired in a variety of contexts

with clear articulation, (2) express the main ideas to be conveyed comprehensively, (3) maintain communication even though sometimes still gaps.

In this new curriculum, English language learning is expected to assist students in acquiring listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting skills. According to Artini (2017), the objectives of English language learning include developing communicative competence in English, both orally, in writing, visually, and audiovisually; fostering cross-cultural competence to understand and appreciate Indonesian and foreign perspectives and cultural products; enhancing self-confidence to express oneself as an independent and responsible individual as well as cultivating critical and creative thinking abilities.

In Curriculum Independent, English is taught since elementary school to senior high school. Some schools have implemented English subject at first and fourth grade. As an example, in Aceh. Some schools here have implemented Curriculum Independent. However, English subject has to insert to the learning process. Here, the writer found the teachers who have not English education background teach that English subject. The teachers who have basic education background only teach this subject. From the preliminary observation, the teachers have problems in teaching English to young learners. First, the teachers' ability to write, master the structure and pronounce English word is an obstacle in learning English in elementary school. Second, the teacher starts learning directly on the topic without giving brainstorming. Third, learning facilities and parental support for student learning progress.

The Independent curriculum is a form of evaluation of the previous curriculum, namely the 2013 curriculum. In an independent curriculum, students are no longer forced to study subjects that are not their main interest. However, based on the researcher's Observation at school during Asistensi Mengajar, there are still many teacher who do not get used to apply the system in Curriculum Independent which is morelikely students center. Additionally, the students also need to adapt at the same time due to the fact that they were not used to doing the Curriculum Independent. That is why the writer intends to identify the students' perception regarding the Independent Curriculum while learning English.

However, there are many complain addressed by the students and teachers seen by the researcher during Asistensi Mengajar. The researcher found that the teachers were difficult to follow the the implementation of Curriculum Independent in the class. They still do not understand the context of Curriculum Independent. The problem is

exacerbated by their inability of using technology and teacher center habit. That is why the writer is curious of how the Curriculum Independent works and intend to conduct the research with the title "An analysis of Students' Perception toward The Implementation of Curriculum Independent".

As the writer's references, there are some previous study related to this research. Firstly, the research "The Urgency in Teaching English to Young Learners in Curriculum Independent" conducted by Dewi, et al. The research aims to analyze perceptions about the importance of English for Young Learners at Elementary Schools at Gugus Diponogoro in Jembrana Regency in 'Curriculum Independent Belajar'. The research objective was to find out teachers' perceptions about the importance of English for young learners at Elementary Schools in Jembrana Regency. The sample of the research was 16 teachers from 12 Elementary Schools in Gugus Diponogoro. The samples were taken through cluster random sampling. The researcher used descriptive qualitative and the data were collected by using questionnaire. The results of the research were 1) The students are able to master English when teaching English since earlier, 2) English will be useful in gaining a job in the future, and 3) By mastering English, the young learners will have the social and economic benefits in the future. Therefore, it can be concluded that the teachers of Elementary Schools in Gugus Diponogoro agreed that English for Young Learners is crucial to teach.

Secondly, "Implementation of The Independent Belajar Curriculum Through The Application of Project-Based Learning Models To Improve Students' Learning Outcomes". It was conducted by Baharulla, et al. The results showed that the application of the project-based learning model could improve student learning outcomes in learning mathematics. This can be seen from the average score of learning outcomes in the cognitive domain in the first cycle of 57.12% increased to 82.88% in the second cycle, the average score of learning outcomes in the psychomotor domain in the first cycle of 53.65% increased to 84.61%, and the average score of learning outcomes in the affective domain in the first cycle of 72.5% increased to 83.85%. This shows that the application of the project-based learning model can improve student learning outcomes.

What make this study different from the previous researches are the location, instrument, and the research subjects. The location is in Banda Aceh, the subject of the research are the UBBG students. Moreover, this research is more specific where it focus on reading aspect in English while other researches are somewhat general.

Based on the previous study as elaborated above elaborate above, the researcher tends to investigate the difficulties of the students in teacher reading within the implementation of Curriculum Independent.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative research. In this research, the writer used design of descriptive method, which is a method of research that attempt to describe and interpret the objects in accordance with reality. The descriptive method is implemented because the data analysis is presented descriptively. It indicates that the writer is going to find the result of data analysis by describing it (Sugyono, 2020)

The research subjects are the students in Grade XII SMAN 1Simeulue Cut and sample is a partial or representative of a particular population that is expected to be able to represent the characteristics of any individual in a population; it mean is that sample is the part of population (Arikunto, 2011:62)

In Addition, Sample is a set of data collected and/or selected from a population by a defined procedure. According to Ary et.al (2006: 148) sample is a portion of a population and the small group that is observed. Besides, a sample is a sub group of the target population that the researcher plans to study for generalizing about the target population (Cresswell, 2008: 152)

REASERACH INSTRUMEN

In this research, there are some instruments being used to do the research, they are questionnaire and documentation. Three of them are the appropriate tools for the writer to use in running this research. The purpose of those instruments are inherently to obtain the information or data directly from the reliable actors related to this study.

On this research, there are three major aspects that the writer wants to investigate; they are the Compatibility, Effectiveness, and the Hardness Rate. Those aspects will be investigated through the instruments.

In this research, the respondents will alternatively choose the answer among some options of each questions with the indicate the scales. The researcher use the Likert Scale. The Likert Scale is a tool used to develop instruments used to measure the attitudes, perceptions, and opinions of a person or group of people against the potentials and problems of an object, the design of a product, the process of creating products and products that have been developed or created. According to Sugiyono (2011:93), Likert

Scale is used to measure attitudes, opinions and the perception of a person or group of a social phenomenon

TECHNIQUE OF DATA COLLECTION

To obtain data from the questionnaire, the author used a survey provided in a Google form which can be accessed via a link sent by the author to respondents. The survey consists of structured, closed-ended questions with four scales for each question. Then the researcher will access the responses of each respondent who has submitted a response on the previous equivalent link. Thus, this method is effective and efficient to do because it does not require a lot of time or destination. The process of getting responses is by providing a survey to respondents on Google Form which can be accessed by them to submit their responses. This aims to make research efficient.

TECHNIQUE OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis in this study, the data analysis approach uses data flow analysis, which includes three elements: data reduction, data display, and discussion. According to Miles and Huberman (Sugiono: 2013), qualitative data classified into 3 types: data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

RESULT

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires distributed via Google Forms, and document analysis. Interview questions and questionnaire items were designed to explore participants' views regarding the compatibility, effectiveness, and level of difficulty of the Independent Curriculum in English language teaching.

Aspect of Compatibility

1. Evaluating the Suitability of Curriculum Independent for Teaching Reading (Perspective Students)

Based on questionnaire data, the majority of respondents (65.8%) stated that the Independent Curriculum was always in accordance with teaching reading skills. Rofiah et al (2020) found that teacher readiness in understanding and implementing the curriculum effectively could be a major supporting factor. These results indicate a positive perception of the suitability of the curriculum in the process of teaching English reading. A number of respondents (21.1%) stated that this curriculum is often

appropriate, while a smaller percentage stated that it is appropriate with less frequency (5.3%) or even not at all (7.9%).

2. Perceptions of Students Regarding the Relevance of Implementing Curriculum Independent in My School

Based on the results of the questionnaire, the majority of respondents (36.8%) stated that they always felt that the Independent Curriculum was relevant to be implemented in their schools. Meanwhile, a significant majority (44.7%) indicated that the curriculum is often relevant. According to Riyanto (2019), the Independent Curriculum aspired to liberate students from the chains of an overly theoretical curriculum and encouraged learning that was more contextual and relevant to real life. However, a small percentage of students (10.5%) stated that it is sometimes relevant, while an even smaller percentage (7.9%) stated that the curriculum is not relevant at all.

3. Assessing the Inclusivity of Curriculum Independent (Perspective Students)

Based on the results of the questionnaire, the majority of respondents (42.1%) stated that they always felt that the Independent Curriculum was inclusive for all. According to Mauizdati (2020), disparities in each student's talents were no longer a cause of teacher subjectivity in the learning process, but rather a benchmark for instructors to enhance the abilities or potential of their students in a good way. A large number of students (36.8%) also stated that the curriculum was often inclusive. However, a small percentage of students (10.5%) stated that inclusiveness occurs sometimes, while the same percentage (10.5%) stated that the curriculum is not inclusive at all.

4. Exploring Student Perspectives on the Adaptive Nature of Curriculum Independent in Teaching Reading English

The results of the questionnaire showed variations in students' perceptions of the adaptability of the Independent Curriculum in teaching English reading. Independent Curriculum is an educational concept that allows schools and instructors to construct a curriculum based on student needs and the local context (Tuerah et al, 2023). Most respondents (34.2%) stated that the curriculum was always adaptive, indicating that some students felt the curriculum was able to adapt consistently to changes and learning dynamics. Although most stated adaptability, a significant percentage stated most (28.9%) or sometimes (23.7%), indicating variation in the degree to which students felt the curriculum was adaptable. A small number of students (13.2%) stated

that the Independent Curriculum was never adaptive, indicating a perception that the curriculum may be less responsive to change or needs to increase its level of adaptability.

5. Assessing the Suitability of Curriculum Independent for Every Student in Teaching Reading English (Perspective Students)

From the results of the questionnaire, it can be observed that the majority of students stated that the Independent Curriculum was suitable for every student in teaching English reading. This positive assessment reflected a curriculum design that could meet the needs of diverse students. Teachers had the opportunity to select numerous teaching instruments to personalize learning to students' learning requirements and interests (Khoirurrijal et al, 2022). As many as (47.4%) of respondents stated that this curriculum was always appropriate, while (31.6%) considered it appropriate frequently. A small number of students (15.8%) stated that it was appropriate sometimes, and only (5.3%) of students felt the curriculum was never appropriate.

Aspect of Effectiveness

1. Effectiveness of Curriculum Independent in Teaching English Reading (Perspective Students)

Based on the questionnaire results, the majority of students (42.1%) felt that the Independent Curriculum was always effective in teaching English reading. A significant number of students (36.8%) also stated that the curriculum was effective frequently. However, a small percentage of students (10.5%) stated that its effectiveness was occasional, while the same percentage (10.5%) even felt that this curriculum was not effective at all in teaching English reading. According to Qurniawati (2023), the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum could be considered quite effective even though there were still shortcomings and inhibiting factors, From the questionnaire results, it appears that the majority of students rate the Independent Curriculum as effective in teaching English reading

2. Exploring the Impact of Curriculum Independent on Achieving Reading Instruction Goals (Perspective Students)

The majority of students who feel that the curriculum always helps achieve reading-learning goals (63.2%) indicate a strong belief regarding the positive contribution of the curriculum to achieving their learning goals. The results of an effective learning process, one of which was learning goals such as understanding

concepts, good grades, and promotion, could be achieved within the targeted time (Nugroho, 2023). Although a small number of students (15.8%) stated that the curriculum was helpful on a frequent basis, it also reflected consistent positive impacts. Although there is a percentage of students (13.2%) who state that curriculum assistance occurs occasionally, as well as a small percentage of students (7.9%) who feel that it never helps, these results indicate that there are variations in student perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the Independent Curriculum in achieving learning objectives read.

3. Exploring the Efficacy of the Independent Curriculum in Enhancing English Reading Instruction (Perspective Students)

From the description of the questionnaire results, it can be seen that the majority of students feel that the Independent Curriculum provides significant assistance in teaching English reading, with (55.3%) of students feeling that this assistance always occurs. The Independent Curriculum was an innovation designed to support teachers and school principals in turning learning into a more meaningful, deep, and enjoyable learning experience for students (Monika et al., 2023). A large number of students (31.6%) also stated that the curriculum was helpful frequently, indicating a consistent positive impact. Although a small majority of students (5.3%) stated that curriculum assistance occurs sometimes, and another small portion of students (7.9%) felt that the Independent Curriculum was never helpful, these results show variations in student perceptions regarding the effectiveness provided by this curriculum in teaching read English

4. Assessing the Seamless Integration of Curriculum Independent in Facilitating the Teaching Reading Process (Perspective Students)

The high percentage in the "Always" category (63.2%) indicates that the majority of students have a consistently positive experience, feeling that this curriculum continuously supports the smooth process of learning to read. Teachers had to facilitate their students in carrying out the learning process, which aimed to develop their thinking abilities optimally (Sahnan et al., 2023). In addition, the percentage of students who stated that the curriculum often made the learning process run well (21.1%) showed a significant positive impact. Although there is a small number of students (10.5%) who state that the learning process runs smoothly sometimes, the percentage of students who feel that the curriculum never makes the learning process run smoothly is quite low (5.3%). This conclusion provides a positive picture of how

the Independent Curriculum can improve the smooth process of teaching English reading in this subject.

5. Examining Efficiency in Curriculum Independent for English Reading Instruction (Perspective Students)

The majority of students (36.8%) felt that this curriculum was always efficient, reflecting consistency in providing positive experiences in the context of learning to read. Efforts made included designing learning materials, creating an environment conducive to learning, disseminating clear instructions, using effective learning methods and strategies (Agustin, 2023). The same percentage (36.8%) stated that efficiency occurs with frequent frequency, indicating a significant but not always consistent positive impact. Although some students (15.8%) think that curriculum efficiency only occurs sometimes, it should be noted that a small number of other students (10.5%) feel that the Independent Curriculum is never efficient in teaching English reading.

Aspect of Rate of Hardness

1. Flexibility of Curriculum Independent in English Reading Instruction (Perspective Students)

The majority of students (55.3%) felt that this curriculum always provided flexibility in learning arrangements, indicating that students felt significant flexibility in learning methods and time. Flexibility was provided for teachers to conduct differentiated learning based on students' abilities and make adjustments to the local context and content (Nafi'ah et al., 2023). This high percentage shows that the Independent Curriculum is perceived as a tool that can be adapted to student needs. Although the percentage was lower, a number of students (21.1%) still acknowledged the frequent frequency of curriculum flexibility, indicating continuity in providing variety in learning. Although there is a small portion of students (13.2%) who state that curriculum flexibility only occurs sometimes, only a small portion of students (10.5%) feel that the Independent Curriculum is never flexible.

2. Analyzing the Clarity of the Independent Curriculum in Teaching Reading English (Perspective Students)

The majority of students (47.4%) consistently find the Independent Curriculum clear in understanding and implementation. Another substantial group (36.8%) frequently perceives the curriculum as uncomplicated. A small percentage (7.9%) thinks it's occasionally complicated, and the same percentage (7.9%) feels it's always

complicated in teaching English reading. Education was carried out by considering the characteristics of students and the school environment, with learning adapted to applicable customs and culture. In this context, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum was also an integral part of education, continually involving educational institutions, parents, and the community as three educational centers to produce quality graduates (Wibawa et al., 2022). Overall, most students hold a positive view regarding the clarity and simplicity of the curriculum in supporting English reading learning.

3. Exploring the Simplicity of Curriculum Independent in Contrast to the Previous Curriculum in English Reading Instruction (Perspective Students)

The majority of students (44.7%) consistently find the Independent Curriculum easier, with an additional (28.9%) frequently experiencing this ease. A small percentage (15.8%) feels the curriculum is easy occasionally, and (10.5%) believe it is never easier than the previous curriculum. Overall, the majority sees the Independent Curriculum as a significant improvement in terms of convenience compared to the previous curriculum. The independent curriculum formulated two essential tools to support, improve, and restore the teaching and learning process (Priantini et al., 2022)

4. Overcoming Classroom Challenges to Independent Curriculum Problem-Solving Abilities in Teaching Reading English (Perspective Students)

The questionnaire indicates that the majority of students 47.4% consistently believe the Independent Curriculum effectively addresses problems in class. Another 34.2% find it generally effective in overcoming learning challenges. A small percentage (13.2%) thinks problem solving occurs occasionally, and only 5.3% feel the curriculum is never successful in addressing issues. Overall, the dissatisfaction rate is relatively low. The freedom to innovate, learn independently, and be creative could be exercised by educational units, teachers, and students (Widyastuti, 2022).

5. Fostering an Enjoyable Learning Environment from the Impact of the Independent Curriculum on Class Enjoyment in Teaching Learning English (Perspective Students)

The independent learning curriculum focused on providing opportunities for students to be relaxed, calm, happy, not stressed, and not feel pressured, showcasing good character and natural talents possessed by students during the learning process (Purwanti et al., 2023). The questionnaire results show that the majority of students 47.4% consistently enjoy the Independent Curriculum, creating a positive learning

environment. Another 28.9% believe this positive experience is a result of the curriculum's consistent approach. While 18.4% felt the curriculum generally fosters enjoyment, 5.3% indicated it never allows everyone to enjoy the class. Further analysis needed to understand factors influencing this perception, and evaluation can provide insights for improving classroom elements to enhance overall learning enjoyment.

DISCUSSION

The research employed a qualitative approach with a questionnaire as the data collection instrument, involving 38 respondents to investigate the Independent Curriculum's effectiveness in teaching English reading. Three key aspects were explored: Compatibility, Effectiveness, and Rate of Hardness. Findings revealed that a majority of students considered the curriculum compatible (65.8%), relevant (36.8%), inclusive (42.1%), adaptive (34.2%), and suitable (47.4%). However, variations in perceptions suggested the need for adjustments to enhance relevance and inclusivity. Regarding effectiveness, a majority found the curriculum effective (42.1%), helpful in achieving goals (63.2%), beneficial (55.3%), facilitating the teaching process (63.2%), and efficient (36.8%). Some variations in effectiveness perceptions indicated areas for improvement. The Rate of Hardness results highlighted flexibility (55.3%), clarity (47.4%), ease (44.7%), problem-solving ability (47.4%), and creating a pleasant learning environment (47.4%). Despite positive perceptions, areas for improvement were identified, emphasizing the need for further evaluation and enhancement of the Independent Curriculum.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

From the results of the questionnaire analysis involving 38 students from class XII at SMAN 1 Simeulue Cut regarding perceptions of the Independent Curriculum in teaching English reading, it can be concluded that the majority of students have a positive view of the curriculum. The majority of students feel that the Independent Curriculum is suitable for teaching reading, is relevant to be implemented in schools, is inclusive, and suits the needs of each student. Students also see that this curriculum is effective, helps achieve the goals of teaching reading, and makes the learning process run smoothly.

Suggestion

A holistic approach is underway to enhance the adaptability of the Independent Curriculum. This involves a focused strategy that actively engages students in both planning and evaluation processes. Concurrently, teacher training programs are being implemented to equip educators in managing classroom diversity and responding to individual student needs. Increased parental involvement is being promoted through transparent communication about the curriculum and encouraging support at home. Periodic evaluations, incorporating feedback from students, teachers, and parents, aim to ensure the ongoing suitability and effectiveness of the curriculum. Additionally, diverse supporting materials are being developed to assist teachers in catering to various learning styles, fostering a more inclusive and dynamic learning environment.

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