

## Exploring the Similarities and Differences among the Kinds of Curriculum Implemented in Indonesian Schools

Kalayo Hasibuan<sup>1</sup>, Erlinda Agustina<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> State Islamic University of Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau (khalayohasibuan@gmail.com,  
12010424357@student.uin.suska.ac.id)

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### Abstract

This paper explores the similarities and differences among the kinds of the curriculums such as the School-Based Curriculum, 2013 Curriculum and the Freedom to Learn Curriculum that have been implemented in Indonesian schools. Their similarities and differences comprise the conceptual or theoretical frameworks, the instructional procedures and the assessment at schools in Indonesia. The curriculum as a determinant of educational success must be responsive to all contemporary challenges and innovations. The 2013 Curriculum and the Freedom to Learn Curriculum, the so called “Merdeka curriculum” are currently being implemented. The Indonesian government has adjusted the changes to the curriculum as much as possible to meet the educational goals expected in this digital era. The objective of this article is to compare the kinds of the implemented curriculums in Teaching English as A Foreign Language (TEFL) based on the basic frameworks, targeted competencies, curriculum structure, learning, assessment, teaching tools, and curriculum tools.

**Key words:** *Similarities, differences, curriculum implemented*

### Introduction

Curriculum referring to Nunan (1999:305) relates to all elements and processes in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning programs. In Indonesia, it refers to a set of planning and organization of aim, content, and learning material as the guidance to learning activity to achieve a particular educational objective (Republic of Indonesian law, no.20 year 2003). In the context of developing the English curriculum, analysis or review of the foundations or approaches adopted in the English curriculum are rarely carried out or even rarely published. Because of this, it is difficult for stakeholders in education, especially teachers and instructors at Higher Education Institutions for Education Personnel (LPTK) to obtain information about the results of the review or analysis. The results of the inter-curriculum comparison analysis obtained from the approach or foundation are rarely discussed in the educational environment. It is often difficult for English teachers at school

to get an explanation of questions, for example, "What is the foundation or theoretical frameworks that underlie the development of the English curriculum?"; "Does the basis or theories adopted by an English curriculum affect its curriculum components?" Of course there are still a number of questions regarding curriculum changes which often do not get answers.

From the point of views of the need for comparative information on the curriculum with all the aspects it compares, especially for educators and observers of foreign language curricula, the discussions on this paper is expected to provide an overview of curriculum comparisons in terms of its theoretical bases. Comparison from this side is an important source in curriculum development starting from the stages, planning, dissemination, implementation, and evaluation.

### **Method**

This study used a critical methodology. Framework for a critical research methodology that includes a configuration of four analytically distinguished but intertwined dimensions: (1) critical understanding and in-depth examination, (2) critical explanation and comparative generalization, (3) open discourse and transformative redefinition or action, and (4) reflexive–dialectic argumentation (Yul et al., 2022).

### **Result and Discussion**

#### **The concept of curriculum**

Curriculum may refer to the sum total of organized learning stated as educational ends, activities, school subjects and topics decided upon and provided within an educational institution for the attainment of the students (Garcia, 1983:1). This also includes all elements and processes in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning programs (Nunan (1999:305).

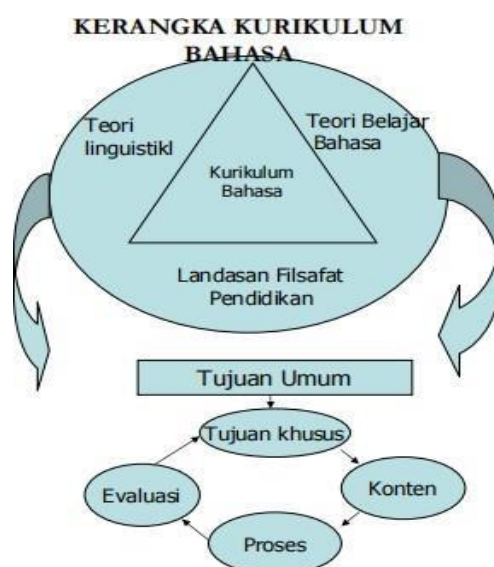
A curriculum therefore is a learning program specifically designed and systematically arranged for the benefits of a group of students. It is given to the schools to achieve the goal of education. As a program design, a curriculum is the bases of the learning process where success and failure depend are measured in relation to the understanding of the curriculum being used. Curriculum as the plan in teaching learning process, of course it is one important thing which teacher should know and implement this. The good teacher is the teachers who disturb their knowledge to the students based on the curriculum as the main planning to get the purpose of the learning process.

### English curriculum in Indonesia

Recent curriculum in English language education in Indonesia focuses only on the teaching of English at junior and high school levels as English is not compulsory at elementary level. The curriculum adopts so-called communicative competence as its model of competence. Communicative competence itself can be summarized as skills needed for communication, which consists of four important components. Those components are: grammatical/linguistic competence, socio-cultural competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Celce-Murcia, Dornyei & Thurrell, 1995; Beale, 2002).

In comparing foreign language curricula, especially English theoretically, various frameworks have been proposed by experts in the field of curriculum development in foreign language learning (Richards and Rogers, 2001, 204). The framework used in theoretical studies of foreign language curricula generally includes the following two questions: (1) What educational philosophy underlies the foreign language curriculum: (2) What approach (referring to language theory and foreign language learning theory) is used in curriculum development foreign language; and (3) How does this approach characterize the development of curriculum components, namely objectives, content, process and evaluation of foreign language learning? Schematically, the frameworks on course design proposed by Dubin and Olsthain (1986) will be used in this comparative study of the curriculum.

#### Theoretical Basis of Foreign Language Curriculum



The above framework will become the basis for comparing the three periods of the English curriculum, namely the 2013 Curriculum for English Subjects, the Emergency

Curriculum, and the Independent Curriculum (2022).

### **School based English curriculum (KTSP)**

The competency-based curriculum has received a more special place in the current Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) or School-Based Curriculum (Emilia, 2011). Regarding English language teaching, the Government Regulation No. 19 Year 2005 stipulates that language education should develop language competence with special emphasis on reading and writing according to the literacy level set for every level of education (Yulia, 2013). The new paradigm of the KTSP was aimed to achieve education objectives based on local characteristics and school circumstance. The 2006 curriculum popularly called KTSP was developed to create better atmosphere of learning activities for the learners.

The School-Based Curriculum was developed from Meaning-Based English curriculum released in 1994. It was hoped that students successfully learned in a meaningful learning impact. Friendly student environmental topics were discussed in learning. Even the target of English as Foreign Language (EFL) used communicative approach, the learning was not only about the language itself but it was also intended to make it in context. However, due to the similar condition lack of teachers' knowledge competence, the textbook-teaching oriented made it hard for students to use English communicatively.

### **Curriculum 2013**

Curriculum 2013 is developed from standard-based curriculum and competency-based curriculum. Standard education states that national standard as the minimum quality of citizens which is detailed into content, standard of process, standard of graduate competence, standard of teacher and educational staff, standard of facility, standard of maintenance, standard of funding and standard of educational assessment. Competency-based curriculum is designed to give learning experience as wide as possible for students in order they can develop their ability to behave, to know, to be skilled and to act (Permendikbud Nomor 70 Tahun 2013). The Curriculum 2013 guides teachers to facilitate the development of adaptable and flexible learners who know how to take on new tasks and situations, quickly and easily. Students will need to be good communicators who can competently discuss topics with others and effectively share their ideas in many forms and for different purposes.

### **Merdeka Curriculum (Freedom to Learn Curriculum)**

As part of the learning restoration efforts, the Merdeka Curriculum (which previously

referred to as the prototype curriculum) is developed as a framework curriculum that is more flexible, while focusing on essential materials and character development and student competence. Main characteristics of this curriculum that support learning recovery are:

Firstly, Project-based learning for the development of soft skills and character according to the profile of Pancasila students. Secondly, Focus on essential material so that there is sufficient time for detailed learning depth for basic competencies such as literacy and numeracy. Thirdly, Flexibility for teachers to carry out appropriate differentiated learning with the ability of students and make adjustments to the context and local loads.

### **The similarities of 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum**

Has a basic framework for the national education system and national education standards. While the difference is that in the Merdeka curriculum there is an additional development of the Pancasila Student Profile which is not in the 2013 curriculum.

Targeted Competencies In the 2013 curriculum, basic competencies (KD) and core competencies are targeted competencies. In contrast to the Merdeka curriculum, the intended competencies use the term learning outcomes (CP). In the learning process, learning outcomes (CP) include knowledge, attitudes, and skills to achieve student competence in each phase. At the senior high school level, phase E is equivalent to class X, and phase F is equivalent to grades XI and XII.

Curriculum Structure of the curriculum structure in the 2013 curriculum consists of intracurricular and extracurricular. Meanwhile, the Merdeka Curriculum uses intracurricular, extracurricular, and projects to strengthen the Pancasila student profile. Class hours in the 2013 curriculum are set per week, while in Merdeka Curriculum it is set per year. The learning organization approach in the 2013 curriculum is subject-based. In the Merdeka curriculum, learning organizations are subject-based and integrated. As a graduation requirement, students are required to write an essay, whereas in the 2013 curriculum there is none.

Learning In the learning process, the 2013 curriculum uses a scientific approach for all subjects. The Merdeka Curriculum uses a differentiation approach that is appropriate to the abilities of students. In addition, in the independent curriculum there is also a project to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile which students must do in the learning process.

In the aspect of assessment, the 2013 curriculum uses formative and summative assessments, while in the independent curriculum both use formative assessment and the results are a reflection to shape student learning according to their abilities. In the Merdeka Curriculum, there is an assessment project to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile which is not in the

2013 curriculum. Assessment of attitudes, knowledge, and skills characterizes the assessment in the 2013 curriculum, while in the Merdeka curriculum, there is no separation between assessment of attitudes, knowledge, and skills.

Teaching Tools Both in the 2013 curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum, teaching tools use text books and non-text books. In addition to the Merdeka Curriculum, the teaching tools used are teaching modules, learning objectives flow (ATP), and a project to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile.

Curriculum Tools Based on aspects of curriculum tools, the 2013 curriculum has guidelines for curriculum implementation, assessment and learning for each level of education.

### **The Similarities KTSP and 2013 Curriculum for learning English**

The 2006 Curriculum (KTSP) and the 2013 Curriculum both present text as KD points (basic competencies) For a solid structure, both in KTSP and in 2013, both were made or designed by the government, to be precise, by the Ministry of National Education.

*Some subjects are still the same as KTSP*

There are difficulties in the nature of the curriculum, for example in the sorting approach which is basically the thinking of students, in which students who seek knowledge instead of receiving knowledge.

*The second emphasis on the structure of the language*

Differences in Learning English According to KTSP 2006 The material taught is emphasized on grammar and language structure. Students are not accustomed to reading and understanding the text presented. Students are not accustomed to composing texts, which are systematic, logical and effective. Students do not know about the rules of the appropriate text need. Lack of emphasis on the essence of expression and inner spontaneity language.

### **The Differences of 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum**

*Basic Framework*

The difference between the 2013 curriculum and the first independent curriculum is regarding the basic framework. The main foundation of the 2013 curriculum is the goals of the National Education System and National Education Standards. Meanwhile, the independent curriculum places more emphasis on developing the profile of Pancasila students, especially for students.

*The intended competence*

In the 2013 curriculum, competencies are arranged in the form of Basic Competencies (KD) as well as Core Competencies as an assessment. These aspects are social attitudes, spiritual attitudes, knowledge as well as skills. Then related to the competencies aimed at independent learning and learning outcomes will be arranged per phase which is stated in the form of paragraphs that contain knowledge, attitudes, and skills in achieving, strengthening, as well as improving competence.

*Curriculum Structure*

In the 2013 curriculum, learning hours or abbreviated JP in Bahasa Indonesia are arranged for a week. This learning time allocation rule will be discussed routinely every week in every semester. Thus, students will get the value of learning outcomes for each semester they have done. While the learning structure of Merdeka Curriculum is divided into two aspects, first is regular learning routines (intracurricular activities). Then the second is regarding the project to strengthen the Pancasila profile as the development of Pancasila character souls in today's students.

*Learning*

In the 2013 curriculum, the learning approach is a scientific approach and applies to all subjects. While in learning the independent learning curriculum further strengthens different learning according to the stages of achievement of students.

*Assessment*

The next difference is that the assessment in the 2013 curriculum will be divided on aspects of attitudes, skills, as well as knowledge. Meanwhile, in the new curriculum, namely the Merdeka Curriculum, there is no a separation regarding the assessment of attitudes, skills and knowledge.

*Teaching Tools Provided by the Government*

Regarding teaching tools, the 2013 curriculum usually uses textbooks or printed books given to schools as learning materials. Meanwhile, in the Merdeka Curriculum, learning resources can be in forms of many sources found around both text and non-text obtained during learning.

**The difference between 2013 curriculum and Kurikulum Merdeka in English Learning**

The material taught is emphasized on language competence as a communication tool to convey ideas and knowledge. Students are accustomed to reading and understanding the meaning of the text as well as summarizing and presenting it in their own language. Students are accustomed to composing texts in a systematic, logical, and effective way through text

preparation exercises.

Students are introduced to the appropriate text rules so that they are not confused in the process of compiling the text (according to the situation and conditions: who, what, where). Students are accustomed to being able to express themselves and their knowledge in spontaneous convincing language.

### **Differences in Learning According to KTSP 2006 in English learning**

The material taught is emphasized on grammar and language structure. Students are not accustomed to reading and understanding the text presented. Students are not accustomed to composing texts, which are systematic, logical and effective. Students do not know about the rules of the appropriate text need. Lack of emphasis on the essence of expression and inner spontaneity language.

### **Conclusion**

Over the years, there have been several curriculum changes to enhance English language education in Indonesia, among others are the School-Based Curriculum, the 2013 Curriculum, and the Merdeka Curriculum. Implementation of the 2013 Curriculum emphasizes the importance of English language skills and aimed to improve the quality of English education across all levels. The "Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar" (Freedom to Learn Curriculum) is an initiative launched by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. It aims to provide more flexibility, autonomy, and personalized learning opportunities for students.

Specifically, the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum have many changes and differences. However, both of them have the same goal, namely to achieve a national education system which is the nation's goal in educating the nation. There are several differences and similarities between the English Subject Curriculum, the 2013 Curriculum, and the Merdeka Curriculum (2022). These differences include the basic framework, the intended competencies, curriculum structure, learning, assessment, teaching tools provided by the government, curriculum tools. The similarities found in the design of the three main foundations of the Curriculum are the goals of the National Education System and National Education Standards and building the personality characteristics of Pancasila. In terms of curriculum content for English subjects for SMP and SMA/SMK levels, the three kinds of curricula refer to all text-based learning (Genre-Based Approach).

The difference is in deciding indicators, theme and in teaching approach. The 2006 does not focus on theme and indicators are decided based on the necessity of learner's need and



ability. Moreover, the 2006 syllabus emphasizes on learning process as high light in lessonplan and as mentioned in PP No. 19, 2005, chapter IV, article 19, verse 1 “ learning process isperformed interactive, inspirable, fun, challenging, motivating learners to involve actively, and given adequate space for innovation, creativity, autonomy based on learner’s potential, interest, physical and psychological development.

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