ENGLISH VERSION

IDENTIFYING CURRENT ENGLISH TEACHING PRACTICES OF IMPLEMENTATION KURIKULUM MERDEKA IN SMP NEGERI 1 TOHO

Rati Tarsila Patrisia[1], Maliqul Hafis, M.Pd[2], Sahrawi, M.Pd[3]
Faculty of Languages, Arts and Vocational Studies University of PGRI Pontianak
correspondence email: ratitarsilapatrisia@.gmail.com

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis praktik pengajaran Bahasa Inggris dalam implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka di SMP Negeri 1 Toho serta mengidentifikasi tantangan yang dihadapi oleh para guru. Dengan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi dan wawancara terhadap tiga guru, termasuk koordinator kurikulum dan dua guru Bahasa Inggris, serta observasi di kelas VII-C, VIII-A, dan IX-C. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru telah menerapkan strategi pembelajaran seperti pembelajaran berbasis proyek dan integrasi teknologi, sejalan dengan prinsip Kurikulum Merdeka yang menekankan pembelajaran berpusat pada siswa dan diferensiasi. Namun, tantangan yang dihadapi meliputi keterbatasan sumber daya dan kesiapan guru dalam mengadopsi metode pembelajaran baru. Penelitian ini memberikan rekomendasi bagi pendidik dan pemangku kepentingan untuk meningkatkan efektivitas implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggris di tingkat sekolah menengah pertama.

Kata kunci: Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris, Kurikulum Merdeka, Sekolah Menengah Pertama, Strategi Pembelajaran, Implementasi.

Abstract

This study investigates the implementation of English teaching practices under the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SMP Negeri 1 Toho and identifies challenges encountered by educators. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through observations and interviews with three teachers, including a *kurikulum* coordinator and two English instructors. Classroom observations were conducted in classes VII-C, VIII-A, and IX-C, each comprising 30–34 students. Findings reveal that teachers have adopted strategies consistent with *Kurikulum Merdeka* principles, such as project-based learning and technology integration. However, challenges persist, notably limited resources and the need for enhanced teacher preparedness in adopting new pedagogical methods. The study recommends targeted professional development and resource allocation to bolster the effective implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in English instruction at the junior high school level.

Keywords: English Language Teaching, *Kurikulum Merdeka*, Junior High School, Learning Strategies, Implementation.

INTRODUCTION

The *Kurikulum Merdeka* is an educational reform introduced by Indonesia Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology in 2022. It aims to provide schools and teachers with greater autonomy to design and implement curricula tailored to students' individual needs, interests, and learning profiles. This student-centered approach emphasizes differentiated instruction, project-based learning, and the development of holistic competencies aligned with the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila*. In the context of English language teaching, the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* necessitates a shift from traditional, teacher-centered methodologies to more interactive and personalized strategies. Teachers are encouraged to adopt differentiated instruction, which involves tailoring content, processes, and learning outcomes to accommodate students' varying readiness levels, interests, and learning styles. Additionally, project-based learning is promoted to enhance student engagement and foster real-world application of language skills. Despite its progressive

objectives, the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* presents several challenges. English teachers often face difficulties such as limited resources, insufficient training, and the need to develop teaching materials.

These obstacles can hinder the effective adoption of innovative teaching practices and affect the overall quality of English instruction. SMP Negeri 1 Toho, located in the Toho sub-district of Mempawah Regency, is among the schools that have adopted *Kurikulum Merdeka* across all grade levels (VII to IX). Initial observations indicate a discrepancy between the curriculum's intended outcomes and the actual classroom practices, highlighting the need for a comprehensive analysis of current English teaching practices within this framework. This research aims to identify and evaluate the current English teaching practices at SMP Negeri 1 Toho in the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka*. By examining the strategies employed and the challenges encountered, the study seeks to provide insights that can inform policy decisions and support the development of effective teaching methodologies tailored to the unique context of the school.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design, as outlined by Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), to facilitate an in-depth and contextual exploration of the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in English language teaching in SMP Negeri 1 Toho. The case study approach enabled the researcher to examine the experiences and practices of educators within a bounded system, focusing on a specific time frame and setting. This methodology is particularly effective for investigating complex educational phenomena within their real-life contexts. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevance to the research objectives. The study involved three educators from SMP Negeri 1 Toho: one male deputy principal who also serves as the head of curriculum, one male permanent English teacher for Grade VIII, and one female substitute English teacher who had been teaching at the school for approximately eight months at the time of the study. This selection was based on their direct involvement in the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in English language instruction. The data collection, Data were collected through direct communication techniques, specifically observations and semi-structured interviews. Observations were conducted in three classes VII-C, VIII-A, and IX-Ceach comprising 30 to 34 students. These observations aimed to capture the teaching practices and classroom interactions under the *Kurikulum Merdeka* framework. Semi-structured interviews provided insights into the educators' experiences, challenges, and perceptions regarding the curriculum's implementation. The instruments utilized for data collection included: Audio and video recorders: Used to accurately capture interviews and classroom

activities for subsequent analysis, field notes: Employed during observations to document teaching activities, classroom dynamics, and other relevant occurrences, interview guides: Structured to elicit detailed information about the educators' experiences and perspectives on the *Kurikulum Merdeka* implementation. The data validity to ensure the validity of the data, member checking was employed. Interview transcripts were returned to the participants for verification and confirmation of accuracy. Additionally, an English education lecturer, Mrs. Marsa Ayu Tira, M.Pd., served as an external auditor to review and validate the findings, enhancing the study's credibility. The data analysis, thematic analysis, as articulated by Braun and Clarke (2006), was utilized to analyze the qualitative data. This method involved a systematic process comprising six phases: Familiarization: Transcribing data and reading through the transcripts to become immersed in the content, generating initial codes: Identifying and coding significant features of the data systematically across the entire dataset, searching for themes: Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme, reviewing themes: Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire dataset, generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis. defining and naming themes: Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells producing the report: Final analysis and write-up of the report, including vivid examples and extracts to illustrate the themes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study aimed to explore English teaching practices and identify challenges in implementing the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SMP Negeri 1 Toho. The research was conducted from March 10 to 17, 2025, using interviews and classroom observations involving one *kurikulum* coordinator and two English teachers. Observations were conducted in three teachers implemented *kurikulum merdeka* in SMP Negeri 1 Toho.

Theme 1: How are English teaching practices currently applied in the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SMP Negeri 1 Toho?

To used teaching practices like this, teachers in SMP Negeri 1 Toho focus more on developing the abilities of educators themselves such as implementing training, workshops and so on. The following are some of the participant's expressions through the observation and interviews data obtained:

"IKM itu adalah kurikulum yang penilaiannya tidak berpatokan pada akademik tapi juga non akademik sehingga guru dapat dengan leluasa dalam menggunakan pendekatan atau metode dalam pembelajaran. terkhusus untuk pada Pelajaran Bahasa inggris itu sendiri IKM itu pembelajarannya lebih fleksibel." (JM)

"Kurikulum ini sebenarnya agak rumit karena merupakan kurikulum baru dan tidak semua guru paham mengenai kurikulum tersebut. Jadi dari penerapan terutama di SMP Negeri 1 Toho, harusnya dengan menggunakan pembelajaran yang relefan, fleksibel dan berpusat pada siswa, sebenarnya di tuntut seperti itu akan tetapi yang di terapkan di sekolah ini masih belum terlaksana seperti itu". (DR)

"kurikulum Merdeka ini merupakan pendekatan baru dalam Pendidikan yang memberikan fleksibel dan otonomi kepada sekolah lebih besar terutama dalam merancang proses pembelajaran. Jadi tujuan utamanya itu adalah untuk meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran dan mengembangkan profil panca sila yang berkompeten, berkarakter, dan berdaya saing". (JP)

Based on the results of interviews and observations conducted, the researcher can conclude that the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SMP Negeri 1 Toho has brought significant changes to the learning process, especially in English subjects. This *Kurikulum* not only emphasizes academic aspects, but also pays attention to non-academic development, thus providing teachers with the freedom to choose learning approaches and methods that are more flexible and relevant to students' needs. Although its implementation in this school is still in the transition stage and has not been fully optimized, teachers have tried to apply the principles of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, such as active learning, time flexibility, and the development of *Pancasila* student profiles. Classroom observations show that the used of interactive methods such as games, group assignments, and simple conversation examples can increase students' enthusiasm and confidence in using English. Overall, the *Kurikulum Merdeka* opens up great opportunities for improving the quality of learning, but a deeper understanding and readiness from educators is still needed to optimize its implementation.

"Di sekolah lebih menggunakan diskusi kelompok, karena dengan diskusi kelompok siswa lebih aktif dan dapat melakukan kerja sama yang lebih baik, kemudian adanya keterlibatan siswa satu sama lain." (JM)

"Saya lebih menggunakan ke integrasi lingkungan lokal budaya sejarah. Karena siswa itu lebih tertarik jika kita mengaitkan pelajaran itu dengan lingkungan tempat tinggal mereka dan aktivitas mereka sehari-hari. Misalnya kemarin di kelas VIII itu ada melaksanakan perlombaan bakiak, nah jadi saya mengaitkan pembelajaran Bahasa inggris dan menminta peserta didik untuk mengtranslate mengenai permainan tersebut ke dalam Bahasa inggris." (DR)

"Metode pengajaran yang sering kami gunakan di kelas terkait IKM karena ini berpusat pada siswa jadi lebih sering diskusi kelompok dan pembelajaran berbasis proyek." (JP)

Based on the results of interviews and observations, the researcher can conclude that in implementing the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SMP Negeri 1 Toho, teachers used more group discussion methods and project-based learning to increase student activity. Group discussions have proven effective in building cooperation, involvement between students, and the courage to express opinions. In addition, the integration of learning materials with the local environment, culture, and daily activities is also an important strategy used to attract student interest, such as linking traditional competitions to English lessons. Classroom observations show that interactive methods such as greetings, questions and answers, and group assignments can increase enthusiasm for learning, although most students are still more comfortable using Indonesian or regional languages in communicating. Overall, an approach based on active participation and local context is able to build student motivation and support the principles of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* which is centered on students.

Theme 2. What are challenges faced by teacher in implementation *Kurikulum Merdeka* at English Teaching in SMP Negeri 1 Toho.

these challenges require teachers to continue to improve their competence, collaborate, and seek innovative strategies so that the goals of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in improving the quality of English learning can be achieved optimally. The following are some of the participant's expressions through the observation and interviews data obtained:

“Sejauh ini selama adanya penerapan IKM itu kurang mendukung. karena pelatihan itu tidak intens sekali di sekolah (jarang).” (JM)

“*Banyak yang perlu di tingkatkan, seperti yang saya katakana tadi harus ada leb Bahasa atau alat-alat praktik lain untuk memotivasi anak belajar. Jadi sebaiknya sekolah harus banyak menyiapkan dari segi fasilitas belajar untuk peserta didik agar lebih tertarik dan menganggap belajar Bahasa inggris itu seru.” (DR)*

*“**“Kalau kita bicara mengenai peningkatan banyak yang harus di tingkatakan karena dalam bidang administrasi jadwal atau pembagian waktunya penyediaan birokrasi mengurangi administrasi guru dan mereka lebih fokus pada pengembangan pembelajaran.” (JP)*

Based on the results of observations and interviews in SMP Negeri 1 Toho, the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in English learning faces various significant challenges. Teachers experience limited adequate special training so that they are less prepared to design and implement learning according to the new *Kurikulum*. In addition, supporting facilities such as technology-based learning media are still minimal and are often used interchangeably, thus hampering the implementation of innovative and interesting learning methods. The diversity of student abilities also requires teachers to adjust learning methods more personally, but limited time and resources are

obstacles. Although there is an increase in student involvement and training support from schools, teachers still need to improve their competence and more adequate facilities so that the goals of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in improving the quality of English learning can be achieved optimally. Therefore, there needs to be an increase in intensive training, provision of adequate technology facilities, and ongoing management support from schools and related stakeholders.

"Strateginya perlu untuk ditingkatkan lagi, dan untuk setiap guru mata Pelajaran lain itu harus siap dengan pergantian kurikulum yang berubah secara tiba-tiba dari kurikulum sebelumnya ke IKM ini." (JM)

According to the reseacher, the results of interviews with (JM) show that the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* has had a positive impact on students' interest and activity in learning English, where the approach used is considered more enjoyable. However, challenges remain, such as limited facilities, lack of training for teachers, and low critical participation of students in discussions. The reseacher views that to optimize the implementation of Implementation *Kurikulum Merdeka*, greater support is needed from the school, both in the form of providing adequate learning facilities and increasing teacher competency through training and workshops. Apart from that, teacher readiness in facing rapid *Kurikulum* changes is also key so that the transition process runs more effectively and does not disrupt the quality of learning.

"Menurut saya harus fokus pada keterampilan komunikasi tepat guna secara lisan atau speaking tidak hanya tertulis, karena menurut pengalaman saya beberapa belas tahun ini, anak hanya di ajarkan menjawab pertanyaan itu bagimana atau seperti apa". (DR)

Based on the results of interviews with these respondents, according to the reaeacher, the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in English language learning needs to be more responsive to differences in individual student abilities and place more emphasis on developing practical speaking skills. The emphasis so far which has focused too much on grammatical structures and the ability to answer written questions is considered less relevant to real communication needs in English. Therefore, a learning approach that is more communicative and oriented towards oral skills needs to be prioritized so that students are not only able to understand theory, but can also use English functionally in everyday life, even with limitations.

"Untuk meningkatkan praktik dalam proses IKM ini sudah jelas meningkatkan professional guru, meningkatkan sumber daya pembelajaran, kemudian peningkatan fasilitas infrastruktur sekolah itu yang harus kita tingkatkan untuk mendukung keberhasilan IKM khususnya dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran." (JP)

Based on the results of these interviews, the reseacher opinion that the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* has had a positive impact on students' learning freedom, but still faces challenges

such as limited time, infrastructure and resources. The success of implementation *Kurikulum Merdeka* is very dependent on increasing teacher professionalism, the availability of learning facilities, and support from various parties, including departments, supervisors, and other stakeholders. Therefore, synergy and continuous monitoring are needed so that the learning process can run more optimally and in accordance with the objectives of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

Discussion

Discussions that the reseacher can find from the results of these two themes include:

Theme 1. How are English teaching practices currently applied in the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SMP Negeri 1 Toho?

Based on the results of the data that the reseacher obtained, the reseacher can conclude that the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in English language teaching in SMP Negeri 1 Toho has shown promising initial steps, though it remains far from fully optimized. The shift toward more flexible, student-centered learning approaches such as group discussions, contextual learning based on local culture, and project-based assignments aligns with the statement by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (2022), which asserts that *Kurikulum Merdeka* aims to develop competencies in both academic and non-academic domains. This suggests that teachers at the school have made efforts to support students' holistic development. Furthermore, the used of interactive methods such as educational games and translating local cultural events into English reinforces the claim by Cadisa & Dwikristanto (2022) that group discussions and constructive feedback enhance student motivation and engagement practices clearly demonstrated by teachers such as (JM) and (DR).

Nevertheless, the reseacher also finds that teachers' understanding of the *Kurikulum* remains inconsistent, as expressed by (DR), which reflects Nasution's (2023) view that limited experience with independent learning concepts, a lack of resources, and ineffective time management hinder effective implementation. The teachers' expressed need for further professional development such as workshops, training, and mentoring is consistent with Hasballah and Zulfatmi's (2024) findings that teacher competence and infrastructure are major obstacles, especially in remote areas like Toho. Additionally, the lack of contextual learning strategies and inadequate facilities further support Reza and Rohmah's (2023) assertion that the curriculum's adaptation to diverse student abilities remains a challenge. Although the school has begun transitioning into the "*Merdeka Berubah*" phase, the process remains gradual and requires ongoing supervision a concern the author shares with (JP).

Moreover, classroom practices such as writing sentence examples on the board, conducting role-plays, and integrating daily life topics into lessons show progress aligned with Putri & Hidayati's

(2023) findings that collaborative and project-based learning foster creativity, independence, and communication skills. However, students' tendency to rely on Indonesian or local languages in the classroom suggests a need to strengthen the functional use of English. This issue may be attributed to weak lesson planning and limited teacher capacity in module development, as pointed out by Lubis (2025). In this regard, the author agrees that strengthening teacher capacity is essential to bridge existing implementation gaps. Furthermore, Widya Rizky Pratiwi (2024) emphasizes that the success of *Kurikulum Merdeka* depends not only on teacher training and infrastructure but also on the ability to motivate students through engaging and relevant teaching approaches an aspect the reseacher considers especially critical in the context of SMP Negeri 1 Toho. Finally, the author concurs with Turner (2020) that a purposive sampling approach in this case, selecting teachers who are motivated and well-trained is key to ensuring meaningful and effective educational reform. Therefore, while notable progress has been made, the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in SMP Negeri 1 Toho still requires sustained support in terms of teacher training, *Kurikulum* comprehension, infrastructure, and contextual learning strategies tailored to students' needs.

Theme 2. What are challenges faced by teacher in implementation *Kurikulum Merdeka* at English Teaching in SMP Negeri 1 Toho.

The implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka* in English teaching in SMP Negeri 1 Toho reflects a blend of positive developments and significant obstacles. One of the prominent benefits observed is increased student engagement and enthusiasm in English classes. Teachers noted that students are more active and interested in learning when using *Kurikulum Merdeka*, which adopts a student-centered and flexible approach. However, this positive shift is often hampered by several key challenges. First, the lack of intensive and structured training for teachers presents a significant barrier. Many educators expressed unpreparedness in designing and delivering lessons aligned with the demands of the new *Kurikulum*.

As argued by Astuti *et al.* (2023), "the lack of teacher training and guidance in adopting *Kurikulum Merdeka* becomes a systemic issue that hinders effective classroom implementation" (Astuti *et al.*, 2023). Without adequate preparation, teachers find it difficult to transition from traditional to more innovative pedagogies. Second, limited learning infrastructure significantly impacts the ability to implement technology-integrated and differentiated learning as promoted by the curriculum. English teachers reported the absence of adequate facilities such as projectors, internet access, or language labs, which are essential in supporting digital and contextual learning environments. This aligns with the findings of Susanto & Ramadhan (2023), who found that "technological gaps between policy expectations and actual school infrastructure remain a major

challenge in rural school contexts" (Susanto & Ramadhan, 2023). Third, the wide variation in student capabilities presents another challenge. Teachers must personalize their teaching strategies to accommodate learners with diverse backgrounds and learning speeds.

However, with limited time and human resources, this becomes difficult to achieve. As emphasized by Widodo & Dewi (2022), "implementing differentiated learning requires strong teacher competence and institutional support, both of which are often lacking in under-resourced schools" (Widodo & Dewi, 2022). Fourth, despite the government's efforts through workshops and online platforms such as PMM (*Platform Merdeka Mengajar*), implementation at the grassroots level still faces resistance and uneven adaptation. Teachers highlighted that while webinars and materials from the Ministry of Education are helpful, they are insufficient when not followed up with hands-on, context-specific mentoring. Research by Hartati et al. (2023) supports this view, stating that "systemic support, including consistent mentoring and monitoring, is necessary to bridge the gap between policy and practice" (Hartati et al., 2023).

Fifth, English learning remains grammar focused with limited emphasis on communicative competence. Learning is One of the important factors in education that must be supported by all parties (Sahrawi and Kurniawati 2021). Several teachers criticized that the curriculum still lacks sufficient support for developing students' speaking skills. They observed that many students still view English as difficult, leading to low motivation and classroom participation. According to Fauzi & Sari (2023), "language teaching in Indonesia continues to be dominated by grammatical competence, neglecting the development of practical speaking skills necessary for real-life communication" (Fauzi & Sari, 2023). This reflects the need to realign learning goals toward communicative and functional language use. In conclusion, while *Kurikulum Merdeka* has begun to positively influence student engagement and pedagogy in English teaching, it still requires significant structural, pedagogical, and institutional support. Continuous teacher development, provision of appropriate learning technologies, greater school and parental support, and a focus on communicative competence are necessary steps to ensure that the *Kurikulum* goals can be met effectively in rural school settings such as SMP Negeri 1 Toho.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in English language teaching in SMP Negeri 1 Toho demonstrates both encouraging progress and ongoing challenges. Teachers have begun to apply more flexible, student-centered methods such as group discussions, cultural-contextual learning, and project-based tasks, which align with the *Kurikulum* holistic educational goals. These practices have

enhanced student engagement and motivation, as reflected in the interactive approaches used by some teachers. However, inconsistencies in teacher understanding, limited professional training, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of contextual learning strategies hinder the full realization of the *Kurikulum* objectives. The reliance on non-English languages in class and weak planning also indicate gaps in implementation, particularly in terms of teacher competence and resource availability. Despite moving toward the "Merdeka Berubah" phase, the transition remains gradual and requires stronger institutional support. Thus, while the school has laid a foundation for reform, consistent efforts and systemic support are crucial for sustainable improvement.

REFERENCES

Astuti, R., Nurhidayati, & Pratiwi, S. (2023). The lack of teacher training and guidance in adopting Kurikulum Merdeka becomes a systemic issue that hinders effective classroom implementation.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.

Cadisa, A., & Dwikristanto, B. (2022). Group discussions and constructive feedback enhance student motivation and engagement.

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Fauzi, F., & Sari, D. (2023). Language teaching in Indonesia continues to be dominated by grammatical competence, neglecting the development of practical speaking skills necessary for real-life communication.

Hartati, S., Siregar, E., & Sari, N. (2023). Systemic support, including consistent mentoring and monitoring, is necessary to bridge the gap between policy and practice.

Hasballah, M., & Zulfatmi. (2024). Teacher competence and infrastructure as major obstacles in the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka in remote areas.

Lubis, R. (2025). Weak lesson planning and limited teacher capacity in module development as challenges in Kurikulum Merdeka implementation.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. (2022). Kurikulum Merdeka aims to develop competencies in both academic and non-academic domains.

Nasution, A. (2023). Limited experience with independent learning concepts, lack of resources, and ineffective time management hinder effective implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka.

Putri, A. N., & Hidayati, N. (2023). Collaborative and project-based learning foster creativity, independence, and communication skills.

Reza, R., & Rohmah, N. (2023). The curriculum's adaptation to diverse student abilities remains a challenge.

Sahrawi, A., & Kurniawati, D. (2021). One of the important factors in education that must be supported by all parties.

Susanto, H., & Ramadhan, A. (2023). Technological gaps between policy expectations and actual school infrastructure remain a major challenge in rural school contexts.

Turner, D. W. (2020). Purposive sampling approach in educational research.

Widodo, A., & Dewi, S. (2022). Implementing differentiated learning requires strong teacher competence and institutional support.

Widya Rizky Pratiwi. (2024). The success of Kurikulum Merdeka depends on teacher training, infrastructure, and motivating students through engaging teaching approaches.