



TEACHERS' INTERPRETATION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM IN ENGLISH LEARNING AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL 2 MATARAM

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Abstract: The aim of the study was to describe the English Teachers interpretation, implementation, and the challenges in implementing independent curriculum. The research used a descriptive design with a qualitative approach. The data was collected using interviews, observation, and document study. The subject of this study were 3 English teachers in the seventh grade at SMPN 2 Mataram. The results showed that 1) the English teachers have appropriate interpretation with the objectives of English learning in independent curriculum, the content of English learning in the material, the method of English learning in differentiated learning, and the evaluation of English learning in formative and summative assessment. But, the English teachers do not have appropriate interpretation with content of English learning in six skills, method of English learning in text based approach and student centered learning, and evaluation of English learning in the diagnostic assessment 2) The English teachers have not implemented independent curriculum optimally because these three English teachers have not been able to correctly interpret the component in independent curriculum 3) The challenges faced by English teachers in implementing independent curriculum were lack of time to prepare the material and lack of time to understand the concept of independent curriculum, difficulties in implementing learning methods in differentiated learning, the lack of time allocation for the English teaching-learning process, difficulties in assessing the students based on the guidelines of implementation of independent curriculum, and lack of facilities that are given by the government.

Key words: Interpretation, implementation, challenges, independent curriculum, English teachers

INTRODUCTION

Independent curriculum is a part of an independent learning program launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology on the 15th episode on Friday, February 11, 2022. The underlying thing for the emergence of the independent curriculum is to overcome the learning loss and learning gap long before the pandemic coupled with the Covid-19 pandemic (Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, 2021). Besides, based on the evaluation of the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum found that there was a mistake in the teacher's understanding of the concept of mastery learning. Most teachers still think that mastery learning is completing all learning materials so that they even override students' understanding; while what is expected for the 2013 Curriculum is the complete understanding of students (Kemendikbud, 2019). Another reason is that teacher flexibility in developing creativity and innovation is not provided in the 2013 general curriculum due to the large amount of administration that must be completed by teachers.

The difference between independent curriculum and 2013 curriculum is the concept of independent curriculum has a role as an effort to restore learning loss that focuses on essential materials and students' basic competencies as well as an effort to create changes in students' character and mindset. Besides, the independent curriculum provides soft skills and accommodates the world's needs (Permendikbud 22 of 2020: 55). The concept of Independent curriculum is also a flexible learning process for teachers to choose various learning tools so that the learning process is following the interests and talents of students and it emphasizes on student center learning, in which students participate more actively in teaching and learning activities in the classroom based on the needs and abilities of students. Another characteristic of independent curriculum is a new paradigm of learning which the learning practice is student-centered and the learning framework is in the form of a continuous cycle starting from the foundation phase to phase F. Another characteristic of an independent curriculum is project-based learning for soft skills and character development according to the profile of Pancasila students. According to Kemendikbudristek (2021), it means that the profile of Pancasila students is a guiding policy direction learning and assessment both in intra-curricular learning and projects to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students.

Component of Independent curriculum consist of objectives, content, method, and evaluation. The objectives subjects at secondary school in the decree of the head of the standard, curriculum, and educational assessment agency number 033 of 2022 is learning focuses on strengthening spoken English and strengthening written English skills. The content of English learning in independent curriculum is not much different from the 2013 curriculum, it's just that the material in the independent curriculum is smaller and deeper. In the decree of the head of the standard, curriculum, and educational assessment agency number 033 of 2022, learning English is more focus on strengthening the ability to use English in six language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting in an integrated manner in various types of texts. It is divided into 3 elements of learning outcomes which are listening-speaking, reading-viewing, and writing-presenting. The method are: first differentiated learning is learning that accommodates students' learning needs, abilities, learning styles, and interests of individual students in the classroom. Differentiated learning means individual needs. Whether teachers differentiated content, process, and products, or the learning environment, the use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping make this a successful approach to instruction (Tomlinson, 2000). Second, text based approach namely learning focused on text, in various modes, both oral, written, visual, audio, and multimodal. According to Richard (2015), the teacher introduces the text and its goals, as well as its features, and guides students to produce texts through the process of providing assistance (scaffolding). The strategy is student-centered learning is making students actively participate in the class based on their abilities and needs. The evaluation of Independent curriculum is more emphasized on formative assessment. Formative assessment at the beginning of learning is called a diagnostic assessment which functions to provide information to educators about students' learning readiness. According to Kemendikbudristek (2022), Formative assessment or assessment of the learning process aims to monitor and improve the learning process, as well as evaluate the achievement of learning objectives. This assessment is carried out to find out the obstacles or difficulties they face, and also to get information on the progress of students. This information

is feedback for students as well as educators. While, Summative assessment Summative assessment or assessment at the primary and secondary education levels aims to assess the achievement of learning objectives and/or students' CP as a basis for determining grade increases and/or graduation from educational units.

In implementing the new curriculum, it always has pro and contra. But, it depends on the teacher's interpretation of the concept of independent curriculum. If the teachers understand the concept, it will make it easier to implement the independent curriculum. Currently, a study on this matter is still in its infancy. Thus, little information is known by the public concerning the implementation of the new curriculum. Therefore, this study wants to see how the teachers' interpretation and the implementation of independent curriculum, whether it is following with the concept presented by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology with what is in school, or not.

RESEARCH METHODS

In terms of the research design, this study used descriptive design with a qualitative approach. Descriptive research is research that seeks to describe existing phenomena, both natural phenomena and human engineering. While qualitative research arises from data, not hypotheses. Descriptive qualitative research in question is to collect as much data or information as possible, descriptive is more concerned with the process than the results, limits the study to focus, has a set of criteria to check the validity of the data, the research design is temporary and the results are agreed upon by both parties, both by researcher and research subjects.

The participants of this research were three English teachers who teach in the seventh grade at SMPN 2 Mataram and coded as TA, TB, and TC. The data was collected using two instruments. First, the data for research question one through a semi-structured interview consist of some questions and developed based on the needs to see the teachers' interpretation, implementation, and the challenges in implementing independent curriculum. Second, an observation to see how the implementation planning of learning activity, characteristics of English learning in the class, and the assessment.

To analyze the data. First, identifying which data are really important related to the research problems from the recording and exporting chat that has been saved. Second, classifying which data is included whether in the teachers' interpretation the concept of independent curriculum, the implementation of independent curriculum from planning, characteristics of English learning, and the assessment, and the challenges faced by the English teachers. Then, describing the English teachers' interpretation about the concept of independent curriculum, the implementation of independent curriculum from planning, characteristics of English learning, and the assessment, and/1the challenges faced by English teachers. Next, explaining all the data that will be displayed in this study in detail. The last, taking a conclusion and verification.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

a. The English Teachers' Interpretation of Independent Curriculum

The findings found that TA, TB and TC have appropriate interpretation with the objective of English learning in independent curriculum.

Table 1. The English Teachers' Interpretation of Independent Curriculum

Component of Curriculum	TA	TB	TC
Objectives	The aim of English learning is to strengthen the ability in spoken and written English through various texts.		
Content	All three TA, TB, and TC interpreted the English material in Independent curriculum is focus on essential material and deeper.		
	TA interpreted these six skills is combined them in the learning process.	TB interpreted by bringing together these various skills in one meeting.	TC interpreted the 6 skills in English by integrating all these skills in the classroom
Method/ Strategy	Differentiated learning interpreted as a condition where students must be distinguished according to their abilities and needs.		
	Text-based approach interpreted as an approach to learning English using text which students were taught to recognize various kinds of vocabulary and parts of speech from various types of texts until guide students to create texts independently.	TB interpreted the text based approach by introducing the characteristics of the material or important points in the text that are taught, whether in the form of part of speech such as prepositions.	TC interpreted by teaching students various types of text and from there it can be taught such as vocabulary, parts of speech or characteristics of the text.
	Students-centered learning interpreted as the teacher functions as a bridge for students to explore and express their abilities, carried out group discussions, and has partnerships for learning.	Student-centered learning interpreted as a condition in which students can be separated according to their abilities in learning and the teacher's function is to provide stimulus to students so that students learn according to their stage of development and more active in class.	Teacher C interpreted student-centered learning which students actively participate in class based on their needs and abilities.
Evaluation	Teacher A interpreted formative assessment in the beginning of learning activity for seeing the level of students and their learning style. Besides, formative assessment in the process of learning interpreted as giving feedback for students which	TB interpreted formative assessment in the beginning of learning activity for knowing the student learning style and assessment of the learning process to see the progress of students. While summative	TC interpreted formative assessment is the same as TA and TB, namely to see student learning styles and provide an evaluation of developments in the learning process, one of which is in the form of

good and bad in the learning process in order to grow. While summative assessment interpreted as evaluation material whether students have understood the lesson by giving assignments and tests to students.	assessment interpreted as assessment at the end or middle to test the learning objectives have been achieved or not.	peer-to-peer assessment. While summative assessment interpreted as evaluates whether the learning objectives have been achieved.
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DISCUSSION

From the finding above the English teachers have appropriate interpretation with the objective of English learning in independent curriculum namely to strengthen spoken and written English skills with using various kinds of text. The English teachers also have appropriate interpretation with the content or material of English learning in independent curriculum which more focus on the essential material and deeper. This is in line with the characteristic of independent curriculum in the Ministry of Education and Culture in BSKAP (2022), the material in independent curriculum is more focus on the essential material and basic competencies. The English teachers also have appropriate interpretation with the method of English learning in differentiated learning. They interpreted differentiated learning as the learning process in accordance with the needs and abilities of students. However, TA, TB, and TC needed to understand more deeply related to acknowledge students needs and abilities, differentiated learning types and diagnostic assessments so that they can find out students' abilities and needs in learning. This was following the concept of differentiated learning from the Ministry of Education and Culture in BSKAP (2022), Differentiated learning is learning that accommodates students' learning needs, abilities, learning styles, and interests of individual students in the classroom. It does not mean learning that provides different treatment or actions for each student or that distinguishes students who are smart and less intelligent. The English teachers have appropriate interpretation with the evaluation of English learning in formative assessment and summative assessment. They consider formative assessment only to provide feedback to students, but also for teachers to evaluate the strategy for learning activity and the students learning needs. And it means individual needs. Whether teachers differentiated content, process, and products, or the learning environment, the use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping make this a successful approach to instruction (Tomlinson, 2000). Differentiated learning also avoids the pitfalls of the one-size-fits-all curriculum (McBride, 2004).

But, The English teacher do not have appropriate interpretation with content of English learning in six skills. They said that the six skills were applied in one meeting. Whereas in the decree of the head of the standard, curriculum, and educational assessment agency number 033 of 2022, The learning outcomes for English the subject are focused on strengthening the ability to use English in six language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting in an integrated manner in various types of texts. The English teachers also do not have appropriate interpretation

method of English learning in text based approach , namely by teaching students to recognize various types of text to learn new vocabulary, expressions, and parts of speech to guide students to make a sentence or text in learning. While, in the decree of the head of the standards, curriculum, and educational assessment agency number 033 of 2022 related to the concept of a text- based approach which reads "the approach used in learning general English is a text-based approach, namely learning is focused on text, in various modes, whether spoken, written, audio, visual or multimodal. Besides, according to Richard (2015), the teacher introduces the text and its goals, as well as its features, and guides students to produce texts through the process of providing assistance (scaffolding). Text based approach also involves reading comprehension, vocabulary expansion, grammar and syntax, writing practice, cultural insight, and supplemental activities. The other do not have appropriate method is student centered learning. In fact, the interpretation of the three teachers is close to the concept of student-centered learning, which is to make the class atmosphere more active according to the abilities and needs of students. As contained in the decree of the head of the standards, curriculum, and educational assessment agency number 033 of 2022, the student-centered learning is teaching concepts and/or skills according to their current abilities instead of teaching material just because it follows the order recommended in the textbook without considering whether the majority of students are ready to learn the material. The English do not have appropriate interpretation with the evaluation of English learning in independent curriculum especially in the diagnostic assessment. TA interpreted formative assessment in the beginning of learning activity for knowing the level of students and their learning style. While TB and TC interpreted with only seeing their learning style. Based on the concept of assessment diagnostic in BSKAP (2022), Diagnostic assessment functions to provide information to educators about students' learning readiness. And there are two kinds of diagnostic assessments, namely cognitive related to abilities or levels in subjects. Non-cognitive related to learning styles, student backgrounds. Therefore, TA, TB, and TC need to understand again related to cognitive diagnostic assessment in the independent curriculum.

b. The Implementation of Independent Curriculum from Planning until Assessment by English Teachers

Table 2. The Implementation of Independent Curriculum from Planning until Assessment by English Teachers

Implementation of Independent curriculum	TA	TB	TC
Planning the Learning Activity	All the three TA, TB, and TC adopted the flow of learning objectives and teaching module from the file that is already in the link given by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. Then, It was modified related to the student's condition.		
Text Based Approach	All The three TA, TB, and TC showed the material to be studied, explains the purpose of the material, the way it is written, and the language elements. After that, TB guided students to make sentences.		

Student Centered-Learning	Both TA and TC placed students who have studied and prepared the day's material in the middle of other students to conduct group discussions. So, they became friends to discuss and ask questions about the difficulties they face. While TB provided more stimulus to students in the form of asking questions to get students active in the class.		
Differentiated Learning	TA gave freedom to students to learn according to their abilities. TA performed process-based differentiation learning when there were children who understand quickly and were slow to understand the material like students who cannot write to make a sentence or text, TA emphasized the students' understanding of the points in the material.	TB does not use media such as film and music in teaching but only shows videos related to telling time material	TC implemented students who had learning preparation participate in listening or directly doing exercises. Besides, TC also utilized these students to be able to help their friends by teaching accordingly to their language. Differentiation learning was also carried out based on the products made, such as students being asked to make wall clocks from cardboard and manila paper.
Six skills	TC implemented listening-spekaing, Reading-viewing in the second meeting, and writing-presenting in the third meeting.		
Pancasila of student Profile	All the three TA, TB and tried to choose which themes are suitable for application in accordance with the material. for example, TA applied independent aspects when making presentations, working together during discussions and working together to see the spirit of unity in the various characters in the class. While TB, students were asked to make wall clocks from cardboard or manila paper so that they can hone students' independence and creativity. TC implemented early learning to start by praying together, then to look at morals. Then, creativity, mutual cooperation, global diversity from the learning process in doing individual and group assignments in the form of projects to students so they can train their competence and character.		
Assessment	All the three TA, TB, and TC conducted assessment before the learning activity was a diagnostic assessment in which they worked together with guidance and counseling teacher for seeing the level of students' ability to do differentiated learning in the class. TA and TB applied formative assessments in the learning process, for example by giving assessments to children in the form of developments where they were good and where they were lacking in the learning process. While TC conducted formative assessments in the form of peer-to-peer assessments. For summative assessment, TA, TB, and TC provided assignments and daily tests, midterm tests, and final semester tests to test whether the learning objectives have been achieved or not.		

Based on the findings above, the English teachers have not implemented independent curriculum optimally. It started from the planning , the English teachers applied independent changes in an independent curriculum with adopting the teaching modules from examples provided by the government, and adapting to needs. the component of teaching modules have already in the teaching module which contained general information consist of module author identity, initial competence, Pancasila student profile, facilities and infrastructure, students target, learning model; core component consist of learning goal, assessment, meaningful understanding, lighter question, learning activity, and student's and teacher's-reflection; and attachment

consist of student worksheets, enrichment and remedial, reading materials for educators and students, glossary, and references (Kemendikbudrsitek, 2021). But, the components of the teaching module were in accordance with those mandated by the government. However, the learning objectives in the teaching module have not reached the desired competency and some of the activities carried out in class were not included in the teaching module. In implementation the characteristics of English learning such as text based approach, student centered-learning, six skills, the profile of Pancasila student have carried out in the class well. But, the English teachers need to maximize the implementation of differentiated learning, student-centered learning, and the dimensions in the profile of Pancasila students in the learning process. The English teachers also need to maximize applying assessments, especially in diagnostic assessment. Diagnostic assessment is related to cognitive assessment such as students' understanding of the material to be studied so that learning is expected to occur according to the level. In addition, non-cognitive assessments such as understanding the learning style, and background of students. Then, formative assessment is also carried out when the learning process takes place, such as the educator ending the learning activity by asking students to write down concepts that are understood and not understood. The teacher gives written questions, then after finishing answering the students are given answer keys as self-reflection (Kemendikburistek, 2022).

c. The Challenges Faced by English Teachers in Implementing Independent Curriculum

Table 3. The Challenges Faced by English Teachers in Implementing Independent Curriculum

Challenges in implementing independent curriculum	TA	TB	TC
Internal Factor	<p>-Some problems in adjusting time allocation such as lack of time to prepare the material and lack of time to understand the concept of independent curriculum.</p> <p>-Difficulties in implementing learning method, especially in the independent curriculum like differentiated learning in the class</p> <p>-The lack of time allocation for the English teaching-learning process, they had</p>	<p>-Some problems in adjusting time allocation such as lack of time to prepare the material and lack of time to understand the concept of independent curriculum.</p> <p>-Difficulties in implementing learning method, especially in the independent curriculum like differentiated learning in the class.</p> <p>-The lack of time allocation for the English teaching-learning process, they had</p>	<p>-Some problems in adjusting time allocation such as lack of time to prepare the material and lack of time to understand the concept of independent curriculum.</p> <p>-The lack of time allocation for the English teaching-learning process, they had difficulties in managing the class because of the decrease in time in teaching English.</p>

	difficulties in managing the class because of the decrease in time in teaching English. -Difficulties in assessing the students based on their ability and their learning style.	difficulties in managing the class because of the decrease in time in teaching English.
Exsternal Factor		Lack of facilities that given by the government, there was lack of textbooks for teaching in the classroom.

The English teacher challenges in implementing Independent curriculum according to Rohmah (2019), there are two factors such as internal and exsternal factor. The internal factor were 1) Some problems in adjusting time allocation such as lack of time to prepare the material and lack of time to understand the concept of independent curriculum 2) Difficulties in implementing learning method, especially in the independent curriculum like differentiated learning in the class 3) The lack of time allocation for the English teaching-learning process, they had difficulties in managing the class 4) Difficulties in assessing the students based on the guidelines of Implementation of Independent Curriculum, TA faced challenges in assessing the students based on their ability and their learning style (Rizki et al, 2021) 5) Lack of facilities that given by the government, there was lack of textbooks for teaching in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions, it can be concluded that the English teachers have appropriate interpretation the objectives of English learning in independent curriculum, the content of English learning in the material, the method of English learning in differentiated learning, and the evaluation of English learning in formative and summative assessment. But, The English teacher do not have appropriate interpretation with content of English learning in six skills, method of English learning in text based approach and student centered learning, and evaluation of English learning especially in diagnostic assessment.

In implementing independent curriculum, the English teachers have not implemented independent curriculum optimally because these three teachers have not been able to correctly interpret the component in independent curriculum. They need to maximize to prepare the lesson plan because they only focus on teaching than preparing the lesson plan. Besides, they need to maximize the implementation of differentiated learning, student-centered learning, and the dimensions in the profile of Pancasila students in the learning process. The English teachers also need to maximize applying assessments, especially in diagnostic assessment. Therefore, they still need time to learn and adapt to implement independent curriculum according to what the government wants.

Last, the challenges faced by English teachers in implementing the independent curriculum were some problems in adjusting time allocation such as lack of time to prepare the

material and lack of time to understand the concept of independent curriculum, difficulties in implementing learning methods especially in the independent curriculum like differentiated learning in the class, the lack of time allocation for the English teaching-learning process (initially 2 times a week within 4 hours, but only 3 hours in a week), difficulties in assessing the students based on the guidelines of implementation of independent curriculum, and lack of facilities that are given by the government.

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