# UNRAVELING CLASSROOM STORIES: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF ENGAGING STUDENTS IN IMPLEMENTING INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM

*SKRIPSI*

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# ABSTRACT

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The Independent Curriculum is a curriculum with various extracurriculars of study where content will be optimized so that learners have sufficient time to explore ideas and enhance skills. In this new curriculum, teachers are free to choose media or study tools that suit the situation and conditions of both the class and the students themselves. For the successful application of the independent curriculum, teachers and students must create good interactions. Therefore, teachers must have a strategy to invite learners to engage more in the learning experience. Of course, in the development of the application of the Independent Curriculum over the past few years, there are still many shortcomings. This study aimed to know obstacles when inviting learners to be active in the classroom experienced by teachers after the curriculum was replaced by the new curriculum, and also to know steps or methods that make learners more active in the classroom that are frequently used by teachers in the knowledge acquisition. For research design, this study used a narrative inquiry design. Narrative inquiry is a type of qualitative research devoted to the human experience. This research took one English teacher who was teaching at a junior high school in Malang. Data collection for this research used in-depth interviews 3 times to ensure its correctness. Then analyzed using a content analysis approach. The result is several obstacles experienced by teachers when engaging students in active learning. These challenges include low student motivation, students' fear of responding, and teachers' lack of technological knowledge. Apart from that, this research found that the methods often used to engage students are PjBL, PBL, and discovery learning.

# CHAPTER I
# INTRODUCTION

This part discusses the research background, research questions, objectives, significance of the study, and definitions of key terms.

## 1.1 Background of the Study

In the transition period of the Curriculum from Curriculum 13 commonly called K-13, to the Independent Curriculum, educators inevitably have to adapt to the new curriculum. The Independent Curriculum has a curriculum with various extracurriculars of study where content will be optimized so that learners have sufficient time to explore ideas and enhance skills (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). In this new curriculum, teachers are free to choose media or study tools that suit the situation and conditions of both the class and the students themselves. The policy, popularly known as Independent Belajar, is intended to realize a self-ruling and malleable lesson process in schools to make a forward-thinking process, not restrictive, according to students' needs (Suryaman, 2020). This shows that the learning experience in the learning independence is created to meet learner needs (student center) (Taufik & Narawaty, 2022). This also applies to English subjects. In the learning experience, students are expected to be independent in achieving learning objectives, methods, materials, and assessments for teachers and students.

According to McCaffrey et al., 2004 by Susanto et al. (2023) shows that teacher quality is the most important element of school learning outcomes, and the influence of teachers on learners turns out to be cumulative and sustainable

learning. Independent here refers to a concept that makes students independent and can explore their respective interests and talents (Setiawan et al., 2022). In learning English in Indonesia, four abilities must be learned to improve language skills, namely reading, listening, writing, and speaking. However, English language learning has changed along with the development of independent curriculum implementation. Changes in the learning elements are added from 4 language skills to 6 language skills, namely the addition of viewing and presentation skills (Mulyani, 2023). Learning Outcomes (CP) include a combination of competencies that will be taught in each phase that learners will go through (Taufik & Narawaty, 2022). In the Independent Curriculum, students are classified into 5 phases, namely: Phase A: Grades 1 and 2; Phase B: Grades 3 and 4; Phase C; Grades 5 and 6; Phase D; Grades 7, 8, 9; Phase E: grade 10, and Phase F; grade 11 and 12.

In applying the independent curriculum, teachers are not asked to provide the whole material that has been prepared. However, in this newly created curriculum, teachers are asked only as guides. So, students are expected to be more active and more critical in thinking. In creating independent learning for students, a teacher should strive to be more innovative in creating lesson plans by collaborating between learning methods and media (Yamin & Syahrir, 2020). Following its name, the independent curriculum, the curriculum does not limit the way students think about the content given by the teacher. There is access to carrying out study, so every student will be able to explore according to the skills and attraction of students' talents. Therefore, the presence of the implementation

of an independent learning curriculum will produce innovative also independent students (Nazmi et al., 2023). There are constraints experienced by teachers in applying an independent curriculum, for example, in the learning outcomes (CP), some teachers have difficulty preparing learning outcomes (CP) because it is still difficult to distinguish between main competencies and basic competencies in the K-13 curriculum (Suryani, 2023). Obstacles were found in the application of learning and assessment, including 1) lack of experience in applying learning and assessment, and 2) lack of references in preparing learning and assessment (Irmawan et al., 2023).

For the successful application of the independent curriculum, teachers and students must create good interactions. Good interaction will encourage teachers and students to communicate better and understand what each other wants in the learning process. Then, the learning targets will be obtaied according to what the teacher planned at the beginning of the lesson. Therefore, teachers must have a strategy to invite learners to engage more in the learning experience. The strategy must follow the conditions of the students and the student's environment. The differences of each student must always be considered by teachers. From the implementation of online and offline learning and the resources available for both teachers and students, a comparison or difference can be obtained (Abou-Khalil et al., 2021). However, every student has different abilities, so the teacher also still pays attention to the learning style of each student. Essentially, teachers must observe the learning styles of learners in the classroom. This observation helps

determine the most effective approach for delivering course materials during the learning process (Sahriyah et al., 2021).

In following up on the challenges received by teachers in the application of the independent curriculum, several actions must be taken by teachers. Teachers can increase the capacity of the teacher's role as a facilitator by increasing literacy about learning and assessment through training, and conducting discussions with other teachers regarding problems in learning and assessment (Irmawan et al., 2023). The constraints of preparing learning outcomes can be solved by Teachers who are advised to explore references using Google Scholar to solve problems regarding references to the independent curriculum (Suryani, 2023). Alternatively, teachers can attend seminars, and workshops, or even look for articles or books related to the problems they are experiencing. Classrooms need to be structured in such a way that students can demonstrate that the learning tasks are worthwhile in the future. When students perceive ESL learning tasks as important and worthwhile, they are likely to put forth their best efforts to invite in the learning experiences (Nazmi et al., 2023). What is felt by students at this time is that other factors in improving achievement, especially in the field of English, are factors from technology, environment, society, and personal circumstances. (Ismiatun et al., 2019). The existence of this lesson plan (RPP) has a positive impact so that what has been planned material that has been created by the teacher can run well. So that it can make it simpler for students to be comfortable learning in class (Nazmi et al., 2023). The collaboration between learners and teachers also needs

to be maintained in the learning process. Collaboration needs to be built with positive vibes that are built outside and inside the classroom. With the formation of a good relationship, it will also build good chemistry between teachers and students. Then, students will be interested in contributing to the class and becoming an active class (Martin & Collie, 2018).

Of course, in the development of the application of the Independent Curriculum over the past few years, there are still many shortcomings. These shortcomings include the lack of preparation carried out, so that it must be finalized first and then implemented, which requires training which takes a long time (Tri Mawarni et al., 2022). Preparation of human resources has not been formed, this curriculum is relatively new, so it is insufficient in preparing human resources. (Dirwan et al., 2023). In addition, some teachers do not get the meaning of the learning systems in the Independent Curriculum, so they do not implement Independent Curriculum in the stages of learning with their students (Dirwan et al., 2023). In K-13, the difficulty experienced by teachers is that teachers are asked to combine four skills, namely writing, reading, listening, and speaking in one learning activity where the facilities at school do not support these activities. In addition, teachers also experience difficulties where there is a shortage of practice or briefing on how to apply K-13 correctly and adequately following K-13 regulations (Anwar et al., 2021). From these shortcomings, it is also a novelty of this research which in this study has not discussed how to understand teaching methods that are suitable for various student characters in the classroom.

In this study, it discusses how teachers can invite students to engage in the classroom, especially in the Independent Curriculum. Based on Trowler (2010) to optimize student understanding and what students gain in the classroom, there needs to be an involvement of time, effort, and related resources. (Wu et al., 2021). Student participation is also important to foster a learning environment that encourages active participation, creativity, and enjoyment and helps learners understand the theory or explain things that have been understood or have not been understood (Nissa & Putri, 2021). This research also discusses what methods teachers often use to help increase student participation in acquiring knowledge. According to Piaget (1968) and Vygotsky (1978) in active learning methodologies based on constructivist theories, students take on the role of constructing information and actively participate in the process of learning. (Erbil, 2020).

The target of this research is to discover the problems of a teacher when inviting students to engage to create an active class and learning. In addition, this research also intends to discover what methods teachers often use and are considered successful in inviting students to play an active role in learning.

## 1.2 Research Questions

From the constraints that have been described in the previous article, some questions will be researched, including:

1. What are the teacher's problems when inviting students to engage in learning in the independent curriculum?

2. What methods are used by teachers to encourage students to engage in class?

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

From the above statement, it becomes a research objective that will be discussed in this thesis, the purposes of this research are:

1. To know obstacles when inviting learners to be active in the classroom experienced by teachers after the curriculum was replaced by the new curriculum.

2. To know steps or methods that make learners more active in the classroom that are frequently used by teachers in knowledge acquisition.
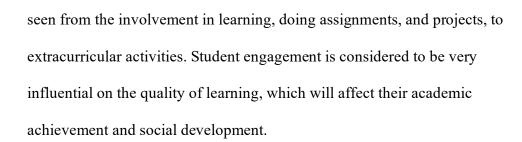
## 1.4 Significances of the Study

The uses of this research that are desired by the writer are as follows:

1. **Theoretically**, this research supports theories that discuss the importance of student participation for teachers in knowledge acquisition. Then, the theory of what supporting factors can increase student participation in knowledge acquisition. All teachers, like all people, have their physical characteristics and habits, and they will take these into the classroom with them (Harmer, 2021).

2. **Practically,** this research will provide data on the importance of student attraction for the smooth learning process. The outcome of this study can be helpful for teachers on things that can increase student participation. Teachers also know the possible problems that arise in inviting students to participate in knowledge acquisition.

## 1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. *Student engagement* is an essential thing for teachers in knowledge acquisition. Student participation refers to the intensity to which students comprehend the content that has been given, and the extent to which learners are enthusiastic about the knowledge acquisition. Student engagement will be

seen from the involvement in learning, doing assignments, and projects, to extracurricular activities. Student engagement is considered to be very influential on the quality of learning, which will affect their academic achievement and social development.

2. *Independent Curriculum* is given the expansiveness to choose media or studying tools that suit the situation and conditions of both the class and the students. The Independent Curriculum has only been applied in a few schools, the government hopes that all educational institutions in Indonesia, from ministers to educators, can work together to recognize the goal of the Independent Curriculum, which is to liberate learners in the learning stages. Since the beginning of the Independent Curriculum, teachers have always cooperated to fix learning in the new curriculum.

3. *Student enjoyment* refers to the satisfaction and curiosity of students about the material presented or on a particular subject. Enjoyment often correlates with active participation and involvement in class activities. Students who find the material interesting and relevant are more likely to engage with the subject matter.

4. *English learning* refers to the process of learning English in Junior High School. Learning English is not only about learning a new language, but also about grammar, pronunciation, and speaking skills. There are many ways to learn English, for example learning from online courses, watching movies, listening to music, and using foreign language learning applications, then you can also learn directly by practicing speaking with native speakers.

# CHAPTER V

# CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter discusses conclusions from the data that has been obtained and analyzed, the chapter also discusses suggestions from researchers.

## 5.1 Conclusions

This study concludes that there are several obstacles experienced by teachers when engaging students in active learning. The first difficulty difficulty is that students are afraid to speak English. With these difficulties, teachers cannot provide creative and innovative learning by following technological developments. Thus, students sometimes feel bored with monotonous lessons. The second is the difficulty in using technology. Students have reasons why they are afraid to speak English, namely because students are afraid and embarrassed to speak wrong. Another reason is that students have little English vocabulary and understanding of speaking English. Students are afraid to be wrong in the pronunciation of vocabulary and afraid to be wrong in the construction of English sentences. These difficulties can interfere with the teacher in inviting students to communicate, so it also does not give the impression of active learning. The third difficulty is that teachers have difficulty choosing suitable learning media for students. There are various students with different backgrounds and characters, making it difficult for teachers to choose learning media that are suitable for all

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students. it also hinders teachers from being able to invite students to play an active role in the learning process.

There are several methods that teachers can use to encourage students to play an active role in learning. The first is PBL (problem-based learning). In this method, students can do their projects, so students play an active role in the chosen project without interference from the teacher. The teacher's job is only to be a facilitator who guides students if they have difficulties. The second method is PjBL (Project-Based Learning). In this method, students are required to think critically about the problems given by the teacher. With the PBL method, teachers are more able to invite active students because each student has a different solution. The last method is Discovery learning. In this method, the teacher only provides the material to be discussed and a little explanation of the material, then asks students to find as much information as possible about the material. this method is considered to be able to invite students to play an active role in the learning process because students have different knowledge and sources, automatically causing many responses in the classroom.

## 5.2 Suggestions

Based on the findings and the conclusions, the writer would like to contribute some suggestions as follows

1. Teachers must better understand what kind of media is suitable for students. Previously, the teacher must also understand what the character of each student is like and what kind of media is suitable for students. This is with the aim that students are not lazy and have the motivation to learn English.

2. Teachers must always be updated about existing developments. Like now technology has developed very rapidly, so teachers must be able to adjust this. With the aim that teachers can produce interesting and useful media to invite students to play an active role in the classroom.

3. Schools must also prepare the latest facilities that can access any source, so teachers and students can take advantage of these facilities to support students' understanding of learning materials.

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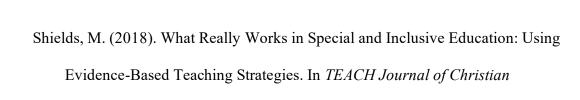(2022). Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar di Sekolah Penggerak.
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