

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The urgency of the development of Indonesian human resources has been the major factor in becoming a respected country internationally. During the presidential speech on October 22, 2019, the President of Indonesia confirmed the issue by arguing that our main priority going forward was the development of well-consolidated human resources. One of the emphasized sectors would be the development of human resources through educational development (Aini, 2023).

Throughout the educational development process, the complexity that came from many sectors of our national education system could be observed. For example the juvenile delinquency has grown rapidly in remote areas, the minimum endeavor of teacher to be involved in productive events as well as their difficulty in terms of adapting themselves to a new challenge and more importantly the tendency of the Indonesian government to change the curriculum based on their period they served not based on the national education outcome or the global demand indicates that Indonesian curriculum has always been implemented prematurely (Barlian & Solekah, 2022).



ling up to this research, the researcher heard a firsthand story from the elder teachers in the high school, which has similarities in terms of their capability. The story is named the botol sosro, meaning that

whatever they will confront, they would end up with the things they liked. Similarly with the curriculums, whatever changes may come in teaching procedure, they will teach the way they want to teach. On the other hand, The *Merdeka* curriculum requires teachers to possess certain types of abilities to be able to implement the curriculum based on the available regulations.

Furthermore, teacher in recent years is expected to be highly educated, creative, and responsible as a professional who carries out their responsibility to perform high-quality teaching and raise successful students. Rationally, the researcher assumes that to will immediately examine the teacher's Metacognitive teaching strategies they perform in the classroom. These internal factors of the teacher could contribute directly to the role as implementer of the curriculum. The phrase Metacognitive teaching strategies is frequently associated with the intelligence of a teacher, which could be reflected through their performance in presenting well-constructed material in the class (Bungawati, 2022).

At the same time, modern teachers seem to encounter several obstacles in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum, which is being changed quite frequently, especially in terms of teaching strategies, in which teachers are required to perform new specific abilities, such as constructing relatable learning materials or conducting a new assessment style. This issue can be



related with Hanushek, Piopiunik & Wiederhold (2019), who claimed that the level in teacher Metacognitive skills is a significant determinant of performance.

There is a substantial endeavor of policymakers to conduct socialization before schools are allowed to implement the *Merdeka* curriculum. Considering that the plan of implementing the curriculum is not just primarily in Jakarta, it must be implemented across all regions of Indonesia. So that there is no different way of interpreting and implementing the curriculum. Moreover, little research has examined how the metacognition of teachers takes part on teaching strategies or how metacognition in general contributes to the implementation of the curriculum. Based on the gap mentioned earlier, the researcher is interested in conducting research entitled “**Investigating Teachers’ Metacognitive Teaching Strategies in Implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum**”.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the problem described as a research limitation, the following problem is formulated:

1. How do teachers apply Metacognitive teaching strategies in the implementation of the *Merdeka* curriculum?
2. What challenges do teachers face in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum at SMPN 26 Makassar?

1.3 Research Objectives

Concerning the study's background indicated above, the research objectives of the study are as follows;

1. To identify teachers' Metacognitive teaching strategies in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum



2. to identify the challenges faced by the teachers in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum

1.4 Research Significance

This researcher takes some significance related to this research; they are;

1. Theoretical benefit

The theoretical significance of this research is to create innovation in the educational community with the expectation of expanding knowledge and understanding. In addition, the results of this study can be used to improve teachers' competencies in understanding the Independence Curriculum learning system.

2. Practical benefit

This research is expected to solve problems in terms of teacher self-regulation in the implementation of *Merdeka* curriculum. It is also expected to contribute positively to institutions, teachers, and students to anticipate various problems related to the teachers' metacognition in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum.

1.5 The Scope of the Research

This research focused on how the teachers' metacognitive teaching strategies contribute to implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum at SMPN 26 Makassar. Metacognitive teaching strategies are divided into three main stages: planning, monitoring, and evaluating.



term *Merdeka* curriculum here is specified to the teaching process as a follow-up action after teachers determine their learning

outcomes (*capaian pembelajaran*) In addition, this study will also examine the challenges faced by teachers in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This unit was organized into three primary sections: previous studies, theoretical background, and conceptual framework. The previous studies covered a range of earlier studies that are pertinent to the current topic. Similar to that, the theoretical background discussed the theories that are pertinent to and helpful in supporting this particular investigation. Furthermore, the conceptual framework is a type of analytical instrument that directs the researcher in setting up the concepts for this study.

2.1 Previous Studies

Many research on teachers' demand to implement a *Merdeka* curriculum will be reviewed. The researcher discovered various references that assisted this research. The previous studies have assisted in drawing a hypothetical imagination to the researcher and revealing the issue to be solved intentionally.

The topic of the curriculum in many aspects has been explored by several researchers. The most relevant one has been written by Alfaeni (2022) entitled "Teacher Readiness in Implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum in the *Sekolah Penggerak* Program (Case Study at SDN Baros)". This study examines teachers' readiness to implement a *Merdeka* curriculum in internal *Sekolah Penggerak*. The researcher employed a



ve method with a case study model. The results revealed that
at SDN Baros did not comprehend the "*Merdeka* curriculum" in the
Penggerak and were unable to apply to learn it. The ability to carry

out learning by the "*Merdeka* curriculum" can be proven by the fact that no learning instruments have been created. There have been no learning tools developed.

The researcher has also observed a journal that is relevant to this inquiry. The authors are Jamjemah, Djudin Tomo, Erlina, and Agung Hartoyo (2022). The title of their research is "Analysis of Teacher Performance During *Merdeka* Curriculum Implementation at SDN 47 Penanjung Sekadau in 2022." This study examined teachers' readiness to apply *Merdeka* curriculum. Researchers employed a qualitative approach with a case study model. The study found that SDN 47 Penanjung Sekadau teachers understood the *Merdeka* curriculum policy and were prepared to apply learning properly.

The other journal that is still related to the subject in terms of the objective of the research was conducted by Heryahya, Herawati, Susandi, & Zulaiha (2022) entitled "*Analisis Kesiapan Guru Sekolah Dasar dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka*". The study examined teacher comprehension and readiness in setting goals, implementing 21st-century learning, and identifying students' self-potential. The method utilized is quantitative. The research found that elementary school teachers in Cirebon are ready to adopt *Merdeka* curriculum.

Teacher's comprehension must have huge implications in implementing this curriculum. Purani & Putra (2022) proved in their recent journal that teachers have yet to get ready to apply the *Merdeka* curriculum. The study found that teachers still lack comprehension of the structure of the *Merdeka* curriculum, and training in the production of teaching modules and learning



assessments for *Merdeka* curriculum teachers is required. As a result, teachers still lack a clear understanding of how an *Merdeka* curriculum is implemented.

The study goal was carried out in another journal that is still relevant to the topic conducted by Marantika (2021) analyze the relationship between Metacognitive ability and learning autonomy as a strategy for improving student learning outcomes. The results showed that there was a significant correlation between Metacognitive ability, learner autonomy, and learning outcomes in Indonesian language courses. These results indicate that there is an encouragement for students to increase their learning capacity for themselves. Also, they are encouraged to develop their learning strategies and have the opportunity to make decisions, especially in developing ideas.

In addition, a researcher has seen a journal conducted by Teng & Yue (2023) that relates to this research project. The present study adopted the structural equation modeling approach to examine Chinese university students' metacognition, critical thinking skills, and academic writing. In particular, this research explored whether awareness of metacognition can foster critical thinking and, thus, lead to enhancement in academic writing. Three models were tested: (1) the role of metacognition in academic writing; (2) the role of metacognition in critical thinking; and (3) correlations between metacognition, critical thinking skills, and academic writing. The results indicated significant relationships between the three variables, and the

ons based on these findings were discussed.

um up those beneficial journals, the researcher noted several es and differences in terms of object, context, and scope.



Specifically, the object focuses on English teachers' ability to adapt and implement the *Merdeka* curriculum, The researcher analyzed teacher readiness in the Metacognitive aspect as a sign of teacher readiness based on the use of teaching tools, project-based learning, learning techniques, learning collaboration, and community involvement.

2.2 Theoretical Background

1. Metacognition strategies

The awareness and comprehension of the human Metacognitive activities are referred to as metacognition. It requires higher-order thinking skills, such as the people's capacity to monitor, manage, and organize brain activity. Metacognitive are strategies that assist people in controlling how they learn and solve problems (Azevedo & Wiedbusch, 2023). Examples of these strategies include; a) Planning: Selecting a strategy for solving a task or issue. b) Monitoring: Keeping task on one's comprehension or output, and c) Evaluating: Contemplating and determining how well the tactics worked. A person's capacity to learn and solve problems can be improved by developing Metacognitive skills, which increase self-awareness and the ability to adapt strategies to achieve greater outcomes.

2. Teacher Readiness in Implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum

Teachers in curriculum implementation have a vital role, namely being responsible as planners, implementers, and evaluators, so that teachers are forefront of the success of curriculum development, namely as responsible for curriculum improvement and learning (Mulyasa, 2015). The importance of the teacher's role in curriculum implementation demands



skills that must be improved in parallel with curriculum development (Alfath, Azizah & Setiabudi, 2022).

Based on Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning teachers and lecturers, it is stated that qualifications are a set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that must be possessed, mastered, and internalized by teachers and lecturers carrying out the duties of professional educators. Teachers, as the front guard in achieving successful curriculum implementation, are required to have good competence. so that good teacher knowledge management is an indicator of readiness to implement the curriculum (Kongen & Jaya, 2019).

Decree of the Minister of Education (Permendiknas) Number 16 of 2007 regarding academic qualification standards and teacher qualifications, that teachers must master several skills, namely pedagogic, personality, professional, and social which are obtained through professional education. Mulyasa (2015), explains the meaning of skills that teachers must master as follows, namely 1) pedagogic expert, namely the teacher's expertise in directing learning, 2) personality expert, which is characterized by having a stable, mature, wise, and dignified, noble personality. and capable of being an example for students, 3) social expert, namely being able to communicate and socialize well and effectively with students, colleagues, teachers, parents or guardians, and the community. 4) professional expert, namely the ability to master scientific substance, scientific structure, and



; as well as professional competence.

Business has several aspects that can influence teachers, this was by Slameto (2015), that the aspects that can influence teacher

readiness are 1) mental, physical, and emotional conditions, 2) goals and needs, and 3) skills and knowledge. Meanwhile, according to Dalyono (in Mayangsari & Safitri, 2018), it is revealed that teacher readiness is influenced by external and internal factors. External factors that influence are the home, school, and community environment, while internal factors influence our health, intelligence, talent, interest, and motivation.

Readiness to implement the curriculum is an indicator as a measure of teacher readiness in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum. Indicators of teacher readiness while implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum, according to Ihsan (2022), are Metacognitive preparation, physical preparation, psychological preparation, and financial preparation. The following is an explanation of each of these indicators, namely 1) Metacognitive preparation, namely teacher readiness which can be seen from understanding, utilization of learning resources and learning processes and assessments, 2) Physical preparation, namely the readiness of human resources, namely teachers in facing the *Merdeka* curriculum, 3) Psychological preparation, namely teacher readiness as seen from the teacher's interest and motivation in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum, 4) Financial preparation, namely the availability of facilities and infrastructure that can support the implementation of the *Merdeka* curriculum.



aring teachers to implement the *Merdeka* curriculum requires
) to provide an understanding of the concept of independent
 , curriculum objectives, curriculum components, curriculum policies,

curriculum structure, and learning material design practices that are the same as the provisions of the *Merdeka* curriculum. the concept of independent learning, namely providing opportunities for educators and students to explore innovation skills and improve the quality of independent learning, the form of coaching or teacher training is no longer in the form of seminars held by regional governments and so on, but has changed to more practical training.

Teacher training in the *Merdeka* curriculum policy means that a website has been prepared by the Ministry of Education and Culture in the form of the *Merdeka Mengajar* platform which contains topics that can help teachers understand and practice independently preparing learning plans such as teaching modules, Project Modules for Strengthening Pancasila Student Profiles and Assessments (Hadiansah, 2022). This form of training becomes an obstacle for teachers in studying the *Merdeka* curriculum, considering that there are technologically illiterate teachers, making it difficult for these teachers to understand the *Merdeka* curriculum.

According to Hamalik (2012), teachers must have basic abilities. These capabilities include a) teachers mastering the teaching materials. b) teachers can manage teaching and learning programs, and teachers can manage the class with learning experiences, c) teachers can use media/resources with learning experiences, d) Teachers can master the basics of education through learning experiences, e) Ability to manage teaching and learning interactions with learning experiences.



Teachers as the front guard in implementing the curriculum must be an it concern. The teacher is someone who confronts directly with

students in learning so that it has a direct influence on students' success in completing learning tasks. The *Merdeka* curriculum brings fundamental changes to the role of teachers in learning.

3. Teachers' Metacognitive Teaching Strategies In Implementing *Merdeka* Curriculum

According to Hartman (2001), Metacognitive ability can be seen from understanding and knowledge (the utilization of learning resources, teaching-learning processes also learning assessment), namely a) The level of understanding can be interpreted as a condition of knowing, or understanding something. Teacher understanding is a process that includes the teacher's actions or ways of understanding various things related to students so that they can be understood and implemented well in the learning process. The level of teacher understanding in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum can be seen from how teachers understand the *Merdeka* curriculum learning mechanism, the structure and principles of *Merdeka* curriculum learning as well as the preparation of learning and assessment in the *Merdeka* curriculum. b) Usage of Learning Resources, teachers must be able to use learning resources as effectively as possible to support the teaching and learning process. Hannafin, Land & Oliver (2013) define the use of learning as an action that relates to the use of instructional methods and models, teaching materials, and media that can help improve the learning environment. When implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum,



Teachers must be able to make the most use of learning materials supplied by the school and the government. *Merdeka* Curriculum offers a variety of learning tools through the *Merdeka* Teaching platform. c) The learning

process means teachers must be competent to design and implement project-based learning strategies. Furthermore, teachers must be able to promote the overall development of students' competence and character, as well as generate learning that is relevant or adapted to students' environmental and cultural contexts, while always involving parents and the community. d) The assessment process is the most important part of determining the needs, development, and extent to which students have achieved learning outcomes. Teachers must understand how the assessment system is applied to the *Merdeka* curriculum.

The *Merdeka* curriculum has several types of assessment, namely: a) A diagnostic assessment is an assessment carried out to identify students' skills, strengths, and weaknesses so that learning can be adjusted based on student's skills and conditions. Diagnostic assessments can be carried out periodically, starting when the teacher introduces a new learning topic, ending when the teacher has finished explaining and discussing a topic, or subject, and at other times during the semester. b) A formative assessment is an assessment that provides information or encouragement to teachers and students intending to improve the learning process. This assessment is carried out in a particular round or competency. c) Summative Assessment is an assessment carried out at the end of the year in the form of a test (Ainiyah, 2023).

4. *Merdeka* curriculum

In general curriculum is a roadmap to where education is going

it is a defining factor in developing quality of education. Moreover,

curriculum is a guideline that focus on developing soft skills,



character and essential materials which has flexibility in its implementation.

Merdeka curriculum is a curriculum with diverse extracurricular learning where content will be optimized so learners have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competencies. Teachers have the flexibility to choose a variety of teaching tools so that learning can be tailored to learners' learning needs and interests.

The *Merdeka* curriculum is a curriculum concept that strengthens students' independence and freedom in learning, taking into account individual potential and needs as well as the socio-cultural environment in which students find themselves. This concept also emphasizes developing students' life skills and critical thinking.

In the *Merdeka* curriculum, students not only follow the curriculum set by the school or government but can also develop their interests and talents by choosing the field of study they want to focus on. The *Merdeka* curriculum allows students to take the initiative in selecting, designing, and developing their learning programs. The independent learning policy is implemented to accelerate the achievement of national education goals, namely increasing the quality of Indonesia's human resources which are superior and competitive compared to other countries. The quality of superior and competitive human resources is realized in students who have noble character and a high level of reasoning, especially in literacy and numeracy.



According to Fitriyah and Wardani (2022), the *Merdeka* curriculum is designed with several principles, including (a) achievement standards for

scientific disciplines that pay attention to the principles of focus, consistency, and coherence, and (b) the ability to transfer interdisciplinary competencies and choices. (c) authenticity, adaptability, and harmony; (d) student involvement, empowerment, or independence; and (e) empowerment or independence of teachers. These principles can be interpreted differently based on the local situation and needs of schools and teachers. An *Merdeka* curriculum creation method allows schools or teachers to create a curriculum based on local requirements and conditions while adhering to the values of fairness, diversity, and community involvement. This method allows for flexibility and creativity in developing a curriculum that is relevant and competitive.

The Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology establishes learning principles written in learning guides and educational assessments. These guidelines were issued by Badan Standar, Kurikulum, and Asesmen Pendidikan (BSKAP), (Damiaati, Junaedi, & Asbari, (2024).

Table 2.1 Description of *Merdeka* curriculum Learning Principles

Learning Principles	The aspect that needs to be done	aspects that need to be abandoned
Learning is organized based on the phase of development of students' abilities	1. Study the circumstances, origins, phase of development, and learning outcomes achieved by students from the	1. Using teaching references without considering students' needs. 2. Apply learning methods in the



<p>various characters and characteristics of students so that the learning process becomes comfortable and not motivated.</p>	<p>beginning to the end of learning and create a graph of their achievements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Monitoring these phase of development as a reference for continuing learning and assessment systems/methods 3. Develop learning objectives according to student development 4. Pay attention to the condition and development of students overall. 	<p>same way in all meetings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Does not prioritize students' needs and abilities
<p>Learning is designed and carried out to enhance students' capabilities to become continuous and sustainable students.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Study various objects that can be used in learning activities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No variation in the assessment of students
<p>Learning activities support the overall development of</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using a variety of strategies in the learning process to help build abilities, 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Only uses one method and does not evaluate the learning method



<p>students' abilities and characteristics.</p>	<p>such as developing thinking skills, engaging students through direct experience, and exposing students to genuine, broad, and reasonable challenges based on their requirements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Seeing various possibilities that can support students' knowledge and skills, interests and attitudes, and motor skills 3. The Pancasila profile is used as a reflection for students. 	
<p>Learning that is structured according to the concept of the environment and culture of students or as relevant ; which y involves the</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parental involvement in learning and communicating becomes feedback in the form of two-way communication. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of communication with student parents 2. Students cannot participate or be involved in the community.



role of the community and parents.	2. Try to ensure the involvement of resource persons (surrounding communities) in the teaching and learning process	
The learning process is centered on a sustainable future	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A learning process that increases meaningful knowledge and provides support at the start to encourage student independence in the future 2. Continue to innovate in teaching both in terms of the methods used and learning strategies. 3. Delivering 21st-century skills teaching. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learning activities and test questions are unchanged from prior years. 2. Just assessing without teaching 21st-century skills.

The concept of independent learning is expected to prepare Indonesia's generation to face social and cultural revolutions, the demands of the work, and the rapid advancement of technology. According to (2022), the objectives of implementing *Merdeka* curriculum are; a)



Fixing problems and improving the quality of education in Indonesia. b) Allow students to learn in their own way, making it enjoyable and less stressful. c) Increasing Local Stakeholder Involvement: By incorporating various stakeholders such as local communities, companies, and non-governmental organizations in developing curriculum, improved synergy between education and the real world is expected. d) Encouraging Skills-Based Learning: *Merdeka* curriculum also seeks to move the emphasis of learning away from just memorizing material and toward developing skills that are more relevant to future requirements, such as critical thinking, creativity, teamwork, and communication.

It can be concluded the objective of *Merdeka* curriculum is to improve and enhance the education system in Indonesia to be more adaptive, relevant, and able to produce graduates who are ready to face future challenges.

5. Component of *Merdeka* curriculum

Nazri et al. (2022) identified four components of the "*Merdeka* curriculum": 1) Components of curriculum objectives. Before deciding on other components for a program, objectives must be established. Education's aims are inextricably linked to the goals of the country since education is a vehicle for achieving those goals. 2) Content components/curriculum materials. Curriculum materials are activities designed to meet learning objectives. The curriculum content is organized in the lessons that students are learning. 3) Components of the implementation process. The curriculum implementation process involves the teacher's involvement in learning activities both within and



outside of school, such as extracurricular activities and independent learning. Teachers must utilize a variety of learning strategies, methods, media, and resources. 4) The Curriculum Evaluation component can be used to provide feedback on the techniques that have been developed, as well as to gather information about the implementation of learning, the success of students, teachers, and the learning process. The outcomes of this evaluation can be utilized to inform curriculum decisions, learning challenges, and essential improvement initiatives.

2.2.2 Characteristics of *Merdeka* curriculum

Kemdikbud (2022) defines a *Merdeka* curriculum as having the following characteristics: a) Project-based learning focuses on developing soft skills and the Pancasila student profile. b) Prioritize key topics for in-depth study, particularly in core competencies like literacy and numeracy. c) Teachers have the flexibility to adapt to students' abilities and local environments, ensuring appropriate learning



5.1 Conceptual Framework

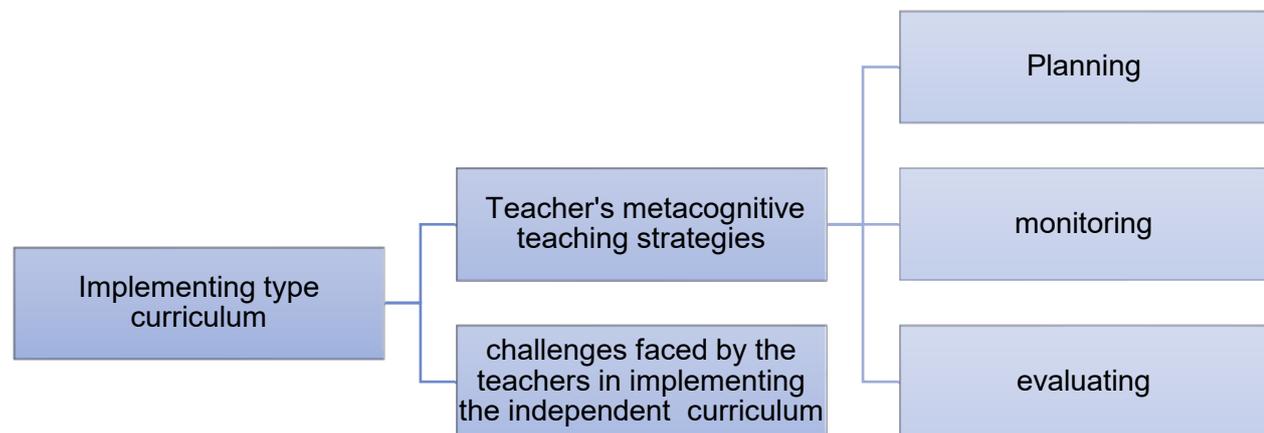


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework reveals the steps and areas of the research. As we see in the chart, there are two hypothetical statements about implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum. Firstly, the researcher is curious about the challenges the English teachers probably face during the preparation the implementation of a *Merdeka* curriculum, considering there is a limited number of researchers that is eager to comprehend teachers' standpoints. Secondly, the metacognition of the teacher should be examined. Therefore, teacher Metacognitive teaching strategies would be reflected through three stages: planning, monitoring, and evaluating. In the

stage, the teacher should precisely select the strategy to solve an
 the monitoring stage, teachers are supposed to make sure their



students comprehend the lesson given. In the evaluating stage, the teachers must contemplate and determine how successful the strategies are.

