



## Kurikulum Merdeka: Implementation in Arabic Language Learning at MIN 2 Palangkaraya

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in Arabic language learning. The research method uses descriptive qualitative research. Research data were collected from primary and secondary data with data collection techniques using observation, and interviews. Data analysis uses a process of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing for. The findings show that: a) Arabic language learning at MIN 2 Palangkaraya has been implemented and adjusted to the Merdeka Belajar curriculum which supports Arabic learning outcomes. b) The implementation of the independent learning curriculum in Arabic language learning at MIN 2 Palangkaraya includes several programs, namely conducting socialization such as training or workshops for teachers regarding the concepts, objectives, and implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Form a special team tasked with developing and adjusting the curriculum according to the needs and characteristics of students in the school. Teachers design flexible teaching modules including project-based learning approaches supported by students' creativity and independence. The effectiveness of Arabic learning is carried out in the classroom which is integrated with the P5 Project based on the independent curriculum by making Arabic vocabulary song groups and making Arabic poster projects for students.

**Keywords:** Implementation, Kurikulum Merdeka, Arabic language learning.

### Abstrak

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Data penelitian dikumpulkan dari data primer dan sekunder dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi dan wawancara. Analisis data dilakukan melalui proses reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: a) pembelajaran bahasa Arab di MIN 2 Palangka Raya telah dilaksanakan dan disesuaikan dengan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar yang mendukung capaian hasil belajar bahasa Arab; b) Implementasi kurikulum merdeka dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab di MIN 2 Palangka Raya mencakup beberapa program, antara lain pelaksanaan sosialisasi seperti pelatihan atau workshop bagi guru terkait konsep, tujuan, dan pelaksanaan Kurikulum Merdeka. Pembentukan tim khusus yang bertugas mengembangkan dan menyesuaikan kurikulum sesuai dengan kebutuhan dan karakteristik peserta didik di sekolah. Guru merancang modul ajar yang fleksibel, termasuk pendekatan pembelajaran berbasis proyek (project-based learning) yang didukung oleh kreativitas dan kemandirian siswa. Efektivitas pembelajaran bahasa Arab dilaksanakan di dalam kelas yang terintegrasi dengan Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5) berbasis kurikulum merdeka, melalui kegiatan seperti membuat kelompok lagu kosakata bahasa Arab dan proyek poster berbahasa Arab oleh siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** Implementasi, kurikulum merdeka, pembelajaran bahasa Arab.

## Introduction

Education is an important component in determining the progress and

quality of a country's human resources. Along with the evolving society and times, the education system has evolved to adapt to globalization. The educational process can produce original and unique ideas in the context of the times. According to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, the purpose of education in Indonesia is to help students realize their potential to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, noble, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. They also want to be responsible and democratic citizens. The curriculum serves as a necessary medium to achieve educational goals.

The curriculum is an important part of the education system because learning is impossible without it. The spirit of education is linked to the curriculum and cannot be separated from it. All educational activities depend on the curriculum. The quality of the curriculum must be improved to achieve educational goals. The curriculum should be able to adapt to the circumstances of each school and take into account the needs and developmental stages of students. National education must be rooted in national culture and based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Hidayani, 2018).

The implemented curriculum must be updated and adapted to the education unit and regional potential to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. In addition, evaluation needs to be carried out to ensure that the curriculum improvement is effective if the results are in accordance with the demands and needs, relevant, flexible, continuous, implementable, and effective (Indarta et al., 2022). The curriculum must have a strong foundation and principles to support the achievement of educational goals. Curriculum development is a tool to improve educational standards and make learning easier. The Indonesian curriculum began in 1947 and has been amended eleven times. This includes revisions and changes in 1964, 1968, 1973, 1975, 1984, 1994, 1997 (1994 curriculum revision), 2004 (competency-based curriculum), and 2006 (education unit level curriculum). In 2018, the government, through the Ministry of National Education, changed it back to Curriculum 2013, or Kurtilas (Azzahra et al., 2022).

The curriculum is often changed, but each change has a strong reason because the main goal is to improve the previous curriculum. The transition to the digital era cannot be separated from curriculum changes, because the Merdeka Curriculum is the result of the restructuring of Indonesia's national education system designed to respond to change and progress (Yamin & Syahrir, 2020). In addition, this curriculum is an effort to revitalize learning in Indonesia. The government has created a focused and flexible Merdeka Curriculum that is expected to improve student character and competence. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, this curriculum has three features that are expected to support learning recovery: 1. Learning that emphasizes strengthening the Pancasila

Student Profile, which is expected to improve, 2. focus on essential material, policymakers have selected essential learning outcomes for students 3. differentiated learning that adapts to student abilities and adjusts the curriculum to the context and local content in education units (Fitria & Sukirman, 2023).

It is considered a learning approach that allows children to showcase their innate abilities and learn in a calm, relaxed, fun and unstressed atmosphere. Free education emphasizes independence and freedom of thought. Risdianto in (Dwipratama 2023) It is stated that the Merdeka Curriculum is intended to address the educational challenges faced by students in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, which requires communication and teamwork skills, critical thinking and problem solving, and innovation and creativity. To support independent learning, the Ministry of Education and Culture offers a driving school program. This education program aims to help each school develop a generation of students who demonstrate the lifelong Pancasila Learner Profile.

The BSKAP Head Decree on Education Units Implementing the Independent Curriculum through Independent Pathways for the 2022/2023 Academic Year will be issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2022 to expand the implementation of the independent curriculum for schools that are not Movement Schools. The Merdeka Curriculum has been implemented as an effort to restore learning in early childhood, primary, and secondary education units starting in 2022. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has stipulated Minister of Religious Affairs Decree Number 347 of 2022 concerning Guidelines for Implementing the Independent Curriculum in Madrasahs. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in madrasahs follows the Ministry of Education and Culture's policy. The Ministry of Religious Affairs makes adaptations according to the learning needs of madrasahs with a focus on strengthening Islamic Religious Education and Arabic Language To support this policy, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has stipulated Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 347 of 2022. About Guidelines for Implementing the Independent Curriculum in Madrasahs The education units that will implement the independent curriculum will be selected by the Ministry of Education and Culture. which will be selected using a questionnaire. The data collection questionnaire contains questions related to the readiness of the education unit to implement the Merdeka Curriculum (Fitria & Sukirman, 2023). The teacher's function is very important to achieve everything (Rahayu et al., 2022). Since teachers act as the main subject, they are expected to catalyze activities that benefit students (Ainia, 2020).

The Merdeka curriculum, which offers high-quality, critical, expressive, practical, varied, and progressive learning, allows students to develop according to their potential and abilities. Along with the adjustment of the new curriculum, all stakeholders must work together, strong commitment, seriousness, and practical

implementation (Sari et al., 2020). In connection with this, there are several independent curricula at the madrasah level in the city of Palangka Raya, one of which is the Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah MIN 2 Kota Palangka Raya. This madrasah is one of the other state madrasahs to become a pilot project for the Independent Curriculum, especially in Arabic language learning. The selection of MIN 2 as a research location is based on its status as a pilot project for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum (IKM). This study aims to explore the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Arabic language learning in the madrasah, so in this case. This study aims to collect data on the Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in Arabic language learning at MIN 2 Palangkaraya.

## Method

The research method used is descriptive qualitative method, which is a research concept through natural data collection and refers to an explanation of something that happens clearly. The data collection techniques used in this research are observation and interview techniques. Observation technique is one of the qualitative data collection efforts that leads to the process of direct observation of activities in the field. This technique is used to explain the situation that occurs in the field precisely and not just an opinion. In this study describes the application of the independent learning curriculum in madrasahs and several things that are elements of qualitative research. The research site is MIN 2 Palangkaraya. The primary data sources are the deputy head of the madrasah in the field of curriculum and Arabic language subject teachers. The research used the process of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to analyze the data.

## Result and Discussion

The Merdeka Curriculum is an innovation in the Indonesian education system that aims to provide freedom and flexibility to education units in developing and managing the curriculum according to the characteristics and needs of their students. This concept is designed to emphasize the importance of developing individual potential and encouraging independence and creativity in the learning process. At Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah Negeri (MIN) 2 Palangka Raya, the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in Arabic language learning is one of the strategic efforts to improve the quality of education. Arabic language learning in this madrasah is not only focused on technical language skills, but also on developing cultural understanding and Islamic values contained in the language. The information we got from the results of interviews with the Deputy Madrasah for the curriculum section and one of the Arabic language teachers at MIN 2 school is as follows:

### Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at MIN 2 Palangka Raya

The implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at MIN 2 Palangkaraya school

shows a strong collaboration between various parties in the school as well as a commitment to continue to innovate and adapt to the needs of students. Some concrete steps taken to manage the Merdeka Curriculum include:

**Socialization and Training:** Schools conduct socialization through training or workshops for teachers regarding the concept, objectives, and implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The concept of independence in the independent curriculum is in line with the ideals of Ki Hajar Dewantara, which focuses on free learning so that students can learn independently and creatively. With this freedom, it is used as an encouragement for students to explore their knowledge so as to create an independent character (Vhalery et al., 2022).

The national curriculum is essentially the same as the implementation of the previous curriculum, but what is different in its application is that the implementation of the independent curriculum is more directed towards Pancasila education which produces competent, characterized, who behave in accordance with the values of Pancasila, so that in the realization of the implementation of the independent curriculum, requires teachers to be professional and design or design effective and fun learning (Malawi et al., 2017).

**Formation of Specialized Teams:** Special teams are formed to develop and customize the curriculum according to the needs and characteristics of students. The independent curriculum is a way to answer the educational challenges that occur due to the post-endemic education crisis. The independent curriculum, which was born to overcome educational problems during this pandemic, formulates several new policies that conceptually provide freedom for both institutions and students in implementing the learning process. One example is the Involvement of Teachers and Staff in Curriculum Development at MIN 2 Palangkaraya school: Involving teachers and school staff in the process of developing and adjusting the Merdeka Curriculum is very important. Concrete steps taken include:

First, technology Training: Teachers and staff receive training to improve skills in using technology and digital resources in learning. Second, teaching Material Development: Develop teaching materials relevant to Merdeka Curriculum, including project-based materials. Through this curriculum change, it is hoped that there will be changes in the world of education that focus more on character development and soft skills based on competencies (Indarta et al., 2022). Third, teachers design teaching modules that are flexible and in accordance with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, including project-based learning approaches and learning that supports student creativity and independence. This is in line with the opinion Ariesanti et al (2023). Arranging teaching modules, there are procedures or steps that must be taken by the teacher. These steps include analyzing the conditions and needs of teachers, students, and education units, identifying and determining the dimensions of the Pancasila learner profile, determining the flow of

learning objectives that will be developed into teaching modules, compiling teaching modules based on available components, implementing learning, and evaluating and following up.

Fourth, monitoring by Supervisors: Implementation of the curriculum in the classroom is monitored and controlled by supervisors. One of them the role of the Deputy Head of Independent Curriculum at MIN 2 Palangkaraya ensures that the curriculum gives more freedom to students in the learning process. They are involved in: a) Monitoring by Supervisors: Curriculum implementation in the classroom is monitored and controlled by supervisors. One of them -The role of the Deputy Head of Independent Curriculum at MIN 2 Palangkaraya ensures that the curriculum gives more freedom to students in the learning process. They are involved in: Routine Monitoring: Conducting routine monitoring of curriculum implementation in the classroom; b) Direction to Teachers: Providing direction to teachers so that every lesson and project is tailored to the needs of students. Fifth, provision of facilities: The school provides facilities and tools that support active and project-based learning.

### **Implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka in Arabic Language Learning at MIN 2 Palangkaraya**

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Arabic Language Learning at this school has been running in grades 1, 2, 4, and 5 of Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah. In this case, the role of the Deputy Head of the Independent Curriculum is very important in ensuring the effective and successful implementation of Arabic learning from this curriculum. Their duties include: Leadership and Coordination: Leading and coordinating the curriculum development team to ensure all aspects of the Merdeka Curriculum are adapted and implemented according to the guidelines, without exception the management of resources to support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and provide encouragement to continue to innovate in applying innovative and creative learning methods in accordance with the Merdeka Curriculum.

As for Strategies to Increase the Relevance of Arabic Learning at MIN 2 Palangkaraya school The school uses various strategies to ensure the flexibility of the Merdeka Curriculum is used to increase the relevance of learning to the real world and community needs. These strategies include: a) Relevant Projects: Encourage students to work on projects that are relevant to real-world situations; b) Entrepreneurship Program: Organize an entrepreneurship program that teaches students about business, management, and innovation.

The goal of Arabic language learning emphasized at MIN 2 Palangkaraya, is to be able to read and understand Arabic at a basic level according to CP in various contexts of daily life, whether at school, at home, or in social interactions. The



adjustment of Arabic language learning to the characteristics of students at MIN 2 Palangkaraya through concrete steps to adjust the Merdeka Curriculum to the characteristics of students and Arabic language teaching includes: a) Survey and Questionnaire: Conducting surveys and questionnaires to students to understand their needs, interests, and characteristics; b) Classroom Observations: Conducting direct classroom observations to identify learning styles, engagement levels, and classroom dynamics.

With the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, there are several changes, such as reducing class hours for certain subjects and increasing class hours for P5. In the Merdeka Curriculum, learners must have the ability to organize a project. This project aims to help learners develop their potential and skills in various fields. One aspect of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation is the Pancasila Learner Profile Strengthening Project (P5), which includes a series of project activities. P5 itself is carried out with two phases, namely conceptual and contextual stages. In learning Arabic at MIN 2 itself, the P5 PPRA profile, which is most emphasized in this school, is independence and responsibility. The learning objectives emphasized are abilities at the basic level in accordance with CP in various contexts of daily life determined by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The specifications emphasized at MIN 2 Palangkaraya, is to be able to read and understand Arabic at a basic level in accordance with CP in various contexts of daily life, both at school, at home, and in social interactions. for project p5 students are asked to make Arabic posters and vocabulary songs per group. In its implementation, students are given freedom in the learning process, and the structure of learning activities becomes more flexible (Firmansyah et al., 2023). The hope is that this activity will strengthen the various abilities possessed by students in the Pancasila aspect.

Furthermore, evaluation and feedback on the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in Arabic language learning are carried out through regular evaluations by the curriculum team. Changes or adjustments are made based on the results of these evaluations. The Merdeka Curriculum is seen as positive because it provides more flexibility in learning, allowing students to explore their interests and talents more freely. this is also in line with the opinion (Zakso, 2022). that the learning curriculum is designed to produce changes in the quality of student learning in accordance with educational objectives. the independent curriculum is a flexible and learner-centered curriculum with the aim of optimizing the achievement of competencies and developing potential according to the interests and talents of each learner.

## Conclusion

The curriculum initiated by Education Minister Nadiem Makarim is the

Merdeka Curriculum, the latest curriculum in Indonesia, which in this Merdeka Curriculum gives students the freedom to explore their abilities and interests. Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at MIN 2 Palangkaraya, the Deputy Head of the Merdeka Curriculum at MIN 2 Palangkaraya has a role in ensuring the effective and successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in this school, namely Leading and coordinating the curriculum development team to ensure that all aspects of the Merdeka Curriculum are adapted and implemented in accordance with the guidelines. The implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at MIN 2 Palangkaraya shows that strong collaboration and commitment to innovation are the keys to success. With socialization, training, the formation of a special team, the development of teaching modules, and strict monitoring, the Merdeka Curriculum can be implemented well and is relevant to the needs of students and society.

The implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in Arabic language learning makes teachers more flexible in teaching and knowing students' interests, talents, needs, and abilities. Freedom in choosing and developing the abilities of each student makes the learning atmosphere more enjoyable. Students do not feel burdened by things they are not interested in because they have talents and intelligence in their respective fields. The learning process carried out by Arabic teachers follows the aspects contained in the Merdeka Curriculum. With the limitations and shortcomings in this study, further research can further develop the research on the Merdeka Curriculum in Arabic language learning.

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## **Author Contribution Statement**

DA and YR jointly conceptualized the research idea and framework. DA conducted field observations and interviews, collected primary data, and drafted the initial manuscript. YR provided guidance on theoretical framework and methodology, conducted literature review, and revised and edited the manuscript for academic quality and clarity. Both authors contributed equally to the final



version of the paper.

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