

**VOLUNTEER TEACHERS' EXPERIENCE IN IMPLEMENTING MERDEKA
CURRICULUM TO TEACH ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS AT SDN 10
PEMULUTAN BARAT**

A THESIS

By:

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ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM

LANGUAGE AND ARTS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

2024

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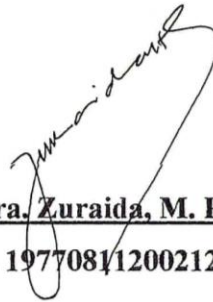
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**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY PALEMBANG 2023**

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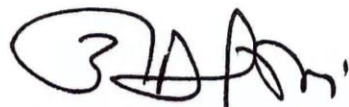
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DECLARATION

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Certified that thesis entitled "Volunteer Teachers' Experience in Implementing Merdeka Curriculum to Teach English for Young Learners at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat" is my own work and I did not do any plagiarism or inappropriate quotation against the ethic and rules commended by the Ministry of Education of Republic Indonesia Number 17, 2010 regarding plagiarism in higher education. Therefore, I deserve to face the court if I am found to have plagiarized this work.

Palembang, December 2023

The undersigned



Rahmania Oktariani

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents, brother, and family, who always support and encourage me to never give up

MOTTO

“Do my best and let God do the rest”

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All praise be to Allah SWT who has to give us all salvation and blessing in life. The Lord who created this world, The Perfection, and The Giver of Peace. Also, may shalawat and salam be with our Prophet Muhammad SAW, who always spread goodness in the world.

By Allah's will, the thesis entitled "Volunteer Teachers' Experience in Implementing Merdeka Curriculum to Teach English for Young Learners at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat" could be finished to fulfil the requirement of acquiring the bachelor degree at English Education Study Program, Language and Art Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University.

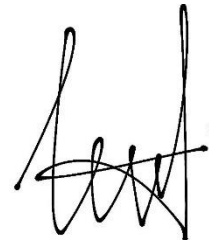
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The Researcher



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VOLUNTEER TEACHERS' EXPERIENCE IN IMPLEMENTING MERDEKA CURRICULUM TO TEACH ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS AT SDN 10 PEMULUTAN BARAT

ABSTRACT

The Merdeka Curriculum has a policy that English subjects is not compulsory to be taught in elementary schools, but this can be considered by the school considering the circumstances and interests. English subjects can be selected according to school readiness. If the school is not ready, it can be integrated with other academic and extracurricular activities by involving the community, school committee, volunteers and/or parental guidance. This study aims to investigate the experiences of UNSRI Mengajar volunteer teachers from the English Education Study Program of Sriwijaya University in teaching English for young learners in the implementation of Merdeka curriculum at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra Province. A case study with qualitative methods was applied in this study. The data collection methods used were Observation and Interview. A total of 6 participants participated in observations and interviews. The research findings show the following: first, the motivation of volunteer teachers to join the UNSRI Mengajar organization is to practice how to teach well and prepare to become a teacher after graduation. Second, the challenges encountered by volunteer teachers in the teaching and learning process include a lack of teaching experience, difficulties in maintaining discipline among students, challenges in capturing students' attention during material explanations, and struggles in creating effective teaching materials. Third, the activities carried out by volunteer teachers during teaching are based on lesson plans that have been made starting from pre activities, main activities, and post activities. Volunteer teachers create interesting teaching strategies such as icebreaking, games, and visual media. Fourth, volunteer teachers regret that the Merdeka Curriculum policy for English subject is not compulsory in elementary school and they also feel that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in school located in remote area is ineffective.

Keywords: *Volunteer Teachers, English for Young Learners, Merdeka Curriculum*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Volunteer teachers are unpaid teachers who contribute to the educational process. According to Romero (2012), when volunteering for education causes, research shows that educated people or learners are more inclined to volunteer than less educated people. The number of volunteer teaching programs is already quite large in Indonesia. A program that has been gaining much attention from the public is Indonesia Mengajar. Indonesia Mengajar is a non-governmental organization engaged in volunteerism among young teachers. This organization aims to address the shortage of elementary school teachers, particularly in remote areas (Adsina & Juliana, 2019). As stated by Anies Baswedan (2010) the primary purpose of this organization is to make educational a means to enhance people's social standing. Therefore, volunteer teachers are needed to improve education, especially in remote areas. Indonesia Mengajar has influenced several universities in Indonesia to form volunteer teaching organizations (Husniah, 2016). One of them is Sriwijaya University. Similar to Indonesia Mengajar, Sriwijaya University also has a voluntary teaching organization, namely UNSRI Mengajar.

UNSRI Mengajar is a student activity unit engaged in social education with the hope of educating the nation's children, especially in the Ogan Ilir Regency area, declared in Indralaya on September 14, 2013, then appointed as a community in 2015, and authorized as a Student Activity Unit through a verification process from Sriwijaya University in 2018. UNSRI Mengajar activities have received permission from the Ogan Ilir Regency Education Office, Village Heads, and Principals from UNSRI Mengajar fostered school. The criteria for the selected fostered school are seen from the number of teachers, school distance, and school facilities. UNSRI Mengajar volunteer teachers are students from various majors at Sriwijaya University who voluntarily want to volunteer to teach in fostered schools.

UNSRI Mengajar carries out teaching activities in elementary schools. Since the change from the 2013 curriculum to the Merdeka curriculum there have been several policy changes in elementary schools, one of which is the English subject. The Indonesian Government has changed 2013 curriculum to the newest curriculum named

Merdeka Curriculum. This curriculum focuses on material foundations, character building and learner competencies. It can be employed at primary school, junior high school, senior high school, vocational school, and university. In elementary school, there are some changes such English subject. In the 2013 curriculum, English was a local content for elementary schools, but now English is a compulsory subject. However, this case can be considered by the school depending on the circumstances and interests (Artila Dewi, Dewi, & Suryantini, 2023). English subject can be chosen depending on the readiness of the school. If the school is not ready then it can be integrated into other subjects or extracurricular activities by involving the community, school committee, volunteers, and parental guidance (Hartoyo & Rahmadayanti, 2022).

UNSRI Mengajar realizes the importance of English for young learners, so the volunteer teachers continue to teach English. This certainly makes it an extra task for volunteer teachers to provide English lessons so that elementary school learners can understand the material being taught. Learning English is very important during this time. English subject in elementary schools is effective as an introductory foreign language before entering higher education (Artila Dewi, Dewi, & Suryantini, 2023).

Several investigations of the experiences of volunteer teachers who teach English have been conducted by past researchers. Romero (2012) investigated the role of English teaching as a volunteer in abroad. Romero investigated how volunteers' experiences teaching English overseas influenced their skill of teaching English. The subjects had a bachelor's degree and were native or near-native English speakers. Another study by Palonen (2012) examined returning volunteers' perceptions of their international volunteering experience and its impact on their lives. Participants in this study were six returning volunteers whose international volunteer experience dated back approximately five years. This study also focused on long-term changes. All of the participants were female. They were learners, employees, or both, with a range of educational backgrounds ranging from bachelor's to master's degrees. The average age of participants is 27 years old. Overall, the participants felt that the internship abroad was a very meaningful experience. Husniah (2016) studied volunteer pre-service teachers' experiences teaching English for young learners. The study's subjects were ten Universitas Malang Mengajar volunteer pre-service teachers who taught English to SDN Randugading 3. Another study by Alison J. White, et al. (2020) investigated improving education through volunteer support. The goal of this study was to look into

education volunteers' desire for the district program as well as themselves, as well as the challenges they confront in their roles and what they require to be successful. Haslina & Hamamah (2022) examined the experience of doing action research while volunteering to teach English for young learners in a Raudatul Athfal (RA) in a remote area of South Sulawesi.

Based on the previous studies, the researcher is interested in conducting research in the same topic but with different concerns. There are several volunteer teaching programs in remote areas, but volunteer English teaching programs are still rare in Indonesia, and such research has not been widely conducted, coupled with the Merdeka Curriculum policy where English subject is not required to be taught in elementary school, the researcher is interested in investigating the experiences of UNSRI Mengajar volunteer teachers from Sriwijaya University's English Education Study Program in teaching English for young learners at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatera Province. This study aims to investigate the motivations behind the volunteer teachers in teaching voluntarily at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatera Province. The researcher also wants to find out what difficulties the volunteer teachers faced and how they overcome these difficulties. The researcher also wants to find out the perspectives of volunteer teachers toward the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat. In addition, it also important to know the volunteer teachers' opinions on the experience. Their opinions on the good things, problems, and things that should be revised in the voluntary English teaching program are worthwhile to investigate developing comparable programs.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

The problems formulated in this study, include:

1. What motivated students of English education study program to become volunteer teachers at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat?
2. What challenges do volunteer teachers face when teaching English at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat, and how do they overcome these difficulties?
3. What teaching activities do volunteer teachers use to improve young learners' English skills?
4. What are the perspectives of volunteer teachers on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

This research aims:

1. To find out the motivation of English education study program students to become volunteer teachers at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat
2. To find out the challenges faced by volunteer teachers when teaching English and how they overcome these difficulties at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat.
3. To find out the teaching activities that have been used by volunteer teachers to improve young learners' English skills.
4. To find out the perspectives of volunteer teachers on the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat.

1.4 The Significances of the Study

Hopefully, this research will be beneficial to Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten Ogan Ilir, SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat Kabupaten Ogan Ilir Sumatera Selatan, Sriwijaya University, UNSRI Mengajar volunteer teachers, and other researchers.

For Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten Ogan Ilir Sumatera Selatan, the result of the study can be used as a constructive feedback for the betterment of government service in education especially in the practices of teaching English for young learners in remote areas.

In addition, for the principal of SDN 10 Pemulutan Barat Kabupaten Ogan Ilir Sumatera Selatan, this study can offer references in order to have new insights into the practices of teaching English for young learners that is conducted by UNSRI Mengajar.

Next, for Sriwijaya University, by knowing the benefits and challenges of the program, it is expected that the Sriwijaya University will support the organization or communities that focus on education development.

Then, for UNSRI Mengajar, this study can be used as an evaluation of the following programs conducted by UNSRI Mengajar.

For UNSRI Mengajar volunteer teachers, this study is expected to be a self-evaluation for professional development and also it can be used as a reflection on implementing teaching English for young learners (EYL) in the future.

Lastly, for other researchers, can be a helpful for further research related to volunteer teachers in teaching English for young learners.

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