

A New Paradigm of Language Teaching Methods in ESP Instruction

Dewi Surani^{1*}, Rini Dwi Septiyani²

^{1,2}Universitas Bina Bangsa, Banten

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Abstract: The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in language teaching requires a specific method that accommodates the curriculum goal. This writing tries to describe the implementation of some language teaching methods used in the Merdeka Curriculum at a higher level of education in English for specific purposes (ESP) context. This article also recommends that lecturers engage Case Based Learning (CBL), Project Based Learning (PBL), and Technology-Based Learning (TBL) as language teaching methods in ESP instruction considering their advantages to attain Merdeka curriculum goals.

Keywords: ELT methods, ESP, CBL, PBL, TBL

INTRODUCTION

In 2000, the Indonesian government through *Kemdikbudristek* launched the *Merdeka* curriculum. The *Merdeka* curriculum mainly essence on freedom of learning, so it provides opportunities for schools, teachers, and students to propose innovation and participation in a wider context. The concept of the *Merdeka* curriculum has a big effect on how English Language Teaching (ELT) classes.

As we know English is not easy to learn for most Indonesians. Efforts have been made through time to make it easier for Indonesian students to learn English. One of the strategies is considering the suitable teaching method implementation that fits with the curriculum. The implementation of effective and efficient teaching methods needs to be thoroughly applied to language classes to achieve *Merdeka*'s curriculum goals.

*Corresponding author: dewi.surani@binabangsa.ac.id

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Indonesia's Education Ministry has been long concerned with English language teaching, one of which is altering some curriculums. According to Ekawati (2018), curriculum is planned activities that students are expected to engage in related to the pedagogical themes, concepts, sources, and practices that aim to investigate educational success goals. Our curriculum was reformed in 2013 using the 2013 curriculum after using the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) to teach English from 2004 to 2013. According to Indriyana and Kuswandono (2019), Curriculum 13 encourages students to develop their capacity for critical thinking through discussion-based activities, small-group conversations, and classroom debates. Last, in 2000, our curriculum changed to the *Merdeka* curriculum, with independently oriented learning as the core base; therefore, the type of curriculum utilized significantly impacts English language instruction within the classroom learning process context. Referring to the Indonesian educational system, the method of teaching English in the classroom is greatly dependent on the sort of curriculum that is currently being implemented (Jon et al., 2021).

Moreover, the *Merdeka* curriculum as a new curriculum is expected to provide a learning experience that allows students to articulate the knowledge and information they gain to solve real-world problems. Regarding to this curriculum, the teaching-learning process aims to establish learning experiences that can equip learners with 21st-century skills, such as the ability to criticize, solve problems, be creative, metacognitive, and communicative, have digital and technology literacy, and global awareness (Joynes et al., 2019; Care et al., 2018). The *Merdeka* curriculum emphasizes independent and flexible learning in higher education and an environment that is forward-thinking, receptive to new ideas, and friendly. The term "independent learning" refers to a process in which students choose both the content and the technique of their educational experiences (Chalupa and Haseborg, 2014).

Furthermore, independent learning education includes a development mindset and innovation. Students are challenged to think critically with good analysis and to innovate against instruments and problem-solving. The focus is on how students can answer the problem in form of a project. This kind of method is called case and project-based learning. In finishing a project, learners should critically elaborate and adapt to technology. The rapid development of technology facilitates the learning process and the learners' self-directed learning optimally in English language teaching (ELT). Undoubtedly, the implementation of the teaching methods in language class also fulfils the needs of skills in 21st-century learning, which covers skills such as thinking critically, working together, communicating effectively, being creative, being innovative, being self-directed, having global and local connections, and acquiring knowledge through the use of technology are all critical skills.

METHOD

The study applied a study literature review as the method. According to Snyder (2019), the study literature review is a method that analyses data and serves as a foundation for knowledge creation, influences policy and practice, gives proof of impact, and generates new ideas and approaches in a field. As highlighted by Fauzi (2023), a literature review is used to develop research objectives, identify research gaps, or merely discuss particular topics.

Therefore, this writing overviews specifically English language teaching methods under *the Merdeka* curriculum and the implementation in the ESP context.

RESULT

Since the teaching method is a strategy, it is crucial in the learning process. The utilizing methods should be knowledge by the teachers based on the curriculum. The appropriate teaching methods will make the teaching and learning process efficient and effective, and the learning goals are reachable. Along with the *Merdeka* curriculum goals that emphasize shaping critical thinking, autonomous learners, and technology literacy in language teaching, this curriculum also proposes three types of teaching methods in language teaching, specifically in the English for Specific Purpose (ESP) context. They are case based learning, project-based learning, and technology-based learning, and they cover the characteristics, advantages, and challenges as a new paradigm for language teaching nowadays.

The implementation of a new paradigm of language teaching method based on the *Merdeka* curriculum applies in both General English (GE) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). In order to get an overall description, this part explains other practices of CBL, PBL, and TBL, specifically in ESP's broader context, from the author's practice experiences in English Economics class. As we discover the ESP teaching is specifically goal-oriented for learners. Thus, it needs a specific teaching method to achieve the learning goals. Based on this core, English Economics students need more specific language teaching methods; therefore, CBL, PBL, and TBL considered as the proper methods to meet *Merdeka's* curriculum goal.

1. Case-Based Learning (CBL)

CBL is a mode of instruction that begins with describing a natural or hypothetical scenario, which then calls for a solution or action to be taken (Roell, 2019). According to Bonney (2015), CBL is a study thought to be effective because it presents content as a story with questions and exercises that foster group debate and complicated problem-solving. This method helps develop the higher stages of Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive learning, which go beyond simple knowledge recall to include critical thinking, analysis, and application. In learning this method, learners must use their language skills along with their analytical and social skills that can happen outside of class and in their real life.

CBL allows lectures to use a communicative approach, in which the primary focus is finishing a task. Students use language to explain their ideas rather than conducting grammar exercises. It focuses on the learner and gets students involved in active learning by giving them chances to communicate realistically. The lecturer's role in this method is as a facilitator and as an advisor who circulates among students and is accessible to answer language-related problems. So, CBL mainly involves the students in spoken interaction, such as discussion. Furthermore, the case method educates students in reading comprehension, audio-visual or aural comprehension (when students view a video or listen to a recording), and possibly written and oral output, such as drafting a report or addressing an audience while presenting solutions.

Moreover, it is adaptable to various linguistic contexts and proficiency levels, including English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and content-based learning (language learning paired with studying a subject matter). There is a wide variety of potential topics, ranging from day-to-day concerns to high-content cases that need in-depth knowledge of the subject matter and involve the analysis of supplementary data in the form of graphs, charts, and other supporting documents. Students will need more precise knowledge and a higher level of specialist terminology depending on the more complicated case they are analyzing. Cases with a high level of context are therefore appropriate for students who possess a level of fluency in English commensurate with their experience and a level of expertise appropriate to the field; is the situation for a significant number of ESP students who are majoring in business, engineering, or other fields. If teachers desire to develop their subject-specific case studies, they should investigate the possibility of cooperating with a subject teacher specializing in that field. As a result, the case topic should be based on a description of a situation or issue that causes conflict that students can understand.

In Addition, utilizing the case method brings some advantages to language teaching. This method allows the implementation of task-based learning and language used to communicate. Language skills are used in the class with other abilities (for example, business, interpersonal, and problem-solving abilities). It is feasible to integrate several different language skills. It is possible to incorporate several forms of media. In certain circumstances, role plays may be applicable. Students are encouraged to develop their scenarios. Besides advantages, utilizing CBL has challenges that must be considered. In this method,

Teachers must locate appropriate case studies in terms of content, complexity, and linguistic level for their students. Reading and processing information from more extensive case studies can be time-consuming. At last, establishing, explaining, and considering assessment criteria needs to be done with great care.

2. Project-Based Learning (PBL)

As it is known, Project-based Learning (PBL) is a social practice in which learners socialize through a series of group activities that involve simultaneous language, content, and skill development (Slater et al., 2006). PBL is defined as a method by which students learn new things and improve their skills by working for a long time to investigate and answer factual, engaging, and complex questions, problems, or challenges. In the PBL, the teacher defines challenges and provides help and direction throughout the learning process. The PBL allows students to attain a specific learning goal by utilizing their accessible linguistic resources resulting in real-world consequences. This approach allows students to apply their knowledge and skills in a stimulating atmosphere. It provides chances for contextualized learning and the development of essential skills relevant to college and career readiness.

The PBL involves students in knowledge development by requiring them to complete critical tasks and create unique products or services (Büchler et al., 2021; Shin, 2018). It is a student-centred learning strategy in which students collaborate to solve an issue in their community or environment (Alrajeh, 2021). The PBL not only provides students with subject knowledge, but it also assists them in developing psychomotor and social skills such

as collecting knowledge from numerous sources, critical reasoning, problem-solving, self-assessment, evaluation, summarizing and synthesizing, and presenting which are all critical for lifelong learning.

Furthermore, PBL provides students with opportunities to strengthen skills necessary in the future. Students learn to collaborate and bounce ideas off one another. They will improve their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It teaches students to think in new ways and achieve more efficient and productive conclusions. Employers seek abilities gained via project-based learning and business and marketing courses. With numerous project-based learning opportunities, students can complete several academic areas in the classroom while also developing and honing skills that will help them succeed in the future.

The benefits of PBL in language teaching and learning have been extensively discussed in the literature. PBL, for example, has the potential to teach 21st-century skills such as cooperation and problem-solving. (Mosier et al., 2016), It promotes active exploration of the subject matter that extends beyond the classroom setting, enhances learners' desire to learn, and helps them attain a deeper level of comprehension on a particular subject. PBL's core is to encourage active learning, to allow students to work constructively in small groups to complete a specific project, and to share resources and ideas. Carrying out tasks as a part of a group makes each member of the group more accountable for making forward progress. In addition, it encourages a broader range of abilities related to cooperation and negotiation as well as various contributions from the group's members. When students collaborate in groups to find a solution to a real-world issue, it can help them acquire content knowledge and skills such as problem-solving, reasoning, and communication. It raises motivation levels and helps create a more cooperative and friendly atmosphere in the classroom. It is recommended as a powerful tool for enhancing language and content development in EFL classes.

The implementation of the PBL in the teaching process has disadvantages, such as working in groups can lead to interpersonal disputes and unfair job distribution among group members; it is impossible to assess the quality of PBL final products objectively unless the group's working process is properly understood, a balance between excessive teacher control and a lack of teacher input and direction throughout the process, generally time-consuming. In brief, when implementing PBL, several things need to be examined to leverage this particular method's benefits while minimizing its limitations' adverse effects.

3. Technology Based-Learning (TBL)

The development of information and communication technology (ICT) has significant impacts on human life, without exception in education practice. Technology is changing how language teachers teach and how language students learn. As a result, technology is becoming more and more important in putting together curricula. Technology integration in learning improves the quality of education and positively impacts teaching and learning English, and it is widely developed as the source of teaching and learning.

Levy (2010) declared that technology has five levels to support language teaching. The first level is physical and includes cell phones, digital cameras, laptops, and tablets. Learning management systems are part of the second level of management. Language management

systems (LMSs) enable it to manage, deliver, track, and report on language courses. Application software is the third level. This includes word processors, email and chat clients, social networking sites, and blogs. The fourth level is the resource level. At this level, users can access materials like online newspapers, magazines, language tutors, and websites created for learners. The fifth level is component technology, which includes tools like spell checkers, grammar checkers, electronic dictionaries, and other support tools.

Richards (2015) states that Technology-based language instruction may benefit students. It can expand exposure to English, for example, by allowing for authentic communication with learners worldwide through the internet. Learners can study whenever they choose. It also supports auditory and visual learning, multiple skills, and lets learners focus on reading or listening. It fits learners of various abilities and promotes active learning as learners control the process and outcomes. Learners can pick what and how they learn as it provides a social learning environment for students to interact and encourages digital games and YouTube material.

Furthermore, Cong-Lem (2018) discovered that technology and web devices influenced student learning and oral performance. Even so, technology-based learning raises some challenges we should consider. Utilizing technology in language teaching is considered time-consuming, and time is required for correct and consistent thought processes. In that case, the level of engagement may drop significantly. The other is cost-consuming and needs teachers' literacy in operating the technology.

DISCUSSION

A new paradigm of language teaching method based on the *Merdeka* curriculum has been implemented in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP). In order to get an overall description of the implementation of the language teaching method, this part explains other practices of CBL, PBL, and TBL, specifically in the ESP's broader context from the author's practice experiences in English Economics class. As we know that

ESP teaching is specifically goal-oriented for learners; therefore, it needs a specific teaching method in order to achieve the learning goals. Based on this core, English Economics students need more specific language teaching methods, so CBL, PBL, and TBL are considered suitable methods to help the students meet the *Merdeka*'s curriculum goal.

English Economics as ESP learning relates a lot with Economics topic issues, for instance, supply and demand of petrol, prices of basic needs, and so on. The topic' cases should be understood and comprehended in theory and practice by the students from the sides of the law and cause effects. The best way to stimulate students' whole comprehension of the topics is by implementing case or problem-based learning. The activities align with the statement from Topperzer et al. (2022) that conceptual theory and practice were successfully and effectively connected by using the CBL model. Through practice activities, this method helps ESP students understand material learning, so they have better learning outcomes. Kulak and Newton's (2015) research result reveals that utilizing CBL improved overall students' academic performance.

The implementation started by introducing and explaining a specific topic supported by video; next, giving time for students to criticize the issue by providing opinions,

statements, or arguments orally in front of the class, as seen in Figure 1. This activity aims to promote students' critical thinking by giving opportunities to communicate their ideas about the topic. They can connect the issues discussed with their real life by actively speaking through the discussion.



Figure 1. The situation of CBL implementation in ESP Class

Furthermore, with this process, ESP students comprehend the material through criticism and find an alternate problem solution for the case discussion. As supported by research results by Hoffer (2020), CBL has an impact; students may better understand the topics, learn new skills, be more satisfied with their learning, and develop confidence and critical thinking skills. During the discussion activity, communication and interaction in the form of positive communication shifts, and more emotional conversations among the students and lectures were created through solving the problems to improve problem-solving abilities. In other words, CBL helps learners find problem solutions (Yoo et al., 2015).

Since the students are non-English department or ESP learners, they have obstacles in delivering their ideas using English orally. Project-based learning is implemented through role-play video group projects to help the Economic students enhance their English skills, especially their spoken or communicative competence. The PBL implementation started with the given assignment and instruction of making a role-play video group project with the broad topic of business meetings, as seen in Figure 2. In the finishing project, they can create the project based on their creativity.



Figure 2. Role Play based on PBL in ESP Class

The PBL project allows the ESP students to be deeply involved in relevant or authentic sources to help them finish the project and get along with intimate interaction among the

group members. Through PBL activities, ESP students work together to develop solutions to actual problems in the integration, application, and creation of knowledge. The students collaborated, such as in preparing the script of the dialogue, deciding the setting, and recording and editing the video. During PBL, the student's subject knowledge, skills, and motivation improved, even though they also said they had to deal with some problems while the lecturer facilitated as the counsellor, mentor, or facilitator at this stage.

The following method, Technology-Based Learning (TBL) was utilized in various activities to foster speaking skills such as delivering presentations using a computer and PowerPoint templates, making podcasts of telling future business plans using the podcast site "Anchor", and describing products using the Kinemaster application. Integrated technologies in ESP class allow students to learn in different modes, for instance, visual and auditory. The integration is also a way to foster students' digital literacy. As we acknowledge, technology literacy is a very urgent skill students must have in 21st-century learning.



Figure 3. Utilizing TBL in ESP Class

The implementation of TBL started with instruction and integrated with PBL. The ESP students have plenty of opportunities to enhance their self-directed learning and become autonomous learners by assessing various tools, media, and applications to finish the assignment. The process of utilizing technology in ESP Class to complete the project gives students the learning experience from authentic and actual sources like YouTube, websites, google machine engine, etc.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the *Merdeka* curriculum influences the implementation of teaching methods in ELT. The *Merdeka* curriculum characteristics recommend three teaching methods of CBL, PBL, and TBL to be applied in language teaching, especially in ESP Classes at the higher education levels.

The CBL accommodate ESP students in improving their material comprehension, critical thinking, and problem-solving ability through practices of discussion on Economics topics. PBL and TBL were utilized in finishing the project by integrating technology in ESP Class. The methods make students get more involved in sources that are real or related to the project, which will help them finish the project, and get along with one another through close, personal engagement. Students have a plethora of opportunities to develop their

potential for self-directed learning and become independent through the evaluation of various resources, platforms, and applications.

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