

ABSTRACT

This study explores the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka in English teaching at SD Patra Mandiri 2 Palembang, focusing on its student-centered approach and the challenges faced by teachers. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with an English teacher, and questionnaires from 22 fifth-grade students. Findings reveal that the curriculum is applied through interactive methods such as games, group discussions, and project-based activities like the "My Dream House" poster, which enhance student engagement and integrate language skills. However, teachers encounter obstacles such as limited access to technology (e.g., projectors and stable internet), difficulties in adapting students to independent learning, and time-consuming project assessments. Students generally respond positively but face challenges in vocabulary retention and speaking confidence. The study highlights the need for improved infrastructure, ongoing teacher training, and tailored strategies to address diverse student needs. The Kurikulum Merdeka shows promise in fostering creativity and critical thinking, yet its success depends on addressing these practical barriers to ensure effective and inclusive English language education.

Keywords: *Kurikulum Merdeka, English teaching, elementary school, student-centered learning, challenges.*