



Digital literacy and the english language classroom: Analyzing teachers' readiness and policy gaps

Diah Palupi^{1,*}

¹ English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Special Region of Yogyakarta 55281, Indonesia.

*Correspondence: diahpalupi2024@student.uny.ac.id

Received Date: November 22, 2025

Revised Date: January 31, 2026

Accepted Date: February 28, 2026

ABSTRACT

Background: This paper aims to analyze teachers' readiness in implementing digital literacy and identify the policy gaps affecting technology integration in language classrooms within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum. **Methods:** This study uses the systematic literature review (SLR) method to analyze research and policy documents published between 2020 and 2025. Data were collected from the Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar databases using keywords such as 'digital literacy', 'EFL teachers', and 'Merdeka Curriculum'. The collected data were analyzed using a six-stage thematic analysis to identify patterns, challenges, and policy implications related to teacher readiness and technology integration. **Findings:** The findings showed that although most teachers have comprehensive understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum concepts, there is a significant gaps between teachers' understanding and the real classroom practices. The main factor is limitations on teachers' training, infrastructure, and resource disparities between urban and rural areas. Furthermore, the national education policy is partially responsive to the actual condition on-the-ground. **Conclusion:** This study concludes that digital literacy is a fundamental competency, not merely an additional skill, for the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Although teachers' theoretical understanding is relatively high, there is a significant gap in classroom practice due to infrastructure disparities and training needs that are more focused on pedagogy. **Novelty/Originality of this article:** This study contributes to the understanding of how digital literacy can serve as a bridge between national education reform and classroom practice. It also highlights the urgent need for continuous professional training and context-based digital education policy to ensure equitable and sustainable implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum across Indonesia.

KEYWORDS: digital literacy; merdeka curriculum; teachers' readiness.

1. Introduction

The development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in this digital era has brought significant change in various aspects of life, including the field of education (Hasemi & Kew, 2021). The newest data from Asosiasi Penyelenggara Internet Indonesia (2025) showed that the number of internet users in Indonesia has reached more than 229.4 millions people. This shows that access to information through digital platforms has become increasingly convenient in recent times. However, this convenience does not necessarily come with the ability to use technology critically, ethically, and productively (Purmayanti, 2022). In educational context, this ability is known as digital literacy, which is an ability to access, evaluate, and utilize technology as well as digital information wisely and responsibly (Hamidah, 2021).

Cite This Article:

Palupi, D. (2026). Digital literacy and the english language classroom: Analyzing teachers' readiness and policy gaps. *Penelitian Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, 3(1), 62-77. <https://doi.org/10.61511/pips.v3i1.2026.2602>

Copyright: © 2026 by the authors. This article is distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).



In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, digital literacy has an important role as it is a key component of sustainability in education (Govender, 2025). English learning is not limited to printed text books but also covers interaction in various multimodal texts such as video, audio, social media, as well as various Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications (Sidik, 2022). Therefore, EFL teachers are expected to not only master learning materials, but also have the ability to integrate digital technology during the learning process. It is in line with the shifts from traditional literacies to multiliteracies that emphasizes the importance of competence in various forms of cross-cultural digital communication.

Unfortunately, the implementation of digital literacy in EFL classrooms still faces various challenges Ahmed & Tümen (2022). Although teachers have started to integrate ICT tools in the learning process, many of them face challenges such as limitation of facility, internet connection, and limitation of teacher training for the use of technology in pedagogical context (Pratolo and Solikhati, 2021). Furthermore, these challenges are closely related to the existing policy gaps in the field of education. Although the government has launched various programs such as the Merdeka curriculum and school digitalization, its implementation has not been evenly distributed as Imansari and Putri (2024) found that the resources in urban and rural areas are different. Many teachers in rural areas have not had the chance for teacher training that aims to successfully integrate ICT in language learning. In addition, the policy does not specifically provide EFL teachers for the training using relevant approaches in this digital context (Lestari, 2024).

Digital literacy is extensively defined as an ability to use technology and digital tools effectively and critically to access, evaluate, create, and deliver opinions in various contexts (Tinmaz et al., 2022). Digital literacy is not only technical skills in operating the tools, but also encompasses cognitive skills and social-culture that enable individuals to navigate, interpret, and participate responsibly in digital platforms. In the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, digital literacy becomes important as teachers are required to design creative, interactive, and Project-Based Learning (PBL) using technology support (Emawati et al., 2024). These skills allow teachers to utilize digital media to stimulate students' engagement and support learning approaches that focus on students. Thus, digital literacy becomes the foundation for teachers to implement the Merdeka Curriculum effectively in EFL classrooms.

Digital competence, as the development from digital literacy, covers critical thinking skills, creative, and responsibility of technology use. Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp 2.1) Framework that is developed by the European Union (2013), which is currently under review and undergoing an updating process, includes five competency areas: (a) information and data literacy, (b) communication and collaboration, (c) digital content creation, (d) safety, and (e) problem solving. In implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, digital competence becomes relevant because teachers do not use technology as supporting tools only, but also expected to be able to create digital contents, facilitate collaboration among students, and integrate technology for specific purposes. Teachers who have high digital competence will be more adaptable in adjusting the learning process with students' needs (Maghfiroh, 2024). Therefore, strengthening teachers' digital competence becomes one of the factors contributing to the success of the The Merdeka Curriculum implementation.

Digital literacy in The Merdeka Curriculum allows teachers and students to utilize technology in an optimal way, improving critical thinking skills, and encouraging innovative pedagogical practice (Nurhayati et al., 2020). Teachers with high digital competence are able to design interactive and contextual learning, while students can access, evaluate, and create relevant digital content related to their projects or assignments. Lack of digital literacy can limit the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, particularly in the use of technology and creative learning methods (Wahyusi et al., 2025). In addition, digital literacy skills also help the digital divide of digital learning sources so that all students will have the same and fair chance to learn actively (Zulaikha et al., 2025). With the support of continuous training and adequate infrastructure, digital literacy and competence become an important foundation for the success of the Merdeka Curriculum in the era of modern education.

The development of digital technology has broadened the meaning of literacy from merely just reading and writing skills into the ability to participate in various forms of multimodal communication (Bacalja et al., 2025). The Multiliteracy concept, first introduced by New London Group (1996), emphasized that literacy in the 21st century era can not be separated by the context of social, culture, and technology. As explained by Dewi et al. (2023), the concept of multiliteracy encompasses both linguistic and cultural diversity in a globalized world and multiple modes of meaning-making that extend beyond printed texts, including visual, audio, and digital media. In this context, language learning does not only focus on linguistic competence, but also the ability to understand and create meaning through various digital communication media.

In EFL classrooms, multiliteracies become relevant (Barreto, 2022). Teachers can teach using various online authentic materials such as Youtube videos, Google pictures, and online articles (Mandarsari, 2023) so that students are able to translate and produce meaning. This process is not merely enhancing language skills, but also improving critical thinking skills and cultural awareness. By applying multiliteracies approaches, teachers can help students understand that language is one of the dynamic social practices, where every form of text or media brings values, perspectives, and certain contexts (Esperat, 2024). Therefore, language learning that focuses on multiliteracies will be more relevant with the needs of global communication.

Furthermore, multiliteracies encourage a paradigm change in language learning from teacher-centered to learner-centered (Nurhidayat, 2024). In this approach, students do not only act as information receivers but also as creative designers of meaning (Kim et al., 2020). While teachers' roles are as facilitators and motivators (Rokayah et al., 2023) who guide students to navigate digital platforms critically, collaboratively, and creatively. Thus, the integration of multiliteracies in ELT can prepare students who are digitally literate, able to use language and technology for actively participating in an increasingly interconnected global society.

In facing the digital transformation in education, EFL teachers are encouraged to have a set of competence that covers technology, pedagogy, and professional aspects (Zhang, 2023). These competencies are not only related to the ability to operate technology tools, but also the ability to utilize them effectively to support the learning process. According to the TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) framework proposed by Mishra dan Koehler (2006), a teacher has to be able to integrate three main aspects: content mastery, pedagogical understanding, and technology utilization. These aspects need to be integrated so that teachers can design meaningful learning related to students' needs in this digital era.

Apart from technology and pedagogy competence, EFL teachers are also encouraged to have digital literacy competence that covers critical thinking skills, online collaboration, and digital ethical awareness. According to Dudeney et al. (2013), there are four main categories of digital literacy needed for EFL teachers: language literacy, information literacy, connection literacy, and re-design literacy. These four aspects reflect teachers to search, evaluate, and create relevant digital content as well as foster students' awareness of responsible and safe digital practices. In other words, teachers' digital competence are needed to integrate ethical and pedagogical values in every digital-based activity.

The development of ICT in this digital era has brought significant change in the field of education, including in EFL learning. Although previous studies have shown that teachers had good understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum concept, there is still a gap found between the Merdeka Curriculum goal and its classroom practices, particularly in the implementation of digital literacy. The obstacles such as limited training, infrastructure, and unequal resources hinder the effectiveness of this curriculum. Furthermore, the national curriculum policy has not been fully responsive to the real conditions of its implementations. Therefore, a systematic literature review on EFL teachers' readiness in implementing digital literacy and its gap is needed. Therefore, this paper will answer the research questions as follow: a) to what extent are Indonesian EFL teachers ready to implement digital literacy in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum?; b) how does the

Merdeka Curriculum conceptualize and promote digital literacy and technology integration in English language teaching?; c) what challenges and policy-practice gaps hinder the implementation of digital literacy and ICT integration in EFL classrooms under the Merdeka Curriculum?; d) what policy recommendations can be proposed to strengthen EFL teachers' digital literacy competencies and support the effective implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum?

2. Methods

2.1 Research design and approach

This paper employed a Qualitative Systematic Literature Review (QSLR) as its primary research design. This approach was selected because it utilizes systematic and explicit methods to identify, select, and critically appraise relevant research, as well as to collect and analyze data from the studies included in the review (Moher et al., 2009). The design was specifically applied to analyze EFL teachers' readiness in implementing digital literacy and to identify the policy gaps that hinder ICT integration within the Merdeka Curriculum framework. To achieve this, the review adopted a thematic analysis approach, following the six-phase procedure established by Braun & Clarke (2006): familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. This interpretative process was utilized to identify recurring patterns, major challenges, and significant policy implications emerging from the existing literature.

2.2 Data collection and analysis procedure

The data collection process was conducted through a structured and rigorous search strategy. Relevant keywords such as "digital literacy," "EFL teachers," "teacher readiness," and "Merdeka Curriculum" were used to search for articles and policy documents published between 2020 and 2025 in major academic databases, including Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. The inclusion criteria were strictly focused on research that discussed digital literacy in English Language Teaching (ELT), teachers' competence, and the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in the Indonesian context. Following the selection, the collected data were analyzed thematically. This analytical phase involved systematically coding the selected articles to identify patterns, challenges, and emerging policy implications. Through this rigorous synthesis, the review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the alignment between EFL teachers' digital literacy readiness and the strategic direction of the Merdeka Curriculum policy.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Teachers' readiness

Previous studies about EFL Indonesian teachers' readiness in implementing the current education policy— particularly the Merdeka curriculum, show various findings. Generally, teachers have comprehensive understanding on the basic concept of its curriculum (Prahastina et al., 2023; Lestari, 2023; Tohamba & Ansyar, 2025). It means, teachers were able to understand the goal of the Merdeka Curriculum, including the basic principle of it that is more flexible and student-centered. This understanding is not merely just the basic concept, but also covers how teachers' assess students' competence holistically and adjust the materials. Teachers evaluated that this curriculum provides flexibility in designing more contextual and adaptive learning that is student-centered. Fatmasari et al. (2024) also noted that most teachers perceived the Merdeka curriculum as a positive thing as it emphasis on 21st century skills development, not merely just material

achievement. Teachers are also given freedom in adjusting the material with the need, interest, and students' competence in their own schools. By having this freedom, teachers can develop creativity in designing the lesson plan related to students' needs so that the learning process will be more adaptive and challenging. It allows teachers to be more responsive with students' characteristics and interests that later on will lead to a meaningful learning.

However, other studies showed a gap between conceptual understanding and practical implementation. Although teachers have understood the basic concept of the Merdeka Curriculum, many teachers still face difficulties in implementing it consistently, particularly for PBL and ICT tools integration (Astuti et al., 2024). Although teachers have understood the curriculum theory, the implementation still found obstacles. For example, teachers still did not master how to combine Project-Based Learning (PBL) with the use of technology, so the learning process did not finish as planned. A study conducted by Ndari et al. (2023) found that some teachers were still not able to design lesson plans independently and not familiar with digital platforms. This condition shows a need for continuous teacher training. Furthermore, Nugroho & Narawaty (2022) found that teachers took a long time to adapt to the new pedagogical approach that reinforces high creativity and collaboration. The process of this adaptation takes time because teachers need to adjust to the new concept that encourages collaboration and creativity.

The differences in preparedness are affected by geographical and infrastructure factors. Teachers in urban areas tend to have better access to professional training, internet connection, and supporting digital facilities than those in rural areas (Fatmasari et al., 2024; Emawati et al., 2024). That is the reason why teachers in urban areas tend to be more ready in implementing digital literacy compared to those in rural areas. A limitation on access in rural areas leads to disparities in learning outcomes between students in urban and rural areas (Emawati et al., 2024). This access limitation affects students' learning experiences, those in urban areas have gained proper experiences. Although teachers showed positive attitudes towards the curriculum changes, obstacles are still found due to lack of facilities and infrastructure (Kaluge & Usmi, 2024). EFL teachers' preparedness in Indonesia remains uneven and still affected by structural, social, and education policy factors that have not been fully responsive to many different contexts. These conditions need more facility support, so that all teachers, both in urban and rural areas can optimally implement the Merdeka Curriculum.

Furthermore, teachers' readiness in implementing digital literacy in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum needs to be understood in more comprehensive views by looking at teachers' internal factors that are not only related to facility, but also professional orientation, pedagogical self-efficacy, and reflective competence (Nurhikmah et al., 2024). Many research showed that although teachers understand the basic concept of the curriculum, implementation readiness is affected by how they perceive curriculum changes in the real classroom practices (Syofyan et al., 2024). Some teachers hold overly administrative perceptions so that they do not critically translate it into instructional practices. These conditions showed teachers' readiness are not merely about technical skills or digital skills, but also related to pedagogical reflective competence to apply the policy's goal to be a sustainable and contextualized learning strategy.

Another aspect that has been less highlighted in previous studies is teachers' readiness in pedagogical decision-making when facing technology. Many teachers might have understood certain applications, but they were still not sure about when, how, and what pedagogical goal in the applications can be used (Harahap et al., 2025). As the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes creativity, collaboration, and PBL, technology-based decision making becomes important. Teachers' readiness in this aspect can lead them to the use of technology ineffectively or just following the trends without providing significant learning achievement (Annisa et al., 2025). Therefore, teachers' digital literacy skills need to be viewed as the combination between technology skills, pedagogy, and concepts about technology-based learning.

In EFL context, teachers' readiness is also affected by their familiarity level on authentic digital resources (Pratolo et al., 2022). The Merdeka Curriculum encourages various digital media such as video, online articles, podcasts and interactive platforms in language learning. However, many teachers still have limitations on the use of static digital materials or merely as a supplement to the textbook. Some studies found that teachers were able to utilize online resources but they lack IT knowledge. As a result, they just use ICT tools for presentation tools, not as a platform to enhance interaction, collaboration, and students' communication skills. The inability to fully utilize these authentic digital resources showed that teachers' readiness is not only affected by external factors such as facility but also pedagogical understanding about multimodality and the development of 21st century skills.

In addition, teachers' readiness can be analyzed from the perspective of workload and professional well-being. Some studies mentioned that teachers often experienced digital fatigue because they should master too many platforms at a time, follow intensive training, and do school administration requirements (Muslimin et al., 2024). In the Merdeka curriculum that encourages teachers' creativity in designing technology-based activities, digital fatigue phenomenon becomes a serious obstacle. Teachers conceptually understand the curriculum, but they are not able to implement it effectively if they experience physiological pressure or too much workload. Therefore, improving teachers' readiness should consider professional well-being to ensure that the transformation does not overly burden teachers.

Teachers' readiness also can be seen from their ability in developing safe, ethical, and inclusive digital learning (Rahmania et al., 2022). In this digital era, teachers' ability to guide students in using technology is important, particularly as there are many active students in digital rooms without having enough understanding about online ethics and safety. However, existing literature showed that some teachers still define digital literacy merely as technical skills, not as social-emotional competence (Deiniatur et al., 2024). The lack of teachers' skills in facilitating discussion about data safety, digital footprints, plagiarism, and AI ethics is an important aspect in the area of teachers' readiness that still requires special attention. Whereas, the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes character development through Profil Pelajar Pancasila so that ethical aspects in digital literacy are very relevant.

Another factor contributing to teachers' readiness is professional collaboration. Teachers who work at school with collaborative cultures tend to be more ready in adopting digital innovation (Baroroh et al., 2025). Through professional learning communities, teachers can share their best practices, discuss their challenges as well as develop technology-based learning strategies. However, the newest research showed that not all the schools across Indonesia had a collaborative and active ecosystem (Ardhi et al., 2024). In some schools, digital innovation relies on certain individuals who are more active, while others did not get support or adequate mentoring. So, digital literacy implementation becomes uneven although at the same institutions. The lack of collaborative cultures limit teachers' readiness in implementing digital literacy as the professional learning process does not occur continuously.

To sum up, although Indonesian EFL teachers already understand the basic concept of the Merdeka Curriculum, the readiness of its implementations showed significant variations. Internal factors such as reflective competence, professional orientation, and pedagogical decision making skills remain as important as external factors such as facilities and infrastructures. Furthermore, teachers' readiness is also affected by their ability in utilizing authentic digital resources, maintaining professional well-being, as well as developing safe, ethical, and inclusive digital learning. Collaborative cultures at schools become the key factor in supporting learning transformation to technology-based learning. Therefore, enhancement of teachers' readiness does not only need technical training, but also a systematic support and continuous development of teaching skills. These integrated efforts are expected to realize the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum more equitably and meaningfully for all students across different contexts. Several recurring themes emerged from the reviewed studies regarding EFL teachers' readiness for Merdeka

Curriculum implementation. These themes, along with their key findings and supporting studies, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Key themes, findings, and studies on efl teachers' readiness and merdeka curriculum implementation

Theme	Key findings	Supporting studies
Conceptual understanding of Merdeka Curriculum	Most EFL teachers understand the principles of flexibility, student-centered learning, and holistic assessment.	Prahastina et al. (2023); Lestari (2023); Tohamba & Ansyar (2025)
Positive perception toward curriculum reform	Teachers perceive the curriculum positively because it promotes 21st-century skills and contextual learning.	Fatmasari et al. (2024)
Gap between understanding and implementation	Teachers struggle to implement PBL and ICT integration despite understanding curriculum concepts.	Astuti et al. (2024); Ndari et al. (2023)
Adaptation to new pedagogical approaches	Teachers require time to adapt to creativity- and collaboration-oriented teaching practices.	Nugroho & Narawaty (2022)
Infrastructure disparities	Urban teachers have greater access to training, internet, and digital facilities than rural teachers.	Fatmasari et al. (2024); Emawati et al. (2024)
Pedagogical self-efficacy and reflective competence	Readiness depends on teachers' ability to translate curriculum goals into classroom practices.	Nurhikmah et al. (2024); Syofyan et al. (2024)
Technology-based pedagogical decision making	Teachers often know digital tools but lack understanding of their pedagogical purposes.	Harahap et al. (2025); Annisa et al. (2025)
Utilization of authentic digital resources	ICT is often used only for presentation rather than interaction and collaboration.	Pratolo et al. (2022)
Professional well-being	Digital fatigue and excessive workload hinder effective curriculum implementation.	Muslimin et al. (2024)
Digital ethics and safety	Teachers need stronger competence in digital citizenship, AI ethics, plagiarism, and online safety.	Rahmania et al. (2022); Deiniatur et al. (2024)
Professional collaboration	Collaborative school cultures support digital innovation and teacher readiness.	Baroroh et al. (2025); Ardhi et al. (2024)

3.2 Merdeka curriculum analysis

The Merdeka Curriculum is one of the main initiatives in Indonesia's national education policy that encourages a more independent, adaptive, and contextual learning. The Merdeka Curriculum is designed to encourage a more autonomous, contextual, and adaptive, allowing teachers to adapt their instructions to students' needs, interests, and abilities. It emphasizes character development through Profil Pelajar Pancasila as well as enhancement of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and digital literacy (Yunitasari et al., 2023). This approach also emphasizes the importance of a learning process that is not merely just memorizing materials, but also developing students' critical thinking and problem solving skills. According to Permendikbudristek Nomor 56 Tahun 2022, this curriculum is designed to provide flexibility for educational institutions and teachers to decide learning goals and learning methods based on students' needs (Ndari et al., 2023). This flexibility allows schools and teachers for designing related to local context as well as adjust the teaching method that is more adaptive and interesting for the students. Conceptually, Merdeka Curriculum brings a new paradigm in Indonesia's English language learning by integrating PBL and the utilization of digital technology in classrooms. Technology is not used as a tool for learning, but also as a media to enhance students'

behavior, emotional, and cognitive engagement (Al-Senafi et al., 2024). Therefore, the success of this curriculum in English Language Teaching (ELT) context depends on teachers' readiness and competence in using digital platforms and resources (Pratolo et al., 2022). Teachers are expected to be able to choose, utilize, and evaluate digital learning sources as well as design technological-based meaningful technology-based learning experiences.

The Merdeka Curriculum provides high flexibility for schools and teachers in deciding their learning goals adjusted with students' needs (Rosyida, 2025). Using this approach, the learning material can be adjusted to social contexts, cultures, and economics, so it will be more relevant with students' life (Ndari et al., 2023). This flexibility supports teachers to design creative and innovative learning methods, including PBL and field study. A relevant learning can enhance students' motivation and engagement significantly. Furthermore, this curriculum gives opportunities for more contextual pedagogical experiments, for example utilizing local potential as teaching materials. To sum up, the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes adaptive, relevant, and meaningful learning for students.

One of the focuses in the Merdeka Curriculum is the development of 21st century skills, including critical thinking skills, creativity, collaboration, and communication (Yunitasari et al., 2023). This curriculum encourages active learning through PBL approach so that students are able to solve real-world problems reflectively. Technology integration in the learning process does not only play the role as tools, but also to enhance emotional, cognitive, and students' behavior engagement (Al-Senafi et al., 2024). By using this approach, students learn to connect their academic competence with their socio-emotional competence needed in the real world. The learning process that emphasizes creativity and collaboration also can enhance students' preparedness in facing global challenges. Therefore, the Merdeka curriculum supports a holistic competence development, not merely material mastery.

Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan (2024) explained that assessment in the Merdeka curriculum emphasizes on holistic and authentic aspects, so it does not only measure the final results but also students' learning process. Teachers can use various assessment forms such as projects, portfolios, or presentations that reflect students' competencies on critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication. These assessment approaches provide constructive feedback and support continuous learning improvement. Furthermore, authentic assessment allows teachers to assess more complex skills and competence rather than conventional tests. This method also encourages students to be responsible for their own learning process. By emphasizing on holistic evaluation, the Merdeka curriculum creates more meaningful and relevant learning experiences.

However, the assumptions of this policy are often inconsistent with teachers' reality competence (Pratiwi et al., 2024). Although the Merdeka Curriculum has an ideal goal, teachers are not fully ready for its requirements. The curriculum reinforces teachers to develop creative, reflective, and technology-adaptive learning designs, however many teachers in rural areas still struggle in understanding and implementing the basic concept of digital literacy (Rasmin and Isma, 2024). In other words, there is a gap between a policy design oriented toward digital transformation, yet not fully supported by human resource readiness. Thus, although the curriculum is designed for digital transformation in education, its success remains limited if teachers' readiness as human resources is inadequate, particularly regarding their technological and pedagogical competence.

In conclusion, the Merdeka curriculum is understood as a paradigm change in order to build a learning ecosystem that is student-centered and aligned with the demands of global development. This curriculum does not only re-arrange the learning structure, but also offers conceptual framework emphasizing relevant contexts, authentic assessment, as well as 21st century development holistically. Nevertheless, the success of the Merdeka Curriculum depends on alignment between policy design and the capacity to implement it in the field, including institutional supports, infrastructure, as well as equal access to pedagogical innovations. Therefore, the Merdeka curriculum needs to be seen as an

initiative to be developed continuously, systemic investment, and enhancement of teachers' skills so that the transition goals can be achieved optimally.

3.3 Implementation of merdeka curriculum

Empirically, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum across regions in Indonesia showed significant differences, particularly related to technology integration and digital literacy practices in classrooms (Saa, 2024). It shows that teachers' digital literacy competence is still variative and the fact that it becomes the main challenge in implementing innovative and contextual learning. A study conducted by Tohamba & Ansyar (2025) showed that there are still many teachers who are still not capable of implementing PBL which is not in line with the curriculum design. Even, the assessments are not run as designed in the Merdeka Curriculum, diagnostic assessment needs to be done. English language learning still relies on traditional literacies that use printed books and the variation of digital media remains limited (Zein et al., 2020). This shows that teachers' digital literacy is low, both in designing or implementing the learning, so that the potential of innovative learning can not be maximized. The gap between teachers' readiness and curriculum expectations show misalignment of policy design and teachers' capacity, leading to a risk that education transformation is not achieved evenly.

However, in urban areas, teachers found to be ready in understanding the Merdeka curriculum concepts (Parahastina et al., 2023). Teachers realize the importance of creating a learning experience that is creative and innovative so that students will have critical thinking skills. They tried to design more contextual and engaging activities, although obstacles were found during the learning process. The biggest challenge faced is limitation of the infrastructure such as low internet connection, lack of digital tools, and limitation of teacher training. A similar situation has also been observed in other rural schools (Fatmasari et al., 2024; Emawati et al., 2024), highlighting that teacher readiness does not always align with the availability of supporting facilities. The lack of ongoing evaluation of teachers' readiness can lead to reactive teaching rather than proactive ones, so learning innovations only happen with certain individual teachers.

The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum requires a proper design to integrate the local context during the learning process. Teachers are encouraged to design a teaching-learning which is relevant to socio-cultural such as history and arts in PBL (Ndari et al., 2023). However, in the classroom practices, many schools face difficulties in identifying and utilizing local resources effectively. PBL has not been fully implemented due to the limitation of time, large class size and administrative workload. Furthermore, some teachers still rely on conventional text books due to a lack of experience with contextual teaching methods. These challenges show that structural support from the schools plays an important role so that the curriculum is able to implement meaningful context learning experience.

Another challenge lies in the integration of technology as a tool for improving learning experiences. Although the Merdeka curriculum encourages a learning process that is technology-based, many teachers have not been trained in using digital platforms to support collaborative and interactive learning (Pratolo et al., 2022). In some areas, particularly rural schools, computer and internet access hinder the potential for implementing PBL using technological support. Teachers who want to implement innovations often face technical obstacles in designing interesting learning. The gap between policy ideals and classroom reality can lead to partial adoption of curriculum strategy so that conventional methods are still dominant. Therefore, enhancing teachers' digital literacy skills becomes a crucial need to implement the curriculum comprehensively.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation plays an important role in ensuring whether the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is conducted effectively or not. Schools are expected to do regular evaluation using holistic and authentic assessment strategies. However, many teachers are not used to designing and carrying out performance-based

assessment, so at the end they are inconsistent in assessing students' academic results. Without consistent mentoring and support, innovative assessment does not always reflect the development of critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving as expected. In addition, feedback from the assessment is not always used for adjusting learning strategy, so the adaptive curriculum potential decreased. It shows that training, mentoring, and professional development play a crucial role in that the curriculum can be translated into classroom teaching practices.

According to the previous paragraphs, collaborations among teachers, schools, and community is also an important factor for an effective implementation of the Merdeka curriculum. It emphasizes an engaging learning that needs coordination from various stakeholders (Yunitasari et al, 2023). Schools that are successful in implementing this curriculum usually have robust collaboration networks, where teachers share each other's best practices, resources, and lesson plan. On the contrary, schools with weak collaboration may challenge in maintaining the consistency of curriculum implementation, particularly in complex activities such as PBL. Promoting peer learning and the professional community can help teachers in overcoming challenges and innovations for teaching-learning. Thus, creating a collaborative ecosystem can bridge the gap between policy goals and classroom realities.

It can be concluded that structural disparities between urban and rural schools are one of the factors contributing to the equitable implementation of technology-based policies. Teachers in rural areas do not have access to digital literacy training, learning equipment, or technical support (Soekamto et al., 2022). Consequently, although teachers have high motivation or good understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum's goals, they are obliged to rely on traditional methods that are teacher-centered (Astuti et al., 2024). Nevertheless, ICT integration is expected to be able to change the paradigm that English learning can be more engaging, creative, and contextual for students. This disparity underscores the need for sustained teacher empowerment efforts to bridge the gap between policy and classroom practice.

To sum up, on-the-ground realities showed a significant policy-practice gap. National policies assume a level of teacher digital readiness that is uneven, while the training and mentoring provided remain sporadic and not evenly distributed across all regions. In some areas, teachers experienced digital fatigue because they are forced to use technology without adequate training support (Emawati et al., 2024). This shows that digital education transformation without adequate training support deepens the educational disparities between urban and rural regions. It strengthens Candrawati and Purbani (2025) findings that the success of the Merdeka Curriculum depends on teachers' readiness and real support for teachers in all regions. The Merdeka curriculum assumes that teachers are highly adaptable, but without proper guidance, teaching innovations risk becoming just administrative formality. Policy focus in digitalizing learning, without considering teachers' socioeconomic contexts, can deepen educational inequalities between regions.

3.4 Recommendations

To bridge the gap between the Merdeka Curriculum policy and its practices, re-orientation of the curriculum is needed to build teachers' digital literacy continuous ecosystem. This effort will not only demand individual teacher capacities change, but also a systematic reformation that ensures continuous professional learning and technology that is relevant with local context. Firstly, teachers should focus on pedagogical digital competence development, not merely just technical skills. English teachers need to understand how technology can be used for interaction, collaboration, and reflection in language learning. This kind of training needs to be done systematically through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) adjusted with every regions' conditions (Yunitasari et al., 2023). Furthermore, CPD should be designed as an ongoing process, not a one-off training,

so that teachers can truly internalize the shift in teaching approaches that emphasizes creativity and collaboration using ICT tools.

Secondly, the government implemented a regional differentiation policy model to support infrastructures and digital resources for schools in rural areas. As suggested by Candrawati and Purbani (2025), local interventions, including the development of low-technology pedagogical models that are aware of cultural contexts can be realistic alternatives for schools with limited facilities. Teachers in those areas also can be facilitated to build professional learning communities that allows them share best practices and adaptive strategies in ICT tools integration.

Thirdly, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (of the Republic of Indonesia) have to improve the Merdeka Mengajar platform to not only be used for materials repository, but also as a space for collaboration and reflection, mentoring, and teacher' digital literacy development. With policy support that is responsive to field-specific contexts, teachers can be a change agent who are able to integrate technology meaningfully in English language learning. Therefore, digital literacy is not considered as an additional ability, but a basic competence that determines the success of the Merdeka Curriculum transformation. If teachers are not equipped with the ability to understand, assess, and use technology critically and creatively, the spirit of "Merdeka Belajar" risks remaining at the level of policy discourse. So, bridging the gap between national policy and local practice through the empowerment of teachers' digital literacy is a key prerequisite for the Merdeka Curriculum to truly enable English language learning that is adaptive, contextual, and inclusive across Indonesia.

4. Conclusions

This paper showed that digital literacy is a basic competence for EFL teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum effectively. Although mostly teachers understand the theoretical concept of the curriculum, there is a significant gap between the curriculum goals and its real practices. This gap is affected by the differences in infrastructure, teacher training, and access to digital resources, particularly in remote areas. Consequently, many teachers experience challenges in integrating meaningful technology in interactive and project-based learning. The interventions for this challenge become essential in order to achieve the curriculum goals. Teachers with strong digital literacy skills are more capable in designing a learning experience that is student-centered. Digital competence allows teachers to encourage students to have critical thinking skills, creativity, collaboration, and communication which is aligned with the 21st century skills. Without having digital literacy capability, even well- designed curriculum initiatives risk remaining merely theoretical. Therefore, adjusting CPD with teachers' needs is crucial. Strengthening teachers' digital literacy will help them be agents of change in modern ELT.

Teachers' readiness is not determined by the technical skills in using technology but also reflective competence, professional orientation, and pedagogical decision making skills. These internal factors are as important as external factors such as facilities and infrastructures. Teachers' readiness is also affected by their skills in utilizing authentic online resources to safeguard professional well-being, as well as to develop digital learning that is safe, ethical, and inclusive. Thus, digital literacy must be acknowledged as one of the core components of Merdeka Kurikulum, not just as an additional skill. Its integration ensures that "Merdeka Belajar" principles can be implemented in the actual situations, not merely as a policy discourse. An equal access to technology and adaptive support for teachers serve as a prerequisite for inclusive and innovative learning. By bridging the gaps between the policy and its actual practices, the curriculum will truly foster 21st-century competencies. Finally, digital literacy becomes a key component for more adaptive and interesting ELT in Indonesia.

Acknowledgement

The author sincerely thank the editorial team for their support and constructive suggestions during the preparation of this manuscript.

Author Contribution

The author is the sole contributor to all aspects of this research, including conceptualization, methodology, analysis, and manuscript preparation.

Funding

Not available.

Ethical Review Board Statement

Not available.

Informed Consent Statement

Not available.

Data Availability Statement

Not available.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Declaration of Generative AI Use

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author utilized OpenAI's ChatGPT to assist with the initial structuring of the paper's framework and Grammarly for grammar and language refinement. All AI-generated suggestions were critically reviewed, evaluated, and modified by the author, who takes full responsibility for the final content and originality of this work.

Open Access

©2026. The author. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third-party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this license, visit: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

References

- Ahmed, K. H. & Tümen Akyıldız, S. (2022). Determining the Role of Digital Literacy in EFL Teaching Concerning the Views of Turkish EFL Teachers. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (29), 966-986. <https://doi.org/10.29000/rumelide.1164991>.
- Al-Senafi, B., AlSabbagh, S., Alhaji, B., & Alghasab, M. (2024). Social media and language learning: How EFL students use online platforms for language learning at the College of Basic Education in Kuwait. *World Journal of Education*, 14(4), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wje.v14n4p1>
- Annisa, A., Suhatmady, B., & Rusmawaty, D. (2025). Investigating EFL teachers' technology adoption level of ICT integration by using the extended Technology Acceptance Model: A study of MGMP Bahasa Inggris in Kutai Kartanegara. *Borneo Educational Journal (Borju)*, 7(2), 701–722. <https://doi.org/10.24903/bej.v7i2.2207>

- Ardhi, M.W., Praptiwi, E., & Ernawati, D. (2024). Eksplorasi Professional Learning Community (PLC) pada Dimensi Supportive and Leadership di Sekolah Dasar Program Khusus. *EDUKASIA: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 5(1), 301–310. <https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v5i1.766>
- Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia. (2025). Survei penetration internet dan perilaku penggunaan internet 2025. <https://survei.apjii.or.id/survei/group/11>
- Astuti, D. F., Samanhudi, U., & Pratiwi, W. R. (2024). The challenges teachers and students face in implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum for teaching and studying English at SMP Negeri 5 Sangatta Utara. *EDUKASIA: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 5(1), 1533–1544. <https://doi.org/10.33578/edukasia.v5i1.01>
- Bacalja, A., Beavis, C., & O'Brien, A. (2022). Shifting landscapes of digital literacy. *The Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, 45(3), 253–263. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44020-022-00019-x>
- Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan. (2024). *Modul 3: Asesmen Kurikulum Merdeka*. https://lmsspada.kemdiktisaintek.go.id/pluginfile.php/711617/mod_resource/content/1/Modul%203%20Asesmen%20Kurikulum%20Merdeka.pdf
- Baroroh, U., Bunyamin, & Sudana, I. M. (2025). Unpacking the Role of Teacher Competence and Collaborative School Culture in Primary Education: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Innovation and Research in Primary Education*, 4(3), 1343–1355. <https://doi.org/10.56916/jirpe.v4i3.1936>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Candrawati, A. C. & Purbani, W. (2025). Teaching English in rural settings: A systematic review of challenges and strategies in non-technological classrooms. *English Language Teaching Educational Journal*, 8(2), 54–65. <https://doi.org/10.12928/eltej.v8i2.14081>
- Dewi, D. S., Hartono, R., Saleh, M., & Wahyuni, S. (2023). Incorporating multiliteracy pedagogy elements into EFL speaking class through digital storytelling. *Issues in Language Studies*, 12(2), 79–97. <https://doi.org/10.33736/ils.5545.2023>
- Dudeney, G., Hockly, N., & Pegrum, M. (2013). *Digital literacies*. Harlow: Pearson
- Emawati, Taufiqulloh, Fadhly, F. Z. (2024). Challenges and opportunities in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in language education: A meta-synthetic analysis. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 12(2), 869–882. <https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v12i2.10356>
- European Union Agency for Cybersecurity, ENISA, Foresight 2030 threats. Empresa Nacional de Innovación, SME, SA, (ENISA) (2023). Retrieved from: <https://tinyurl.com/m9jm2t3k>
- Fatmasari, A. D., Tirtanawati, M. R., & Prastiwi, C. H. W. (2024). Teachers' perception of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation in English vocabulary teaching at rural elementary schools. *Aisyah Journal of English Language Teaching*, 3(1), 202–212. <https://doi.org/10.30604/ajjelt.v3i1.1613>
- Flórez Barreto, D. M. (2022). 11th graders' acknowledgment of their community through multiliteracies in an EFL classroom. *English Language Teaching*, 15(11), 25–51. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n11p25>
- Govender, I. (2025). Digital literacy and STEM skills – What is the connection? A systematic review. *Technology, Knowledge and Learning. Advance online publication*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10758-025-09879-x>
- Hamidah, N. (2021). Digital literacy in EFL teaching. *ELTALL (English Language Teaching, Applied Linguistics and Literature)*, 2(2), 90–102. <https://jurnal.iainponorogo.ac.id/index.php/eltall90>
- Harahap, D. K., Daulay, S. H., & Dewi, U. (2025). Navigating EFL teachers' challenges with digital technologies in project-based learning in the English classroom. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 13(2), 4370–4379. <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v13i2.7813>

- Hashemi, A. & Kew, S.N. (2021). The barriers to the use of ict in english language teaching: a systematic literature review. *Journal of Information and Communication Technologies*, 3(1), 77-88. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/bited/article/841574>
- Imansari, N., & Putri, A., (2024). Equity in English Language Education: Challenges and Opportunities through the Lens of Capability Approach. *English Language, Literature, and Teaching*, 9(2), 88-97. <https://doi.org/10.32528/ellite.v9i2.2534>
- Kaluge, T. A., & Usmi, U. (2024). High school teachers' readiness for the implementation of Merdeka curriculum in English language teaching. *Bahasa dan Seni: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, dan Pengajarannya*, 52(1), 90-100. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um015v52i12024p90>
- Karkar Esperat, T. M. (2024). Multiliteracies in teacher education. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 20(2), 115-132. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.1890>
- Kim, S., Ramos, K. A., Chung, H., & Choi, S. (2020). Integrating critical multiliteracies pedagogy in ESL/EFL teaching. *Journal of English Learner Education*, 11(1), 1-29. <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/jele/vol11/iss1/4/>
- Lestari, I. (2023). The English Teacher's Perspective and Challenge on Implementing Merdeka Curriculum. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 9(3), 331-339. <https://doi.org/10.22225/jr.9.3.2023.331-339>
- Maghfiroh, A., Styati, E. W., Fachriza, A., Khoiriyah, K., Simpoh, W., Syaputra, R. A., & Lathifah, L. (2024). Future-ready educators: Assessing digital competence and teaching preparedness among prospective teachers in the 21st century. *Indonesian Journal on Learning and Advanced Education (IJOLAE)*, 6(1), 47-61. <https://doi.org/10.23917/ijolae.v6i1.23081>
- Mandarsari, P. (2023). Online authentic materials in teaching English for EFL students. *International Journal of Research on English Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 4(1), 65-78. <https://doi.org/10.30863/ijretal.v4i1.5013>
- Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). Technological pedagogical content knowledge: A framework for teacher knowledge. *Teachers College Record*, 108(6), 1017-1054. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9620.2006.00684.x>
- Moher, D., Shamseer, L., Clarke, M., Ghersi, D., Liberati, A., Petticrew, M., Shekelle, P., & Stewart, L. A.; the PRISMA-P Group. (2015). Preferred reporting items for systematic review and meta-analysis protocols (PRISMA-P) 2015 statement. *Systematic Reviews*, 4(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.1186/2046-4053-4-1>
- Muslimin, A. I., Mukminatien, N., & Ivone, F. M. (2024). Cyber fatigue in the classroom: Unravelling the complex web of technostress among EFL teachers. *Education and Linguistic Knowledge Journal (EduLink)*, 6(1), 38-57. <https://doi.org/10.32503/edulink.v6i1.5192>
- Ndari, W., Suyatno, S., Sukirman, & Mahmudah, F. N. (2023). Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and its challenges. *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, 4(3), 111-116. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24018/ejedu.2023.4.3.648>
- Nugroho, T., & Narawaty, D. (2022). *Kurikulum 2013, Kurikulum Darurat (2020-2021), dan Kurikulum Prototipe atau Kurikulum Merdeka (2022) Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris: Suatu kajian bandingan*. Prosiding Seminar Nasional Bahasa, Seni, dan Sastra, 373-382. <https://doi.org/10.30998/sinatra.v1i0.6099>
- Nurhayati, E., Rizaldi, D. R., & Fatimah, Z. (2020). The correlation of digital literation and STEM integration to improve Indonesian students' skills in 21st century. *International Journal of Asian Education*, 1(2), 73-80. <https://doi.org/10.46966/ijae.v1i2.36>
- Nurhidayat, E., Mujiyanto, J., Yuliasri, I., & Hartono, R. (2024). Technology integration and teachers' competency in the development of 21st-century learning in EFL classroom. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, 18(2), 342-349. <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v18i2.21069>
- Nurhikmah, H., et al. (2024). Teachers' readiness in online learning: Digital literacy-self-efficacy, pedagogical competence, attitude, infrastructure, and management support.

- Electronic Journal of e-Learning*, 22(8), 93–105.
<https://doi.org/10.34190/ejel.22.8.3358>
- Pratolo, B. W., & Solikhati, H. A. (2021). Investigating teachers' attitude toward digital literacy in EFL classroom. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, 15(1), 97–103.
<https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v15i1.15747>
- Pratolo, B. W., Fatimah, N., Soviyah, & Zuraina, A. (2022). Digital literacy readiness: Voices of Indonesian primary and secondary English teachers. *English Language Teaching Educational Journal*, 5(2), 129–142. <https://doi.org/10.12928/eltej.v5i2.6562>
- Prahastina, L., Indriayu, M., & Matsuri. (2024). Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and its impact on effective learning achievement in elementary school. In *Mini International Conference of Educational Research and Innovation (MICERI 2023), SHES: Conference Series*, 7(1), 166–173.
<https://jurnal.uns.ac.id/SHES/article/view/84306/44077>
- Pratiwi, A. A. S., Elizar, E., Apriza, B., & Sumarno, S. (2024). Evaluating K13 and Merdeka curriculum implementation in primary education: A comprehensive literature review. *Indonesian Journal of Educational Research and Review*, 7(3), 491–499.
<https://doi.org/10.23887/ijerr.v7i3.83226>
- Purmayanti, D. (2022). The challenges of implementing digital literacy in teaching and learning activities for EFL learners in Indonesia. *BATARA DIDI: English Language Journal*, 1(2), 101–110. <https://doi.org/10.56209/badi.v1i2.38>
- Rahmania, R., Sunggingwati, D., & Wardani, I. (2022). Teacher Readiness for Online Teaching Using Mobile Technology. *E3L: Journal of English Teaching, Linguistic, and Literature*, 5(2), 95–104. <https://doi.org/10.30872/e3l.v5i2.1419>
- Rasmin, L. O., & Isma, A. (2024). *Challenges and experiences of English teachers in implementing Merdeka Belajar curriculum in rural Indonesia: A case study*. In *Strategi pengembangan literasi digital pada pendidikan modern* (Prosiding Seminar Nasional, pp. 29–37). Mandala.
- Rokayah, R., Hermita, N., Vebrianto, R., Mujtahid, I. M., Sulistiyo, U., & Samsudin, A. (2023). Reflection of Indonesian educators on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. *Mimbar Sekolah Dasar*, 10(3), 684–700. <https://doi.org/10.53400/mimbar-sd.v10i3.64864>
- Rosyida, N. (2025). Flexibility of the Merdeka curriculum in giving educators freedom to design learning. *Global Journal of Islamic Education*, 1(1), 17–29.
<https://doi.org/10.58518/gajie.vii24..2779>
- Sidik, E. J. (2022). *The integration of multimodality in English teaching in Indonesian junior high schools* [Doctoral dissertation, Queen's University Belfast]. Queen's University Belfast.
- Saa, S. (2024). Merdeka curriculum: Adaptation of Indonesian education policy in the digital era and global challenges. *Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental*, 18(3), 1–24.
<https://doi.org/10.24857/rgsa.v18n3-168>
- Soifah, U., Jana, P., & Pratolo, B. W. (2021). Unlocking digital literacy practices of EFL Teachers. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1823 (1), 1–11.
<https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1823/1/012030>
- Soekamto, H., Nikolaeva, I., Abbood, A. A. A., Grachev, D., Kosov, M., Yumashev, A., Kostyrin, E., Lazareva, N., Kvitkovskaja, A., & Nikitina, N. (2022). Professional development of rural teachers based on digital literacy. *Emerging Science Journal*, 6(6), 1525–1540.
<https://doi.org/10.28991/ESJ-2022-06-06-019>
- Syofyan, H., Rosyid, A., Fadli, M. R., & Yusuff, A. A. (2024). Teacher readiness factors that influence the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*, 13(5), 168–178.
<https://doi.org/10.5430/jct.v13n5p168>
- The New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(1), 60–92.
<https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.66.1.17370n67v22j160u>

- Tinmaz, H., Lee, Y.-T., Fanea-Ivanovici, M., & Baber, H. (2022). A systematic review on digital literacy. *Smart Learning Environments*, 9(21), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-022-00204-y>
- Tohamba, C. P. P., & Ansyar, M. (2025). Teachers' readiness for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in English instruction. *Contemporary Education and Community Engagement*, 2(1), 20–29. <https://doi.org/10.12928/cece.v2i1.1138>
- Wahyusi, W., Masruddin, M., & Wisran, W. (2025). Teachers' barriers in implementing Merdeka Curriculum in teaching English at junior high school. *IDEAS: Journal on Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 13(2), 4193–4203. <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v13i2.6822>
- Yunitasari, D., Suastra, I., & Lasmawan, I. (2023). Implementation challenges of merdeka curriculum in primary schools. *Prisma Sains : Jurnal Pengkajian Ilmu dan Pembelajaran Matematika dan IPA IKIP Mataram*, 11(4), 952–959. <https://doi.org/10.33394/j-ps.v11i4.8079>
- Zein, S., Sukyadi, D., Hamied, F. A., & Lengkanawati, N. S. (2020). English language education in Indonesia: A review of research (2011–2019). *Language Teaching*, 53(4), 491–523. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444820000208>
- Zhang, J. (2023). EFL teachers' digital literacy: the role of contextual factors in their literacy development. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1153339. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1153339>
- Zulaikha, S., Fadholi, M., Sururi, S., Syahril, S., Jamil, S. N., & Ariyanti, P. N. (2025). “Bridging the digital divide”: Assessing and advancing teachers' digital literacy across Indonesian provinces. *Journal of Educational Management and Instruction*, 5(1), 195–212. <https://doi.org/10.22515/jemin.v5i1.11586>

Biography of Author

Diah Palupi, English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Special Region of Yogyakarta 55281, Indonesia.

- Email: diahpalupi2024@student.uny.ac.id
- ORCID: N/A
- Web of Science ResearcherID: N/A
- Scopus Author ID: N/A
- Homepage: N/A