

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Education is universally recognized as a vital component of individual development and societal advancement. As Harahap et al. (2023) state, education is a continuous life process aimed at helping individuals achieve their maximum potential, enabling them to become well-rounded, cognitively adept, emotionally intelligent, and psychomotorically skilled members of society. Within this broad context, the curriculum serves as a fundamental guide for instruction and learning. Safitri et al. (2023) emphasize the curriculum as a structured framework that specifies what, when, and how students learn. It functions as a roadmap, defining learning objectives, harmonizing content, and assisting with evaluation. By influencing instructional strategies and adapting to societal shifts, the curriculum ensures the relevance and effectiveness of education.

Indonesia's educational trajectory has been marked by numerous curriculum reforms, with eleven modifications since 1947, reflecting the nation's commitment to refining and improving its educational system. The most recent of these was the 2013 curriculum, which was in place until the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic disrupted traditional educational practices, necessitating innovative solutions and adaptations. In response to these challenges, the

Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, Nadiem Makarim, introduced the "Kurikulum Merdeka" (Independent Curriculum) in 2022. This curriculum represents a significant paradigm shift, aiming to revitalize education by empowering students to explore their individual interests and talents.

According to Minister Makarim, the core of the Independent Curriculum is "independent learning," a concept designed to allow students to explore their interests and talents. Unlike the 2013 curriculum, where students had to study all subjects from kindergarten to junior high school before specializing in science or social studies at the high school level, the Independent Curriculum eliminates such constraints, offering greater flexibility and autonomy.

In line with the Independent Curriculum's emphasis on student-centered learning, the integration of various language skills becomes crucial. This approach recognizes that language skills are interconnected and should be taught in a holistic and cohesive manner. Traditional methods often isolate speaking, listening, reading, and writing, potentially hindering students' ability to use language effectively in real-world contexts. Integrated skills teaching, on the other hand, seeks to bridge these gaps by creating learning experiences that require students to use multiple skills simultaneously.

Given this context, this research focuses on analyzing the strategies employed by English teachers in teaching integrated skills at SMPN 1 Kota

Bengkulu, within the framework of the Independent Curriculum. By examining these strategies, the study aims to provide insights into effective methods for fostering comprehensive language proficiency among students. Understanding how teachers adapt their approaches to align with the Independent Curriculum and integrate language skills can offer valuable lessons for educators across Indonesia and beyond.

This study aims to bridge this gap by investigating the current strategies employed by English teachers at SMPN 1 Kota Bengkulu to integrate these four language skills in the classroom. Furthermore, it explores the challenges encountered by teachers in this integration process.

By focusing on the perspectives and experiences of English teachers at SMPN 1 Kota Bengkulu, this research aims to provide valuable insights into the practical implementation of integrated skills teaching within the context of the Independent Curriculum.

Based on the background above, the researcher submits a thesis entitled **“English Teacher’s Strategy in Teaching Integrated Skills at 7th Grade of SMPN 1 Kota Bengkulu”**.

B. Focus of the Research

This research is focus on English teachers’ strategy in integrating English skills, including speaking, reading, writing, and listening in teaching at 7th grade of SMPN 1 Kota Bengkulu.

C. Formulation of the Problem

The formulation of the problem of this research is as follow:

1. What strategy is mostly used by teacher in integrating English skills in teaching at 7th grade of SMPN 1 Kota Bengkulu?
2. How does English teacher integrating English skills in teaching at 7th grade of SMPN 1 Kota Bengkulu?

D. Purpose of the Research

The purposes of this research are:

1. To find teacher's strategy in integrating English skills is mostly used in teaching at 7th grade of SMPN 1 Kota Bengkulu.
2. To describe teacher's strategy in integrating English skills in teaching at 7th grade of SMPN 1 Kota Bengkulu.

E. Significant of the Research

Theoretically, this study offers important insights into teaching strategies for integrating English skills. It acts as a resource for English teachers to improve their instructional methods and create a more engaging and effective learning experience. The research helps expand teachers' understanding of various teaching strategies and encourages them to adopt more creative approaches in the classroom. Additionally, it allows educators

to evaluate their current methods and make necessary adjustments to enhance their future teaching practices.

Practically, this research benefits multiple groups. For readers, it provides valuable information on how English teachers implement strategies for teaching English skills in 7th grade at SMPN 1 Kota Bengkulu. For teachers, the findings offer guidance on actively involving students in learning and identifying effective strategies that make students feel comfortable and motivated. For students, this study supports their English language development by encouraging greater participation in class, helping them improve their reading and overall communication skills. Lastly, for future researchers, this study serves as a useful reference and source of information for further research on teaching strategies.

F. Definition of the Key Terms

1. Integrated Skill

An approach to language teaching that combines two or more of the four main language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in instruction.

2. Teacher's Strategy

A planning by the teacher which contains a series of activities designed to achieve certain educational goal