

## IMPLEMENTATION OF *MERDEKA BELAJAR-KAMPUS MERDEKA* IN ENGLISH TEACHING AND LINGUISTICS BASED ON CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING (CTL) MODEL AT HIGHER EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

*To be achieved in learning and teaching language aspects were full involvement in the selection of learning resources and materials in higher education. They were applied in everyday life. This article discussed and analyzed the implementation of Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka in English teaching and linguistics based on the contextual teaching and learning model in higher education. The method applied used a qualitative descriptive approach. Data sources included primary data: observation and interviews. Then, secondary data: guidelines for Implementation of the 2021 Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka and some relevant articles. Data collection techniques were carried out using interviews, observation, and documentation techniques. Techniques in determining documentation: 1) linkage of studies with reading sources, 2) engagement of studies with the results of previous research, and 3) the theory of significance and the experiences of researchers. Data analysis techniques include 1) coding/noticing, 2) categorizing, 3) thematic analysis, 4) testing and triangulation, 5) reflexivitation, 6) conclusion. The results of the study and analysis found that there was a significant relationship between the implementation of MB-KM in ETL based on the CTL model, there was seem from the full involvement of students in determining learning resources in the classroom and outside the classroom, directing meaningful learning, cognitive learning in students, and developing character and creative competencies in leaning language study. These things will help students and lecturers in full collaboration to build an independent competency profile in higher education to build up language proficiency.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Learning and teaching based on contextual learning requires the role of educators is important to be applied (Utaminingsih & Shufa, 2019). The application of contextual learning in all learning objects directs learning outcomes towards the potential of each student. So, the potential of each student will be seen from the student's efforts in achieving learning objectives

that have been arranged in the form of specific tasks (Munir & Nur, 2018). Therefore, Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model constitutes one of the approaches based on student involvement in compiling teaching materials and connecting these materials to students' real lives (Pramujiyanti Khotimah, 2016). One of the main problems of learning activities that occurred in universities was the absence of authentic approaches. It was to involve students in formulating learning materials (Mukwambo, 2016). Otherwise, learning materials were arranged based on the needs of the vision and mission of the university as outlined in the graduate profile and course learning outcomes.

Related to *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MB-KM) appears as one of the Ministry of Education and Culture programs that emphasizes several aspects of learning, including 1) directing learning objects that hone development and learning experiences that have meaning, 2) teachers have freedom over the development period of students by prioritizing learning achievement steps, 3) learning and character development are focused on collaborative activities and guidance on the character of national philosophy through actual dynamics (Rahman, Astina, & Azizah, 2021; Restu Amelia, Fajri Romadhan, 2022).

*Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* would run well if this program was synergized with a set of learning materials and learning activities (Saputra et al., 2022). Learning materials and learning activities will provide meaningful concepts and experiences for students to apply the concept of MB-KM (Oksari, Susanty, Wardhani, & Nurhayati, 2022). Consequently, this will certainly have an essential impact on learning and teaching activities in higher education. The essential impact on learning and teaching activities in higher education can be in the form of improving the quality of graduates, the flexibility of interests and talents, holistic and integrated learning resources, and increased collaborative learning between study programs and universities (Rahman et al., 2021). The above explanation will reduce the negative impacts that occur in learning and teaching activities, including reducing the unemployment rate of college graduates, minimizing the competency gap in private and public universities, reducing the dropout rate for students, and reducing the limitations of educators using the classroom as a learning activity.

The implementation of the contextual teaching and learning model in *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* on learning materials and learning activities seems a synergy between students and the world of work (Sihono, 2004). *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* will not be implemented when the approach or model used has not touched learning fundamentals such as material, learning activities, student learning styles, teaching characters, learning resources, environment, and competency collaboration (Rosani, 2023). So that, the integration of the right learning plan, learning implementation and learning evaluation will make a significant contribution to student learning competencies. Addition other statement, student competence and skills in MB-KM activities and CTL model enrichment can be a bridge to actualise knowledge, as well as differentiated innovation.

In general, it can be seen that the concept of MB-KM in essence has several characters, including that MB-KM is a form that strives to create efficient, active, collaborative, innovative, cultured, independent, and contextual learning and teaching management (Abdullah, 2018). Therefore, the MB-KM programme continues to strive for procedural reductions both administratively, and meaningless learning, so that these things hinder the effectiveness and essence of learning and teaching.

The learning essence of CLT and MB-KM in learning and teaching and enrichment has the same concept and working principles. It was connecting the academic learning techniques with practical exercises, collaborating with local residents and organisations, applied to issues in the real world, action research (Saputra et al., 2022). It was a motivate for the students to complete the assignment makes the school more of a community contextual learning. It was

strengthened through contextual instruction, educators develop into learning leaders, need more direct connections to the curriculum, need collaborations with businesses (Rosani, 2023).

On the other hand, promoting problem-based learning, determining the community's assets, diversity constitutes a component of context-based instruction and learning, energetic and experiential, a significant paradigm shift, educate children on the complexity of reality, students gain knowledge from context (Rahman et al., 2021). In another section, promoting problem-based learning may be said that it is determining the community's assets, diversity is a component of context-based instruction and learning, energetic and experiential. They did a significant paradigm change, educating children on the complexity of reality, students get knowledge from context, context is provided for meaning, encouraging learning metacognition, combining training and evaluation (Sears, DeStefano, & Howey, 1998).

Contextual Learning and Teaching denotes an educational approach that emphasizes the integration of real-world context and authentic experiences into the learning process (Brown, J. S., Collins, A., & Duguid, P, 1989). This approach aims to make learning more meaningful and relevant to students by connecting classroom concepts to the practical applications and situations they might encounter in their daily lives. The main goal of CTL is to help students develop a deeper understanding of concepts, enhance critical thinking skills, and promote a more active engagement in their own learning (Gardner, J., & Wallace, H, 1999).

Real-world Context and CTL focus on presenting subject matter within the context of real-world situations or problems. By doing so, students can see the practical relevance of what they are learning. Real-world context in education refers to the practice of integrating genuine, practical situations and experiences into the learning process (Gardner, J., & Wallace, H, 1999). It involves connecting academic concepts and content to real-life scenarios, problems, and applications, thereby making the learning experience more relevant, engaging, and meaningful for students. By placing learning in a context that mirrors the complexities of the real world, educators aim to enhance students' understanding and retention of knowledge, as well as their ability to apply what they've learned to authentic situations. For examples: 1) Language arts can be analysing current news articles, social issues, or literature that reflect contemporary society and stimulate discussions about relevant topics 2) Arts may be exploring various art forms through projects that connect to students' cultural backgrounds or contemporary issues. 3) Foreign Languages can be using real-world scenarios, such as ordering food at a restaurant or asking for directions, to teach practical language skills (Kilpatrick, W. H, 1918).

Interdisciplinary approach and CTL encourage the integration of multiple subjects or disciplines to address complex real-world problems (Kilpatrick, W. H, 1918). This approach reflects the interconnected nature of knowledge in real life. An interdisciplinary approach in education involves the integration of knowledge and methodologies from multiple disciplines or subject areas to address complex real-world issues, problems, or themes. Instead of viewing subjects in isolation, interdisciplinary learning emphasizes the interconnectedness of knowledge and encourages students to explore topics from various angles, fostering a more holistic understanding (Sihono, 2004). This reflects the reality that many challenges and phenomena in the real world are multifaceted and cannot be fully understood through a single disciplinary lens.

Collaboration and CTL often involves collaborative learning, where students work together to solve problems, share ideas, and learn from one another (Hasani, 2016). Collaboration in education refers to the process of individuals, whether students, teachers, or professionals, working together to achieve common goals. Otherwise, collaborative learning and teaching methods are designed to encourage active engagement, interaction, and sharing of ideas among participants, fostering a dynamic and cooperative learning environment (Hudson & Whisler, 2008). Collaboration can occur between students, between teachers, or between students and teachers, and it can take various forms, both inside and outside the classroom.

English Teaching and Linguistics involves imparting the knowledge and skills related to the English language, its structure, usage, and communication, both in spoken and written forms

(Lave, J., & Wenger, E, 1991). Linguistics, on the other hand constitutes the scientific study of language itself, including its structure, meaning, and how it is used in different contexts (Yule, G, 2014). Combining these two areas enables educators to provide a comprehensive understanding of English language and communication to students.

Teaching English involves instructing students in various aspects of the language, including grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Larsen-Freeman, D., & Anderson, M, 2011). The goal helps the students become proficient and effective communicators in English. English language teaching (ELT) methods often include a combination of interactive activities, real-world context, and language skills development (Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S, 2014). There is modern ELT often focuses on communication skills, critical thinking, and cultural awareness.

English language instruction covers four main skills reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Pangemanan, 2020). Lessons are designed to enhance each skill and integrate them for effective communication. 1) Grammar and Vocabulary seems the teaching grammar rules and vocabulary usage helps students construct sentences accurately and express themselves clearly. 2) Literature does the exploring literature exposes students to different writing styles, genres, and cultural perspectives, while also enhancing critical thinking and analytical skills. 3) Language variation applies the teaching about regional accents, dialects, and variations helps students understand the diversity of English language usage. 4) Communication strategies seems instruction focuses on teaching students to convey their ideas effectively, negotiate meaning, and understand context in various communication situations.

## II. METHODS

This research used a qualitative descriptive approach. This approach used Creswell's 2016 theory. Creswell (2016) stated that research based on qualitative descriptive methods is directed at an actual situation based on manuscripts, documentation, interviews, and field notes. Sources of Data: Primary data sources obtained by researchers based on filling out questionnaires and interviews with parties who are considered to be sources of information (Sugiyono, 2019). Secondary data sources took from articles directly related to primary data sources (Sugiono, 2019). Secondary data sources are obtained from documentation, archives, and reports. Based on these secondary data source that is *Buku Pedoman Implementasi Merdeka Belajar Kampus Tahun 2021* and some articles relevant to the study of this article and the Contextual Teaching and Learning Book by Borko, Hilda, et al (1998).

### Tehnique of Collecting the Data

An interview is a two-way or more activity to discuss with one or more people (Creswell, 2018). Interviews were conducted with parties who are considered to have competence in the field of learning development and human resource development. The interview was loaded by giving an interview sheet consisting of 10 questions with 2 characters; 1) implementation of CLT in learning and, 2) implementation of MB-KM-based CLT.

Observation is a direct or indirect activity conducted by researchers or writers to directly observe events or occurrences (Sugiono, 2003). Observation of what is done is direct observation and indirect observation. This observation has an observation sheet that is filled in by the author or researcher by listing 2 characters; 1) learning activities in the classroom, and 2) MB-KM-based lesson plans. The observation was conducted by the author's team involving lecturers and students.

Documentation is part of data collection techniques made by the subject himself or others (Sugiono, 2008). Documentation was used as secondary data, namely data sourced from decrees, photographs, worksheets, and so on. The documentation used in data collection comes from the

2021 *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* Policy Implementation Guidebook and articles that are relevant to the study of this article and the Contextual Teaching and Learning Book by Borko, Hilda, et al in 1998.

### Tehnique of Analysis Data

The technique in analysing data uses an inductive approach, meaning that the analysis can be carried out when the data has been collected properly, so that the data will become a source in drawing conclusions (Sugiyono, 2008). The techniques used include 1) coding/noticing, 2) categorisation, 3) thematics analysis, 4) data analysis. Thematics Analysis, 4) Testing and Triagulation, and 5) reflexivity, and conclusion. Sources adopted Sugiono, 2008; Creswell, 2013; Arikunto, 2006.

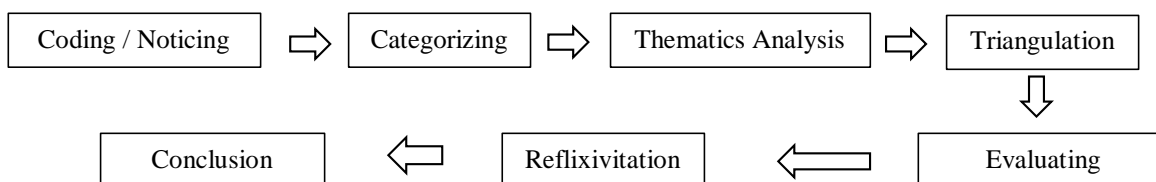


Figure 1. Tehniques of Analysis of Data

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model based on *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* in higher education is a learning approach that combines the concept of CTL with the principles of *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka*. Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) constitute a learning approach that emphasises the importance of connecting learning materials with the context of students' real lives (Munir & Nur, 2018). In CTL, learning materials are presented in a context that is relevant to students' daily lives, so that they can see the connection between what is learned in class and experiences and situations outside the classroom. CTL also encourages the application of knowledge in real situations and the development of 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, and problem solving.

*Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* introduced in higher education reform in Indonesia (Rosani, 2023). The concept aims to give students freedom and independence in determining their learning path and content. Students are given the freedom to choose courses, organise schedules, and determine learning methods that suit their interests, talents, and needs. *Merdeka Kampus* also encourages student involvement in self-development, learning experiences outside the classroom, and community service.

The implementation of the CTL model based on *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* in higher education combines concepts and principles from CTL and *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka*. This approach creates a learning environment that allows students to connect learning materials with their life experiences and contexts, while providing freedom in determining their own learning paths and exploring their interests. In the implementation of CTL based on *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka*, students are given the freedom to choose topics or problems they want to explore, as well as learning methods that suit their preferences. Learning materials are presented in a relevant context and provide opportunities for students to develop 21st century skills through projects, research, collaboration, or learning experiences outside the classroom.

By combining CTL with *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* principles, the college creates a learning environment that is stimulating, relevant, and responsive to student needs. This encourages students to take an active role in the learning process, develop creativity and initiative, and relate knowledge to the real context they face.

## DISCUSSION

- a) The implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model with *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MB-KM) can show students' full involvement in determining learning resources both inside and outside the classroom.

In CTL, students are actively involved in selecting learning resources that are relevant to their real-life context. With MB-KM, they have the freedom to determine learning resources that suit their interests, talents, and needs. Students can search for learning resources such as books, journals, articles, videos, or online materials related to learning topics. Students' full involvement in choosing these learning resources allows them to obtain relevant and meaningful information in the context of their learning.

Through MB-KM, students are given the freedom to explore outside the classroom. They can explore learning resources in the library, laboratory, field, or through participation in community activities or internships. Students can look for learning resources that are interesting and relevant to their real-life context, such as visits to industrial sites, interviews with practitioners in related fields, or direct experience in facing real challenges. This allows them to develop a deeper understanding and connect with real-world situations.

CTL and MB-KM encourage students to engage in active discussion and collaboration with fellow students, lecturers, or practitioners in related fields. In this context, students can share learning resources they find, give each other feedback, and develop a common understanding. These discussions and collaborations can take place in the classroom, through online forums, or in group activities. Students can inspire each other and enrich their learning experience through full engagement in determining and sharing learning resources.

With the implementation of CTL model with MB-KM, students' full involvement in determining learning resources in class and outside the class gives them the opportunity to have an active role in the learning process. This encourages intrinsic motivation, independence, and reinforcement of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and initiative. Through this process, students can relate learning to the context of their own lives, develop their interests, and gain a deeper and more relevant understanding.

- b) The relationship of meaningful learning to Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) with *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MB-KM)

Meaningful learning is a central concept in CTL. In CTL, meaningful learning means that students relate learning material to their real experiences and see its relevance in their daily lives. Students are given the opportunity to understand and apply the knowledge and skills learned in a context that is meaningful to them.

Meaningful learning in MB-KM give us the great learning is also an important principle in MB-KM. In MB-KM, students have the freedom to determine their own learning path, which includes selecting learning resources that are meaningful and relevant to their interests, talents and needs. Students are given the space to experience learning that gives meaning and has a real impact in their lives.

CTL and meaningful learning have a close relationship. In CTL, meaningful learning is realised through learning experiences that are relevant to the context of students' lives. They are given the opportunity to relate learning materials to their real-life experiences, which provides clearer meaning and purpose in learning.

Meaningful learning also supports the implementation of MB-KM. In MB-KM, students have the freedom to determine their own learning path, which includes selecting meaningful learning resources. By choosing meaningful learning resources, students can develop their interests, see the relevance to their lives, and gain deeper and more relevant understanding.

In the implementation of CTL with MB-KM, meaningful learning becomes an important cornerstone. Students engage in learning experiences that provide meaning and relevance to their life context. They have the freedom to choose meaningful and relevant learning resources, so that they can relate learning to their real experiences. Through this meaningful learning, students can develop a deep understanding, motivate themselves, and feel connected to the learning materials and learning objectives they set.

c) Student-centred learning is an approach that is emphasised in both Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MB-KM).

#### 1. Student-Centred Learning in CTL

CTL emphasises the importance of connecting learning materials with the context of students' real lives. In student-centred learning, learning materials are presented in a context that is relevant to students' experiences, interests, and needs. Therefore, students were given an active role in the learning process. They are encouraged to relate the learning material to their personal experiences, participate in discussions, collaboration, as well as apply knowledge in real situations. So that, students were given the opportunity to make choices regarding learning paths, methods and learning resources that suit their interests and needs. In addition, they are encouraged to reflect on their understanding and experiences in the context of learning.

#### 2. Student-Centred Learning in MB-KM

Student independence: MB-KM encourages students to be independent in determining their learning path and content. They have the freedom to choose courses, learning methods, and out-of-class learning experiences that suit their interests and needs. Students are given the opportunity to explore their interests and talents through the selection of learning resources, exploration of relevant topics, and learning experiences outside the classroom. In student-centred learning in MB-KM, the development of interests and talents becomes the main focus. In student-centred learning in MB-KM, assessment is holistic, considering students' achievements in various aspects, such as knowledge, skills, attitudes, and their contributions to learning and society.

Both approaches, CTL and MB-KM, pay significant attention to student-centred learning. Students are given freedom and responsibility in determining their own learning path, linking learning to their life context, and developing their interests and talents. Student-centred learning in CTL and MB-KM allows them to be actively involved in the learning process, self-motivate, and develop skills and understanding that are relevant and meaningful to them.

d) The development of character and creation competencies is an important aspect of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MB-KM).

#### 1) Development of Character Competencies in CTL

Real life context applies CTL emphasises the relationship between learning and the context of students' real lives. Through contextual learning, students have the opportunity to develop character competencies that are relevant to their life situations, such as honesty, cooperation, responsibility, or empathy. Reflection and linking to values: CTL encourages students to reflect on the values that emerge in the learning experience. Students are given the opportunity to relate the learning material to their values and identify values that are relevant to the learning context.

#### 2) Development of Creating Competence in CTL

Project-based learning: CTL can implement project-based learning, where students are challenged to create something new or solve a real problem. This creating process involves critical thinking, creativity and problem solving, which develops students' creating competence. CTL encourages students to apply the knowledge they learn in real-life situations. This allows students to see the relevance and impact of their knowledge in creating solutions or innovations.

#### 3) Character Competency Development in MB-KM

Freedom and responsibility: In MB-KM, students have freedom and responsibility in determining their own learning path. This process involves the development of character competencies, such as independence, responsibility, initiative, or discipline, needed to manage learning independently.

#### 4) Choice Based on Values and Interests

MB-KM provides students with the opportunity to choose courses, learning methods, and learning experiences that suit their values and interests. Students can develop character competencies by choosing learning experiences that support their values and explore their interests in more depth. Exploration of interests and talents: MB-KM provides space for students to explore their interests and talents. By choosing courses and learning experiences that match their interests, students can develop creative competence in their fields of interest.

MB-KM encourages students to experience learning outside the classroom, such as internships, participation in community activities, or collaborative projects with industry. This process provides opportunities for students to apply and develop creating competencies in a more real-world context. In CTL and MB-KM, the development of character and creation competencies is an integral part of the learning approach. Through real-life contexts, reflection, application of knowledge, freedom, and choices based on values and interests, students can develop character and creative competencies that are relevant and meaningful in their learning context.

## IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Contextual learning that combines the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model with the *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MB-KM) approach is a learning approach that combines CTL concepts with MB-KM principles. The implementation of MB-KM-based CTL in higher education allows students to be actively involved in the learning process, relate learning materials to their real experiences, and develop 21st century skills.

The implementation of MB-KM-based CTL involves full involvement of students in determining learning resources, both inside and outside the classroom. Students have the freedom to choose learning resources that are relevant to their interests and needs, as well as exploration outside the classroom. In student-centred learning, students are given active roles, opportunities to make choices, and reflect on their learning experiences.

The development of character and creation competencies is also an important aspect of CTL and MB-KM. In CTL, character competence is developed through connection with real-life contexts and reflection of values. Meanwhile, in MB-KM, character competence is developed through student freedom and responsibility in determining learning paths and choices based on values and interests. On the other hand, the development of creating competence occurs through the application of knowledge in real situations, project-based learning, and exploration of interests and talents.

Meaningful learning is also a focus in CTL and MB-KM. In CTL, meaningful learning is realised through learning experiences that are relevant to the context of students' lives. Whereas in MB-KM, students have the freedom to choose learning resources that are meaningful to them.

Overall, the implementation of CTL based on MB-KM allows students to be fully involved in the learning process, relate learning to the context of their lives, and develop relevant and meaningful character and creation competencies. Through this approach, universities can create a learning environment that is stimulating, relevant and responsive to students' needs.



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