



EXPLORING THE APPLICATION OF THE 2013 CURRICULUM STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract : *The 2013 Curriculum marks a significant shift toward a learner-centered approach in English language teaching, aiming to empower students through the use of innovative instructional strategies that foster critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills. It emphasizes active student involvement and the development of functional language skills beyond the classroom. However, its implementation presents challenges such as limited teacher training, classroom management difficulties, and resource constraints. This study explores how the 2013 Curriculum strategies are applied in English language teaching using a qualitative method, including interviews and classroom observations. The findings reveal that approaches like collaborative learning, task-based learning, project-based learning, and inquiry-based learning positively influence student engagement and language proficiency. While both students and teachers responded positively to the curriculum, the success of its implementation relies heavily on adequate professional development and institutional support. The study highlights the need to equip educators with sufficient knowledge, resources, and pedagogical skills to ensure effective application of the curriculum's learner-centered strategies in EFL classrooms.*

Keywords : 2013 Curriculum; Strategies; English Language Teaching

Abstrak : *Kurikulum 2013 menandai pergeseran yang signifikan menuju pendekatan pembelajaran yang berpusat pada peserta didik dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris, dengan tujuan memberdayakan siswa melalui penggunaan strategi instruksional inovatif yang mendorong berpikir kritis, kreativitas, dan keterampilan komunikasi. Kurikulum ini menekankan keterlibatan aktif siswa dan pengembangan keterampilan bahasa fungsional yang melampaui batas-batas kelas. Namun, penerapannya menghadapi tantangan seperti terbatasnya pelatihan guru, kesulitan dalam manajemen kelas, dan keterbatasan sumber daya. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana strategi-strategi Kurikulum 2013 diterapkan dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif, termasuk wawancara dan observasi kelas. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan seperti pembelajaran kolaboratif, pembelajaran berbasis tugas, pembelajaran berbasis proyek, dan pembelajaran berbasis inkuiri berdampak positif terhadap keterlibatan siswa dan kemahiran berbahasa mereka. Meskipun siswa dan guru memberikan respons yang positif terhadap kurikulum ini, keberhasilan penerapannya sangat bergantung pada pengembangan profesional yang memadai dan dukungan kelembagaan. Penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya membekali pendidik dengan pengetahuan, sumber daya, dan keterampilan pedagogis yang cukup untuk memastikan penerapan strategi pembelajaran yang berpusat pada siswa secara efektif di kelas bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL).*

Kata Kunci : *Kurikulum 2013; Strategi; Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris*

INTRODUCTION

The 2013 Curriculum for English represents a significant shift in educational philosophy, moving from traditional teacher-centered models to more dynamic, learner-centered approaches. This curriculum reform is part of a broader national effort to enhance the quality of education by placing students at the center of the learning process. Unlike conventional methods where teachers serve as the sole source of knowledge, the 2013 Curriculum encourages teachers to act as facilitators, guiding students as they explore, question, and construct their own understanding. The curriculum promotes several innovative teaching strategies such as collaborative learning, task-based language teaching, project-based learning, and inquiry-based learning. These methods are designed to cultivate critical thinking, creativity, communication, and problem-solving skills. Students are encouraged to participate actively in the learning process, engage in group discussions, complete real-world tasks, and reflect on their learning experiences. Such approaches not only strengthen their language proficiency but also prepare them to function effectively in a globalized and rapidly changing world (Richards, 2013; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014). Recent studies also show the effectiveness of such strategies in increasing student engagement and creative expression in EFL contexts, such as through collaborative poetry teaching (Novitaningrum, Imaniar, & Aulia, 2024), project-based learning that enhances writing skills (Hidayat, Lutfiah, & Akillah, 2024), and practice-based instruction that supports independent writing in literary forms (Mahmawati & Setiawan, 2024). Additionally, integrating creative and reflective activities has been found to improve students' motivation and self-confidence in language learning environments (Rahmawati & Yuliasri, 2023).

While the curriculum's learner-centered vision is compelling, its implementation in real classroom contexts presents a variety of challenges. Teachers are often required to shift their mindset and teaching practices, which demands professional development and ongoing support. In addition, systemic issues such as large class sizes, limited instructional time, insufficient learning materials, and students' varied proficiency levels hinder the effective execution of these strategies. Teachers may struggle with managing interactive activities or designing tasks that align with both curriculum goals and student needs. According to Lie et al. (2018) and Burns (2010), such challenges reflect the broader issues faced in EFL contexts where innovation requires institutional readiness and commitment to change. Furthermore, educators who lack adequate training in practical strategies, such as structured writing practice or differentiated group work, may struggle to guide learners effectively, as observed in studies involving literary and writing-focused instruction (Mahmawati & Setiawan, 2024). Therefore, successful implementation depends not only on teacher willingness but also on structural and pedagogical support.

This study explores the degree to which the methodological strategies outlined in the 2013 English Curriculum contribute to student empowerment, particularly in fostering critical thinking, active engagement, and language proficiency. Through a qualitative research approach, the study investigates how these strategies are applied in actual classroom settings and how both students and teachers perceive their effectiveness. It also examines the contextual barriers faced by educators, including limited training opportunities, lack of resources, and the need for differentiated instruction. By examining these factors, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum's strengths and areas for

improvement. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of continued professional development, mentoring, and access to instructional resources as essential components for supporting teachers in adopting and sustaining learner-centered practices (Fullan, 2007; Nunan, 2004).

METHOD

The design of this research is a qualitative method. The qualitative aspect of this study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of how the methodological strategies outlined in the 2013 English Curriculum impact student engagement, language proficiency, and critical thinking, as well as to explore the challenges faced by teachers in implementing these strategies. This study adopts a descriptive, exploratory, and interpretive qualitative design, which is appropriate for examining the lived experiences and perspectives of teachers and students in real classroom contexts. As Creswell and Poth (2018) emphasize, qualitative research is particularly effective in exploring complex educational settings and capturing participants' experiences in rich detail.

Data were collected through two main techniques: semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with both English teachers and students to obtain detailed and personal insights into their experiences with the 2013 Curriculum's learner-centered strategies, such as collaborative learning, task-based language teaching (TBLT), project-based learning (PBL), and inquiry-based learning. Classroom observations were used to document how these strategies were implemented in practice, focusing on student interaction, task execution, and teacher facilitation. These qualitative methods allowed for triangulation of data and a deeper understanding of how the curriculum is applied in English language teaching. The use of interviews and observations aligns with Merriam and Tisdell (2016), who argue that these techniques are fundamental for capturing authentic practices and perceptions in educational research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and discussion related to the implementation of the 2013 English Curriculum strategies in EFL classrooms along with the challenges encountered by teachers during its application.

1. Result

This study explored how the 2013 English Curriculum strategies are implemented in English language teaching and how they affect both students and teachers in EFL classrooms. Data were gathered through interviews and classroom observations to gain insight into classroom practices and the challenges encountered during implementation.

Teaching Strategies of the 2013 English Curriculum in EFL Classrooms

The findings indicate that teachers have made various efforts to apply learner-centered strategies promoted by the 2013 Curriculum. These include collaborative learning, task-based learning, project-based learning, and inquiry-based learning. In classroom observations, students were actively involved in group tasks, discussions, and presentations. Teachers structured learning activities to encourage communication, problem-solving, and creativity, helping students to use English in real-life contexts. Lessons often involved student participation in decision-making, project planning, or inquiry-based tasks, where they

explored topics and shared findings with peers. These strategies helped improve not only students' language skills but also their confidence and motivation in using English.

Students responded positively to the shift from passive to active learning, enjoying tasks that were interactive and meaningful. They felt more engaged when learning activities related to their experiences or allowed them to express opinions. Teachers acted more as facilitators, guiding students through tasks rather than lecturing. Despite differences in class sizes and student abilities, most classrooms demonstrated increased student participation and language use. These observations suggest that the 2013 Curriculum's learner-centered strategies can enhance learning outcomes when thoughtfully implemented.

Challenges That Teachers Face in Implementing These Strategies

While the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum strategies showed promise, several challenges were identified. Many teachers expressed difficulties in designing and managing student-centered activities, especially in large classes or when students had diverse proficiency levels. A common concern was the lack of sufficient time for planning and conducting in-depth tasks, such as projects or inquiry-based assignments. Additionally, the shift in teacher roles required a change in mindset and instructional habits, which some found difficult without adequate training or support.

Resource limitations were also a significant obstacle. Some schools lacked access to materials or facilities needed for interactive and project-based learning, making it harder to apply the strategies effectively. Teachers also reported challenges in classroom management when students worked in groups or engaged in open-ended tasks. Without proper support and professional development, teachers often reverted to traditional methods. These challenges highlight the importance of institutional support and ongoing teacher training to ensure that the curriculum's learner-centered goals can be successfully achieved in various classroom contexts.

2. Discussion

This research highlights the transformative potential of the 2013 English Curriculum in reshaping English language teaching in EFL classrooms. Teachers were observed implementing various learner-centered strategies such as collaborative learning, task-based learning, project-based learning, and inquiry-based learning. These approaches actively engaged students in classroom activities and encouraged the development of essential skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. Students responded positively to this shift from passive to active learning, showing greater motivation and willingness to use English in meaningful ways. For instance, when given tasks that required collaboration or investigation, students became more expressive and confident in communicating their ideas. These learner-centered activities allowed students to take more responsibility for their own learning, which not only enhanced their language proficiency but also improved classroom interaction and engagement. This aligns with Harmer (2015), who argues that authentic and communicative tasks can stimulate learners' motivation and deepen their understanding of language use in real contexts. Recent findings by Yuswandari and Fitriyah (2024) also support the notion that integrating visual aids and interactive strategies, especially in literary contexts such as poetry, can enrich students' interpretive and language skills. Similarly, Mahmawati et al. (2023) emphasize the role of modernized educational practices in traditional settings like Islamic boarding schools, showing that progressive teaching strategies can adapt to diverse institutional contexts.

Despite the positive outcomes, the implementation of these strategies did not come without challenges. Teachers reported difficulties in conducting student-centered learning in large classes, where managing group dynamics and ensuring equal participation were often problematic. Time constraints also posed a barrier, particularly when preparing and facilitating complex activities like projects or inquiry-based assignments. Some teachers found it challenging to shift from a directive teaching style to a more facilitative role, especially when they lacked prior training or support in these methods. Furthermore, the variation in students' English proficiency often made it hard to design tasks that accommodated all learning levels effectively. These findings reflect what Lamb and Wedell (2013) describe as the "implementation gap," where systemic and logistical issues limit the successful adoption of educational reforms. Resource constraints further deepened these issues, as several schools lacked access to adequate teaching materials, multimedia tools, or even basic classroom facilities. In such environments, even the most motivated teachers struggled to fully embrace and sustain the curriculum's intended strategies, often reverting to traditional teaching practices that prioritized control and coverage over interaction and depth. According to Nahidin and Faroid (2024), integrating local cultural and spiritual values into literature instruction can serve as a meaningful bridge between curriculum goals and students' lived experiences, but such integration requires supportive conditions and pedagogical flexibility.

To address these limitations, the study underscores the need for continuous professional development and institutional support. Teachers require more than just initial training—they need ongoing opportunities to reflect, collaborate, and refine their practice in line with the curriculum's pedagogical principles. Structured workshops, mentoring systems, and peer-learning communities could help teachers strengthen their capacity to plan and implement effective learner-centered instruction. According to Borg (2015), teacher beliefs and classroom practices evolve through experience and reflection, making it essential for schools to foster environments where educators feel empowered to experiment and adapt. Additionally, policy-level changes are necessary to ensure that schools are equipped with the resources and time needed to support active learning models. In this context, the success of the 2013 Curriculum hinges not only on what happens in the classroom but also on the broader support system that enables teachers to thrive. As highlighted by Susanto and Abdurrahman (2023), effective curriculum implementation is deeply intertwined with institutional readiness, access to resources, and consistent pedagogical leadership. By addressing these structural challenges and investing in teacher development, the promise of the curriculum—to create empowered, communicative, and critical language learners—can be more fully realized.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored the implementation of the 2013 English Curriculum strategies in EFL classrooms, highlighting both the benefits and challenges experienced by teachers and students. The findings reveal that when effectively applied, learner-centered approaches such as collaborative learning, task-based learning, project-based learning, and inquiry-based learning can significantly enhance student engagement, language proficiency, and critical thinking. These strategies foster a more active and meaningful learning environment, where students take greater responsibility for their learning and develop communication skills relevant to real-life contexts. However, the study also shows that the success of these methods depends heavily on factors such as teacher readiness, class size, availability of resources, and

institutional support. Many teachers still struggle with adapting to the curriculum due to limited training and a lack of facilities, which often hinders the full realization of its goals. Therefore, while the 2013 Curriculum holds great potential for improving English language education, its effective implementation requires not only a shift in classroom practice but also a strong commitment to supporting educators through professional development, collaboration, and access to adequate teaching materials. This conclusion emphasizes the need for a comprehensive and sustained effort to ensure that the curriculum's learner-centered vision can be successfully translated into everyday teaching practices across diverse EFL settings.

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