

ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE ON DEEP LEARNING AS A PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATION IN THE MERDEKA CURRICULUM

Ahsan Muzri.S¹

Murni Mahmud²

Abdullah³

La Sunra⁴

¹²³⁴Universitas Negeri Makassar

E-mail: ahsanmuzri@student.unm.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Educational transformation through the Merdeka Curriculum encourages more flexible, student-centered, and competency-strengthening learning practices. In this context, Deep Learning is viewed as a pedagogical innovation that emphasizes meaningful understanding, active student engagement, and the connection of learning to real-life contexts. This study aims to explore the perspectives of high school English teachers on the Deep Learning approach in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. This study used a qualitative descriptive design involving 15 high school English teachers in South Sulawesi. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. The results indicate that teachers generally interpret Deep Learning as a pedagogical approach that emphasizes meaningful, contextual, reflective, and student-centered learning, rather than mere memorization. Teachers also view this approach as aligned with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, particularly in encouraging independent learning, critical thinking, and active student participation. Furthermore, Deep Learning is believed to have strong potential to increase student motivation, engagement, and conceptual understanding in English learning. However, its implementation still faces several challenges, such as varying teacher and student readiness, limited learning time, uneven professional training, and limited school facilities. Therefore, Deep Learning has great potential as a learning innovation in the Merdeka Curriculum, but its success requires systemic support through continuous teacher professional development, practical pedagogical mentoring, strengthening teacher learning communities, and providing adequate learning resources. These findings contribute to ongoing discussions on pedagogical innovation in EFL education and curriculum reform in Indonesia today.

Keywords: Deep Learning, Merdeka Curriculum, learning innovation, teacher perspective, English learning.

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Education Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training
Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar
South Sulawesi-Indonesia

1) INTRODUCTION

Education in the twenty-first century is changing. Instead of just passing on information, schools now focus on learning that encourages reflection, teamwork, and real-world connections. The goal is to help students grow intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Today, learning is not just about knowing facts. It is also about building skills like critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and collaboration, as well as applying knowledge to real-life situations.

One-way educators are responding to these needs is by using Deep Learning as a teaching method. This approach focuses on getting students actively involved, solving real problems, making sense of what they learn, and connecting lessons to daily life. In this study, Deep Learning means a teaching approach, not the artificial intelligence technique. In education, Deep Learning encourages students to fully understand concepts, think about how they learn, and apply their knowledge to new and meaningful situations (Fitrah et al., 2025).

In the Indonesian context, the shift in educational policy through the Merdeka Curriculum strengthens the need for more flexible, student-centered learning that supports the development of twenty-first-century competencies. The Merdeka Curriculum is designed to provide teachers with wider space to select strategies, media, and learning experiences according to students' needs. This curriculum also emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and the holistic development of students' character (Rifa'i & Putra, 2024). Therefore, the Merdeka Curriculum provides a policy foundation that is consistent with the principles of Deep Learning because both position students as active subjects in the learning process and emphasize meaningful learning (Arina & Isyanto, 2025).

Multiple studies indicate that successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is highly dependent on teachers' readiness and pedagogical competence. Teachers must not only possess subject matter expertise but also understand student characteristics, design contextualized learning experiences, conduct formative assessments, and foster meaningful learning interactions (Real, 2022). Within the Merdeka Curriculum framework, pedagogical competence is essential, as teachers serve as facilitators of change who are expected to be

active, creative, innovative, and reflective in managing the learning process (Sabeliana et al., 2024). Insufficient pedagogical understanding may result in curriculum reform remaining at the policy level without effective translation into classroom practice.

Previous studies have also emphasized that Deep Learning has strong potential to support these goals. Deep Learning is understood as an approach that promotes conceptual understanding, reflection, knowledge integration, and the ability to transfer learning to new contexts. This approach contrasts with surface learning, which focuses mainly on memorization and the reproduction of information (Baharuddin, 2025). In its implementation, Deep Learning encourages teachers to shift from being transmitters of information to facilitators, designers of learning experiences, and leaders of reflective learning. Therefore, the successful implementation of Deep Learning is strongly influenced by how teachers interpret this approach and how they translate it into actual teaching strategies (Fitrah et al., 2025; Sudirman et al., 2025).

Several studies show that Deep Learning is still difficult to implement. Fitrah et al. (2025) found that teachers' readiness depends on their technological knowledge, twenty-first-century skills, and how they view education policies. Even so, personal, structural, and cultural barriers continue to limit its use. Many teachers see the value of Deep Learning but struggle to apply it in their teaching. Also, curriculum changes like the Merdeka Curriculum have not been fully put into practice because teachers still deal with administrative work, time limits, lack of resources, and uneven support from their schools (Irfanuddin & Widodo, 2025).

Arina and Isyanto (2025) also found that teachers see Deep Learning in the Merdeka Curriculum as student-centered, encouraging critical and creative thinking, meeting students' needs, and possibly improving education quality. Still, their study points out challenges like limited teacher skills, a lack of resources, and trouble creating a school culture that supports Deep Learning. So, while teachers recognize its potential, making it work in practice needs more systematic support.

Additional research supports these findings. Sudirman et al. (2025) reported that teachers generally hold positive perceptions of Deep Learning; however, their understanding

is frequently confined to a broad interpretation of “learning deeply,” with some equating it to mastery learning. Teacher readiness remains constrained by insufficient training, inadequate policy dissemination, limited implementation guidelines, and reliance on professional communities and school support. Consequently, ongoing professional development, enhanced teacher collaboration, and robust institutional support are essential for strengthening the implementation of this educational innovation.

Despite extensive research, a significant gap remains in the literature. Most existing studies have concentrated on general teacher readiness, pedagogical competence in elementary schools or madrasah settings, and technological or policy aspects related to Deep Learning implementation. However, limited attention has been given to the perspectives of senior high school English teachers regarding Deep Learning as an educational innovation within the Merdeka Curriculum. English language instruction possesses unique characteristics, as it demands language proficiency, effective communication, collaboration, reflective practice, and a strong connection between instructional content and authentic language use. Consequently, it is essential to investigate how English teachers interpret Deep Learning, perceive its alignment with the Merdeka Curriculum, and identify the challenges encountered in classroom practice.

Building on this context, the present study investigates the perspectives of senior high school English teachers regarding the Deep Learning approach within the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Specifically, the research examines teachers’ understanding of Deep Learning as a pedagogical method, their perceptions of its potential to enhance meaningful English learning, and the challenges encountered during its implementation. The findings are anticipated to offer empirical contributions to the advancement of learning innovation in the Merdeka Curriculum and to inform efforts to strengthen systemic support through training, professional mentoring, and ongoing teacher capacity development.

2) METHODS

A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to examine the perspectives of senior high school English teachers regarding Deep Learning in the context of the Merdeka

Curriculum. This methodology was chosen as the research aimed to investigate teachers' understanding, experiences, interpretations, and perspectives on a pedagogical phenomenon within authentic learning environments. Consequently, the study did not seek to test hypotheses or measure statistical relationships between variables, but rather to provide a comprehensive account of how teachers interpret, respond to, and reflect on the implementation of Deep Learning in educational practice.

The participants in this study were 15 English teachers who taught at the senior high school level in South Sulawesi Province. The participants were selected using purposive sampling based on the consideration that they had direct experience and relevance to the focus of the study. The criteria for participation included being a senior high school English teacher, having been involved in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, and being willing to provide in-depth information through interviews. This purposive selection enabled the researcher to obtain rich, relevant, and purpose-oriented data.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews using a semi-structured format. This technique was chosen because it allowed the researcher to explore teachers' views in detail regarding the meaning of Deep Learning as a pedagogical approach, its compatibility with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, its potential in English learning, and the challenges faced in its implementation. The interview guide contained several key questions but still allowed participants to develop their responses freely based on their own experiences and perspectives. Thus, the data obtained were expected not only to answer the research focus but also to allow important themes to emerge from the field.

In general, the interviews in this study were directed toward four main aspects. First, they explored teachers' understanding of the concept of Deep Learning as a pedagogical approach. Second, they examined teachers' perceptions of the relevance and alignment of this approach with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum. Third, they investigated teachers' views on the contribution of Deep Learning to improving the quality of English learning, particularly in promoting student engagement, meaningful learning, critical thinking, and independent learning. Fourth, they identified the obstacles or challenges teachers faced in

applying this approach in the classroom. All interviews were recorded with the participants' consent and then transcribed for analysis.

Thematic analysis was employed to examine the data. Initially, interview transcripts were reviewed multiple times to ensure comprehensive understanding. Subsequently, data segments relevant to the research focus were coded. Codes with similar meanings were consolidated into categories, which were then developed into major themes reflecting patterns in teachers' perspectives on Deep Learning during the Merdeka Curriculum implementation. These themes were ultimately interpreted to provide a detailed understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

3) RESULTS

Based on the interviews, English teachers' perceptions of the Deep Learning approach in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum showed a generally positive tendency, although levels of understanding, readiness, and institutional support varied. Overall, the findings of this study can be grouped into four main aspects: teachers' understanding of Deep Learning, perceptions of its alignment with the Merdeka Curriculum, views on its potential benefits for English learning, and challenges in classroom implementation.

The first finding indicates that teachers generally understood Deep Learning as a pedagogical approach that emphasizes meaningful, contextual, active, and in-depth learning. Most teachers perceived this approach as not oriented toward memorization but toward comprehensive conceptual understanding, the development of critical thinking, reflection, and the connection between learning materials and students' real lives. R1 stated that Deep Learning is a meaningful and contextual learning approach that pays more attention to process than outcome. R4 explained that this approach encourages students not only to memorize learning concepts but also to interpret and understand concepts comprehensively through contextual learning, critical thinking, and reflection. R9 specifically emphasized that Deep Learning in this context does not refer to artificial intelligence technology but to a pedagogical approach or in-depth learning. These statements indicate that teachers had an initial

understanding that Deep Learning places the quality of the learning process at the center of instruction.

Nevertheless, teachers' experiences in becoming familiar with this approach varied. Some teachers had attended training or seminars, read literature, or obtained information through social media and policy documents, while others admitted that they had never received formal exposure to the approach. R5 stated that he had attended school-based training and, through the activity, began to understand how to design Deep Learning for implementation in the Merdeka Curriculum. R6 also mentioned that a seminar at school helped her understand that learning through this approach should create a meaningful, joyful, and active learning atmosphere. In contrast, R7, R8, and R9 stated that they had never attended training or seminars on this approach. These varied experiences indicate that access to teacher capacity building related to Deep Learning remains unequal.

The second aspect concerns teachers' perceptions of the alignment between Deep Learning and the spirit of the Merdeka Curriculum. Almost all participants perceived the two as compatible because both emphasize student-centered learning, contextual learning, flexibility, and the more holistic development of students' potential. R1 emphasized that the Merdeka Curriculum encourages teachers to design contextual and student-centered learning, making it aligned with Deep Learning, which encourages students to connect concepts with their lives. Similarly, R6 stated that Deep Learning is highly compatible with the Merdeka Curriculum because both promote student-centered, flexible, and contextual learning. R9 also noted that Deep Learning is highly consistent with the spirit of the Merdeka Curriculum because both share the same vision of developing students' potential in a holistic, independent, and meaningful way. These findings show that, from the teachers' perspectives, Deep Learning is not separate from the Merdeka Curriculum but can function as a way to actualize the values of the curriculum in learning practice.

The third aspect shows that teachers perceived strong potential benefits of implementing Deep Learning in English learning. In general, teachers believed that this approach could increase student participation, deepen conceptual understanding, foster

learning motivation, and promote critical thinking. R4 stated that this approach could improve student participation and understanding because it emphasizes active engagement, deep reflection, and the connection of concepts with students' real experiences. In R5's view, when learning is designed in accordance with real life or relevant problems, students' motivation to participate increases and they become more active in collaboration and idea sharing. Similarly, R6 explained that when students are given opportunities to explore, discuss, and connect lessons with everyday life, they become more enthusiastic, more willing to ask questions, and the learning process becomes more dynamic in the classroom. R7 also considered this approach effective because it can encourage motivation, develop critical thinking skills, and create contextual connections. These findings indicate that teachers view Deep Learning as an approach that can strengthen the quality of English learning not only in terms of language understanding but also in relation to engagement, meaning, and student activeness.

In addition to benefits for students, teachers also perceived that Deep Learning could have positive effects on their own teaching practices. Several teachers considered that this approach could help them present learning that is more interesting, relevant, and responsive to students' needs. R12 stated that this approach could help teachers present materials that are more interesting, interactive, and adapted to each student's needs. Meanwhile, R8 believed that, besides increasing students' motivation and independence, this approach could also enhance teachers' creativity. This means that the benefits of Deep Learning were perceived not only for students but also for improving the quality of teachers' pedagogical practice.

Although teachers tended to have positive views, their level of readiness to implement this approach was not uniform. Some teachers felt ready or fairly ready, while others acknowledged that they still needed further learning and practice. R1 stated that he was ready to apply the Deep Learning approach in the classroom because it was very helpful for both teachers and students. R5 also considered himself ready to implement this approach through learning designs adapted to students' needs, the environment, and school facilities. However, R2 admitted that his readiness was still limited because he first needed to understand more concretely how Deep Learning should be implemented. R6 also offered a more cautious

reflection; although she had a strong desire to apply it, she felt that her readiness was not yet equal to her ability to implement Deep Learning and that she was still in the learning stage. This variation indicates that positive attitudes toward the approach are not always accompanied by equally strong pedagogical confidence among all teachers.

Another finding relates to school support. Participants' responses showed that institutional support for the implementation of Deep Learning varied. Some teachers felt that their schools provided sufficient support through training, seminars, permission to participate in professional development activities, or the provision of learning facilities. R1 considered school support to be fairly good in facilitating the Deep Learning approach, particularly through teacher training, technological facilities, and policies that encouraged active and collaborative learning. R7 also viewed the school as highly supportive because it invited competent speakers. However, other teachers considered such support limited. R2 stated that the facilities provided by the school were still inadequate, particularly in terms of infrastructure, so the implementation of Deep Learning needed to be carried out gradually according to existing conditions. R6 even stated that there was no real support in her school because the school did not yet have adequate facilities and had not begun implementing the approach. These findings indicate that institutional support remains a determining factor in the successful implementation of this approach.

The final prominent aspect in the data concerns implementation challenges. Teachers identified several obstacles that might arise when Deep Learning is applied, especially those related to student readiness, teacher readiness, limited time, and limited facilities. R1 highlighted that the main challenge was differences in students' readiness because not all students were prepared to learn independently or participate actively in discussions. He also added that this approach required more time to guide students to become active, while teachers still had to meet curriculum completion demands. R2 expressed a similar concern, namely students' readiness due to diverse backgrounds and learning abilities, as well as limited time to manage in-depth learning amid a dense curriculum. From the teachers' side, R5 emphasized teachers' limited knowledge and literacy regarding the principles of implementing

Deep Learning, limited school facilities, and students' readiness. R7 also reminded that not all teachers were able to apply it in the classroom, while R9 mentioned time constraints and inadequate facilities as challenges. Thus, the main obstacles expressed by the teachers were not only individual but also structural and contextual.

In line with these challenges, teachers expressed fairly consistent support needs. They expected continuous training, practical seminars, mentoring from facilitators, forums for sharing good practices, teacher collaboration, and the provision of more adequate facilities. R1 explained that to implement this approach properly, he needed continuous training from schools and the government, curriculum flexibility, sufficient time allocation, and teacher communities for sharing good practices. R4 also emphasized the importance of advanced training, facilitation of relevant learning tools, mentoring from facilitators, and forums for sharing good practices among teachers. Meanwhile, R6 expected training or seminars that were genuinely practical for all teachers. This indicates that teachers not only recognized implementation challenges but also had a clear view of the types of support needed for the approach to be applied effectively.

Overall, the findings show that English teachers view Deep Learning as a relevant, meaningful, and potential pedagogical approach to support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Teachers understand this approach as learning that emphasizes depth of understanding, active participation, reflection, and connection with real contexts. They also see its benefits in increasing students' motivation, engagement, and understanding in English learning. However, the implementation of this approach still faces real challenges, particularly related to teacher and student readiness, limited time, unequal training, and limited supporting facilities. Therefore, the application of Deep Learning requires systemic support to operate more optimally in school environments.

4) DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that English teachers perceive Deep Learning as a pedagogical approach that emphasizes meaningful, contextual, active, and in-depth learning. This perception is evident in participants' explanations that Deep Learning is not merely

memorization but involves comprehensive conceptual understanding, critical thinking development, reflection, and the connection of learning materials with students' real lives. R1 described Deep Learning as meaningful and contextual learning that pays more attention to process than outcome, while R4 emphasized that this approach encourages students to understand concepts comprehensively and to think critically and reflectively. R9 even explicitly distinguished Deep Learning from artificial intelligence and positioned it as a pedagogical approach in learning. These findings suggest that teachers already had a fairly clear initial understanding that Deep Learning focuses on the quality of students' learning processes.

These findings align with Fitrah et al. (2025), who emphasize that Deep Learning pedagogy in education should be distinguished from Deep Learning in artificial intelligence. Instead, it represents a transformative learning approach that fosters students' active participation, authentic problem solving, and meaningful knowledge integration. Fitrah et al. (2025) further contend that this approach seeks to move learning beyond the simple transmission of knowledge toward reflective, collaborative, and contextual experiences. Therefore, the results of this study reinforce the argument that English teachers have grasped the fundamental principles of Deep Learning as a pedagogical approach that extends beyond the mere delivery of instructional content.

However, the study also revealed that teachers' levels of understanding were not uniform. While some teachers had participated in training, seminars, or engaged with literature on Deep Learning, others had not received any formal exposure to the approach. This variation suggests that teachers' understanding develops through multiple pathways, both formal and informal, which may affect the quality of implementation readiness in the classroom (Yadav & Pandey, 2026). The findings further indicate that a positive attitude toward this approach does not necessarily correspond to strong conceptual mastery among all teachers.

This finding is consistent with Sudirman et al. (2025), who found that teachers were familiar with the term Deep Learning, but their understanding often remained at a general level and did not fully reflect the expected pedagogical depth. Sudirman et al. (2025) showed

that the lack of specific training, weak policy dissemination, and limited technical guidelines caused teachers' readiness to implement Deep Learning to remain less than optimal. Therefore, the findings of this study reinforce previous findings that teachers' positive perceptions need to be followed by more systematic professional capacity building so that the implementation of Deep Learning does not remain only at the level of discourse.

Another important finding is that most teachers perceived Deep Learning as aligned with the spirit of the Merdeka Curriculum. Participants emphasized that both are oriented toward student-centered learning, flexibility, real-life contexts, and the more holistic development of students' potential. R1, R6, and R9 clearly saw an alignment of vision between Deep Learning and the Merdeka Curriculum in terms of independent learning, meaningful learning, and critical thinking development. This indicates that teachers do not view Deep Learning as an approach separate from the Merdeka Curriculum, but as one that can strengthen the curriculum's implementation in English learning.

This result is in line with Arina and Isyanto (2025), who state that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in the context of Deep Learning strongly depends on teachers' pedagogical understanding. According to Arina and Isyanto (2025), teachers with good pedagogical understanding are better able to develop learning that is relevant to students' and society's needs. Therefore, the alignment between Deep Learning and the Merdeka Curriculum in this study can be understood as an alignment at the level of pedagogical vision, although its implementation still requires further support.

In the context of English learning, teachers in this study saw strong potential for Deep Learning to increase students' participation, motivation, and understanding. Participants considered that this approach could make learning more dynamic, relevant, and close to students' experiences. R4, R5, and R6 emphasized that active engagement, case studies, real-life problems, discussion, and exploration of materials related to everyday life could increase students' enthusiasm and make them more willing to ask questions, express opinions, and engage in the learning process. Thus, Deep Learning is perceived as having the potential to

enrich English learning not only in terms of content but also in terms of the quality of students' learning experiences.

This finding supports Fitrah et al. (2025), who found that teachers' readiness to adopt Deep Learning pedagogy is closely related to the strengthening of twenty-first-century competencies, especially critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity. Fitrah et al. (2025) even found that twenty-first-century competencies contribute more strongly than technological knowledge to shaping teacher readiness. This is relevant to the findings of the present study because teachers emphasized the benefits of Deep Learning more in terms of students' activeness, critical thinking, contextual relevance, and independent learning than in terms of technology use.

However, this study also confirms that such potential is inseparable from various implementation challenges. Teachers identified several main obstacles, such as diverse student readiness, limited time, limited teacher literacy and readiness, and inadequate supporting facilities. R1 and R2 highlighted that not all students were prepared to learn independently, think critically, or participate actively in discussions, while limited instructional time made it difficult for teachers to balance the demands of in-depth learning with curriculum targets. R5 and R9 also indicated that limited facilities and infrastructure were practical barriers to applying this approach. These findings show that the implementation of Deep Learning does not depend solely on teachers' willingness but also on structural and contextual conditions in schools.

This finding is consistent with Fitrah et al. (2025), who argue that the implementation of Deep Learning pedagogy is still constrained by personal, structural, and cultural factors. Their study shows that although teachers have optimism toward Deep Learning, school realities still expose them to limited training, infrastructure inequality, and weak institutional support. Similarly, Sudirman et al. (2025) state that curriculum reform without adequate dissemination and continuous professional support will create a gap between policy and classroom practice. Therefore, the findings of this study reveal a similar pattern: teachers

recognize the pedagogical value of Deep Learning, but its implementation is still constrained by pedagogical readiness, time, facilities, and institutional support.

The variation in school support found in this study is also important. Some teachers considered that schools had provided support through training, seminars, speakers, or certain facilities, while others viewed such support as limited. This variation indicates that the success of Deep Learning implementation is strongly influenced by school leadership, collaborative culture, and internal policies that support learning innovation. In this regard, teachers are not the only determinants of success; the school ecosystem also plays a crucial role.

This result is in line with Saputra et al. (2025), who found that internal training based on lesson study, clinical coaching, and teacher learning communities was effective in improving teachers' pedagogical competence in implementing Deep Learning-based instruction. Saputra et al. (2025) also emphasize that although challenges such as limited time and variations in teachers' understanding exist, strong school management support and continuous mentoring can help overcome these obstacles. This finding is highly relevant to the needs expressed by participants in this study, who expected advanced training, practical seminars, forums for sharing good practices, and adequate facilities.

More broadly, the findings of this study indicate that the implementation of Deep Learning in English learning requires a combination of individual teacher readiness and systemic support. At the individual level, teachers need adequate conceptual understanding, openness to innovation, and the ability to design contextual and student-centered learning. At the systemic level, structured training, professional mentoring, strengthened teacher learning communities, curriculum flexibility, and adequate school facilities are needed. Sudirman et al. (2025) emphasize that the transition toward Deep Learning will remain uneven if support networks are weak, collaboration is not strengthened, and professional development is not carried out continuously. In this context, the present study reinforces this argument, especially because the teachers themselves proposed training, trial classes, collective reflection, and collaborative forums as gradual implementation strategies.

Thus, Deep Learning can be understood as a learning innovation perceived by teachers as relevant to the direction of educational transformation in the Merdeka Curriculum. This approach is considered capable of promoting more meaningful, active, reflective, and contextual learning in English classrooms. However, for its potential to be realized in classroom practice, continuous strengthening is needed in teachers' understanding, student readiness, school support, training, and learning facilities. Therefore, Deep Learning should not only be understood as pedagogical discourse but should also be developed as an educational practice supported by a strong professional and institutional ecosystem.

5) CONCLUSION

This study shows that English teachers perceive Deep Learning as a pedagogical approach that emphasizes meaningful, contextual, reflective, and student-centered learning. From the teachers' perspectives, this approach not only encourages deeper conceptual understanding but also provides space for the development of critical thinking, active participation, and the connection of learning with students' real lives. The findings also show that Deep Learning is perceived as aligned with the spirit of the Merdeka Curriculum, particularly because both emphasize learning flexibility, independent learning, and the more holistic development of students' potential.

In the context of English learning, Deep Learning is viewed as having strong potential to increase students' motivation, engagement, and understanding. Teachers believe that this approach can help create learning experiences that are more dynamic, relevant, and authentic, so that students learn language not only as academic content but also as a means of thinking, interacting, and making meaning from their learning experiences. However, this study also shows that the implementation of Deep Learning is not free from challenges, such as variations in teacher and student readiness, limited instructional time, unequal training opportunities, and limited supporting facilities in schools.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that Deep Learning has strong potential as a learning innovation in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, but its success depends heavily on systemic support. Therefore, more practical continuous training,

professional mentoring for teachers, strengthened teacher learning communities, and the provision of adequate learning facilities are needed so that this approach can be implemented more effectively and sustainably in the classroom. This study also indicates the importance of building a more equal understanding among teachers regarding the principles and practices of Deep Learning so that this approach does not remain merely a discourse but becomes part of everyday learning practice.

As an implication, the findings of this study can serve as a basis for schools, policymakers, and professional teacher communities to design more realistic and contextual strategies for implementing Deep Learning in English learning. In addition, future research may expand the scope of participants, involve direct classroom observation, or examine the implementation of Deep Learning in specific language skills in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of its application in the context of English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia.

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