

PORTRAYING THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON ENGLISH SPEAKING
CLASS ACTIVITIES WITHIN INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM
IMPLEMENTATION:A PHOTOVOICE STUDY

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Abstract: *This research aims to explore the senior high school students' perception on Independent Curriculum implementation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, particularly in English-speaking class activities. The shift from the previous curriculum to the independent curriculum resulted in many significant changes for teachers and students. In this case, the English subject experienced a complete change when the independent curriculum was implemented in schools, especially in teaching speaking skill. Using Photovoice research design, the researchers observed the speaking class, analyzed the photos taken by eleven students from three different classes during English-speaking activities and administered in-depth interview to these participants dealing with their photos. This research was conducted at SMAIT Ukhuwah Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. The findings portrayed that the photos taken by students in the English-speaking class captured memorable, harmonious learning moments that were conducive, communicative, informative, and an accurate depiction of the atmosphere of the English-speaking class. This is further demonstrated from the students' perspective through their photos showing communicative activities during English-speaking classes since the photos portray a well-organized, positive, engaging, and fun classroom environment as well as emphasizing individual development in line with the independent curriculum demand. The research highlights the effectiveness of the Independent Curriculum in fostering student engagement and communicative activities, suggesting that visual-based methodologies like Photovoice can provide meaningful insights into classroom dynamics*

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the increasing use of the Independent Curriculum in Indonesian schools, little research has examined how students perceive English-speaking activities within this framework, particularly through visual methodologies like Photovoice. Education system plays a crucial role in shaping the quality of human resources. The Indonesian education system prioritizes character education by evaluating students' academic topics. Moreover, according to Article 1 Paragraph 19 of Law No. 20 of 2003 of the Republic of Indonesia,

"Curriculum" refers to a collection of plans and arrangements encompassing objectives, content, learning materials, and methods. These plans and arrangements guide educational activities to achieve specific goals. The curriculum in Indonesia has undergone periodic changes. The shift commenced in 1947 and culminated in the government's implementation of the 2013 Curriculum. In February 2022, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemdikbudristek) introduced the Independent Curriculum and Independent Teaching Platform, intending to make the Independent Learning Curriculum being used in Indonesia now.

Every curriculum has a distinct pedagogical style in which Merdeka curriculum implementation adopts a project-based approach (Rahayu et al., 2022). The Independent Curriculum places a high value on students' and instructional personnel's autonomy and innovative thinking. Consequently, the majority of teaching approaches employed by educators during the instructional process rely heavily on student projects. Curriculum implementation necessitates English teachers consistently engaging in labor, self-improvement, and innovative educational practices to prepare instructional approaches effectively. In addition, students are expected to demonstrate increased engagement and employ innovative thinking. Moreover, teachers have multiple roles, including educators, companions, and organizers, leaders of the classroom environment, participants, expeditors, planners, supervisors, motivators, and counselors. Furthermore, Mulyasa (2009) asserts that teacher competence involves synthesizing personal, scientific, technological, social, and spiritual aptitudes. These aptitudes collectively establish the benchmark for teacher competence, encompassing proficiency in subject matter, comprehension of students, educational pedagogy, personal growth, and professionalism.

English language education is vital in developing students' linguistic skills to tackle global difficulties (Aries et al., 2023). Numerous educational institutions are embracing autonomous curricula to enhance the caliber of English language instruction. Yuhelmi (2022) findings demonstrate that the Two Stay Two Stray learning model effectively promotes student engagement and participation in discussion sessions by encouraging them to express their thoughts actively. Dariyanto and Awiria (2023) argue that incorporating character education values into English conversation instruction endeavors to imbue and cultivate student character. While this technique offers versatility in creating learning activities, it applies to the numerous obstacles encountered by English teachers, particularly when implementing English-speaking activities in the classroom.

The existing implementation of the Independent Curriculum poses multiple perception for both English teachers and students. In line with the findings of the observations, multiple challenges were encountered when trying to implement the Independent Curriculum in English-speaking classes. Thus, this study outlines the perception the students have in implementing this curriculum in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms of a Senior High School in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan.

Photovoice was chosen for its ability to capture students' perspectives visually, providing a deeper, more reflexive understanding of classroom interactions that traditional methods may not reveal. The problem formulation used by the researchers is: How do the photos represent the students' perception of English speaking class activities within Independent Curriculum Implementation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Independent Curriculum Implementation

The curriculum is continually modified to address current educational requirements. This curriculum modification was implemented throughout all educational institutions, from primary schools to postsecondary institutions. Starting from the 2021/2022 academic year, the Minister of Education has introduced a new policy on implementing the independent curriculum. This new curriculum replaces and improves upon the existing 2013 curriculum. Since the start of this academic year, the Independent Curriculum has been introduced in around 2500 registered schools. These schools also participate in the Driving School Program and the 901 Vocational School Center of Excellence, which aim to provide a fresh approach to learning. This curriculum is introduced in the TK-B, SD, and SDLB levels for classes I and IV, at the SMP & SMPLB levels for class VII, SMA & SMALB, and the SMK levels for class X.

Acquiring proficiency in English as a tool for international communication is highly significant and should be emphasized in secondary education (Mulyani, 2018). The primary objective of learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia is to enhance students' proficiency in acquiring and mastering four essential language skills: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Implementing the Independent Curriculum has led to modifications in English language learning. The modifications are to the curriculum structure, specifically the terms learning outcomes, learning elements, flow of learning objectives, and teaching materials/modules. The learning element incorporates four more language skills, particularly seeing and presenting abilities, to the existing six language skills.

Prior research has investigated the growth of children's English learning, including studies undertaken by Adisti (2018), Hertiki (2018), and Zuhdi (2019). The research has yielded media innovation products that are highly successful in teaching English to children. In addition, prior researchers, such as Bekker et al. (2015), Saud (2021), and Alfia et al. (2021) have conducted studies on digital literacy. These investigations have uncovered a preference among students for utilizing digital technology in language acquisition where the language spoken is English. Rohimajaya and Hamer (2023) conducted research comparing the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum in English Language Learning for High Schools in the Digital Era. The study concluded that these two curricula have similarities and differences in English language learning at the Senior High School level. The examination of similarities and differences pertains to various areas of the fundamental

framework, organization of the curriculum, methods of learning, evaluation, teaching aids, and curriculum resources. The research findings indicate that teachers can implement creative, innovative, and comfortable learning methods to promote student-centered learning. Furthermore, findings by Nita et al. (2023) demonstrate that the utilization of media platforms such as Smart TV in English classes, particularly for speaking exercises, has the potential to enhance students' speaking abilities. In their study, Syafik and Raihany (2020) discovered that students with strong interpersonal skills exhibited superior English speaking abilities compared to individuals with strong intrapersonal skills. This can be attributed to their extroverted disposition, aptitude for collaboration, and rapid learning abilities. Varied forms of intelligence have distinct impacts on academic success, whereas internal and external factors contribute to enhancing oral communication abilities. Previous research has yet to be discovered that specifically examines the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in English language classes. Thus, this research adds to prior studies by providing a new perspective on students' opinions of English class activities in implementing the Independent Curriculum.

English Speaking Class Activities

Speaking is deemed the foremost skill due to its foundational role in effective interaction, though it's acknowledged as the most challenging to master. Appel (1985) highlighted that proficiency in speaking indicates a deep understanding of language, making it a fundamental skill. Enhancing speaking ability can be achieved through various activities, fostering better communication and creating enjoyable exchanges. These activities not only boost speaking skills but also bolster students' self-assurance, fostering a supportive language-learning environment. Harmer (2001) proposed a widely accepted definition of speaking as "the process of constructing and conveying meaning through verbal and non-verbal symbols across various contexts". It involves the learner's capacity to express ideas orally, with coherence, fluency, and appropriateness within a meaningful context.

Celce-Murcia et al. (2014) delineates numerous speaking activities, such as discussions, speeches, role plays, conversations, and audio-taped oral dialogue journals, all aimed at refining speaking skills. Discussions involve exchanging ideas in pairs or groups to address topics or problems. Speeches, tailored to students' levels, allow freedom in topic selection within a given genre. Role plays facilitate practicing speech variations in social contexts, while conversations encourage language analysis and evaluation. Audio-taped oral dialogue journals provide fluency practice with teacher guidance.

Harmer (2007) further expands on speaking activities, including scripted acting, communication games, discussions, prepared talks, questionnaires, simulations, and role plays. Scripted acting involves creating a supportive environment for students to enact dialogues or scenes. Communication games foster peer communication through interactive tasks. Discussions allow expressing opinions on various topics preparing students for

argumentative discourse. Prepared talks involve structured presentations, while questionnaires stimulate discussion and written work. Simulations and role plays elicit speaking and emotional expression in English.

METHOD

Research Design

A qualitative participatory-action photovoice research design was employed in this present study. Through the use of documentary photography and community-based methodologies, photovoice combines these aspects into a single qualitative approach. As part of the photovoice process, people require access to cameras so they may utilize images to record, represent, and better serve their communities (Wang & Burris, 1997). Photovoice is an initiative that uses photo discussions in both large and small groups to (1) help people capture and represent the positives and negatives of their community, (2) increase awareness of and engagement with important community issues, and (3) get the attention of policymakers and other change agents. The major goal of photovoice is to provide people the tools they need to document the positives and negatives of their local community (Wang & Burris, 1997; Wang et al., 2000). The data collection and analysis stages of traditional photovoice research investigations encourage participant involvement. The opposite is true of contemporary methods of study. After shooting images, the participants have a conversation about their experiences and the recurring patterns they have seen.

On the other hand, participants in a photovoice study may decide for themselves what to show and how to communicate their ideas, opinions, and feelings at any time throughout the study (Asaba et al., 2014). With photovoice, the researchers may capture participants' meaningful reactions to a phenomena (Plunkett et al., 2013). Visual pictures, such as photos, may be useful for participants to utilize in order to construct deeper meanings of the world, as they may allow participants to reflexively think, recall, reflect, and express emotions, ideas, events, and other challenges in a particular moment. Because of its benefit in investigating how the independent curriculum is implemented in English-language class, the photovoice research design is employed here. Baker and Wang (2006) and Wass et al. (2020) methodology was adopted for this study. Simple but comprehensive, the procedure is well-suited to the execution of high-quality participatory- action photovoice.

Informed consent was obtained from both the students and their guardians prior to participation in the photovoice study. Participants were fully briefed on the purpose of the research, how the photographs would be used, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. To ensure confidentiality, all photographs were reviewed by the participants before inclusion in the study, and any identifying features, such as faces or school names, were anonymized. Ethical approval was granted by the university's ethics committee, ensuring that all procedures aligned with best practices in research involving minors.

This study draws upon constructivist learning theories, which posit that students learn best when they are actively engaged in constructing their own knowledge. The Independent Curriculum aligns with these principles by promoting student autonomy and critical thinking, encouraging students to take ownership of their learning process. In line with this, photovoice, as a participatory action research method, allows students to document their learning experiences through photography, offering a visual representation of how they navigate and engage with the curriculum. Theoretical perspectives on experiential learning, such as those proposed by Dewey, further support the curriculum's focus on hands-on, interactive learning experiences that go beyond traditional, teacher-centered approaches.

Participants

Participants in this study included 11 students in grade 10 at Senior High School in Banjarmasin who had implemented the Independent Curriculum in English-speaking classes. Following the suggestion by Wang and Burris (1997), the researchers used several criteria to choose study participants. Participants were selected based on their willingness to engage with photography and their ability to reflect on their experiences in English-speaking activities. Additionally, efforts were made to ensure a diverse representation of students across the three classes to capture varied perspectives. The researchers had sought out volunteers to snap photographs according to the following parameters:

- 1) Be familiar with photography in its broadest sense or more specific terms.
- 2) Be capable of effectively communicating ideas and information.
- 3) Can comprehend the significance of a purposive sample approach to participant selection.

This was done to guarantee that the sample accurately reflects the population intended to be studied, that the most critical information is acquired, and that adequate and relevant data information is permitted. This study was conducted with strict adherence to ethical standards, ensuring confidentiality and obtaining informed consent from all participants and their guardians. However, a limitation of the study is its small sample size, which may not fully capture the diversity of student experiences across different schools or regions. Additionally, the subjective nature of the Photovoice methodology might introduce bias in how students choose to represent their classroom experiences.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The researchers conducted some direct observations to understand how the independent curriculum is implemented in English-speaking class activities. The researchers have been able to know a description of the student's behavior, the learning process, and natural phenomena regarding the issues. The researchers further administered in-depth interviews to get the rich data of the students' reason of taking the photos as well as obtaining their perception of the English speaking class activities.

At this point in the analysis of participant data, the researchers had adopted a constructivist stance. There are three stages that make up a participatory analysis, as described by Wang and Burris (1997).

- 1) Participants began by taking stock of their surroundings by selecting subjects for photographic documentation. Participants were asked to reflect on what they regarded to be both impediments to and facilitators of the speaking skills in Independent Curriculum Implementation that they had learnt during the learning process.
- 2) The participants went back over their photos and selected which ones they wanted to focus on during the group conversation.
- 3) During the discussion group, the photos were shown to everyone, and the researchers also served as the group's moderator. In a method defined by Wang and Burris (1997) participants continued to interpret visuals while they were discussing them to the group.

This was done in accordance with the process. Following the selection of the "best" two photographs, the group then debated the options. The debate of various photographs led to the generation of data and topics for investigation. Coding the data that was generated in the discussion group was the first step in the analysis process, which was followed by the exploration, development, and interpretation of themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

English Class Activities in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum through Students' Perceptions

In addition to implementing the independent curriculum in English subjects, especially in speaking skills which experienced significant changes, the researchers also found fifteen different perceptions through the photos they took regarding how to learn English and speaking activities while implementing the independent curriculum. The fifteen participants joined a project formed with the researchers, namely the Photography Team from classes X1, X2, and X3.

1. Student's Perception through Photo in Class X1

a) Picture by P1X1



Figure 1.a and 1.b: English Class Activities taken by Participant 1 Class X1

P1X1 took the photo above with an angle behind the class, and the photo orientation

type is landscape. He stated that at this angle, it would appear comprehensive and precise. While capturing this moment, P1X1 revealed a few difficulties encountered, such as finding the right moment, and several students prevented him from taking pictures of the English class atmosphere. He also revealed that there were five times in the process of taking photos; however, according to P1X1, the photo above was the best.

b) Picture by P2X1



Figure 2.a and 2.b: English Class Activities taken by Participant 2 Class X1

Next, the photos above were captured directly by P2X1 in landscape and extended shot modes, showing all the conditions that occurred in class. While taking this photo, P2X1 revealed that he could not take a moment to read the prayer together in class. In the photo, P2X1 briefly and concisely explained how he took pictures in order to capture all the moments in one photo. It is also clear that the atmosphere of the English class from the P2X1 point of view represents the concept of independent learning in the independent curriculum, in which the teacher facilitates the material in class, and the students study with their peers to boost their learning achievements. This agrees with the appearance of P2X1 in the pictures. Then, based on data from the results of the P2X1 photos, the photo shows a teacher teaching material to his students. P2X1's point of view through the photo comprehensively describes the atmosphere of the English class in implementing the independent curriculum.

c). Picture by P3X1



Figure 3.a and 3.b.: English Class Activities taken by Participant 3 Class X1

Then next, the photo presented is the result of a portrait from P3X1. Meanwhile, based on the photo, P3X1 explained that the atmosphere in the class was not very

interesting to capture; he added clearly that when the photo was taken, the moment he saw could not be the best in the photo. Through the photos taken, P3X1 defines that the English class is divided into three parts: the opening of the class (while reading the prayer), the while activity, and the closing of the class (reading the prayer together). Of the three sections, P3X1 argues that the first photo is when the teacher finishes reading the prayer together; the teacher begins the lesson by introducing the material as Imperative Text, followed by intensive delivery. The last is a material review in the form of exercises before finally reading the prayer together. By referring to P3X1's statement, the researchers finds that P3X1's point of view looks objective and accurate. The photos presented also clearly explain that the indicators in the English class that apply the independent curriculum have been fulfilled, namely independent learning, critical and creative thinking, and objectivity in assessing a situation.

d). Picture by P4X1



Figure 4.a and 4.b.: English Class Activities taken by Participant 4 Class X1

Next is the photo result from P4X1. The photos presented present a more exclusive and attractive atmosphere from the P4X1 point of view. This is in line with the expression from P4X1 as follows:

'Taking photos in class was quite fun because I like taking photos. There are no difficulties while taking photos, only good angles at best. So that in the photo frame, the students look neat, not messy here and there.'

Likewise, the researchers found further meaning through the photos taken by P4X1. He explained straightforwardly and intelligently about the atmosphere in the class, even coherently, from starting class learning to the teacher explained the material to students who asked questions in class. According to him, every photo he takes has meaning, so the results of the photos P4X1 captures represent a communicative, informative, and accurate English class atmosphere. In this finding, P4X1 also explained that the photos he took had their aesthetics, including every angle the photo was taken very important to him, so P4X1 paid great attention to the neatness of the atmosphere and conditions before being photographed, paying close attention to the primary indicators of the photo, such as thinking about people's perceptions when seeing the results of the photos taken by P4X1. This is in line with the results of the photos presented; the P4X1 is trying to express

emotions and messages to be conveyed through intelligent visual composition. He uses the proper lighting techniques, background selection, and a balanced composition to create attractive and captivating photos.

e). Picture by P5X1



Figure 5.a and 5.b: English Class Activities taken by Participant 5 Class X1

The next one is a photo from the P5X1. Based on the photos presented above, the P5X1 revealed that he had no difficulties during photo-taking. The angle of the photo used is landscape, with the reason that all events can be captured in one photo frame. This is also in line with the expression of P5X1 as follows:

'I took the photo with a back angle and landscape to make it look bigger and more numerous. At the opening of the class earlier, the Ustadz delivered the material, but only a few students paid attention, and some did not. Moreover, when doing assignments, you can see which one is doing it and which one is not doing it; some are joking too. During the closing, the class was immediately closed by the Ustadz, and he did not have time to read the prayer.'

P5X1 views the condition of the atmosphere that is not conducive in class as an exciting challenge. He saw that some students did not notice the teacher during the learning process. In the photos it takes, the P5X1 manages to convey this message through precise composition and exuding essence. In this case, P5X1 considers moments in class as exciting subjects to photograph. He sees learning activities as exclusive activities and has its coherence. Through these photos, P5X1 managed to describe events that occurred in the classroom in a unique and interesting way. Thus, the results of the P5X1 photos become a portrait that reveals life in the X1 class.

2. Student's Perception through Photo in Class X2

a) Picture by P6X2



Figure 6.a and 6.b: English Class Activities taken by Participant 6 Class X2

Then the next one is the photo results from P6X2. Based on the photos above, P6X2 revealed that he had no difficulties during retrieval. However, the two photos taken by P6X2 depict that the class atmosphere looks peaceful and conducive. This is in line with the expression P1X2 as follows:

The first photo is the condition of the class before reciting the prayers, but when they finish reading the prayers, the atmosphere becomes calmer and more orderly.'

Based on the expressions that P1X2 has explained, the researchers found that P6X2 could concretely differentiate the learning atmosphere before and after it started. By referring to this expression, it is clear that P6X2's observation skills are well-honed.

b). Picture by P7X2



Figure 7.a and 7.b: English Class Activities taken by Participant 7 Class X2

The photos taken from P7X2 above have a different meaning. P7X2 explained in detail that there were no difficulties during the photo-taking process, but he needed to find the right time to capture the moment in class. All photo angles used are horizontal from the front and rear angles, showing the preparation for starting class and when learning takes place. Concerning this, this is also in line with the explanation from P2X2 as follows:

'This first photo shows the atmosphere after reading the prayer, preparing for studying and starting to pay attention to the teacher. For the second photo, it is seen listening to the teacher explaining material about Narrative Text. So the class atmosphere looks like this, even though there is a small quantity of chaos in classes.

Based on the expression from P7X2, it was revealed that there were exciting moments during the class. The English teacher drew several animal characters on the blackboard, and the students then continued the story by guessing what would happen next based on the pictures. This activity attracts students' interest and provides an in-depth perspective for P7X2 in conveying meaning through the photographs taken. Through these photos, P7X2 conveys deep meaning involving imagination, creativity, and student participation in learning. P7X2 captures this moment as proof of how activities that interest students can effectively strengthen student understanding and involvement in learning.

3. Student's Perception through Photo in Class X3

a) Picture by P8X3



Figure 8.a and 8.b: English Class Activities taken by Participant 8 Class X3

Next are the photos taken by the P8X3. As seen above, the P8X3 explains that there were no difficulties during the photo-taking process and the photo angle used; the P8X3 uses landscape mode to get the entire moment in one photo. The two photos presented represent the opening of the class when learning takes place and reading prayers together. This relates to the expression explained by P8X3 as follows:

'In the first photo, we read a prayer together, as usual, to start learning, then continued explaining the material. While in class, Ustadz explained the material in a humorous way, namely Narrative Text; Ustadz described several animal characters in class, and we continued the animal stories to the end, so the class atmosphere was more interesting and exciting. If the last photo is when we read a prayer together, the class atmosphere becomes more calm and orderly.'

P8X3 addressed that he found something was interesting in the photos he took. In the second photo, P8X3 captures the moment one of the children is glancing at the camera; this is funny and witty for him. The researchers also found that the P8X3 point of view refers more to the nature of each character in the class. This is in line with how the body language, expressions, and emotions conveyed by P8X3 are included in the euphoria category. Feelings of happiness, pleasure in expressing feelings, and a raised tone of voice accompanied by laughter indicate the collaborative nature of students in character education and creative expression.

b) Picture by P9X3



Figure 9.a and 9.b: English Class Activities taken by Participant 9 Class X3

Those above photos are portraits from P9X3. P9X3 explained that the photos taken had their meaning, starting from the first photo; he explained that before starting the lesson,

there was a group prayer reading session. Continuing with the second photo, P9X3 revealed that the active teaching during the English class resulted in solid chemistry between the teacher and students. From the findings above, the researchers found that the student's observation level had increased significantly. P9X3 is an individual who is confident in expressing the implied meaning through the photographs he takes. This also reflects the implementation of the independent curriculum in English classes, where students show respect, comprehensive observation, and self-confidence. More sensitive observations from students show their ability to see and understand more in the context of learning. They observe what is on the surface and can also see the hidden and deep meaning behind the photos they take. This shows the cognitive development and analytical skills of increasingly mature students.

c) Picture by P10X3



Figure 10.a and 10.b: English Class Activities taken by Participant 10 Class X3

Switches to photos from P10X3. As shown in the picture, P10X3 describes the atmosphere of the English class clearly and informatively. In this regard, it is also in line with the P10X3 statement as follows:

'Before starting the lesson, we prayed to get blessings while studying. Then the next photo is the essence of the school, namely learning. Today we learned about Procedure Text and Narrative Text. Because you have read the prayer at the beginning, the class is closed with a prayer to add more blessings.'

Based on the expressions that have been explained, P10X3 expressively explains the process of learning English that is communicative, creative, and interesting. In his view, the learning process must include religious indicators, persistence, and seriousness in class. The English class provides an approach that attracts students' interest in continuing to learn and sharpening their cognitive abilities through respect for religious norms. P10X3 enthusiastically conveyed how the English learning process was carried out with a communicative approach. Students are invited to interact actively, use English in various activities, and involve their creative abilities in expressing ideas and understanding. This creates a dynamic learning environment and inspires students to continuously participate in the learning process. It is crucial for P10X3 that the learning process is also based on religious values. In English classes, students are taught to uphold religious values, such as discipline, perseverance, and seriousness in learning. Thus, the learning process not only

hones academic skills but also shapes students' character and spiritual attitude.

d). Picture by P11X3



Figure 11.a and 11.b: English Class Activities taken by Participant 11 Class X3

Then the last one is the photo results from the P11X3. In his in-depth description, the P11X3 revealed that he found no difficulties during the photo-taking process, and the photo mode he used was a portrait. In this case, P11X3 describes in depth the activities during English class learning as follows:

'Earlier, we studied Narrative Text, General Structure, and vocabs related to Narrative Text. In the second photo, the camera caught an exciting thing, namely, one of my friends tying his tie to his head. In my opinion, this is a form of enthusiasm for a student to receive the material provided so that it is easy for him to understand the material during the lesson.'

Concerning what has been explained by P11X3, the enthusiastic attitude of the students in class X3 gave positive results in implementing the independent curriculum. They show a strong interest in the learning process through their body language, ability to accept subject matter, and cheerful expressions radiating from their faces. The enthusiastic attitude of the students reflects a high level of motivation and involvement in the learning process. They show a genuine interest in acquiring new knowledge and skills. Their cheerful expressions also reflect the joy and satisfaction they feel while learning. This shows that the implementation of the independent curriculum has succeeded in arousing the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of students in the teaching and learning process. In addition, the student's ability to use body language to communicate shows their interpersonal intelligence. They can convey messages and expressions nonverbally, which enriches interaction and communication in the classroom. The ability to accept good material also shows that the independent curriculum has facilitated an adequate and relevant learning process for student

Discussion

1. Student's Perception through Photo in Class X1

In order to get a good overview, P1X1 shot the scene from behind the classroom in landscape mode. P1X1 overcame obstacles like timing and student interference to take a series of photos, the best of which is displayed. These pictures show the students listening

intently to the teacher and actively participating in their education (Chandrawati, 2020; Ramadhevi & Rajaprakash, 2022). P1X1 aims to leave an impression with its harmonious and focused environment. The study found that participation and attention levels in X1 classes were exceptionally high. According to P1X1, while capturing photographs of English-speaking activities in class, he perceived a greater sense of organization and discipline. This is demonstrated by the perspective captured in the photograph shot by P1X1, which exhibits the benches' orderly arrangement and the students' attentive posture as they listen to the English teacher's explanation.

Through landscape and extended shot modes, P2X1 captured the classroom environment directly. The methodology used by P2X1 is consistent with the educational philosophy of student-driven learning. Images show teachers facilitating material and students working together to meet learning objectives. These pictures capture the feel of the classroom and how the independent curriculum is being used. P2X1 indicates that the classroom environment exhibits effective instructional practices, including active engagement and communication between teachers and students (John et al., 2018; Yalley et al., 2020). His photograph possessed significance in his perspective, explicitly depicting the students' fervor in acquiring English language skills.

Using a portrait-oriented approach, P3X1 captured critical moments from an English class, including the opening prayer, the presentation of new material, and a review of previously covered material. The perspective of P3X1 is accurate and objective. Indicators of independent curriculum, such as student initiative, analytical reasoning, and impartial evaluation, are depicted visually (Alshaer et al., 2016; Sari et al., 2021). Despite P3X1's biased interpretation of the setting, the images successfully illustrate key concepts from the course material. P3X1 claims that capturing images of classroom instruction lacks the appeal to be immortalized. This is due to multiple students walking back and forth in the classroom. P3X1 also documented a photograph depicting students facing the opposite direction while the teacher presented the topic to the class (Figure 3.a).

The passion and talent P4X1 has for photography shines through in their striking and unique images. Pictures from P4X1 show the instructor elucidating concepts and the students asking and answering pertinent questions. P4X1 places a premium on photography's aesthetic and technical aspects to ensure that messages and feelings are conveyed precisely. The images depict an open and informative environment conducive to learning English. P4X1 states that, despite the seemingly organized classroom environment, the open contact lines between instructors and students do not contribute to an anxious or frightening learning environment (Copoc, 2021; Moola et al., 2014). Conversely, P4X1 divulged that he relished capturing the delightful English class activities through photography. Each picture, in his opinion, conveys a unique message. Several students and the English teacher are seen chatting in Figure 4.a. According to P4X1, this is an example of how the English class is refreshing.

P5X1 took pictures from all sides of the classroom, highlighting the difficulty of keeping students interested and involved in class. Students' attention, distraction, and humor can all be caught on camera in P5X1's photos. Despite difficulties, P5X1's method reflects the independent curriculum, showcasing the class's individuality and unity. The pictures show how P5X1 feels about the classroom, and that feeling is critical and subjective. P5X1 claims that the classroom climate could be more productive because some students ignore their teacher throughout class (Figure 5.a and 5.b). P5X1 clarified, nevertheless, that despite the unfavorable conditions, the classroom climate was far from rigid and uncomfortable; on the contrary, it grew dynamic, entertaining, and engaging (Speranskaya et al., 2020). This observation aligns with the research conducted by Intopiana et al. (2021), which indicates that various speaking activities are implemented inside English classrooms. Group discussions and teacher-led question-and-answer sessions emerge as the predominant activities in these instructional settings. Engaging in these activities can facilitate the development of students' oral communication skills, bolstering their courage and self-confidence. Additionally, these activities can influence students' perspectives on speaking exercises' efficacy in the English classroom.

2. Student's Perception through Photo in Class X2

The photographs taken by P6X2 show a dramatic change in the mood of the classroom between before and after the recitation of prayers. P6X2 reported no issues with successfully recording these instances. The images depict a calm and orderly scene following the prayers, implying the ritual has a calming effect. If they could pick up on and accurately portray this distinction, P6X2 has keen observational skills and an awareness of class dynamics. P6X2 reported that the English-speaking session was noticeably calmer and more organized. Figures 6.a and 6.b depict a serene classroom environment where students attentively listen to the English teacher's explanation without making much noise (Mahmudah & Rahmah, 2021; Zohoorian & Faravani, 2021).

The photographs taken by P7X2 offer a descriptive account of the classroom setting. P7X2 said that taking the photos presented no difficulties but that timing was crucial. The first image depicts the transformation from prayer to concentrated study preparation. In the second image, students listen intently as their instructor presents information about narrative texts (Mahmudah & Rahmah, 2021; Zohoorian & Faravani, 2021). P7X2's pictures show exciting and engaging moments in class, despite moderate disarray (John et al., 2018; Yalley et al., 2020). At the same time, P7X2 claims that the English teacher's description of multiple class members disrupted the previously serene environment. Figure 7.a and 7.b show that when the English teacher presents the class subject, the students listen attentively, remain calm, and respond with smiles and laughter. P7X2's photos are more nuanced because students actively participate in a storytelling activity involving animal characters and attempt to predict what will happen next. These pictures illustrate the

importance of using activities that encourage student interaction and participation in the learning process (Muhammad et al., 2018). P2X2's careful observation of important classroom moments and use of multiple camera angles demonstrate a deep familiarity with the classroom setting.

The findings of this study reveal that the P7X2 and P8X2 exhibited a notable deviation from the researchers' prescribed image collection protocol. In photography, the esteemed individual have shed light on the intricate dynamics at play. They assert that they have assumed a pivotal role in the shooting process, deftly maneuvering the realm of visual storytelling. These skilled individuals can deftly direct the camera angles, ensuring that each frame captures the subject matter's essence. Furthermore, their discerning eye enables them to curate a collection of photographs that possess aesthetic appeal and convey profound meaning. As a result, the photos show that the classroom environment is active, engaging, and conducive to learning.

The findings presented in this study align with the research conducted by Khairunnisa et al. (2021), which demonstrated that most students exhibited favorable perceptions of storytelling. Students perceived storytelling as an engaging medium that stimulated their motivation to enhance their speaking skills, encompassing aspects such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Students also get several benefits through storytelling, including enhanced self-confidence, improved communication skills, and the ability to effectively articulate and comprehend topics while integrating their own words and expertise.

3. Student's Perception through Photo in Class X3

Photos from P8X3 show the progression of the class from beginning to end, from prayer to learning activities, and back to prayer. The photos do a great job of capturing the ebb and flow of the classroom dynamic. P8X3's decision to shoot in landscape mode emphasizes their desire to capture the full scope of the educational experience. The researchers found that P8X3's emphasis on character observation—through facial expressions and tone of voice—illuminated the joy and teamwork among the students. This viewpoint is consistent with the objective of the non-traditional curriculum, which is to encourage personal growth and the free expression of ideas (Andrew et al., 2021; Waks, 1981). P8X3 claims that he caught a humorous incident that occurred in the English lesson. A student fiddles with his tie and wraps it over his head in Figure 11.b. Case in point: P8X3 said that exactly those kinds of things kept them engaged and awake in class.

The photographs taken by P9X3 tell the story of the class from the beginning, when the students are gathered for prayer, to the end, when the classroom is quiet and orderly. The analysis emphasizes P9X3's capacity to convey implied meanings and a more nuanced comprehension of the learning process. According to the study, P9X3's self-assurance in conveying meaning through photography indicates their advanced level of cognition,

analytical skills, and mastery of observing and capturing pivotal moments (Aswanti & Isnaeni, 2023). P9X3 said he showed that there was total unity amongst the instructors and pupils in the classroom. The environment in the English class is well-structured, orderly, and disciplined, as seen in Figures 9.a and 9.b (Thilagaratnam & Yamat, 2021).

Photos taken by P10X3 show the class's regular procedures, such as opening and closing prayers, and the teacher's humorous approach to maintaining the students' attention. According to the findings, P10X3 has nailed a crucial part of the homeschool curriculum by carefully observing and aligning with religious aspects (Adila et al., 2023). P10X3 clearly values a stimulating and interactive classroom setting, as evidenced by their focus on the classroom atmosphere and the instructor's participation (Thilagaratnam & Yamat, 2021). P10X3 claims that the English teacher creates an engaging and entertaining classroom environment. It is clear from Figure 10.a and 10.b that he also mentioned how engaging and amusing the offered information was, which contributed to their successful comprehension of the topic.

The photos taken by P10X3 do a great job of showing how interactive and engaging the classroom is (John et al., 2018; Yalley et al., 2020). The independent curriculum is reflected in P10X3's moral and ethical development emphasis. Their account exemplifies an awareness of the importance of both academic mastery and character development in a well-rounded education. The researchers admire P10X3's dedication and the thoroughness with which it captures the essence of English acquisition. P10X3 claims that classroom instruction in English is engaging, dynamic, and full of opportunities for creative expression (Yuniari & Sudarmawan, 2023). He continued by saying that the lesson's content would be blessed if they prayed before and after each class. The English teacher's lessons are therefore easily comprehensible.

The photos taken by P11X3 perfectly capture the students' energy as they dive into the material and enjoy the learning process. P11X3's analysis supports their perceptions of the dynamics among their peers. He noticed, for example, that one student wore a tie around their head (Figure 11.b). The researchers applaud P11X3 for their keen awareness of the dynamic nature of the classroom and their enthusiastic participation in the learning process. P11X3 claims that he became excited about learning because of the class environment (Ford & Kea, 2017). This is in keeping with the images from P11X3, which show that the English class has a lively, engaging, and amusing environment for learning.

In short, the photographic documentation of students' perceptions in Class X1, X2, and X3 offers a multifaceted insight into the classroom dynamics and the efficacy of English language instruction. Despite varying perspectives and methodologies employed by different photographers, a consistent theme emerges: the classroom environments depicted are active, engaging, and conducive to learning. Each photographer, whether capturing moments of serenity, engagement, or humor, contributes to a rich tapestry of experiences within the educational setting. Through their photographs, the students' enthusiasm for

learning English is palpable, underscored by their active participation and interactions with instructors and peers. Despite occasional disruptions or deviations from prescribed protocols, the images reflect an environment where students are encouraged to express themselves freely and engage with the material in meaningful ways.

Furthermore, the study aligns with existing research highlighting the benefits of interactive and engaging classroom activities, such as storytelling, for language acquisition and personal development. The photographers' keen observations and nuanced interpretations illuminate not only the academic aspects of English instruction but also the social and emotional dynamics at play. Overall, the photographic documentation provides valuable insights into the lived experiences of students in English language classrooms, highlighting the importance of creating supportive and stimulating learning environments. Moving forward, these findings can inform educators and policymakers in their efforts to design and implement effective language instruction strategies that cater to the diverse needs and preferences of students.

While the majority of students expressed positive experiences with the Independent Curriculum, particularly in terms of the interactive and engaging nature of the English-speaking activities, some challenges were also noted. Several students reported difficulties adapting to the increased responsibility and autonomy required in the classroom. For instance, some felt that the open-ended nature of the tasks made it harder for them to stay focused, while others, particularly those less confident in their English-speaking abilities, found group-based activities intimidating. These challenges highlight the need for additional support and scaffolding to ensure that all students can successfully engage with the curriculum.

The photos taken by students offer a visual narrative of the Independent Curriculum's impact on their learning experiences. Many images depict students actively participating in discussions and group work, aligning with the curriculum's focus on fostering autonomy and collaboration. However, some photos also reveal moments of disengagement, where students appear distracted or overwhelmed. These contrasting visuals suggest that while the curriculum encourages independence, additional support may be necessary to ensure that all students can effectively manage their learning. By closely examining these images, we can gain a deeper understanding of how the curriculum's principles are enacted in practice and identify areas for improvement.

CONCLUSION

Evidence indicates that students at Senior High School in Banjarmasin have varying perspectives on the activities conducted in the English class of the independent curriculum. Photographs captured by students during classroom activities exhibit diverse perspectives. The photographs indicate a strong correlation between the student's opinions and the implementation of the independent curriculum in the English class. Students in Class X1

demonstrate attentiveness and actively engage in conversations. Class X2's mood had a visible transformation while Class X3 attracts focus toward significant occurrences and play an active role in exercises conducted in English class.

For future research, the researchers recommends that further researchers carry out studies on the assessment of speaking skills in implementing the independent curriculum. This includes what instruments English teachers use and the steps for assigning speaking skills in implementing the independent curriculum. It is important to acknowledge that the small sample size of 11 students from a single school limits the generalizability of the findings. While the insights gained through the photovoice methodology provide a rich and detailed understanding of students' perceptions, they may not fully represent the broader student population across Indonesia. Future research should consider involving a larger, more diverse sample from multiple schools and regions to ensure the findings can be applied more broadly. Furthermore, longitudinal studies may offer a more nuanced understanding of the curriculum's long-term impact on students' English-speaking skills and classroom engagement

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