

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

The field of education must make various innovation to face and respond to the challenges of an increasingly complex world. Nowadays, the Minister of Education and Culture launched a new policy named *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) which aimed to improve the competence of graduates to be more prepared and relevant to the needs of the times (Guidebook of MBKM.2020). *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) has two important concepts, namely "*Merdeka Belajar*" and "*Kampus Merdeka*". The first concept, concerning "*Merdeka Belajar*" which shows the meaning of freedom and independence in thinking. Second, "*Kampus Merdeka*" which refers to an effort taken to give freedom to the actors in the educational world in order to be able to move more freely. The main focus in the MBKM policy is the right for students to study three semesters outside the universities. The purpose of MBKM is to encourage students to gain learning experiences with various additional competencies (hard-skills and soft-skills) both in the study program and outside of universities.

Providing opportunities for students to study outside the university has also been done by various countries. In Canada, there is a program called Co-operative Education (Co-op). This is a structured program that combines academic study with paid work experience in a field related to the student's field of study. This program is offered at many universities in Canada and is designed to give students practical, hands-on experience as they complete their academic degree

(Canada.Ca). In Australia there is a policy in higher education named Work-Integrated Learning. This is a systematic approach to education that combines classroom learning with real-world work experience. The system is designed to enhance students' employability by giving them the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical environment, interact with industry professionals, and develop ready-to-use skills before graduation (sydney.edu.au). In addition, there are many other countries that have implemented system or policy in higher education such as MBKM policy.

One of the MBKM programs is Teaching Assistance in educational units or what is known as the *Kampus Mengajar* program. *Kampus Mengajar* is a program developed by the Directorate General of Higher Education and the Directorate of Learning and Student Affairs as part of solving problems that arise during online learning caused by the Covid-19 pandemic (Rosyida Nurul Anwar, 2021). The *Kampus Mengajar* program aims to train students' skills and innovation in developing the learning models in remote areas. The *Kampus Mengajar* program provides opportunities for students to develop themselves and hone their leadership and character as well as giving learning experiences through activities outside the lecture class. The *Kampus Mengajar* program also aims to improve students' soft skills and hard skills so that they are better prepared and relevant to the needs of the times as future leaders of a superior nation and also have good personality (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2021).

Currently, the *Kampus Mengajar* program has 8 batches. That is, starting with the Kampus Mengajar Perintis which was implemented in 2020, followed by the Kampus Mengajar Batch 1, Batch 2, Batch 3, Batch 4, Batch 5, Batch 6 and

Batch 7 which are currently underway. According to data from the Director of Learning and Student Affairs (2023), more than 112 thousand students have participated in the *Kampus Mengajar* program and directly collaborated with teachers, principals and parents in more than 23,000 target schools. The Ministry of Education and Culture (2023) has also prepared opportunities for 30,000 students who to take part in the *Kampus Mengajar* program at batch 7 which placed in 3,000 target schools.

Student involvement in the *Kampus Mengajar* program cannot be separated from their role as agent of change in society. In social life, students have an important role, namely as agent of change, social control, and a strong generation (iron stock). students can take actions that bring positive change in society. Students not only convey ideas, but are involved in carrying out these ideas as actors. With the knowledge they have, students can apply it in real life (Istichomaharani & Habibah, 2021).

In English Study Program at Universitas Jambi, the *Kampus Mengajar* Program has been implemented since 2021. It aims to develop students' skills and competencies in teaching and to provide learning experiences that will be useful for them in the future carrier. In every batch, there are several students from the English Study Program who take part in the *Kampus Mengajar* program. However, many students who were involved in this program faced some problems and challenges in implementation (Lestari et al, 2022).

Based on what the researcher describe above, the researcher is interested in explore the experience of English Study program students who take part in

Kampus Mengajar program and the challenges they faced during *Kampus Mengajar* program.

1.2 The Research Question

Based on the background of research above, the researcher formulates the follow questions :

1. What are experiences students achieved in *Kampus Mengajar* Program at English study program?
2. What are the challenges students faced in *Kampus Mengajar* Program implementation?

1.3 The Purpose of Research

Based on the research questions above, The main puposes of this research are to explore the experience of English Study program students in participating at *Kampus Mengajar* program and figure out the challenges faced by the students in this program.

1.4 Limitation of Research

This research are limited on finding out the experience of English Study program students during the *Kampus Mengajar* program and the challenges faced by students when participated in batch 6 of *Kampus Mengajar* program at English Study program, Faculty of Teaching and Education, Universitas Jambi.

1.5 The Significance of Research

The result of this research is expected can be useful in the education world, particularly for the students and other researcher. For the student, the results of this reserach is expected to provide information for students who want to participate in *Kampus Mengajar* program in the next batch. Students can read and

conclude the activities that previous students have undertaken. For *the Kampus Mengajar* program, this research is expected to provide additional information about the implementation and progress of *Kampus Mengajar* program followed by students and as evaluation material to improve in the next batch. For other researcher, this research is expected to be useful as a reference for further research. The researcher also hopes that other researcher can evaluate, develop, reconstruct this research and also conducted the similiar research with the different forms, places, and objectives.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. Merdeka Curriculum

Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum that gives freedom to educators to create various and quality learning in accordance with the needs and environment of students (Kemendikbud, 2024).

2. Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) Policy

Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka is a policy launched by the Minister of Education and Culture for higher education. The main program in this policy is students get the right to study three semesters outside their study program with the aim to improve the competence of graduates and to prepare the graduates as future leaders of the nation who are superior and have personality (Guidebook of MBKM).

3. Kampus Mengajar (Campus Teaching) program

Kampus Mengajar Program is a program in the MBKM policy that provides opportunities for students to learn outside the universities by becoming teacher

partners in the learning process in primary and secondary education units (Guidebook of Kampus Mengajar 6).

4. Experience

Experience in this research refers to everything that is happened to the students during the Kampus Mengajar program, both inside and outside the classroom.

5. Challenges

Challenge in this research is the problem, obstacle, or difficulty faced by the participants when participated in Kampus Mengajar program at the destination school.