CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Education is essential in shaping a person's personality. The type of education a person receives often reflects in their character. According to Marisa (2021), education is the intentional and structured process through which individuals attempt to develop themselves in order to realize their full potential. This process involves both effective teaching and learning activities. According to a UNICEF education survey, only about 60% of students in Indonesia have a strong interest in learning, while the remaining 40% show lower levels of interest, with 26% demonstrating very low interest and 14% showing minimal interest. This indicates that many students in Indonesia are still not fully engaged in their education, leading to lower motivation and consequently, lower graduation rates.

Additionally, there are several current international issues related to the implementation of a new curriculum in English Education for Senior High Schools, based on surveys by researchers such as Aguilar (2020), Pittman et al. (2021), and Kelly & Zakrajsek (2023). These issues include: (1) Remote Learning and Digital Equity: The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote learning, which has exposed disparities in access to technology and digital resources among students worldwide. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) highlights the need to address digital equity to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn (Morgan, 2020; Demuyakor, 2020).

(2) Language Policy and Multilingual Education: Gorter and Cenoz (2017), Bhaskaran (2017), Ayazbayeva (2017), Van Avermaet (2018), Phyak and Ojha (2019), Bonacina-Pugh (2020) and Kirsch et al. (2020), Rieckmann, (2017) recent policy brief on Languages in Education: Fairley (2020), Zein et al. (2020) and Wang (2021), policy and practice in Asia" discusses the challenges and opportunities of multilingual education, emphasizing the need for inclusive language policies that value linguistic diversity and promote equitable access to education.

(3) Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) highlights the role of education in advancing the SDGs and fostering global citizenship. Their framework for Education for Sustainable Development emphasizes the importance of integrating sustainability principles into curriculum design and pedagogy. (4) Teacher Professional Development in Online Environments: With the shift towards online and blended learning models, there is a growing need for effective professional development programs for teachers. The report on "Teacher Professional Development for Quality Teaching and Learning" emphasizes the importance of supporting teachers in developing digital competencies and adapting instructional strategies to online environments.

(5) Assessment and Learning Outcomes: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) highlights the importance of aligning assessment practices with learning outcomes and curriculum objectives. Their studies on international assessments, such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International

Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), provide insights into effective assessment practices and their impact on student learning. (6) Cultural Competence and Inclusive Education: The Centre for Global Education at Asia Society emphasizes the importance of cultural competence in education and the need for inclusive pedagogical approaches that recognize and value students' diverse backgrounds and experiences.

These expert sources offer valuable insights into current international issues related to the implementation of a new curriculum in English Education for Senior High Schools, providing guidance for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders involved in curriculum development and educational reform efforts.

Trends and issues currently in Indonesia related to the new curriculum in English Education for Senior High Schools, they are as follows: (1) Implementation Challenges: The implementation of the new curriculum in English Education for Senior High Schools in Indonesia faces various challenges, including inadequate teacher training, limited resources, and infrastructure constraints (Khatiwada et al. 2017). (2) Digital Divide and Access to Technology: Disparities in access to technology and digital resources among students in Indonesia pose a significant challenge to the effective implementation of the new curriculum. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia addresses the digital divide through initiatives like the Indonesia Smart School program, which aims to provide access to digital learning resources for all students.

(3) Teacher Professional Development: ere is a need for comprehensive teacher professional development programs to support educators in effectively implementing the new curriculum. The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education

Organization (SEAMEO) Regional Language Centre (RELC) offers professional development courses and resources for English language teachers in Indonesia, focusing on pedagogical strategies and enhancing language proficiency. (4) Language Policy and Multilingualism: Indonesia's diverse linguistic landscape presents both challenges and opportunities for language policy in education. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia emphasizes the importance of preserving and promoting the country's linguistic diversity while also prioritizing English language proficiency as a key tool for global communication.

(5) Assessment Practices: The new curriculum may require revisions to assessment practices to align with its objectives and learning outcomes. The Indonesian National Education Standards Agency *(Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan)* develops assessment frameworks and guidelines for evaluating student proficiency in English language skills, ensuring alignment with curriculum standards. (6) Inclusive Education: Ensuring equitable access to quality English education for all students, including those from marginalized communities and students with disabilities, is essential. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia promotes inclusive education through policies and initiatives aimed at providing support and accommodations for diverse learners in the English language classroom.

These trends and issues highlight the complex landscape of English Education curriculum implementation in Indonesian Senior High Schools, requiring collaboration among policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to address effectively.

In South Sumatra, Indonesia, several trends and issues related to the new curriculum in English Education for Senior High Schools can be observed. While specific expert sources directly addressing these issues in South Sumatra may be limited, broader national and regional sources can provide valuable insights. There are some trends and issues along with potential expert sources: (1) Implementation Challenges: South Sumatra, like many regions in Indonesia, faces challenges in implementing the new curriculum in English Education for Senior High Schools. These challenges include limited resources, inadequate teacher training, and infrastructure constraints.

(2) Digital Divide and Access to Technology: Disparities in access to technology and digital resources among schools and students in South Sumatra may hinder effective implementation of the new curriculum. Reports from Indonesian government agencies or international organizations, such as UNESCO, may provide valuable insights into initiatives aimed at bridging the digital divide in education. (3) Teacher Professional Development: Enhancing teacher capacity through professional development programs is crucial for the successful implementation of the curriculum. Regional education agencies or universities in South Sumatra may offer training courses or workshops for English language teachers. Additionally, resources from organizations like SEAMEO Regional Language Centre (RELC) could offer insights into effective professional development strategies for language educators in the region.

(4) Language Policy and Multilingualism: South Sumatra's diverse linguistic landscape may present unique challenges in terms of language policy and promoting multilingualism alongside English language proficiency. Research

articles or policy briefs from Indonesian government bodies, such as the Ministry of Education and Culture, may provide information on language policies and initiatives aimed at preserving linguistic diversity while promoting English proficiency. (5) Assessment Practices: Aligning assessment practices with the new curriculum's objectives is essential for measuring student progress effectively. Reports or publications from the Indonesian National Education Standards Agency *(Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan)* may offer guidance on developing assessment frameworks tailored to the needs of South Sumatra's English language learners.

While direct expert sources specifically focusing on South Sumatra may be limited, consulting national-level publications, government reports, and regional educational organizations can provide valuable insights into the trends and issues related to the new curriculum in English Education for Senior High Schools in the region.

Identifying research gaps based on trends and issues at the international, national, and South Sumatra levels related to the new curriculum in English Education for Senior High Schools requires a comprehensive understanding of the existing literature and ongoing developments in the field. Here are some potential research gaps based on these contexts, Reimers et al. (2020): (1) Comparative Analysis of Curriculum Implementation: While there is existing literature on the implementation of the new curriculum in English Education at the international and national levels, there may be a lack of comparative studies that examine implementation strategies, challenges, and outcomes across different contexts.

Conducting comparative research could provide valuable insights into effective practices and lessons learned from diverse settings.

(2) Localized Approaches to Curriculum Adaptation: Fahmi, et al. (2023) Given the diverse linguistic and cultural contexts within Indonesia, including South Sumatra, there may be a need for research on localized approaches to adapting the new curriculum in English Education. This could involve exploring how curriculum content and teaching methodologies can be tailored to meet the specific needs and characteristics of students in different regions. (3) Digital Inclusion and Equity in Education: George et al. (2022) emphasize that, while digital inclusion and equity are recognized as significant issues globally and nationally, there may be a lack of research specifically focusing on these aspects within the context of English Education in South Sumatra. Investigating the extent of digital inclusion, access to technology, and its impact on English language learning outcomes could be a fruitful area for research.

(4) Teacher Professional Development Needs: Despite the importance of teacher professional development for successful curriculum implementation (Noom-Ura, 2023; Badri et al., 2016; Zein, 2017; Shernoff et al., 2017; Czerniawski et al., 2017; MacPhail et al., 2019; Sancar et al., 2021; Fernández-Batanero et al., 2022), there may be limited research on the specific professional development needs of English language teachers in South Sumatra. Exploring teachers' training requirements, preferences, and the effectiveness of professional development programs could help inform targeted interventions.

(5) Assessment Practices and Language Proficiency Measurement: Research on assessment practices and language proficiency measurement in the

context of the new curriculum in English Education may be limited, particularly in South Sumatra (Anderson et al., 2018; Rahman, 2020; Bachman & Adrian, 2022). Investigating the alignment between assessment methods and curriculum objectives, as well as exploring innovative approaches to assessing English language proficiency, could address this gap. By addressing these research gaps, scholars can contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with the new curriculum in English Education for Senior High Schools, both internationally and within specific regional contexts like South Sumatra.

Despite the increasing emphasis on implementing a new curriculum in Senior High Schools (SHS), there remains a notable research gap in understanding the intersectionality of international, national, and regional issues influencing curriculum implementation, particularly in the context of South Sumatra, Indonesia. While some studies have explored the challenges and successes of curriculum reform at the national level, there is limited research that examines how global trends and national policies intersect with regional dynamics to shape the implementation of the new curriculum in Senior High School in South Sumatra, they are as follows:

1. International Perspectives

Existing literature often overlooks the influence of international educational frameworks, such as global competency standards, international assessments (e.g., PISA), and trends in educational reform, on the design and implementation of the new curriculum in Senior High School. Understanding how global educational discourses and trends impact local curriculum initiatives is essential for ensuring

alignment with international best practices and preparing students for global citizenship.

2. National Policy Context

While there is substantial research on national-level policies guiding curriculum reform in Indonesia, there is a need for a nuanced analysis of how these policies are translated and enacted at the regional level, particularly in provinces like South Sumatra. Investigating the alignment between national directives and regional implementation strategies can shed light on the challenges and opportunities unique to the local context.

3. Regional Dynamics in South Sumatra

Despite being one of Indonesia's largest provinces, there is limited scholarly attention to the specific contextual factors shaping curriculum implementation in South Sumatra. Factors such as cultural diversity, socioeconomic disparities, infrastructure challenges, and local educational priorities may influence the adoption, adaptation, and effectiveness of the new curriculum in Senior High School. For example, after doing observation, there are some misunderstandings in implementing of P5 project of English material in some Senior High School in Palembang. The activities are not suitable to what the government intended. Therefore, English teachers should understand these regional dynamics, which are crucial for designing targeted interventions and support mechanisms to enhance curriculum implementation outcomes.

Addressing this research gap requires interdisciplinary studies that draw on insights from comparative education, policy analysis, curriculum studies, and regional studies. Mixed-methods approaches, including surveys, interviews, and document analysis, can provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex interactions between international, national, and regional factors influencing curriculum implementation in Senior High School in South Sumatra. By bridging this gap, researchers can contribute valuable insights to inform evidence-based policymaking, curriculum development, and educational practice at both regional and national levels.

Based on the interview and observation with some English teachers at MGMP South Sumatra, the researcher identified the urgent need to conduct research on the intersectionality of international, national, and South Sumatra-specific issues related to the implementation of the new curriculum in Senior High Schools (SHS). This need arises from the critical importance of ensuring quality education and equitable opportunities for students in the region. Several compelling reasons underscore the urgency of this research:

(1) Equity and Inclusion: Education is a fundamental human right, and equitable access to quality education is essential for promoting social mobility and reducing disparities. However, without a comprehensive understanding of how international, national, and regional factors intersect to shape curriculum implementation in South Sumatra's Senior High School, there is a risk of exacerbating existing inequities. Research in this area is urgently needed to identify barriers to access, participation, and achievement, particularly among

marginalized groups, and to develop targeted interventions to promote equity and inclusion.

(2) Global Competitiveness: In an increasingly interconnected and competitive global economy, students require skills and competencies that enable them to thrive in diverse contexts and contribute meaningfully to society. By investigating how international trends in education intersect with national and regional policies in South Sumatra, researchers can identify areas for curriculum enhancement and innovation to better prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century global landscape.

(3) Educational Quality and Relevance: The quality and relevance of education are critical determinants of students' academic success and future prospects. Research on the implementation of the new curriculum in Senior High Schools (SHS) in South Sumatra can provide insights into the effectiveness of current instructional practices, the alignment between curriculum objectives and student needs, and opportunities for curriculum improvement. By identifying areas for enhancement, policymakers and educators can work collaboratively to ensure that the curriculum meets the evolving needs of students and society.

(4) Policy and Practice Improvement: Evidence-based policymaking and practice are essential for driving positive change and improving educational outcomes. By conducting research on international, national, and regional issues related to curriculum implementation in South Sumatra's Senior High Schools, researcher can generate actionable insights to inform policy development, program planning, and instructional strategies. This

research can serve as a catalyst for fostering collaboration among stakeholders, promoting data-driven decision-making, and advancing educational reform efforts in the region.

(5) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Education is central to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Research on curriculum implementation in South Sumatra's Senior High Schools can contribute to progress towards this goal by identifying strategies to improve educational quality, promote lifelong learning opportunities, and foster sustainable development in the region.

To identify the research gaps in this study, the researcher undertook a comprehensive review of existing literature, focusing on the emancipated curriculum's implementation and its related aspects. A research gap, as described by Kumar (2020), signifies a void or inadequacy in the current body of knowledge that hinders a thorough understanding or resolution of a specific research question. Kumar's framework for identifying research gaps emphasizes the systematic evaluation of previous studies, highlighting areas where further exploration is required.

Applying this approach, the researcher identified multiple gaps in the literature. Firstly, there is limited research addressing the alignment of teaching syllabi with the emancipated curriculum's principles, particularly in EFL contexts. While various studies explore syllabus design, few delve into how teachers interpret and operationalize these guidelines within their pedagogical practices.

Secondly, the pedagogical competencies required for successful curriculum implementation remain underexplored. While the importance of teacher competence is acknowledged, existing studies lack a detailed examination of how teachers adapt their methods and approaches to meet the emancipated curriculum's demands.

Thirdly, although teaching materials play a critical role in curriculum delivery, there is insufficient research on how these materials are developed, selected, and evaluated in light of the curriculum's objectives. This gap raises questions about the adequacy and relevance of resources available to educators.

Finally, assessment practices, a cornerstone of effective teaching, also present a notable gap. Current studies often generalize assessment strategies without addressing how they align with the emancipated curriculum's emphasis on student-centered and competency-based learning.

These identified gaps form the foundation of this study, highlighting the need for a focused investigation into the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing the emancipated curriculum. By addressing these gaps, the research aims to contribute to the development of more effective strategies and practices for EFL educators, as shown in Figure 1 below:

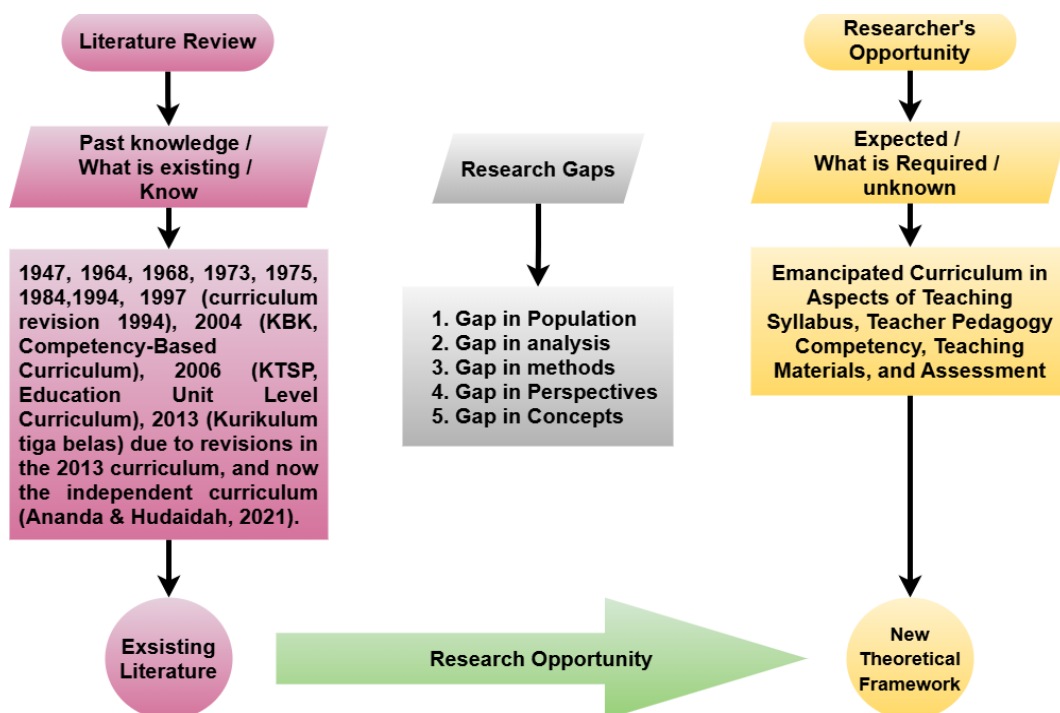**Identifying Research Gaps and Research Opportunity**

Figure 1 Identifying Research Gaps and Research Opportunity

To further explore research opportunities, the researcher employed advanced bibliometric tools, specifically Publish or Perish and VOSviewer. These tools provided a structured approach to mapping the research landscape on the topic of the emancipated curriculum. Using the keyword emancipated curriculum, the analysis revealed a notable lack of studies addressing this subject, particularly in the context of teaching syllabus, instructional materials, teacher pedagogical competencies, and assessment practices. This research gap was particularly evident in the context of EFL teachers at Senior High Schools in Palembang, highlighting the need for deeper investigation in this area.

The process of exploring research opportunities was meticulously carried out through the following steps:

1. The researcher began by launching the Publish or Perish application, a tool designed to retrieve and analyze academic citation data from major databases.

2. A bibliometric search was conducted using the keyword emancipated curriculum to ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant studies.

3. The search results from Publish or Perish were saved in the standardized .ris file format, which is compatible with bibliometric software for further analysis.

4. The researcher then utilized VOSviewer, a tool for creating visual bibliometric maps, to analyze the collected data.

5. Within VOSviewer, the option to "Create a map based on text data" was selected, focusing on textual elements such as titles and abstracts to uncover thematic trends.

6. The researcher imported the previously saved .ris file using the "Read data from reference manager files" option, ensuring a seamless transition between applications.

7. Specific fields, namely the title and abstract, were selected for analysis, following the application's detailed instructions to finalize the setup.

8. Upon completing the configuration, the process was concluded by clicking Finish, which generated the desired bibliometric map.

The analysis produced a clear visualization of the current research landscape, showing patterns and areas that have not been fully explored regarding the emancipated curriculum. These findings were important for identifying specific research opportunities and guiding the direction of this

study. By carefully analyzing the data using these advanced tools, the researcher confirmed that there has been limited research on this topic, especially in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education at the Senior High School level.

The results from VOSviewer offered valuable insights into where existing research is focused, helping to better understand the gaps and opportunities in this field. This approach not only improves the quality of the study but also ensures its relevance and contribution to filling the important gaps in the literature.

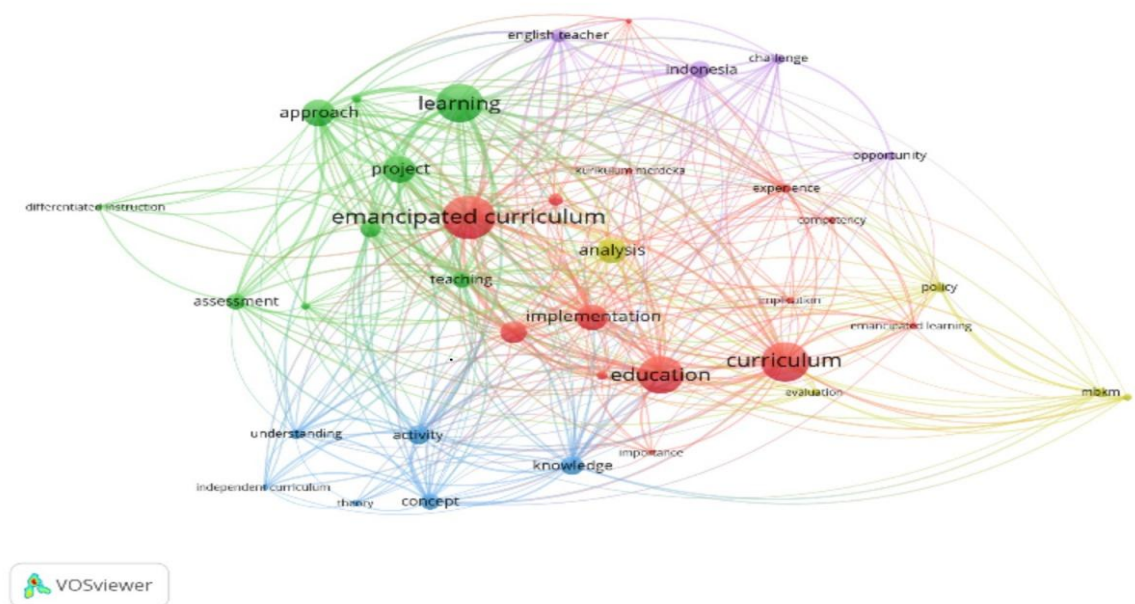The result of Vosviewer is demonstrated by the figure 2 below:

Figure 2 Exploring the Research Opportunity by Using VOSviewer

The figure above illustrates the main focus of existing research on the emancipated curriculum, which has primarily explored its relationship with various aspects such as EFL teachers' readiness, curriculum design, teaching syllabus, assessments, instructional materials, and teacher pedagogical competence. However, despite the considerable attention given to these broad areas, there is a significant gap in studies examining the specific implementation of the emancipated curriculum in relation to the teaching syllabus, instructional materials, teacher pedagogical competence, and assessment practices, especially within the context of Senior High Schools in Palembang. This gap highlights a crucial area that remains underexplored, emphasizing the need for further investigation into how the emancipated curriculum is practically applied in these key educational domains at the Senior High School level.

Based on previous research and findings from observations and interviews, the challenge for the researcher lies in exploring both the 'what' and 'how' of EFL teachers' implementation of the emancipated curriculum in Senior High Schools.

1.2 Research Focus

The focus of this study is limited to investigating the implementation of the emancipated curriculum in Senior High Schools in South Sumatera, Palembang, specifically in terms of the teaching syllabus, teachers' pedagogical competency, teaching materials, and assessments. Furthermore, the researcher analyzes English teachers' documents, including lesson plans

(Rencana Pembelajaran Semester), syllabi, and assessments from the academic year 2022/2023. The aim is to describe and explain aspects of the emancipated curriculum that can be improved to create a better learning experience. This includes enabling English teachers to master both basic skills and additional competencies, such as sourcing teaching materials, utilizing media in the classroom, and evaluating student progress. The study seeks to support the professional development of English teachers by providing an overview of the current curriculum and teaching/learning situation at the Senior High School level, all within the framework of policy and the ongoing development of the Senior High School curriculum in the field of English education, specifically in the context of implementing the emancipated curriculum.

1.3 Formulation of Problems

The aim of this research is to investigate the implementation of the emancipated curriculum as a means of supporting EFL teachers in areas such as the teaching syllabus, pedagogical competence, teaching materials, and assessments in Senior High Schools in Palembang. The research questions were:

1. What do English teachers perceive the implementation of emancipated curriculum in aspects of teaching syllabus, teacher's pedagogical competence, teaching material and assessments?
2. How do English teachers implement the emancipated curriculum in terms of teaching syllabus, teacher's pedagogical competence, teaching materials and assessments?

The design of this research program directly links the research questions to the chosen methods. Table 1.1 outlines the research phases, data collection sources, instruments, and data analysis techniques.

Table 1.1
Illustrates the Research Phase

	Research Questions	Methods	Data Sources	Data Analysis
1.	What do English teachers perceive the implementation of emancipated curriculum in aspects of teaching syllabus, teacher's pedagogical competence, teaching materials and assesments?	Questionnaires	Survey responses from 105 EFL teachers across 22 Senior High School in Palembang	Quantitative data Descriptive Statistics using SPSS to discover teachers' pedagogical competence during the implementation of the emancipated curriculum.
2.	How do English teachers implement the emancipated curriculum in terms of teaching syllabus, teacher's pedagogical competence, teaching material and assessments?	Documents, interview and observation	EFL teachers documents of *Modul Ajar* consisting of four parts: problems related to learning outcome (CP) and guide line for the goal of learning (ATP), using a learning model that is integrated with technology, rules of teaching learning process and rubrics assessments and evaluation.	Qualitative data (Thematic Analysis by using coding text, developing a description, defining themes, connecting and interrelating themes.
			Interview transcripts from 10 EFL teachers about their expectations of teachers' teaching materials during the implementation of the emancipated curriculum.	
			Field notes during EFL teachers' do assessments in their daily activities at class.	

1.4 Research Objectives

The purpose of this quantitative and qualitative study is to explore the implementation of the emancipated curriculum in Senior High Schools in South Sumatra, Palembang. The study aims to understand how the emancipated curriculum is applied in these schools, focusing on the EFL teaching syllabus, teachers' pedagogical competence, teaching materials, and assessment practices. The information gathered from these participants is expected to provide

comprehensive insights into the research questions. Based on this aim, the objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To investigate the EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of emancipated curriculum in aspects of teaching syllabus, teacher's pedagogical competence, teaching materials and assessments.

2. To examine how the English teachers implement emancipated curriculum in terms of teaching syllabus, teacher's pedagogical competence, teaching materials and assessments.

1.5 Research Significances

This research is relevant to the current curriculum requirements for English education programs in Senior High Schools. First, the study investigates the emancipated curriculum within Senior High Schools. Second, it explores how the emancipated curriculum is implemented within the context of the Senior High School English language education curriculum, with a focus on the teaching syllabus, teachers' pedagogical competence, teaching materials, and assessments.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge, particularly in the area of the English curriculum in Senior High Schools, and to help clarify the current need for enhanced teacher competence in both teaching and research. The aim of this qualitative study was to gain insights into the teaching materials and assessments within the emancipated curriculum based on EFL teachers' experiences, rather than to seek generalizable conclusions. As such, the contribution of this study lies in offering examples of various factors that could be explored in future research.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

The definitions of key terms are specific explanations of concepts or variables within a study, clearly detailing how they are measured, observed, or applied in a given context. hese definitions ensure clarity and consistency, allowing the researcher to translate abstract ideas into measurable and actionable terms. In this study, the following operational definitions are used:

1. Emancipated Curriculum

The emancipated curriculum refers to a flexible and adaptive framework for teaching and learning that prioritizes autonomy and contextual relevance. It is designed to foster critical thinking and real-world application by allowing educators to tailor content, teaching methods, and learning objectives according to local needs and societal demands, this curriculum serves as a guideline for teachers to implement learner-centered approaches while promoting active participation and engagement.

2. Teaching Syllabus

A teaching syllabus is a formal document that systematically outlines the instructional goals, topics, and learning activities to be addressed within a specific course or subject over a given time frame, it serves as a roadmap for educators, facilitating lesson planning, time allocation, and alignment with educational standards to ensure coherent and effective instruction.

3. Teacher's Pedagogical Competence

Teacher pedagogical competence refers to the knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable educators to effectively design, implement, and assess

instructional activities. This includes proficiency in subject matter, classroom management, and the application of diverse teaching strategies, it is reflected in teachers' ability to create an engaging, inclusive, and productive learning environment that supports the achievement of desired educational outcomes.

4. Teaching Material

Teaching material encompasses all resources and tools utilized by educators to support and enhance the learning process. These include textbooks, digital media, visual aids, handouts, and manipulative, teaching materials are the tangible or digital components designed to align with lesson objectives and facilitate the effective delivery of instructional content.

5. Assessments

Assessments are systematic processes and tools employed to measure students' learning progress, knowledge acquisition, skill development, and overall performance. These include formal assessments such as tests and quizzes, as well as informal methods like observations and project-based evaluations, assessments provide a mechanism for educators to gather evidence of learning, offer feedback, and inform instructional adjustments to optimize educational outcomes.