



# An Analysis of Teachers' Teaching Module based on the Independent Curriculum

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**Abstract.** This present study was aimed at describing and interpreting the teaching module or *modul ajar* (MA) developed by senior high school teachers in Surabaya in terms of the systematics of every component of the MA. *Modul Ajar* is a document containing learning objectives, learning activities, learning media and assessment needed in one unit or topic based on the flow of learning objectives. To obtain the data for this descriptive qualitative study, the researchers analyzed ten teachers' MAs using a rubric adapted from the lesson plan format analysis designed by the Curriculum Center of Education Ministry 2014. The components in a rubric are based on the MA components as suggested by the independent curriculum. From the results and discussion of the study, it was found out that many teachers still lacked of knowledge on developing a good and standardized MA. For example, in formulating the components of learning objectives and meaningful understanding, explaining in detail the learning models applied during the learning process, stating the reflections from both the teacher and students, and presenting the appendices which comprise learning materials, students' work sheets (LKPD), and references. These difficulties will gradually become weaknesses for the teachers if they do not try some efforts to solve those difficulties. Therefore, any recommendations such as workshops on developing a well-organized teachers' MA and teachers' discussions on independent curriculum with its related components (like MA, assessment, etc.) are urgently needed.

**Keywords:** Modul Ajar, independent curriculum, 2013 Curriculum, students' worksheets (LKPD).

## 1 Introduction

A teacher must have four competencies: pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies [1]. Regarding pedagogical competence, a teacher is a professional educator that must have abilities not only in managing the classroom, conducting the teaching and learning process, and assessing the learning outcomes but also in designing the lesson plan. The success of the teaching and learning process cannot be

separated from the teacher's ability in designing the lesson plan since all the teacher's preparedness before teaching is stated on the lesson plan. With a well-organized lesson plan, a good result of the learning process can be achieved. Hakim argued that half of the success in the teaching and learning process is achieved when the lesson plan has been designed well. Another half is on the implementation of the plan of a lesson [2].

The Indonesian education minister's policy in Circular Letter Number 14/2019 [3] about the simplification of a lesson plan and the Minister Decree Number 56/2022 [4] about the guidelines of curriculum implementation in the context of learning recovery are pivotal points that the teacher must pay attention. These two government documents explain that from a minimum of 13 components that must be included in a lesson plan based on the 2013 Curriculum change to three compulsory components that must be included in a lesson plan based on an independent curriculum. Those three components are learning objectives, learning stages, and assessment, while other components are the complement. It aims to design a lesson plan with the principles of effective, efficient and student-oriented [3].

Teachers' challenges are getting bigger when they have to change the lesson plan from the 2013 Curriculum to the independent curriculum; even they have to design a lesson plan based on the two curriculums since the minister released the current curriculum, namely the independent curriculum, in 2020 [7]. In other words, two curriculums are applied in Indonesia: the 2013 Curriculum and the independent curriculum nowadays. It can be understood that the Indonesian government gives freedom to schools, exclusively teachers, to select a particular curriculum to apply. The essential point is that the curriculum must be appropriate for the students and school environment [7].

Both curriculums have similarities and differences in designing the lesson plan, and teachers must get to know well about that. It is an urgent problem and must concern stakeholders, including the teacher education study program. Their supports are significant for the teachers' career as professional teachers. Hence, this study focuses on the analysis of teachers' lesson modules (*Modul Ajar* or MA) as a lesson plan based on the independent curriculum. The term "*Modul Ajar* or MA" is used in independent curricula as a lesson plan in the context of a classroom setting [8]. The result of the analysis will be valuable in identifying which components from the teacher MA still need more attention and elaboration. Thus, the present study aims to describe the MA of senior high school teachers in Surabaya in terms of the systematics of every component of the MA.

## 1.1 Pedagogical Competencies

One of the competencies that the teachers must have is pedagogical competence, for they have to be familiar with the students' characteristics from several aspects, like physics, morals, social, cultural, emotional, and intelligence [9]. It implies that a teacher must be able to master learning theories and principles since students have different characters and interests. Due to this, a teacher must be able to elaborate the lesson plan based on the curriculum of each education level and local needs.

More specifically, concerning the pedagogical competencies [2], teachers must have abilities to (1) recognize the students' characteristics well in terms of aspects of physics, morals, social, culture, emotional, and intelligence; (2) master learning theories and principles; (3) elaborate curriculum in relation to the subject that the teachers develop; (4) conduct teaching and learning activities; (5) utilize technology and communication for teaching and learning activities; (6) facilitate and improve students' various potentials; (7) communicate effectively, politely, and empathetically; (8) assess and evaluate the learning process and outcomes, and utilize the results of assessment and evaluation for the learning needs; and (9) employ reflective activities to improve learning quality.

## 1.2 Independent Curriculum

**Principles of the Independent Curriculum.** The independent learning philosophy is the main basis of implementing an independent curriculum [10]. *Permendikbud* identifies that independent learning supports paradigm changes, exclusively curriculum and learning paradigms. Moreover, the independent curriculum principles include simple and easy to understand and implement, attention to all students' competencies and characters, flexible, align, cooperative, and attention to the results of the study and feedback.

One of the main principles of an independent curriculum is a policy that provides flexibility to education units, educators, and learners [11]. Moreover, the Government Decree Number 57/2021 [12] about the standard of national education in Chapter 6 explained that the curriculum consists of the curriculum framework and structure. The curriculum framework is the main plan for developing the structure of the curriculum.

**Learning Achievement.** (*Capaian Pembelajaran* or CP) is the minimum competency that must be achieved by the students for every school subject. CP is designed to refer to the graduate competence standard (*Standard Kompetensi Lulusan* or SKL) and content standard (*Standard Isi* or SI) [8], as core and basic competence (*Kompetensi Inti* or *Kompetensi Dasar*) in the 2013 Curriculum. CP is a renewal from KI/KD that is designed to strengthen the learning process by improving students' competencies. Previous curricula had been directed to the competence-based as the national learning objective and the current curriculum. Furthermore, in CP, the learning strategies are strengthened to achieve the learning goal by reducing the material scope and changing how to formulate the achievement, emphasizing learning flexibility.

Another difference between KI/KD in the 2013 Curriculum and CP in the independent curriculum is the time spent to achieve the target competencies. For this, KI/KD is set annually, while CP is designed based on the phase. Each phase has different time spent. The first phase, namely the foundation phase is achieved in the last year of kindergarten. Next, phase A is for the first to the second grade of elementary school; phase B is for the third to fourth grade of elementary school; phase C is for the fifth to sixth grade of elementary school; and phase D is for the seventh to the ninth grade of junior high. While the last two phases, they are phase E is for the tenth grade of senior high and phase F is for the eleventh and twelfth grade of senior high.

Phases E and F are separated because starting from the eleventh grade, students will determine the selected subject attributed to their interests and talents. Then, the curriculum structure began to differ since the eleventh grade.

**Curriculum Structure.** As Government Decree Number 57 [12] stated about the Standard of National Education, the curriculum structure is the organization of competencies and learning load. The main characteristics emphasized in the curriculum structure draft are (1) the status of the learning subject is changed; (2) the education unit has a right to develop an operational curriculum; (3) the learning activities are divided into two, they are intracurricular and extracurricular, the form of a project to strengthen *Pancasila* learner profile; and (4) there is a choice that can be determined by the learners.

**Learning Principles and Assessment.** Assessment is a process of collecting and analyzing information to know the learning needs, development, and achievement of students' learning outcomes. Types of assessments consist of assessment as learning, for learning, and of learning.

Assessment is usually employed by focusing on the summative assessment as a reference for the report of students' learning outcomes. The assessment product has yet to be utilized as feedback for learning refinement. In the new learning paradigm, teachers are expected to focus more on the formative assessment instead of summative assessments and use the formative result assessment to refine the continuing learning process, as shown in Fig.1.



Taken from the guidelines of learning and assessment [15].

**Fig. 1.** The changes of assessment implementation emphasizing on the assessment for learning.

**Teaching Module (*Modul Ajar/MA*).** *Modul Ajar* (MA) is developed by accomplishing the criteria below: [11]

- a. Essential: understanding the concept of subject learning through the learning experience and cross disciplines.
- b. Attractive, important, and challenging: Improving students' learning interest and involving them actively in the learning process by dealing with their prior

knowledge and experience. The activities will not be too complex and not too easy for their age.

- c. Relevant and Contextual: Regarding the prior knowledge and experience and according to the context of the time and students' place.
- d. Continues: the relationship between the students' learning activities and phase.

Not all components must be stated in MA developed by teachers. In other words, teachers have the right to develop components in MA based on the environmental contexts and learner needs (see Fig. 2).

General information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer identity</li> <li>• Prior competencies</li> <li>• Pancasila learner profile</li> <li>• Infrastructure facilities</li> <li>• Learner targets</li> <li>• Learning models</li> </ul>
Core competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning objectives</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Meaningful understanding</li> <li>• Trigger questions</li> <li>• Learning activities</li> <li>• Reflection</li> </ul>
Appendices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student learning sheets</li> <li>• Enrichment and remedial</li> <li>• Reading materials</li> <li>• Glossaries</li> <li>• References</li> </ul>

Fig. 2. Components of *Modul Ajar*. Taken from the guidelines of learning and assessment [15].

## 2 Methods

This study applied a descriptive qualitative research design which described and interpreted the data to get a clear picture of *Modul Ajar* (MA) designed by senior high school English teachers in Surabaya. Hence, the research object was the teaching module (MA) of Surabaya senior high school English teachers. We are interested in analyzing Surabaya teachers' MA because Surabaya is a capital city in East Java, and they have implemented an independent curriculum since 2021 (the result of a preliminary study).

The data in this study were ten teachers' MAs that we identified and analyzed in terms of the systematics of every component in MA. Moreover, the instrument used in this study is a rubric adapted from the lesson plan format analysis designed by the Curriculum Center of Education Ministry 2014. The components in a rubric are based

on the MA components as suggested by the independent curriculum (see Figure 2, Components of MA).

The techniques of collecting data in this study were: (1) keeping in touch with the leader of the Surabaya English teacher association and (2) collecting the teachers' MA from schools recommended by the leader of the Surabaya English teacher association.

Then, the data collected were analyzed through several steps, they are (1) identifying MA in terms of the systematics of every component and (2) classifying the components in MA using a rubric adapted from the lesson plan format analysis designed by the Curriculum Center of Education Ministry 2014; and (3) analyzing, describing, and drawing the conclusion.

### 3 Results and Discussion

From the data analysis, we found that three MAs, i.e., MA 4, 8, and 10, only contained the core components of three essential components: learning objectives, classroom activities, and assessment. For other MAs, they contained three parts, namely general information, core components, and appendices. Moreover, two MAs, they are MA 5 and 7, added a component of teaching preparation and project relevancy (MA 6).

In general information, seven MAs completed the writer or school identity component. They also wrote down the students' prior competencies. Nevertheless, the cognitive levels of the predicate used were not organized well. In other words, they were not organized from the low to the high or easy to difficult, or simple to complex. MA 1, for instance, formulated the students' prior competencies as below:

1. Students are able to read and respond to various texts independently.
2. Students are able to show the skills of responses.
3. Students are able to write the text and present the complex idea using various vocabulary.

In MA 1, the first students' competency includes the first and the third cognitive level (C1 and C3), while the second competence includes C3 and the third competence presented as C6. Moreover, most of the verbs used by the seven MAs were also unobservable and unmeasurable, like the verbs "knowing, understanding, and mastering." Those words caused the pictures of students' prior competencies to be unclear.

For the *Pancasila* learner profile, all seven MAs mentioned all the competencies of the *Pancasila* learner profile. Similarly, they provided the learning sources, including the media and materials. However, only one MA mentioned the books adapted or adopted for the materials, but not the website link utilized (MA 1), and it was the opposite of MA 2. Furthermore, MA 4, 8, and 10 inserted the website link of media in the learning activities. For the materials provided, all MAs were considered to provide materials appropriate for students, although materials in MA 8 and 10 seem too easy for students at the level of senior high.

Concerning the component of the learners' target, only three MAs out of seven stated the level of the learners' target (MA 1, 2, and 7). Other MAs presented the same as they wrote in the learning objectives. Similarly, all seven MAs clearly mentioned the learning model or method or technique applied, like PjBL, GBA, STAD, blended learning, and the scientific method. Nevertheless, only MA 7 explained how the learning model was applied clearly.

All ten MAs had formulated the learning objectives for the core components and covered at least the components of audience and behaviors. They also contained the competencies of knowledge and skills. However, as the same as the way the component of learners' prior knowledge is organized, almost all MAs formulated learning objectives (*tujuan pembelajaran* or TP) unsystematically on the basis of cognitive levels, like MA 6:

1. Identifying, analyzing, and concluding the text.
2. Getting the specific information from a text.
3. Getting the narrative text.
4. Concluding the moral value.

From the MA 6, the first TP includes C2 and C4, and C4 for the second and fourth TP. In contrast, the third TP was unclear on what the teacher planned to achieve. Some MAs also used unobservable and unmeasurable verbs, like the word "understanding" (MA 5, 6, and 7). Moreover, MA 9 briefly formulated the learning objectives as follows:

"Siswa mampu mendeskripsikan fungsi sosial, struktur teks, unsur kebahasaan report text serta mampu menyusun dan mempresentasikan report text dengan baik."

(Students are able to describe the social function, text structure, and language features of a report text, and able to compose and present the text well.)

Besides, only MA 1, 2, 4, 8, and 10 wrote the elements of learning skills for listening and speaking, reading and viewing, or writing and presenting. Moreover, the component of learners' prior knowledge and TP were unconnected.

Regarding the component of meaningful understanding, all seven MAs mentioned as the same as what they wrote for TP. More specifically, they did not explain what experiences students could gain from the classroom activities. However, all MAs engaged students in classroom activities actively. Similarly, seven MAs formulated several questions to trigger students' responses. However, only MA 7 applied the triggering questions in pre-activities to activate students' prior knowledge instead of providing questions in whilst-activities; even MA 2 presented the triggering questions mismatched with the materials discussed, as below:

- Do you like the activity?
- What is your opinion about do ice breaking before the lesson?
- What is the importance of doing ice breaking before the lesson?

Since three MAs only contained of the essential components (MA 4, 8, 10), they conducted the learning activities only for the main or whilst-activities. They applied a scientific model with unclear stages where the learning process was described briefly and seemed monotonous. Meanwhile, the seven MAs employed a learning model in the teaching and learning process, although some MAs did not implement it appropriately. In other words, they missed a particular stage or different from the principles of it, like MA 6 when it was stated that the discovery learning would be implemented. However, the class activities did not demonstrate that learning model at all.

Only four out of 10 MAs applied learning reflections where three of them inserted the reflection briefly in the post activities by asking, "Do you have any difficulties in learning the materials discussed today? What do you feel after involving the classroom activities? Is it fun?" (MA 1, 6, and 7). Unlike MA 5, it designed two kinds of learning reflection: reflection for learners and teachers. Furthermore, in designing assessments, five MAs designed assessments as learning (MA 2), for learning (MA 6), and of learning (MA 1, 3, and 5). Other MAs have mentioned the types of MA they applied but did not elaborate on the assessment rubrics or test items. In addition, all MAs did not design the assessment matrix.

In the appendix, there are only three MAs consisting of three essential components that did not provide the learning sheets. They also did not provide references. For the other seven MAs, although they have provided learning sheets, only one provided the references (MA 1).

As previously stated, this present study was aimed at describing the *Modul Ajar* (MA) developed by senior high school teachers in Surabaya in terms of the systematics of every component of the MA. *Modul Ajar* is a document containing learning objectives, learning activities, learning media and assessment needed in one unit or topic based on the flow of learning objectives (the Minister Decree Number 56/2022). As implied from this definition, therefore, in implementing independent curriculum, three components, such as learning objectives, learning activities, and assessment are strongly suggested to be included in MA.

Based on the results of MA analysis, it was reported that 3 out of 10 teachers' MAs already included those three components, they are MA 4, 8, and 10. From this result, it can be concluded that many teachers still lacked of knowledge on developing a good and standardized MA. In addition, in terms of the systematics of every component developed in those 10 teachers' MA, unfortunately those MAs analysis showed unsatisfying results. In general, many of them still have difficulties in developing MA. These difficulties will gradually become weaknesses for them if they do not try some efforts to cope with those difficulties. Based on the results of analysis on those 10 teachers' MAs, it was found out that mostly teachers got difficulties in formulating the learning objectives. Instead of using observable and measurable verbs, they unsystematically formulated their learning objectives. Besides, among four aspects of learning objectives, they only mentioned two them, they are audience and behavior. Moreover, there were also no relations between the component of learners' prior knowledge and learning objectives. Similar case also occurred in formulating the component of meaningful understanding. Here, many teachers did not explain clearly what experiences that students could obtain from the classroom activities. Another diffi-



culty that becomes weaknesses is the component of the learning model, method or technique applied during the learning process. Although seven MAs had already mentioned their learning model explicitly, the stages of how to implement those learning models were not explained in those MAs. MA 6, for instance, had mentioned discovery learning as the learning model implemented during the learning process. However, the class activities portrayed in the component of learning activities did not show it at all. In addition to those difficulties, the components of reflections and appendices also become the teachers' difficulties as well as weaknesses in developing their MA. From 10 MAs, only 4 of them which presented the component of reflections from both the teacher and students. While concerning the appendices, some MAs had elaborated the learning materials and the students' work sheets (*LKPD*). Unfortunately, they did not develop it from the easiest to the difficult one – from the concrete to the abstract one. In addition, they also did not provide references.

However, although many weaknesses were found in those 10 teachers' MAs, strengths can still be found in those MAs. For example, in terms of general information, seven out of 10 MAs had already stated it, particularly information related to the course or subject identity, students' prior knowledge, *Pancasila* learner profile (*Profil Pelajar Pancasila*), infrastructure facilities, learner targets, and learning models. In addition, the component of triggering questions also becomes the strengths for those teachers. Most of them had stated triggering questions in pre-activities or whilst-activities.

From those two points of view, i.e., weaknesses and strengths, recommendations finally come up particularly to solve those weaknesses. Any teachers' professional developments are urgently needed, especially workshops on developing a well-organized teachers' teaching module (*Modul Ajar*). In addition, discussions among teachers on independent curriculum with its related components, such as *Modul Ajar*, assessment, etc., can also be conducted in any meetings of teacher association.

## 4 Conclusion

From the results and discussion above, finally, it can be concluded that many teachers still have difficulties in developing a well-organized teachers' teaching module (*Modul Ajar*). These difficulties will gradually become weaknesses for them if they do not try some efforts to cope with those difficulties. Therefore, any recommendations such as workshops on developing a well-organized teachers' teaching module (*Modul Ajar*) and teachers' discussions on independent curriculum with its related components (like *Modul Ajar*, assessment, etc.) are very pivotal to be conducted.

## Authors' contributions

The writers collaboratively work to write the manuscript starting from conceptualization, data collection and analysis, sources, drafting, and editing.

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