

ASSESSING THE ALIGNMENT OF "ENGLISH FOR CHANGE" TEXTBOOK WITHIN MERDEKA CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

¹Ameliana, ^{1*}Syifa Khuriyatus Zahro

¹English Language Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
Universitas Islam Darul 'Ulum Lamongan, East Java, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author Email: syifazahro@unisda.ac.id

Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: April 2025 Revised: July 2025 Accepted: September 2025 Published: October 2025	<i>With the introduction of the Merdeka Curriculum in the Indonesian educational system, new instructional materials were developed to support its implementation, including textbooks designed to align with the Curriculum's emphasis on global standards such as the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages (CEFR). Merdeka Curriculum-based textbooks require systematic evaluation to determine their alignment with both the Merdeka curriculum goals and CEFR proficiency levels. While existing studies do not focus on skill-specific material alignment with CEFR in English textbooks, this study fills a key gap by analyzing to what extent "Bahasa Inggris: English for Change" aligns with Merdeka Curriculum and the CEFR framework. This research aims to investigate the skill-specific alignment of the "Bahasa Inggris: English for Change" textbook for grade XI with the Merdeka Curriculum within the CEFR B1 framework. Using a descriptive qualitative content analysis approach and the adapted Tanto rubric, the textbook was evaluated across four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The results indicate a high level of alignment, with overall 80% of the materials strongly conforming to CEFR B1 descriptors, and 20% showing moderate alignment with particular skills, such as reading, listening, and speaking. These results demonstrated that most of the specific-skill material in the textbook highly aligns with CEFR B1. This offers valuable insight for curriculum developers, textbook authors, and teachers by highlighting the alignment of textbook materials with both CEFR B1 and Merdeka Curriculum standards.</i>
Keywords English textbook; Language curriculum; Merdeka curriculum; CEFR framework; Language assessment;	
How to cite: Ameliana, A., & Zahro, S.K. (2025). Assessing the Alignment of "English for Change" Textbook within the Merdeka Curriculum Framework. <i>JOLLT Journal of Languages and Language Teaching</i> , 13(4), 2091-2102. Doi: https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v13i4.15433	

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks hold a core component in supporting language instruction, serving as the primary resource, accepted language input, and practice for students (Richards, 2011). In English language teaching, they are considered indispensable, with no teaching-learning context seeming complete without a relevant textbook (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). Textbooks also offer significant advantages for both teachers and students in English as a second language (ESL) or foreign language (EFL) contexts (Sheldon, 1988). Most importantly, they help shape the direction, content, and even the method of ESL or EFL lessons. In essence, textbooks are fundamental to English language instruction, guiding both context and method while supporting effective learning in ESL and EFL contexts.

Published in December 2022, "*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*" is a new English textbook developed to support and align with the *Merdeka Curriculum*, and has been used as an English learning resource in most Indonesian schools for one academic year. Designed for students in phase F, grades XI and XII, the book aims for students to achieve proficiency at the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) level B1 (Rohimajaya et al., 2022). At the B1 level of CEFR, students are classified as independent

users of the language. They are expected to understand the main points of things commonly encountered at work, school, and leisure contexts, participate in situations likely to arise when travelling in regions where English is spoken, produce simple texts on familiar or personally relevant topics, and describe experiences, events, aspirations, and opinions (Council of Europe, 2020).

Given its widespread use and the ongoing application, evaluating the content and relevance of the textbook to the *Merdeka* Curriculum is essential. This Curriculum enables teachers to design learning experiences tailored to students' needs and the classroom context (Pratycia et al., 2023). As textbook evaluation plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of the Curriculum in schools (Dewi & Alam, 2022), its evaluation is critical for determining its alignment with the Curriculum that incorporates the CEFR frameworks. To ensure its effectiveness, both the Curriculum and its supporting materials require systematic evaluation against the educational standards. This Process ensures instructional materials support curriculum objectives and improve learning outcomes.

While prior studies have explored CEFR-aligned textbooks from various perspectives, such as teachers' perceptions (Mohamad Uri & Abdul Aziz, 2024; Aman, 2021), cultural representation (Sahar & Emaliana, 2024), and general curriculum feasibility (Wardani et al., 2023), little is known about the evaluation of textbook content in relation to both CEFR descriptors and national curricula. Sulistiani (2024) conducted a CEFR-based content analysis, but only addressed one specific textbook, *English for Nusantara*, whose reading and speaking tasks misaligned with CEFR B1, revealing a gap in skill-related examinations and highlighting the need for a more comprehensive analysis of other relevant English textbook materials for CEFR alignment.

Furthermore, previous research on the *Merdeka* Curriculum has primarily focused on specific aspects of textbooks rather than evaluating skill-specific aspects. Ripalga and Fitrawati (2023), for example, analyzed questions in reading assignments. Permatasari and Arsyad (2023) studied the coherence of reading texts from Work in Progress books, and Kamil (2023) focused solely on the suitability of reading texts in relation to the CEFR. Notably, a single study analyzed the "*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*" textbook using four aspects of Cunningsworth's theory (Efendi et al., 2023). Despite the national adoption of the Curriculum, the effectiveness of *Merdeka* Curriculum-based English textbooks remains underexplored, particularly in relation to CEFR alignment across all language skills.

The growing emphasis on aligning English language teaching with both national standards and international frameworks necessitates the evaluation of instructional materials to meet the expected proficiency level and learning outcomes. However, current research has not sufficiently examined how well widely used textbooks support these goals, particularly in terms of skill integration and level appropriateness. This study fills a significant gap by offering a skill-specific analysis of the "*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*" textbook to assess its alignment with both national and international standards. This study aims to answer the following research question: To what extent do the skill-specific materials in "*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*" align with the Learning Outcomes (*Capaian Pembelajaran/ CP*) for English in phase F of the *Merdeka* curriculum and the CEFR B1?. This study, therefore, seeks to describe the extent to which the textbook skill-specific materials align with the *Merdeka* curriculum and CEFR B1.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

A qualitative approach through content analysis design is used to understand and evaluate each data obtained more comprehensively and in depth against primary data in the form of textbook material, "*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*", and its alignment with the

CP of the English subject of the *Merdeka* Curriculum based on CEFR B1. Qualitative analysis offers more profound insight into contextual and content-specific alignment. The selection of this textbook is justified by its widespread use in Indonesian secondary schools and its designation as an official learning resource within the *Merdeka* Curriculum framework, as a representative for evaluating alignment with national Curriculum and CEFR standards.

The main instrument used in this study is the researcher himself as an instrument that collects data and analyzes data obtained from primary data sources, "*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*" textbook, which refers to the four language skills of the CP of the English subject based on the *Merdeka* Curriculum and CEFR B1: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Reliability was ensured through the use of detailed analytical rubrics based on CEFR descriptors and each skill-specific learning outcome in the *Merdeka* Curriculum for the English subject, providing consistent criteria for classification and rating. To strengthen the trustworthiness of the analysis, multiple raters independently classified and reviewed the study, facilitating peer debriefing and consensus on any discrepancies. This Process helped maintain consistency and objectivity throughout the analysis.

Primary data in this study are in the form of words, phrases, and sentences obtained through a series of data collection procedures spanning multiple stages.

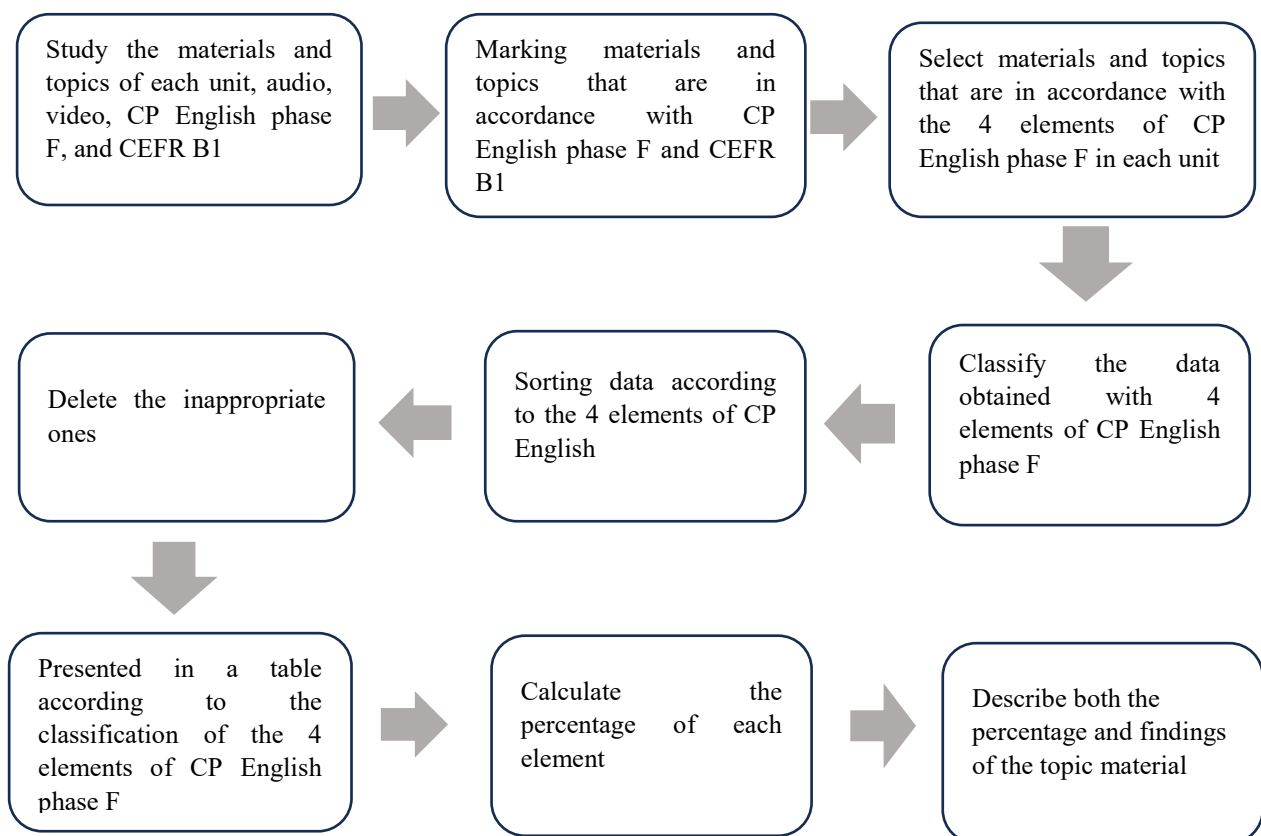


Figure 1. Data collection steps

After the data with the classification of four language skills of CP for English subjects had been obtained, the data were then analyzed using the theory of Miles et al. (2019) with three stages: (1) data condensation, (2) data presentation, and (3) concluding. In data condensation, the obtained data in the form of a classification is then condensed again by sorting the data according to the four language skills of the CP of the English subject and deleting those that are not appropriate. After being classified by the four language skills of the CP, the data are organized into tables and analyzed by calculating the percentage alignment of each language skill. Narrative descriptions were used to interpret the findings by comparing

the textbook content with the CP and CEFR B1 standards. A checklist rubric adapted from Tanto (2023) is used to assess each skill-specific material's alignment in the textbooks, as shown in Table 1. To visualize the overall summary, a chart that summarizes comparative percentages is employed to illustrate the alignment level across language skills.

Table 1
Checklist Rubric Instrument

High	Moderate	Low
More than 75% of the material aligns with the recommendations of both the English phase F learning outcome (CP) in the <i>Merdeka</i> Curriculum and the CEFR B1.	50-74% of the material aligns with the recommendations of either the English phase F learning outcome (CP) in the <i>Merdeka</i> Curriculum or the CEFR B1.	Less than 50% of the material aligns with the recommendations of both the English phase F learning outcome (CP) in the <i>Merdeka</i> Curriculum and the CEFR B1.

The final stage, concluding, involves answering research questions regarding the extent to which the skill-specific materials in “*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*” align with the Learning Outcomes (*Capaian Pembelajaran/ CP*) for English in phase F of the *Merdeka* curriculum and the CEFR B1.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to describe the alignment of the textbook skill-specific materials with the English phase F learning outcome (CP) in the *Merdeka* Curriculum and the CEFR B1. In detail, the study's results are described in accordance with the four language skills of the CP in the English subject: listening, reading, speaking, and writing, as outlined in the “*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*” textbook.

Listening Materials Alignment in “Bahasa Inggris: English for Change” with the CEFR B1 and the CP-based Merdeka Curriculum

CEFR B1 listening skill emphasizes understanding conversations about general matters commonly encountered in the workplace, school, and leisure time, etc., including understanding what is said or conveyed relatively clearly and slowly in radio and television programs on current topics, both personal and professional (Council of Europe, 2020). While CP in Phase F of English Subject Listening - Speaking, one of which requires students to use English to express opinions on social issues and to discuss interests, behaviors, and values across cultural contexts that are close to the lives of young people, and to provide and defend their opinions, make comparisons, and evaluate their perspectives (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022).

Based on Table 2, which presents the results of the listening material alignment analysis, it is evident that the majority of the listening materials are highly aligned with the CEFR B1, with a percentage of 75% and a total of 9 materials in the listening activities. The nine materials are in Units 1 -Activities 6a-6 b and 8, Unit 2 -Activities 3, Unit 3 -Activities 3, 4 - 5, Unit 4 -Activities 3 b- 3c, 4 and 5, Unit 5 Activities 1. Listening materials in several activities with high alignment are obtained from audio that can be accessed via QR code on page 266. All audio accessed via the QR code on page 266 can be heard clearly at a sufficient speed, not too slow or too fast. This corresponds to CEFR B1, where students can understand what is conveyed or discussed clearly. Furthermore, these materials align with CP Phase F English Subject Listening - Speaking, which corresponds to the CEFR B1, requiring students to understand conversations about current personal topics at school, work, or in their leisure time. Therefore, these materials are classified as highly aligned with the *Merdeka* Curriculum as they both suit the CEFR and the CP.

Table 2

Alignment of Listening Materials in “*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*” with the CEFR B1 and the CP-based *Merdeka* Curriculum

Unit	Page	Activities	Topics	High	Moderate	Low
1	6-7	6a-6b	<i>Starting opinions,</i>	✓		
	8	8	<i>agreeing & disagreeing</i>	✓		
2	48	3	<i>Personal Talk</i>	✓		
3	100	3	<i>Defending Opinions</i>	✓		
	101-102	4-5		✓		
	104	7			✓	
4	141	3b-3c	<i>Starting, Continuing &</i>	✓		
	142	4	<i>Ending Dialogue</i>	✓		
		5		✓		
5	189	1	<i>Saving Money</i>	✓		
	182	2	<i>Set a Budget</i>		✓	
		3	<i>Deposit checks</i>		✓	
Percentage				75%	25%	0%

A moderate level of alignment was observed in listening materials at 25% through three activities accessed via QR-linked YouTube videos: in Activity 7 on Unit 3, and Activities 2 and 3 on Unit 5 featured native-speaker audio that was reasonably too fast and unclear for students at the CEFR B1 level to follow effectively. Although these materials align with the *Merdeka* Curriculum’s standards, students' limited comprehensibility and deviation from CEFR listening descriptors highlight the partial nature of their alignment. Referring to the CEFR B1, which emphasizes that students can understand what is being discussed or conveyed relatively clearly, the three listening materials are considered moderately aligned with CEFR B1.

Given that Indonesians are EFL learners, Most Grade XI high school students have limited exposure to authentic spoken English in their daily lives. Consequently, they require audio or video materials delivered at a manageable pace. This aligns with Rintaningrum (2018), who found that one of the primary challenges Indonesian students face in developing listening is the limited opportunity to engage with English audio input, resulting in reduced listening comprehension ability.

Speaking Materials Alignment in “Bahasa Inggris: English for Change” with the CEFR B1 and the CP-based Merdeka Curriculum

The CEFR B1 has two speaking foci: speaking through interaction and independent production. Speaking with independent production focuses on independent speaking activities without interaction, while speaking through interaction emphasizes students' ability to start speaking without preparation when traveling in places where the language is used on familiar, personal, or everyday life topics such as family, hobbies, work, travel, and current events (Council of Europe, 2020). While CP in Phase F of the English Subject Listening - Speaking requires students to use English to communicate with teachers, peers and others by using and responding to open questions and starting, maintaining and concluding conversations and discussions, expressing opinions on social issues and to discuss interests, behaviors and values across cultural contexts that are close to young people's lives and providing and defending their opinions, making comparisons and evaluating their perspectives (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022).

The results of the alignment analysis of the speaking material can be seen in Table 3. The majority of the speaking materials exhibit a high level of alignment with the Independent Curriculum, based on the CEFR B1, with a percentage of 77% in listening activities. These

materials are in Units 1 - Activities 6, Unit 2 -Activities 8, Unit 3 -Activities 2c, 4, 5,6, and 7, Unit 4 -Activities 1b, 6, and 8, Unit 5 Activities 7, 8, 9, and 10. The speaking materials align with CP Phase F English Subject Listening - Speaking, which requires students to be able to speak through interactions that focus on speaking without preparation and speaking independently. This corresponds to the CEFR B1, where students can engage in speaking through interaction and independent production. Therefore, these materials are in line with the *Merdeka* Curriculum at a high level.

Table 3

Alignment of Speaking Materials in “*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*” with the CEFR B1 and the CP-based *Merdeka* Curriculum

Unit	Page	Activities	Topics	High	Moderate	Low
1	13	5	<i>Starting opinions,</i>		✓	
	14	6	<i>agreeing & disagreeing</i>	✓		
2	62	8	<i>Waste Management</i>	✓		
3	106	1b	<i>Defending Opinions</i>	✓		
	107	3c-4		✓		
	108	5	<i>A healthy morning routine</i>	✓		
	109	6	<i>Cycling as a sport</i>	✓		
	110	7	<i>Healthy lifestyle</i>	✓		
4	146-147	1b	<i>Starting, Continuing &</i>	✓		
	150	6, 8	<i>Ending Dialogue</i>	✓		
5	195	7	<i>Comparative Superlative</i>		✓	
	199	9-10	<i>Phrases</i>		✓	
	196	8	<i>Giving Opinion</i>	✓		
Percentage				77%	23%	0%

On the other hand, three speaking materials at 23% were at moderate alignment, as in Activities 5 in Unit 1, Activities 9 and 10 in Unit 5. Speaking Activity 5 in Unit 1 required students to prepare dialogues for specific situations provided, speaking material in Activity 7, Unit 5 emphasizes the superlatives task to write appropriate expressions in certain situations, in Activity 9, Unit 5, students are required to write dialogues in groups about financial literacy, and in Activity 10, Unit 5, they have to create a dialogue according to the picture presented using comparative phrases. While these activities aligned with the performance standards, they lacked spontaneity and thus did not meet the requirement of CEFR B1 for unprepared speech. However, the materials still align with English phase F CP of the *Merdeka* Curriculum, so the material is considered to have moderate alignment.

In the spirit of the *Merdeka* Curriculum’s student-centered ethos, speaking materials should be designed not merely as supplementary drills but as the backbone of English learning, because they operationalize communicative goals into observable classroom performances. If communication is the clearest indicator of proficiency (Sujinem, 2023), then the materials must foreground the full architecture of communicative competence: not only grammar and vocabulary, but also discourse features (cohesion, coherence), pragmatic norms (politeness, register, turn-taking), and strategic behaviors (asking for clarification, paraphrasing, repairing breakdowns). In practical terms, this means sequencing tasks from scaffolded, controlled practice toward freer, authentic interaction so that learners gradually assume agency. A pre-task phase can prime key lexis and functional language; a during-task phase orchestrates purposeful exchanges (e.g., problem-solving or information-gap tasks); and a post-task phase consolidates language with feedback and reflection. Such design keeps oral communication at the center (Ur, 1999) and ensures that textbooks and classroom texts embed opportunities to notice, rehearse, and deploy the components of communicative skill (Al-

Mashaqba, 2017), aligning the ultimate target of speaking classes with communicative performance itself (Zahro & Fariq, 2019).

Classroom enactment should therefore privilege rich practice over theory or scripted writing by offering varied speaking opportunities—individual micro-presentations, pair role-plays and interviews, and group tasks like jigsaw discussions, debates, simulations, or project pitches rooted in real local contexts. Materials can integrate listening inputs as models, provide sentence starters and discourse markers for fluency, and include intelligibility-focused pronunciation work so learners can negotiate meaning effectively. Technology can widen practice channels (audio/video recordings, peer feedback, and reflective journals), while differentiation keeps tasks accessible across proficiency levels through tiered objectives and optional supports. Assessment, likewise, should be performance-based: analytic rubrics that track fluency, accuracy, range, coherence, and pragmatics; cycles of formative feedback; and self/peer assessment using can-do statements to foster metacognitive growth. By weaving these elements into textbooks and activities, teachers create a high-frequency “speak to learn” environment where communication—in pairs, groups, and individually—drives learning, honors learner autonomy, and fulfills the Merdeka mandate to cultivate competent, confident English users in real-world situations.

Reading Materials Alignment in “Bahasa Inggris: English for Change” with the CEFR B1 and the CP-based Merdeka Curriculum

The reading skill at CEFR B1 emphasizes understanding texts related to daily life or work, as well as descriptions of events, feelings, and desires in personal letters (Council of Europe, 2020). While CP in Phase F of English Subject Reading - Listening one of which requires students to read and respond to various simple texts (descriptions, procedures, expositions, arguments and narratives) independently in written or digital form, including visual texts, multimodal, or interactive, reading to learn something and reading for pleasure, synthesizing and evaluating specific details and the essence of various types of texts, understanding main ideas, issues or plot developments in different kinds of texts, and identifying the author's purpose and making inferences to understand implied information in the text (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022).

Table 4

Alignment of Reading Materials in “Bahasa Inggris: English for Change” with the CEFR B1 and the CP-based *Merdeka* Curriculum

Unit	Page	Activities	Topics	High	Moderate	Low
1	15	1a	<i>Social Media Platform</i>	✓		
	16-17	2	<i>Simple Digital Texts</i>	✓		
	17-18	3	<i>Author & Creator Purpose</i>		✓	
	19-23	4-9	<i>Daily Digital Texts</i>	✓		
2	63-65	1-3	<i>Waste Management</i>	✓		
	66-67	5	<i>Descriptive Text</i>		✓	
	68-69	6	<i>Main Idea</i>		✓	
	70-72	7-8	<i>Text about Waste</i>	✓		
3	111-113	1-2	<i>Healthy life</i>	✓		
	114-115	4	<i>Exposition Text</i>		✓	
	116-121	5-9	<i>Health Life-Main Idea</i>	✓		
4	152	2	<i>Environmental Activists</i>	✓		
	153-155	4b, 6-8	<i>Narrative Essay about the</i>	✓		
	156-158		<i>activits</i>			
5	200-201	1-2	<i>Internet Banking</i>	✓		
	202-204	4-5	<i>Procedure Text</i>		✓	
	205-207	6-9	<i>ATM</i>	✓		
Percentage				67%	31%	0%

Table 4 above shows that in the reading materials, a high level of alignment was obtained at 67% of Activities 1a, 2, and 4-9 in Unit 1, Activities 1-3, and 7-8 in Unit 2, Activities 1-2, and 5-9 in Unit 3, Activities 2, 4b, and 6-8 in Unit 4, and Activities 1-2, and 6-9 in Unit 5. The aforementioned materials have a high level of alignment with CEFR B1 and CP English *Merdeka* Curriculum because it is related to everyday life in reading through social media, which is related to everyday life about waste, health, and the environment, also about banking that is done daily, both with internet banking or ATMs and cards. These topics are at the CEFR B1, which requires students to understand texts related to their daily lives. In addition, the material aligns with the English CP *Merdeka* curriculum, especially in reading, which requires students to read not only through physical writing but also in digital form, both independently and in groups. Therefore, the reading materials are in accordance with the *Merdeka* Curriculum, which is based on the CEFR B1.

However, 31% reading activities were classified as moderately suitable, such as Activity 3 in Unit 1 (author & creator's purpose), Activity 5 in Unit 2 (descriptive text), in Activity 6 in Unit 2 (main idea), Activities 4 in Unit 3 (exposition text), Activities 4 and 5 in Unit 5 (procedure text). These activities are moderately suitable in addressing the *Merdeka* Curriculum's Phase F, particularly in supporting the goal of reading to learn. However, these materials are often too focused on conceptual explanation and definitions, which contradict both the CEFR B1, which emphasizes real-world contexts rather than explanations of concepts, and the *Merdeka* Curriculum aims to minimize definitional content.

The findings of these reading materials lack alignment with CEFR B1, supporting Efendi et al. (2023), who found that there were only seven reading texts at CEFR B1, while 15 other reading texts were above CEFR B1. The problem of reading material unalignment was not only found in grade XI phase F books. Kamil (2023) found that the reading materials of grade X English books with Phase E were classified as low because only two texts were in accordance with CEFR B1, while 16 texts were not in accordance with CEFR B1 standards, so the reading materials in grade X English books showed that there was still a mismatch with the CEFR B1.

Writing Materials Alignment in "Bahasa Inggris: English for Change" with the CEFR B1 and the CP-based Merdeka Curriculum

The writing skill at CEFR B1 emphasizes the ability to write simple connected texts on familiar topics or personal interests, and to write experiences and impressions in personal letters (Council of Europe, 2020). While CP at Phase F of English Subject Writing - Presenting requires students to be able to write various types of fictional and factual texts independently, planning, writing, reviewing and rewriting multiple kinds of texts by demonstrating self-correction strategies, including punctuation, capitalization and grammar, conveying complex ideas and using a variety of vocabulary and grammar in their writing, writing main sentences in their paragraphs and using time markers for sequence, as well as conjunctions, linking words and third person pronouns to connect or differentiate ideas between and within paragraphs (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022).

Table 5

Alignment of Writing Materials in "Bahasa Inggris: English for Change" with the CEFR B1 and the CP-based *Merdeka* Curriculum

Unit	Page	Activities	Topics	High	Moderate	Low
1	34-38	4, 6-10	<i>Social Media Post</i>	✓		
2	85-86	1-2	<i>Punctuation on Short Social Media Messages</i>	✓		
	87-90	4-5, 8	<i>Punctuation & Capitalization</i>	✓		

Unit	Page	Activities	Topics	High	Moderate	Low
3	126-130	1-6	<i>Healthy Life</i>	✓		
	130	7	<i>Gardening</i>	✓		
4	168	1b	<i>Environment figure</i>	✓		
	171-173	7-9		✓		
	170	5-6a	<i>Event on Text</i>	✓		
5	218	2	<i>Save Money Poster</i>	✓		
	220	5	<i>Mind Map</i>	✓		
	221-222	6-8	<i>How to shop online</i>	✓		
Percentage				100%	0%	0%

As shown in Table 5, the analysis of the writing material reveals a 100% level of high alignment with the *Merdeka* Curriculum. Topics presented in the writing materials, such as writing comments on social media statuses or posts, health, gardening, saving money, and writing about how to shop online, are personal topics and interests familiar to students at the CEFR B1 in writing. In addition, these materials are also in accordance with the English CP phase F of the *Merdeka* curriculum, in writing that students are required to be able to write various types of texts independently, make plans, write, review, and rewrite various kinds of texts by showing self-correction strategies, including punctuation, capitalization, and grammar, and also peer correction. In CEFR B1, Díez-Bedmar (2018) emphasizes the importance of peer correction, noting that the strategy of correcting each other's writing produced by peers can help students build monitoring skills to improve the quality of their writing. In addition, the results of the perfect writing are in line with the findings of Efendi et al. (2023), who evaluated that the writing had been presented in a well-made sequence with well-guided writing tasks, given useful phrases and vocabulary to help students compose targeted writing.

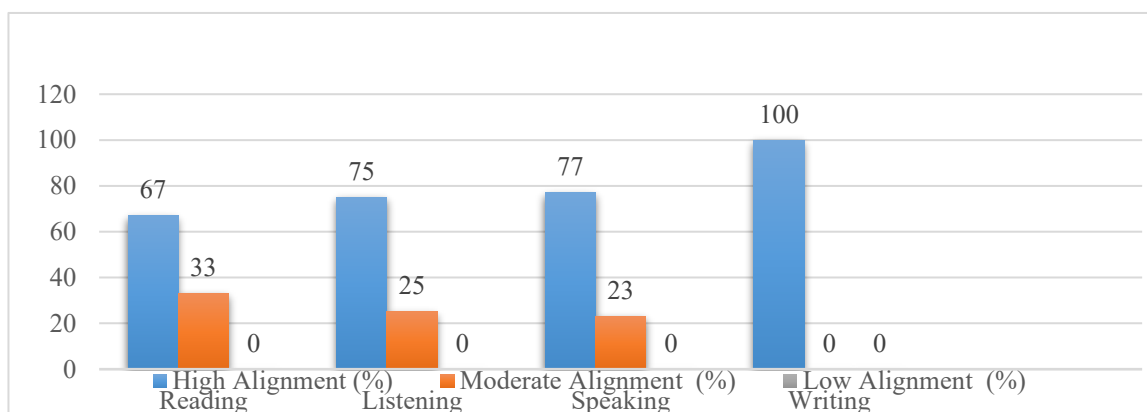


Figure 1. Alignment Levels of Textbook Materials by Language Skill

Based on the results of the analysis above, of the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, the “*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*” has a high level of alignment with the *Merdeka* curriculum with an overall percentage of 80% including; 75% in the listening, 77% in the speaking, 67% in the reading, and 100% in the writing. In contrast, the remaining 20% falls into the moderate level of alignment, comprising 25% listening, 23% speaking, and 33% reading. No material with low alignment was found in this textbook. These findings directly supported the findings of Efendi et al. (2023) that “*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*” textbook is well written with Communicative Language learning by the recommended approach, method, and level.

In light of the findings of a moderate level of alignment between both CEFR B1 and the English CP phase F of the *Merdeka* curriculum, and the analyzed textbook materials

across reading, listening, and speaking skills, notable gaps emerged, particularly in listening and speaking materials that lacked opportunities for authentic, and interactive communication, which limit their alignment with performance-based outcomes (Tanto, 2023; Aprilia et al., 2024). Reading tasks similarly emphasized literal or surface-level comprehension rather than inferential or critical engagement, which diverges from prescribed learning outcomes (Tanto, 2023). This misalignment suggests a disconnect between the intended competencies and the instructional material provided, which potentially impedes language proficiency development (Irsyad et al., 2024). Overall, the moderate alignment across the three skills reflects a tension between curriculum-based objectives and the CEFR's communicative benchmarks, which underscores the need for more carefully calibrated instructional materials and greater teacher support in adaptation (Pratiwi, 2025; Aprilia et al., 2024).

The communicative intention embedded within the *Merdeka* Curriculum explicitly targets CEFR-equivalent proficiency, particularly aiming for students to reach Phase F, corresponding to CEFR B1. Nonetheless, empirical evaluation of EFL textbooks reveals persistent misalignments as revealed in Tanto (2023). These findings highlight a discrepancy: while the curriculum emphasizes spontaneous and meaningful communication, textbooks frequently still rely on structures, pre-scripted tasks that do not promote real-life language use (Tanto, 2023; Aprilia et al., 2024). Additionally, research on teacher adaptation evidences the practical response to these materials' shortcomings. English teachers implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum have intentionally adapted and modified materials, acknowledging that existing textbooks frequently fail to match students' proficiency needs or adequately support communicative goals (Pratiwi, 2025). Therefore, although curriculum design intends to foster communicative competence, instructional material and classroom practice continue to exhibit persistent gaps in authenticity and interaction. These insights reveal a clear misalignment between the curriculum's communicative vision and both textbook design and current pedagogical practice. Addressing this gap requires both systematic material revision of instructional resources alongside the advancement of teacher preparedness through targeted professional development.

CONCLUSION

The results of the analysis presented above reveal that "*Bahasa Inggris: English for Change*" textbook, designed based on the *Merdeka* Curriculum, referring to the CEFR B1, exhibits a high level of alignment, with a percentage of 80% for the four language skills analyzed. The writing materials have a 100% high level of alignment, followed by the speaking materials with a rate of 77%, and the listening materials with 75%. Meanwhile, the reading materials were the least skilled to suit a high level of alignment 67% which is below 70%. This needs to be an essential concern for the textbook users to adjust 33% of the reading materials, 23% of the speaking materials, and 25% of the listening materials with a moderate level of alignment. They are required to adapt material from outside the textbook to suit both CEFR B1 and CP English subjects phase F in the *Merdeka* Curriculum.

Since this textbook is the leading textbook in the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum for teachers and students, on the other hand, material adaptation steps must be taken by teachers to achieve a better alignment level, especially for materials with a moderate alignment, both with CEFR B1 and with the CP of the English subject Phase F in the *Merdeka* Curriculum. It is imperative that educational policymakers implement clear and sustained strategies to ensure the alignment of textbooks with national curriculum standards and inclusive pedagogical goals. Continuous monitoring of textbook content is essential to identify and address biases, inaccuracies, and outdated materials. Targeted professional development for teachers, equipping them with skills to critically engage with curricular material and adapt instruction to diverse classroom contexts, is essential to form a foundation of a responsive education system to meet the students' needs.

REFERENCES

- Al-Mashaqba, N.J.H. (2017). Micro and macro content analysis of English textbook entitled "Mosaic One Listening and Speaking (Student's Book)" in the light of communicative competence. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 8(2), 41–47.
- Aman, Z.B. (2021). *Teachers' perceptions toward the implementation of CEFR aligned textbook in secondary school* (Master thesis, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia). UTM Repository . <https://eprints.utm.my/100273/1/ZulaikaMPP2021.pdf>
- Aprilia, D., Izdihara, S.I.S., & Apoko, T.W. (2024) An Evaluation of the Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum Policy in English Lesson: A qualitative study in upper secondary school. *Journal of English Teaching, Literature, and Applied Linguistics*, 8(2), 193–198. <https://doi.org/10.30587/jetlal.v8i2.7852>
- Council of Europe. (2020). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning (CEFR)*. (For CEFR B1 Benchmark).
- Díez-Bedmar, M.B. (2018). Fine-tuning descriptors for CEFR B1 level: insights from learner corpora. *ELT Journal*, 72(2), 199–209.
- Dewi, E.R., & Alam, A. (2022). Facilities and Merdeka Curriculum influence students' achievement through knowledge and learning quality. *Journal of Educational Science and Technology (EST)*, 8(3), 198–208.
- Efendi, T.A., Nurhidayah, S., & Prihantini, A.F. (2023). An analysis of English textbook entitled "English for Change" with reference to Independent Learning Curriculum. *Language and Art: Lunar*, 7(2), 1–14.
- Hutchinson, T., & Torres, E. (1994). The textbook as agent of change. *ELT Journal*, 48(4), 315–328
- Irsyad, S.F., Syarif, H., & Zainil, Y. (2024). Flexible approach in English language learning curriculum design: Optimizing teaching in Merdeka Curriculum. *Eduvest - Journal of Universal Studies*, 4(11), 9843–9852. <https://doi.org/10.59188/eduvest.v4i11.43675>
- Kamil, D. (2023). Are they finely tuned?: Mapping the CEFR level of the reading texts of the English textbook for grade 10 of Indonesian senior high school. *Eduvelop: Journal of English Education and Development*, 6(2), 93102.
- Miles, M.B., Huberman, A.M., & Saldaña, J. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Ministry of Education and Culture. (2022). *Merdeka Curriculum*. (For Phase F English CP Reference)
- Mohamad Uri, N. F., & Abdul Aziz, M. S. (2024). Materials adaptation of imported CEFR textbooks: Teachers' perceptions and practices. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction (MJLI)*, 21(2), 23–47.
- Permatasari, C. Y., & Arsyad, S. (2023). Coherence analysis of reading texts in English textbooks for class X SMA "Work in Progress" published by Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. *Journal of English for Specific Purposes in Indonesia*, 2(1), 59–66.
- Pratiwi, W. R. (2025). Transforming education with the "Merdeka Belajar Curriculum: Digging into challenges and crafting effective strategies in rural Indonesia. *ENGLISH FRANCA: Academic Journal of English Language and Education*, 9(1), 111–128. <https://doi.org/10.29240/ef.v9i1 May.12737>
- Pratycia, A., Putra, A.D., Salsabila, A.G.M., Adha, F.I., & Fuadin, A. (2023). Analisis perbedaan Kurikulum 2013 dengan Kurikulum Merdeka. *Jurnal Pendidikan Sains Dan Komputer*, 3(1), 58–64.
- Richards, J.C. (2011). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

- Rintaningrum, R. (2018). Investigating reasons why listening in English is difficult: Voice from foreign language learners. *Asian EFL Journal*, 20(11), 6–15.
- Ripalga, R., & Fitrawati, F. (2023). An analysis of questions on reading tasks in the English textbook “Work in Progress” in Merdeka Curriculum. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 12(2), 570–581.
- Rohimajaya, N.A., Hartono, R., Yuliasri, I., & Fitriati, S.W. (2022). Kurikulum 2013 dan Kurikulum Merdeka dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris untuk SMA di era digital. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pascasarjana (PROSNAMPAS)*, 5(1), 825–829.
- Sahar, R., & Emaliana, I. (2024). Analysis of cultural contents in CEFR-aligned English Proficiency Textbook: Implications for material development for intercultural learning. *The International Young Scholars Journal of Languages (IYSJL)*, 6 44-55
- Sheldon, L.E. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbook and materials. *ELT Journal*, 42(4), 237–246
- Sujinem, S. (2023). Analysis of implementation of Communicative Approach in teaching English under “Kurikulum Merdeka”. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemikiran*, 3(1), 56–68
- Sulistiani, E.R. (2024) *Content analysis of " English For Nusantara" textbook for eight grade based on CEFR Level B1*. (Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau. UIN-Suska Repository. <https://repository.uin-suska.ac.id/81908/>
- Tanto, F.R. (2023). *An analysis of the English textbook "Bahasa Inggris Work in Progress" based on the Curriculum Merdeka*. (Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta). UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Institutional Repository <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/74731>
- Tomlinson, B. (2011). *Material development in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Ur, P. (1999). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wardani, N. E., Suwandi, S., & Ulya, C. (2023). Feasibility assessment of Merdeka Curriculum in Bahasa Indonesia digital textbooks for class VII junior high schools. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 13(12), 3268-3278.
- Zahro, S.K., & Tasaufy, F.S. (2019). The development of educational YouTube videos-based instructional material for Speaking for Beginner Course. *Indonesian Journal of English Teaching: IJET*, 8(2), 105–114.