

Constructing WHERE TO-Based Learning Activities: Escalating Competencies of Guru Penggerak Batch 10 in Medan City

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Abstract: Teacher competency scores in Indonesia remain suboptimal, with an average score of 57 out of 100 in 2019. Specifically, Indonesia's teacher quality ranked 14th out of 14 developing countries according to UNESCO's 2016 GEM Report. To address these challenges, the Ministry of Education and Culture launched the Guru Penggerak program to enhance educational quality through student-centered learning and professional development. This study aims to improve the professional competencies of Guru Penggerak Batch 10 teachers in Medan City by constructing teaching modules using the WHERE TO framework within the context of differentiated learning and the Merdeka Curriculum. The research utilized a one-shot pretest-posttest group design conducted over two cycles. Participants included Batch 10 prospective Guru Penggerak teachers who underwent workshops and intensive mentoring. Data were collected via performance tests focusing on lesson plan design and analyzed using an independent T-test. Quantitative analysis revealed a significant improvement in teacher competencies, with average scores reaching 88 after two cycles. Statistical testing yielded a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the WHERE TO framework significantly impacts competency escalation. The framework encompassing Where, Hook, Explore, Reflect, Evaluate, Tailored, and Organized effectively addressed gaps in systematic instructional design and student-centered sequencing. The construction of WHERE TO-based learning activities serves as an effective integrative mechanism for developing multiple teacher competency domains, including curriculum knowledge, planning, and assessment. This approach fosters innovative thinking and professional autonomy among teachers in the Medan City region.

Keywords: Where To, Teacher Competencies

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Introduction

The background of this study is based on the mapping of the Teacher Competency Test (UKG) scores in 2019, which showed that elementary school teachers obtained an average score of 54.8%, junior high school teachers 58.6%, senior high school teachers 62.3%, and vocational high school teachers 58.4%. Based on these results, the average teacher competency score was only 57 out of 100 (Riowati & Nono H. Yoenanto, 2022). This is supported by data from UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report 2016, which indicates that Indonesia ranked 10th out of 14 developing countries, while the quality of Indonesian teachers ranked 14th out of 14 developing countries. In terms of academic achievement, OECD data show a declining trend across all assessed domains. For example, the gap in mathematics scores between Indonesian students and those in OECD countries decreased from 139 points in 2000 to 115 points in 2018. Indonesia's unsatisfactory achievement may be attributed to various factors, such as geographical disparities in educational quality, students' socio-economic conditions, and the lack of adequate educational facilities and infrastructure.

In the non-academic domain, such as attitude and behavior education, data from the Ministry of Education and Culture also indicate the need for improvement. For instance, 41% of Indonesian students reported experiencing bullying several times within a month. This bullying resulted in a 21-

point lower reading score among affected students. Furthermore, the teacher's role as a facilitator in the classroom contributes significantly to engaging students' participation in applying the Flipped Classroom (FC) method (Nissa, 2023).

This research is important because some urgent reason (1) While Guru Penggerak receive training on various pedagogical frameworks, understanding how they actually construct and implement WHERE TO-based activities in real classroom contexts reveals whether the training translates into practice. This helps identify what works and what needs improvement (Ardiansyah et.al, 2023). (2) Supporting teacher professional development - By examining how these teachers escalate or develop their competencies specifically through WHERE TO methodology, the research can inform more effective professional development programs. It shows the progression of skills and where teachers might need additional support (Wuryaningsih W., 2023). (3) Contextualizing pedagogy for Medan - Educational strategies don't always transfer uniformly across different contexts. Studying implementation specifically in Medan City accounts for local challenges, resources, student populations, and cultural factors that affect how teaching methods succeed or need adaptation (Gusti et. all, 2025). (4) Evaluating the Guru Penggerak program - Since Guru Penggerak is a key initiative in Indonesian education reform, documenting how Batch 10 teachers develop their competencies provides evidence of program effectiveness and areas for refinement in future cohorts (Learning-Focused. (n.d.). 2025) (5) Building evidence-based practice - Research like this creates a knowledge base showing which aspects of WHERE TO methodology most effectively enhance teacher competencies, providing empirical support for continuing or modifying this approach(Hilmiatussadiah, et. all, 2024)

Based on the analysis of the issues related to teachers' competencies and students' learning outcomes, greater attention is required to address the quality of education, particularly in improving teachers' competencies. (Cahyono, 2020) stated that, in addition to the curriculum, teachers are one of the important competency factors in improving the quality of education. Teachers with high competence are able to implement teaching methods systematically, starting from preparation, through the instructional process in accordance with learning principles, and conducting evaluations to measure the learning objectives outlined in the initial instructional design.

The research gap of this study is despite the growing body of research on the Guru Penggerak program and instructional frameworks in general, there remains a significant gap in understanding how specific pedagogical frameworks particularly the WHERE TO framework are practically constructed and implemented by teachers to escalate their professional competencies. Furthermore, batch-specific and location-specific studies are lacking, leaving unanswered questions about regional implementation variations and the progressive development of teacher competencies through framework-based learning activities. This study addresses these gaps by examining the construction of WHERE TO-based learning activities and the resulting competency escalation among Guru Penggerak Batch 10 specifically in Medan City context. The novelty of this research is specifically examining the WHERE TO instructional framework within the Indonesian Guru Penggerak program. While instructional frameworks have been studied globally, their application in Indonesia's unique educational reform context is novel.

To improve teachers' competencies, the Ministry of Education and Culture launched the Guru Penggerak program. The principles of the Guru Penggerak program are to encourage efforts to enhance the quality of education both in schools and beyond through the use of andragogical approaches and blended learning. The objectives of the Guru Penggerak Program are to enable teachers to develop themselves as well as other teachers through reflection, sharing, and collaboration; to possess moral, emotional, and spiritual maturity in accordance with professional ethical standards; and to plan, implement, reflect on, and evaluate student-centered learning by involving parents. The purpose of this study is to improve the competencies of prospective Guru Penggerak teachers in

developing teaching modules for the learning process by using the WHERE TO framework in differentiated learning within the Merdeka Curriculum.

Method

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a one-shot pretest–posttest group design. The research was conducted in Guru Penggerak Program at Education Department, East Medan, Sumatera Utara Indonesia, during the ten months implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The population of this study consisted of all teachers involved in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at the research site. The sample comprised five teachers, selected using a purposive sampling technique, with the criteria that participants were actively teaching and involved in designing lesson plans and teaching modules.

In this study, the researcher acted as a facilitator, directly assisting participants in identifying and applying participatory methods for developing teaching modules. These modules were subsequently used to enhance learning tools in classroom instruction (Hudayana et al., 2019). The instructional design integrated the WHERE TO framework within the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) and Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) learning models in the development of Merdeka Curriculum teaching modules. In terms of Technology Readiness Level (TRL/TKT), this research was positioned at Levels 1–3, indicating the stages of basic concept formulation, proof of concept, and early development.

Data were collected through a performance test, which assessed teachers' abilities in designing lesson plans based on the developed teaching modules. The performance test produced quantitative score data, measured using a validated scoring rubric. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics to examine teachers' performance scores, followed by an independent samples t-test to determine differences in teachers' abilities in lesson plan design as presented in the research results. All analyses were performed at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

Results and Discussion

The pre-assessment through collection of existing teaching modules revealed significant baseline data. Analysis of teaching modules previously developed by prospective Guru Penggerak teachers of Batch 10 showed considerable variation in pedagogical structure and instructional design quality. The diagnostic assessment identified that most modules lacked systematic framework integration, with limited evidence of student-centered learning approaches and insufficient alignment between learning objectives and assessment strategies.

Comprehensive Analysis Outcomes Three-dimensional analysis produced critical insights that shaped the intervention design: 1) Needs Analysis Results: The examination revealed that teachers required structured guidance in designing learning activities. Existing modules demonstrated gaps in systematic activity sequencing, differentiation strategies, and formative assessment integration. 2) Curriculum Analysis Results: The analysis confirmed strong alignment between the Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on learner independence and the WHERE TO framework's principles. The curriculum's flexibility provided an optimal context for implementing WHERE TO-based approaches. 3) Characteristics Analysis Results: Profiling of Batch 10 teachers revealed a cohort with diverse teaching experiences (ranging from 5 to 15 years), varied subject area expertise, and high motivation for professional development. The analysis identified readiness for innovative framework adoption while also highlighting the need for structured scaffolding during implementation.

Based on the diagnostic and analytical findings, the WHERE TO framework emerged as the evidence-based solution. The framework's components Where are we going, Hook, Explore/Experience/Enable, Reflect/Rethink/Refine, Evaluate, Tailored, and Organized directly addressed the identified gaps in teachers' instructional design practices, particularly during core

learning activities. The literature review successfully established a robust theoretical foundation connecting three key domains. The synthesis of references on the Guru Penggerak concept, Merdeka Curriculum requirements, and WHERE TO framework principles created a coherent conceptual framework that guided the intervention. This integration confirmed the compatibility between Guru Penggerak competency standards and WHERE TO implementation.

All necessary resources were successfully secured and allocated. Budget calculations were completed and approved, covering workshop materials, mentoring sessions, and documentation needs. Human resources were identified and committed, including qualified facilitators, subject matter experts, and support personnel for the implementation phase.

The workshop on WHERE TO framework construction produced substantial results

Participation and Engagement: All prospective Guru Penggerak teachers of Batch 10 attended the full workshop series, demonstrating 100% participation rate. The in-depth introduction to the WHERE TO framework at the workshop's opening successfully established common understanding among participants.

Knowledge Acquisition: Post-workshop assessments indicated significant improvement in teachers' understanding of framework components. Participants demonstrated ability to identify and articulate each WHERE TO element and its pedagogical purpose.

Practical Application: Workshop activities yielded initial draft frameworks that teachers applied to their subject areas. The complete workshop documentation, published on the dedicated webpage, captured the learning progression and collaborative exchanges among participants. The guided development process produced tangible instructional products:

Module Production: Prospective Guru Penggerak teachers of Batch 10 successfully developed complete WHERE TO-based teaching modules. Each module incorporated all seven framework components with varying degrees of sophistication based on subject matter and grade level.

Instructional Tools Creation: Alongside the modules, teachers created comprehensive instructional tools including: WHERE TO-aligned lesson plans, Differentiated learning activity sheets, Formative and summative assessment instruments, Reflection and evaluation rubrics and Student engagement strategies

Analysis of the developed modules revealed enhanced pedagogical features compared to baseline modules, including clearer learning trajectories, more engaging hooks, experiential learning opportunities, built-in reflection points, diverse assessment methods, differentiation strategies, and systematic organization. Regular individual mentoring sessions generated progressive improvements. Each teacher received consistent individual guidance throughout the development process, with sessions scheduled at critical development milestones. The mentoring process facilitated continuous improvement of teaching modules and instructional tools. Teachers revised their materials multiple times based on feedback, demonstrating growth in critical reflection and self-assessment capabilities. Through mentoring interactions, observable escalation in teacher competencies emerged, particularly in pedagogical reasoning, framework application skills, and instructional decision-making. Teachers increasingly demonstrated autonomy in applying WHERE TO principles to novel teaching contexts. The ongoing development of teaching modules with WHERE TO-based learning activities and complete instructional tools was systematically documented, creating a portfolio of evidence showing each teacher's competency growth trajectory.

Following the workshop and mentoring phases, comprehensive data analysis revealed significant findings : Statistical analysis of pre- and post-intervention data confirmed the research hypothesis. Teaching modules developed after WHERE TO framework training demonstrated significantly higher quality scores across multiple dimensions compared to baseline modules. The quantitative analysis established a positive relationship between WHERE TO-based learning activity construction and teacher competency escalation. The analysis successfully linked teaching module quality indicators to Guru Penggerak competency achievement standards: Teachers demonstrated marked improvement in designing systematic, student-centered learning activities. The WHERE TO

framework enabled teachers to structure lessons with clear learning progressions, engaging entry points, active exploration opportunities, reflective practice integration, comprehensive evaluation, and intentional differentiation.

Teachers showed enhanced mastery of instructional design principles and curriculum implementation skills. The ability to translate curriculum standards into WHERE TO-based learning experiences indicated deepened professional expertise. The development process revealed increased innovative thinking and professional confidence. Teachers exhibited greater willingness to experiment with novel approaches and demonstrated reflective professional dispositions. Collaborative engagement during workshops and peer learning throughout the development process strengthened teachers' collegial and communicative competencies.

The results indicated that WHERE TO-based learning activity construction served as an integrative mechanism for competency development, simultaneously addressing multiple competency domains rather than isolated skills. This holistic impact distinguished the intervention from traditional professional development approaches that target single competency areas. Evidence suggested that teachers internalized the WHERE TO framework as a sustainable planning tool rather than a one-time compliance exercise. Follow-up analysis of subsequent lesson plans showed continued application of framework principles beyond the formal intervention period.

The results can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Improvement of Teacher Competencies

No.	Responden	Result 1	Result 2	Result 3
1	R1	60	80	85
2	R2	50	85	85
3	R3	60	60	85
4	R4	70	90	95
5	R5	70	85	90

Based on the data collection results above, further analysis is needed to examine the influence of the activities of Cohort 10 Guru Penggerak on the resulting WHERE TO-based teaching modules. The average of teacher competencies score is 88 after twice cycles. The category of this score is high. The maximal score in twice cycle is 85 and the maximum score is 95. To facilitate data analysis, the following figure is presented:

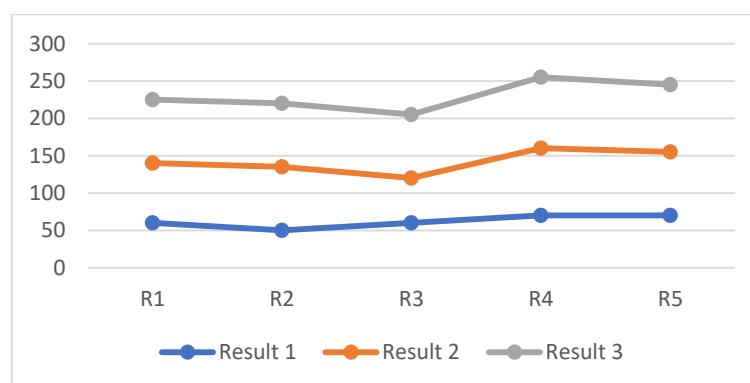


Figure 1. Improvement of Teacher Competencies

After the intervention was applied in two cycles, the next step was to test the results of the improvement in teacher competencies. The results are presented in the independent t-test analysis. below:

Table 2. Hypothesis Test Results

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Nilai siswa	Equal variances assumed	1.735	.224	-6.128	8	<.001	-26.000	4.243	-35.784	-16.216
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.128	6.113	<.001	-26.000	4.243	-36.335	-15.665

Based on the table above, it can be observed that the significance value is 0.000, where $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that there is a significant effect of developing teaching modules based on the WHERE TO framework on the improvement of competencies of Guru Penggerak Batch 10. The results of this study are in line with the statement of Ayranci (2021), According to The Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) in England, the teacher competencies are categorized under six field: curriculum knowledge, planning, classroom management, assessment and evaluation, self-assessment, professional relations, and qualifications. 1) Curriculum Knowledge encompasses teachers' deep understanding of subject matter content, pedagogical content knowledge, and the ability to transform curriculum standards into meaningful learning experiences for students. Research demonstrates that teachers using common instructional frameworks show improved student achievement, as they learn together and support each other while focusing on improving practice over time Learning-Focused. This collaborative approach to curriculum knowledge development enhances both individual and collective expertise (Poorvu, 2025). 2) Planning competency involves the systematic design of learning experiences that align objectives, instructional strategies, and assessment methods. Effective teacher professional development must focus on active learning, coherence with other policies, extended duration, and collective participation to support teacher success Research.com. Planning skills develop through sustained professional learning that provides teachers with frameworks and tools for designing high-quality lessons (Research, 2025), 3) Classroom Management competency reflects teachers' ability to create productive learning environments, establish routines, manage student behavior, and optimize instructional time. Research shows differences in professional, pedagogical, and personality competencies between Guru Penggerak and non-Guru Penggerak teachers Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, suggesting that targeted professional development programs can enhance teachers' classroom management capabilities. 4) Assessment and Evaluation competency encompasses both formative and summative assessment practices, including the ability to design valid assessment instruments, interpret student performance data, and use assessment results to inform instruction. Studies indicate that when teachers implement common instructional frameworks, student achievement improves as teachers collaborate on improving their assessment practices. 5) Self-Assessment competency involves teachers' capacity for critical reflection on their own practice, identification of professional growth areas, and engagement in continuous improvement. The Guru Penggerak program aims to transform teachers into leaders, instructors, and motivators who provide training and experience in solving learning problems, which requires strong self-assessment capabilities to identify and address instructional challenges. 6) Professional Relations competency addresses teachers' ability to collaborate with colleagues, communicate effectively with parents and stakeholders, and participate in professional learning communities. Studies emphasize the importance of Guru Penggerak in forming innovative learning communities that strengthen collaboration skills and improve teaching quality SchoolAI. This

competency recognizes teaching as fundamentally collaborative work requiring strong interpersonal and communication skills.

Modern and up-to-date learning is also an important factor in improving teachers' qualifications and competencies. Nessipbayeva (2012), effective teaching practices, representing differing viewpoints, theories, "ways of knowing" and methods of inquiry in the teaching of subject matter concepts. Multiple teaching and learning strategies should help engage students in active learning opportunities that promote the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance capabilities while helping them assume responsibility for identifying and using learning resources.

The score of teacher competencies increase caused by the workshop done more than three times and in every workshop teachers did the project test in designing lesson plan using WHERE TO framework.

Conclusion

This study was conducted in Medan with the support of the Cohort 10 Guru Penggerak program. The research was carried out using the one shot pretest posttest group over two cycles, after which conclusions were drawn from the assessments, which served as the basis for the quantitative research analysis. The results using independent t-test show the significance value is 0.000, where $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that there is a significant effect of developing teaching modules based on the WHERE TO framework on the improvement of competencies of Guru Penggerak in each cycle. Based on the calculations, there is a significant effect on teacher competencies through the development of teaching modules using the WHERE TO framework

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