

Basic Concepts of Evaluation and Assessment of English Language Learning in the Merdeka Curriculum

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Abstract

English language education has become a major focus in the education curriculum in many countries, as well as in Indonesia. In the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, evaluation and assessment of English learning play a crucial role in determining the successful implementation of the Merdeka curriculum. This study aims to (1) explore the basic concepts of evaluating English learning in the Merdeka curriculum, (1) explore English learning assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum, (3) and explore the challenges in evaluating and assessing English learning in the Merdeka curriculum. This research uses a literature review research method in which secondary sources are obtained from books and journals in supporting the study and findings. The results of this study First, the basic concepts of evaluating English learning in the independent curriculum include formative, summative and authentic assessment. Second, the assessment of the independent curriculum English language learning includes listening, reading, viewing, speaking and writing. Meanwhile, the challenges of evaluating and assessing English learning in the independent curriculum include the development of assessment instruments that are in accordance with the principles of the independent curriculum, the integration of continuous formative assessment in the independent curriculum, and aspects of inclusiveness in English learning.

Keywords:

Evaluation
Assessment
ELT

Abstrak

Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris telah menjadi fokus utama dalam kurikulum pendidikan di banyak negara, begitu juga di Indonesia. Dalam konteks Kurikulum Merdeka, evaluasi dan penilaian pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris memegang peranan krusial dalam menentukan keberhasilan implementasi kurikulum Merdeka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk (1) mengeksplorasi konsep dasar evaluasi pembelajaran bahasa Inggris kurikulum merdeka, (1) mengeksplorasi penilaian pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris dalam Kurikulum Merdeka, (3) dan mengeksplorasi tantangan dalam evaluasi dan penilaian pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris kurikulum Merdeka. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kajian pustaka di mana sumber sekunder didapatkan dari buku dan jurnal dalam mendukung kajian dan temuan. Adapun hasil penelitian ini Pertama, konsep dasar evaluasi pembelajaran bahasa Inggris kurikulum merdeka meliputi penilaian formatif, sumatif dan autentik. Kedua, penilaian pembelajaran bahasa Inggris kurikulum merdeka meliputi, mendengarkan, membaca, memirsa, berbicara dan menulis. Sedangkan tantangan evaluasi dan penilaian pembelajaran bahasa Inggris kurikulum merdeka meliputi pengembangan instrumen penilaian yang sesuai dengan prinsip-prinsip kurikulum merdeka, integrasi penilaian formatif yang berkelanjutan dalam kurikulum merdeka, dan aspek inklusifitas dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris.

Kata Kunci : Evaluasi, Penilaian, ELT

INTRODUCTION

Merdeka Curriculum is an initiative launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia with the aim of providing greater freedom and flexibility in the learning process in schools. This initiative is part of an effort to respond to the dynamics of global education and evolving local needs. The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes the importance of developing students' competencies and character through an approach that is more personalized and relevant to everyday life (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022). One of the main objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum is to create an education system that is more adaptive and responsive to the needs of learners. In this case, teachers are given the freedom to design and implement teaching methods that

best suit the conditions and characteristics of the students in their class. Thus, it is hoped that students can learn in a more enjoyable and effective way, so that they can develop their full potential (Wardhani, 2023).

The Merdeka Curriculum also aims to improve the quality of education in Indonesia through the use of project-based approaches and contextual learning. It allows students to learn through direct experience and application of knowledge in real situations. This method is considered more effective in helping students understand and master important concepts, as well as developing critical and creative thinking skills (Susilo, 2023). In addition, Merdeka Curriculum encourages closer collaboration between schools, parents, and communities in the education process. Active participation from various parties is expected to create a more inclusive learning environment and support students' holistic development. This collaboration is also expected to strengthen local social and cultural values which are an important part of the nation's identity (Handayani, 2022).

In the context of English language learning, Merdeka Curriculum provides room for innovation and creativity in teaching and evaluation methods. Teachers can develop various interesting and interactive learning strategies, as well as use various media and technology to improve student understanding. Evaluation also focuses not only on the end result, but also on the learning process itself, so that it can provide a more comprehensive picture of student progress (Prasetyo, 2023). English plays a very important role in the Merdeka Curriculum because it is a global language that is the main means of communication in various fields, including education, business, and technology. In the current era of globalization, the ability to speak English is not only an added value, but also a fundamental need to compete in the international arena. Therefore, the Merdeka Curriculum pays special attention to English language learning to ensure students have the skills needed in the future (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022).

One important aspect of English language learning in the Merdeka Curriculum is the improvement of students' communication competencies. The curriculum emphasizes the mastery of four key skills in English: listening, speaking, reading and writing. With these skills, students are expected to be able to communicate effectively in various situations, both formal and informal, and to be able to understand and interpret information they receive in English (Prasetyo, 2023). In addition, mastery of English is also considered important to broaden students' horizons and knowledge. Through access to international literature, media and learning resources, the majority of which are available in English, students can obtain the latest and reliable information from various parts of the world. This is very important to support a learning process that is contextualized and relevant to the development of global science and technology (Wardhani, 2023).

English also plays a role in increasing students' academic and professional mobility. With good English language skills, students have greater opportunities to continue their education to higher levels in international institutions, as well as participate in student exchange programs and internships abroad. This ability also opens up wider career opportunities, both at home and abroad, in various industrial sectors (Susilo, 2023). In its implementation, Merdeka Curriculum encourages the use of innovative and creative learning methods in teaching English. Teachers are encouraged to integrate technology and digital media, such as learning apps and online platforms, to make the learning process more interactive and engaging. In addition, project-based approaches and contextualized learning are also applied to help students apply their English skills in real-life situations, making learning more meaningful and effective (Handayani, 2022).

Evaluation and assessment of English learning in the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes the measurement of holistic learning processes and outcomes. Evaluation is carried out through various methods, including formative and summative assessments, as well as authentic assessments that reflect real situations. Formative assessment is carried out periodically to monitor student progress and provide constructive feedback, while summative assessment is carried out at the end of the learning period to measure students' overall competency achievement (Prasetyo, 2023). Authentic assessment in English learning involves tasks that are relevant to students' daily lives, such as creating essays, conducting interviews or compiling reports. This assessment not only assesses cognitive abilities, but

also students' communication and critical thinking skills. With this comprehensive assessment approach, students are expected to develop practical and applicable English language skills, in accordance with the demands of the times and the needs of the global community (Handayani, 2022).

Based on the description above, this study aims to (1) explore the basic concepts of evaluating English learning in the independent curriculum, (1) explore English learning assessment in the Independent Curriculum, (3) and explore the challenges in evaluating and assessing English learning in the Independent Curriculum.

METHOD

In this research, researchers used literature review research. Literature review is a research method that collects and analyzes various written sources relevant to the research topic to identify trends, gaps and recent developments in a particular field. This method is particularly suitable for the topic "Evaluation and Assessment of English Language Learning in the Merdeka Curriculum," as it allows researchers to explore various approaches, theories, and previous research results related to the implementation of this new curriculum. Through the literature review, researchers can build a strong theoretical foundation and formulate relevant and in-depth research questions (Creswell, 2013).

The first step in the literature review is to determine relevant and credible sources. These sources include academic journals, books, policy reports, and conference articles that discuss Merdeka Curriculum, English language learning, and evaluation and assessment methods. Researchers should use academic databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ProQuest to find high-quality literature. Literature selection should consider relevance, validity, and reliability to ensure that the data used is reliable and useful in answering the research questions (Boote & Beile, 2005).

After collecting relevant literature, the next step is to conduct a critical analysis of each source. This analysis involves evaluating the methodology, findings and conclusions presented in each study. Researchers must identify the strengths and weaknesses of each study as well as how the research results can be applied in the context of Merdeka Curriculum. This critical analysis helps researchers to build solid arguments and support research hypotheses with strong evidence (Hart, 1998).

The literature review also serves to identify existing research gaps. By evaluating the research that has already been done, researchers can find areas that have not been studied enough or that require new approaches. For example, although many studies have addressed learning evaluation and assessment in general, there are still few studies that specifically examine how these methods are applied in the context of Merdeka Curriculum and English language learning. Identifying these gaps is important for determining the direction of further research and highlighting the unique contributions of the research being conducted (Webster & Watson, 2002).

The literature review provides a comprehensive theoretical basis for the research being conducted. By summarizing and synthesizing various theories and previous findings, researchers can develop a theoretical framework that underlies their hypotheses and research methods. This theoretical framework helps in designing research instruments, such as questionnaires or interview guidelines, and provides a broader context for data analysis. This approach ensures that the research has a strong academic foundation and is relevant to the existing literature (Ridley, 2012).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Independent Curriculum English Learning Evaluation

Formative assessment is an important component in the Merdeka Curriculum, especially in English language learning. This assessment is carried out periodically to monitor student progress during the learning process. Based on research conducted by Prasetyo (2023), the use of formative assessments such as quizzes, class discussions, and group projects has proven effective in increasing student engagement and understanding. For example, students who regularly participated in quizzes and discussions showed significant improvement in their reading and writing skills in English. This is

because formative assessment provides immediate and specific feedback, allowing students to know their strengths and weaknesses and make necessary improvements.

Formative assessment also facilitates more interactive and collaborative learning. In a study by Wardhani (2023), it was found that group projects used as a formative assessment method can improve students' speaking and listening skills. Group projects allow students to work together, discuss and give each other feedback, so they can learn from each other. It also encourages students to be more actively involved in learning and develops critical thinking and social skills. Thus, formative assessment not only assesses student learning outcomes, but also the learning process itself.

However, implementing formative assessment also faces some challenges. One of the main challenges is teachers' increased workload, as they need to design, administer and provide feedback on a regular basis. In addition, the success of formative assessment largely depends on the quality of the feedback provided. Feedback that is not specific or constructive can reduce the effectiveness of formative assessment. Therefore, training for teachers on effective formative assessment techniques is necessary. According to Susilo (2023), this training should include strategies for providing effective feedback and how to manage formative assessment efficiently. With the right support, formative assessment can be a very useful tool in learning English in the Merdeka Curriculum.

Summative assessment is an evaluation method carried out at the end of the learning period to assess students' overall competency achievement. In the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, summative assessments such as exams, presentations, and written assignments play a crucial role in determining students' understanding and mastery of the material that has been learned. Research conducted by Prasetyo (2023) shows that well-structured final exams can measure students' abilities comprehensively, including cognitive, analytical skills, and factual knowledge. For example, exams that include different types of questions, such as multiple choice, essays, and case studies, help identify students' strengths and weaknesses in different aspects of English learning.

In addition to written exams, presentations are also an effective form of summative assessment in Merdeka Curriculum. Research by Wardhani (2023) found that presentations allow students to develop and demonstrate their speaking skills and critical thinking abilities. Students who prepare and deliver presentations tend to have a deeper understanding of the topics they cover, as this process requires them to organize information, practice verbal communication, and defend their arguments in front of an audience. Presentations also provide an opportunity for students to receive feedback from their teachers and peers, which can be used to improve their performance in the future.

Written assignments are another important element in summative assessment. According to Susilo's (2023) research, written assignments such as essays and research reports allow students to develop their academic writing and critical thinking skills. These assignments provide opportunities for students to explore topics in depth, construct logical arguments, and present their findings systematically. In addition, written assignments also allow teachers to assess students' analysis, synthesis and evaluation abilities, which are essential skills in English language learning. However, the success of written assignments as an evaluation tool relies heavily on clear and detailed scoring rubrics, which include specific and objective assessment criteria.

While summative assessment has many benefits, challenges also exist in its implementation. One of the main challenges is ensuring the fairness and reliability of the assessment. Inconsistent or biased summative assessments can harm students and hinder their development. Therefore, efforts are needed to develop valid and reliable assessment instruments and provide training to teachers in fair and objective assessment techniques. According to Handayani (2022), the use of technology in summative assessment, such as online exam systems and automated assessment tools, can help improve the fairness and efficiency of the assessment process. With the right support, summative assessment can provide an accurate picture of student achievement and be the basis for future learning improvements.

Authentic assessment in English learning in Merdeka Curriculum plays an important role in measuring students' abilities holistically and applicatively. This assessment includes tasks that reflect real situations, such as essays, interviews and reports, which provide students with opportunities to

apply their knowledge and skills in contexts relevant to everyday life. According to Gulikers et al. (2004), authentic assessment can increase students' learning motivation as they see first-hand the benefits and practical applications of what they are learning. In addition, authentic tasks help students develop critical and creative thinking skills, which are very important in English language learning.

Essay assignments, as a form of authentic assessment, allow students to explore topics in depth and express their thoughts in a clear and structured manner. Research by Andrade et al. (2009) shows that essays provide opportunities for students to develop analysis and synthesis skills, as well as good writing skills. In the context of Merdeka Curriculum, essays can be used to assess students' understanding of various texts, their ability to develop logical arguments, and their creativity in composing writing. In addition, essays also allow teachers to provide detailed and constructive feedback, so that students can improve their writing skills continuously.

Interviews are another form of authentic assessment that is very effective in measuring students' speaking and listening skills. According to Jonsson and Svingby (2007), interviews can be used to assess students' verbal communication ability, critical thinking ability, and interpersonal skills. In interviews, students are challenged to think spontaneously and responsively, which helps them develop speaking skills in real situations. In the Merdeka Curriculum, interviews can be conducted in various formats, including individual or group interviews, to evaluate students' ability to interact and convey ideas effectively.

Reports are authentic assessment tasks that reflect students' ability to systematically collect, analyze, and present information. According to Wiggins (1993), reports provide opportunities for students to apply research, critical thinking, and academic writing skills. In the Merdeka Curriculum, reports can be used to assess various aspects of English learning, such as students' understanding of certain topics, their ability to conduct research, and their skills in compiling informative and structured reports. The use of reports as an assessment tool also helps students to develop discipline and responsibility in completing complex and challenging tasks.

The Concept of Assessment of English Language Learning in the Merdeka Curriculum

Language teaching and learning in senior high school is a crucial aspect of education, as it plays a major role in students' overall linguistic development and academic success. It is important for teachers to assess students' language skills regularly and provide appropriate feedback and support to enhance their learning. Furthermore, it is essential for language teachers to create a conducive learning environment that promotes active participation and encourages students to use the target language in various communication contexts. Additionally, incorporating various teaching strategies and methodologies, such as communicative language teaching and task-based learning, can effectively engage students in meaningful language activities and promote their language acquisition. By incorporating authentic and culturally relevant materials, language teachers can also create opportunities for students to develop their intercultural competence and broaden their understanding of different cultures and perspectives. Furthermore, it is crucial for language teachers to incorporate technology into their teaching practices, as it can enhance students' language learning experience and provide them with opportunities.

Assessment of English language learning is a crucial aspect of language education. The concept of assessment considers not only speaking and writing proficiency, but also a deep understanding of the language, culture, and relevant social contexts. According to Brown (2004), English language assessment includes evaluation of language skills, grammatical knowledge, as well as understanding of cultural content. This concept emphasizes the importance of holistic measurement of students' language skills.

Approaches to English language learning assessment have evolved over time, with an emphasis on the use of diverse assessment techniques. According to Weigle (2002), formative, summative and criterion assessment are important elements in English language assessment. Formative assessment provides continuous feedback to improve learning, while summative assessment provides an overall picture of student achievement over a period of time.

Authenticity is also a focus in the concept of English language learning assessment. According to Fulcher (2010), authentic assessment reflects real communicative situations encountered in daily life. This requires students to apply their language skills in relevant and meaningful contexts. In addition, inclusiveness is an important principle in English language learning assessment. According to Hughes (2003), assessment should consider the diversity of students' backgrounds, including cultural, social and linguistic factors. An inclusive approach to assessment ensures that all students have a fair chance to demonstrate their abilities.

The link between assessment and teaching is also highlighted in the concept of English language learning assessment. According to Shohamy (1998), assessment should be integrated directly into the learning process so that students can understand the learning objectives and improve their abilities through the feedback provided. Thus, the concept of English language learning assessment covers various aspects, from the evaluation of language skills to the principle of inclusiveness and connectedness with teaching. The application of this concept can help improve the effectiveness of English language learning in various educational contexts.

The Challenge of Evaluation and Assessment of English Language Learning in the Merdeka Curriculum

The Merdeka Belajar curriculum is an educational initiative that aims to provide flexibility and autonomy to students in the learning process. However, the implementation of this curriculum in English language learning is inseparable from a number of evaluation and assessment challenges. One of the main challenges is the development of assessment instruments that are in line with the principles of the independent curriculum. According to Cizek (2012), assessment instruments must be relevant, valid and reliable in order to provide an accurate picture of student achievement.

Another challenge is the integration of continuous formative assessment in the independent curriculum. According to Black and Wiliam (2009), effective formative assessment allows teachers to provide continuous feedback to students so that they can improve their understanding and skills over time. However, the integration of formative assessment requires adequate provision for teachers in implementing it in English language learning.

In addition, the aspect of inclusiveness is also a challenge in the assessment of independent curriculum English learning. Hughes (2003) highlights the importance of considering student diversity in the assessment process, including cultural, social and linguistic factors. Inclusive assessment ensures that all students have a fair chance to demonstrate their abilities.

The development of teachers' assessment skills is also a focus in facing the challenges of evaluation and assessment of independent curriculum English language learning. According to Popham (2008), teachers need to be equipped with adequate assessment skills to be able to measure student achievement effectively. Thus, training and coaching teachers in the field of assessment is key in overcoming this challenge.

Overall, evaluation and assessment of English language learning in the context of an independent curriculum pose a number of challenges that need to be addressed. The development of appropriate assessment instruments, the integration of effective formative assessment, the implementation of inclusive assessment, and the coaching of teachers' assessment skills are key steps in facing these challenges.

CONCLUSION

In this conclusion, it can be concluded that the basic concepts of evaluation and assessment of English language learning in the Merdeka Curriculum have significant implications in improving the quality of English language learning. Appropriate and measurable evaluation and assessment are key in ensuring the achievement of the desired learning objectives. Important principles such as fairness, validity, and reliability must be upheld in the assessment process. In addition, formative assessment has a very important role in providing continuous feedback to students to improve their learning. However, there are challenges in implementing this basic concept, such as developing appropriate assessment

instruments and fostering teachers' assessment skills. Nonetheless, with the right approach and adequate support, the basic concepts of evaluation and assessment of English learning in the Merdeka Curriculum can be a strong foundation in achieving meaningful and relevant learning goals for students.

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