



## The Study of Assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School

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### Abstract

*Assessment is very needed in learning. Assessment in the educational context is defined as a series of activities that include collecting, analyzing and interpreting data to determine the level of understanding and performance of students during the learning process. Without conducting an assessment, it is impossible for us to verify that the goals and objectives have been achieved. Each curriculum that is carried out by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia must have an assessment to assess students' abilities or achievements in their learning activities; the same goes for the Merdeka Curriculum. Therefore, this article aims to provide information and discuss assessment studies in the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools. This research is included in the category of qualitative research with library research methods by collecting and evaluating data from library sources that are relevant to the research topic. This research refers to books, articles, journals, and other appropriate sources. Based on research results from several journals, it is proven that by conducting assessment studies, student learning outcomes will reflect their respective competencies. The conclusions based on the results of the literature review carried out are that assessment is very important in the application of learning, especially in the Merdeka Curriculum. There are many examples in the Merdeka Curriculum, such as diagnostic assessments, summative assessments, and also formative assessments, all of which are equally useful for knowing the value or quality of students' absorbing the learning that has been given by the teacher to them.*

**Keywords:** *Assessment study; Merdeka curriculum; elementary school.*

### PENDAHULUAN

Assessment, derived from the English term "assessment," refers to evaluation. In the educational context, assessment is a series of activities involving data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Its purpose is to determine the level of understanding and performance during the learning process. Assessment is a crucial step in education, serving as a systematic and continuous process to gather information about the learning process and outcomes.

The results of the assessment are essential for verifying that goals and objectives have been achieved. According to Jafarigohar (2017), assessment outcomes significantly impact educators' evaluation of the ongoing program's effectiveness and their ability to recognize successful strategies for promoting future actions. Learning outcomes are

reflected in assessments, making them a vital aspect of the educational process.

In the current Merdeka curriculum, the evaluation of successful learning is determined by identifying whether the planned learning objectives have been achieved. Teachers now have the freedom to set criteria for achieving learning objectives, as long as they align with the characteristics of competencies in learning objectives and activities. Assessment is not only conducted at the end of learning activities but also during ongoing learning activities. Typically, each subject teacher conducts assessments for their students.

Sayekti (2022) explains that assessment serves the function of providing teachers with comprehensive insights into their students. It measures the level of achievement of learning indicators and collects information about

students' learning development in various aspects. Through assessment, teachers will know their performance during the teaching and learning process (Iskandar, 2020). The results of assessments are used by students, educators, education personnel, and parents as reflective material to improve the quality of learning.

Assessment encompasses cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Cognitive aspects focus on the development of intellectual abilities and skills, ranging from the lowest level of remembering to the highest level of creating. Affective aspects relate to behaviors and emphasize emotional and feeling aspects, such as interest, attitude, appreciation, and self-adjustment. Psychomotor aspects relate to activities or motor skills that require research instruments and complex assessments.

Assessment is designed and implemented according to its functions, with flexibility in choosing techniques and timing to be effective in achieving learning objectives. The learning process contributes to the overall development of students' competencies and character. When explaining learning outcomes and deciding on subsequent learning steps, assessments must be fair, proportional, valid, and reliable. If assessments are conducted correctly, students' learning outcomes will reflect their respective competencies (Purnawanto, 2022).

The Merdeka curriculum proposed by Minister of Education Nadiem Makarim during President Joko Widodo's administration emphasizes helping students develop character and soft skills. It focuses on essential content and flexible learning according to students' developmental phases. Both the Merdeka curriculum and previous curricula require assessments or evaluations of students to assess their abilities or achievements in learning activities. Assessment as a learning, assessment for learning, and assessment of learning are three different types of assessments, each serving specific functions (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Summative tests have been the main focus of assessment, guiding the writing of student learning outcome reports. However,

assessment results have not been fully utilized for learning improvement. Educators are encouraged to understand the new paradigm better, focusing more on formative assessment than summative assessment, and using formative assessment results to enhance the learning process. Teachers are urged to emphasize formative assessment in the Merdeka curriculum rather than concentrating solely on summative assessment. This shift is expected to raise awareness that the process is more crucial than just the final results.

This article aims to provide a deep understanding of various assessments used in learning activities, especially in elementary schools, particularly in the context of the Merdeka curriculum. The flexibility granted to educators in designing high-quality learning according to students' needs and learning environments is crucial. It is essential to conduct and publish this research to contribute to references on the understanding of assessment, assessment objectives in the Merdeka curriculum, assessment principles in the curriculum, various types of assessments in the Merdeka curriculum at elementary schools, and examples of assessment instruments in the Merdeka curriculum so that teachers can have a comprehensive understanding without requiring an extended period to grasp the results of this research.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is a literature review. Data collection is conducted by searching for information from relevant sources on the research topic, including journals, books, the internet, and other literature. The collected data is then critically and comprehensively analyzed. The results of data analysis in this research are presented in the form of descriptive narratives to explain the identified topics from the data sources.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Definition of Merdeka Curriculum Assessment

Assessment is a systematic and continuous process of collecting information about the learning process and outcomes of students to make decisions based on certain criteria and

considerations (Nasution, 2021). Assessment is a process that involves the selection, collection, and interpretation of information to make decisions or evaluate the weaknesses of a product or program or to assess the extent to which the approach taken can solve problems and achieve desired goals (Zahro, 2015; Ananda & Rafida, 2017; Elisa et al., 2021). In the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, there is an assessment known as the Merdeka Curriculum assessment. The Merdeka Curriculum assessment is a process of evaluating the competence of students to measure the success of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Juniardi, 2023).

### **Developing Merdeka Curriculum Assessment**

The Merdeka Curriculum provides freedom for teachers to develop learning that can be tailored to the needs and characteristics of students. The implementation of this Merdeka Curriculum aims to create a pleasant atmosphere in the learning process for teachers, students, and parents (Nasution, 2021). Teachers can choose creative and innovative teaching methods and content. In addition, teachers also have the freedom to develop assessments used in the learning process. According to Juniardi (2023), there are several ways to develop Merdeka Curriculum assessments: (1) choose techniques or instruments that suit the needs; (2) use varied assessment techniques; (3) utilize technology.

### **Objectives of Merdeka Curriculum Assessment**

Merdeka Curriculum assessment is used as a form of evaluation to measure students' learning processes, with detailed goals such as providing accurate information about students' achievements, understanding their needs, and helping educators design more effective teaching based on the conditions and development of students (Hasmawati & Mukhtar, 2023). In addition, assessments in the Merdeka Curriculum can also be used as a tool to evaluate students regarding a learning process that has been conducted. The results of this evaluation can serve as a reference for

teachers to improve learning outcomes. Other goals of Merdeka Curriculum assessment include providing information about students' learning styles, detailed information about students' progress in learning, providing information about the effectiveness of the conducted learning, motivating students to maintain or improve learning outcomes, motivating teachers to improve the variety of teaching styles in the class to enhance student learning outcomes, and facilitating teachers in knowing students' abilities, interests, and talents.

### **Principles of Merdeka Curriculum Assessment**

The fundamental principles of Merdeka Curriculum assessment that educators need to consider, based on the Guidelines for Learning and Assessment by the Ministry of Education and Culture's Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Body (Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan Kemendikbud-Ristek RI), are as follows: Assessment is an integrated part of the process, facilities, comprehensive information provision, or as a unit, and as feedback for educators, students, as well as parents/guardians in determining subsequent learning strategies. Examples of its implementation in elementary schools include educators reinforcing assessment at the beginning of learning to design lessons according to the readiness and abilities of students. Educators plan lessons by referring to the intended objectives and provide encouragement or supportive sentences to stimulate mindset growth. Educators involve students in assessments through self-assessment, peer assessment, self-reflection to peer reflection. Subsequently, educators provide opportunities for students to reflect on their abilities and how to improve them based on assessment results. Educators design assessments to encourage students to continually improve their competencies through assessments with difficulty levels suitable for the developmental stage of students.

Assessments are designed and implemented based on their functions, with

flexibility in determining techniques and timing for effective achievement of learning objectives. Examples of its implementation in elementary schools include educators considering learning objectives during assessment planning and explaining to students the purposes of assessment at the beginning of learning. Educators use varied assessment techniques based on the function and objectives of assessment. Results from formative assessments are used as a reference for learning, while results from summative assessments are used for reporting learning outcomes.

Assessments are designed to be fair, proportional, valid, and reliable to explain learning deficiencies or progress and make decisions on steps and as a basis for arranging learning programs for the next implementation. Examples include educators providing sufficient time and duration for assessments to become a learning process. Educators establish competency graduation criteria so that students understand what needs to be achieved. Collaboration in designing assessments ensures the creation of criteria that align with the assessment objectives. Educators use assessment results to determine follow-up learning based on the assessments conducted.

Reports on learning deficiencies, learning progress, and student achievements are simple and informative, providing useful information about the character and competencies that students have achieved, as well as follow-up strategies from the assessments conducted. Examples include educators composing concise and clear progress reports, prioritizing the most important information for students and parents/guardians. Educators provide periodic feedback to students and discuss follow-up actions from assessment results together with parents/guardians.

Assessment results can be used by students, educators, education personnel, and parents/guardians as reflective material to improve the quality of learning. Examples include educators allocating time to read, analyze, and reflect on assessment results. Educators then use assessment results as a

discussion material to determine what is already good and what needs improvement.

## **The Various Types of Assessments in the Merdeka Curriculum**

### **a. Diagnostic Assessment**

Diagnostic assessment is used to measure the initial understanding and skills of students in a subject before proceeding with further learning. Its purpose is to provide educators with a better insight into students' abilities and help them design more tailored instruction (Hasmawati & Mukhtar, 2023). According to Komaawati (Nasution, 2021), diagnostic assessment is divided into two types: non-cognitive and cognitive diagnostic assessment. The non-cognitive assessment aims to understand students' psychological and socio-emotional well-being, monitor activities during home learning, identify students' family conditions and backgrounds, and understand students' learning styles, characters, and interests. On the other hand, the goals of cognitive diagnostic assessment include identifying students' competency achievements, adjusting in-class learning to the average competency of students, and providing remedial classes or additional lessons for students with below-average competency (Nasution, 2021). The stages of implementing cognitive diagnostic assessment can be divided into three main steps: preparation, implementation, and diagnostic and follow-up steps (Hasmawati & Mukhtar, 2023).

### **b. Formative Assessment**

Formative assessment is the most frequently conducted assessment with the smallest scope (Gezer et al., 2021). According to Perie et al. (2009), formative assessment is used to describe interim assessments. Formative assessment is a gradual learning assessment to help students improve learning by providing continuous feedback during the learning process (Kwon, Lee, & Shin, 2017). Operationally, formative assessment is defined as an assessment used to provide feedback to students, facilitate their learning, and check their academic progress (Sadler, 1998).

The objectives of formative assessment include: (1) understanding whether the designed program progress is going well and identifying factors that may hinder its implementation; (2) ensuring the achievement of desired goals and making improvements to specific products or programs. The functions of formative assessment include: (1) identifying successes and failures in the teaching and learning process for improvements and enhancements; (2) identifying problems and obstacles in the teaching and learning activities, including assessing the teaching and learning methods used by teachers and the strengths and weaknesses of students involved; and (3) improving the quality and efficiency of the learning process by improving the unit or learning plan for better and more effective learning.

According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, there are two benefits of formative assessment: (1) the formative assessment process benefits students for self-reflection by monitoring their learning progress, identifying challenges, and taking necessary steps to continuously improve their achievements; (2) the formative assessment process benefits educators to reflect on the teaching strategies used and improve effectiveness in designing and implementing learning. Additionally, this assessment provides information about the individual learning needs of the students they teach.

Procedures for formative assessment in elementary schools include: (1) selecting teaching materials, (2) determining aspects and mastery levels, (3) linking instructional components, (4) preparing exam questions, and (5) preparing follow-up steps. Techniques used for formative assessment can be categorized into two types: written and unwritten techniques. Written techniques include tests, essays, portfolios, and self-assessment, while unwritten techniques include questions, observation, conference interviews, and presentations.

Examples of formative assessments during the learning process in elementary schools include teachers asking students questions to

assess their understanding of the taught material. If the majority of students still have difficulties understanding the material, the teacher's next action is to evaluate their teaching methods and improve the delivery of the material to be better understood by students. This example shows that formative assessment is not limited to written tests at the end of a lesson but can also take the form of oral questions or assignments given during or after a lesson. In this case, the process and post-tests carried out in the learning system can also be considered part of formative assessment.

### **c. Summative Assessment**

Summative assessment is an evaluation conducted to ensure the achievement of overall learning objectives. This assessment is often performed at the end of the learning process, the end of the academic year, or the end of an educational level (Mujiburrahman, Kartiani, & Parhanuddin, 2023).

The purpose of summative assessment for teachers is to measure whether students have met the learning achievements and to what extent they have reached the end of the learning unit. It also serves to improve subsequent teaching and learning after knowing the assessment results. For students, the purpose of summative assessment is to understand or know the performance at the end of the learning unit and to understand whether students have met the learning achievements and to what extent they have reached the end of the learning unit. To conduct summative assessments, educators can use various techniques and instruments, not just tests, but also observations and performance (practical, product generation, project work, and portfolio creation).

Steps to develop a summative assessment plan (Maulidini, 2023) include: (1) formulating assessment goals, such as determining grade promotion or student graduation at the education level; (2) selecting or developing assessment instruments according to the goals; (3) arranging instruments to be used to assess the process and results of student learning; (4) determining scores, criteria for achieving learning goals, and the duration of the

assessment activity, such as a good criterion between 71-80; (5) next, teachers will check tasks or tests that students have completed to obtain data that can be processed and analyzed; and (6) after processing and analyzing the data, the next step is to interpret and draw conclusions from the data, for example, student A is declared graduated and can continue to the next level of education.

Summative assessments at the elementary school level are aimed at assessing the achievement of learning goals or student learning outcomes as the basis for determining grade promotion or the completion of a teaching unit by comparing the achievement of learning outcomes with the criteria for achieving learning goals (Mujiburrahman, Kartiani, & Parhanuddin, 2023).

### **Examples of Instruments for the Merdeka Curriculum Assessment**

According to Purnawanto (2022), there are several examples of Merdeka curriculum assessment instruments, including:

(1) Rubric: A guide created to evaluate and assess the quality of student performance, allowing educators to provide necessary assistance to improve performance. Rubrics help educators focus on the competencies that students need to master. Criteria or dimensions to be assessed are expressed in the form of rating levels, ranging from poor to excellent; (2) Checklist: A list of information, data, signs, characteristics, or desired elements; (3) Anecdotal Records: Brief notes resulting from observations containing summaries of outstanding behaviors and performances, as well as background information about the observed events. These observations are then analyzed to draw relevant conclusions; and (4) Developmental Graph (Continuum): Graphs or infographics used to illustrate the stages of learning development.

Examples of assessment techniques that can be adapted and developed by educators at the elementary school level include: (1) Observation: A periodic assessment technique to evaluate student behavior. Observation can be conducted for all students or individually,

focusing on routine or daily tasks and activities. Continuous observation is performed to obtain more accurate and up-to-date data on student progress; (3) Performance Assessment: Assessment requiring students to demonstrate and apply their knowledge in various contexts according to predetermined criteria. Performance assessment can include various types of tasks such as practice, product creation, project work, or portfolio creation; (3) Projects: Task assessments involving three stages: design, implementation, and reporting, to be completed within a specified time period; (4) Written Tests: An assessment method using written questions and answers to measure students' abilities and knowledge. Written tests can take the form of essay questions, multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, or other types of written tests. The goal of written tests is to obtain information about students' abilities in a specific field or subject objectively; (5) Oral Tests: Oral assessments involve asking questions or posing problems orally to students, usually conducted in groups or individually during the learning process; (6) Assignments: Giving tasks to students to measure knowledge and help students acquire or improve their knowledge; and (7) Portfolio: A collection of documents containing assessment results, awards, and student work in a specific field. Portfolios reflect the reflective-integrative development of students over a certain period.

### **CONCLUSION**

Assessment is a process of collecting or processing information to determine the learning needs, development, and achievement of learning outcomes for students. The results are then used for reflection and as a basis for improving the quality of learning. In the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools, assessment plays a crucial role in evaluating students' abilities and development in learning. Three types of assessments are used: diagnostic assessment, summative assessment, and formative assessment. Diagnostic assessment is conducted at the beginning of learning to determine students'

initial abilities. Summative assessment is performed at the end of the learning period to evaluate overall student achievement. Formative assessment is conducted continuously during the learning process to provide feedback to students about their progress. Elementary school teachers can assess students' abilities through assessments, provide appropriate support, and motivate students to continue learning and achieve better grades. Therefore, in elementary schools using the Merdeka Curriculum, assessment plays a significant role in ensuring that learning objectives are achieved successfully.

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