

## EXPLORING CONSTRUCTIVE ALIGNMENT BETWEEN LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ENGLISH ASSESSMENT PRACTICES UNDER THE MERDEKA CURRICULUM: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY IN PEKANBARU

Ade Aulia Mutiara Munawaroh<sup>1</sup>, Nur Aisyah Zulkifli<sup>2</sup>  
[auliaade2002@gmail.com](mailto:auliaade2002@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [nuraisyah.zulkifli@uin-suska.ac.id](mailto:nuraisyah.zulkifli@uin-suska.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>  
UIN Suska Riau

### ABSTRACT

*This qualitative case study investigates constructive alignment between stated English language learning outcomes and assessment practices in three public junior secondary schools (SMP Negeri) in Pekanbaru, Riau, under Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum framework. Grounded in Biggs and Tang's (2007) constructive alignment theory, the study draws on document analysis of teacher-designed Modul Ajar and assessment instruments, non-participant classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews with eight English teachers. Thematic analysis of the data reveals predominantly partial alignment: while learning outcomes are frequently articulated at higher-order cognitive levels, corresponding assessment tasks disproportionately target recall and lower-order comprehension. Classroom instructional activities often demonstrate richer alignment with intended outcomes than do the formal assessment instruments that follow. Facilitating factors include participation in school-based professional learning communities and structured in-house training (IHT), while hindering factors include limited assessment literacy, time constraints, and insufficient curriculum implementation guidance. The findings contribute to growing scholarship on Merdeka Curriculum implementation and offer implications for EFL assessment design, teacher professional development, and curriculum policy in Indonesian secondary education.*

**Keywords:** *Constructive Alignment; Merdeka Curriculum; English Language Assessment; Learning Outcomes; Qualitative Case Study; Pekanbaru; EFL Indonesia.*

### INTRODUCTION

The promulgation of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka) since 2022 has initiated one of the most consequential pedagogical reforms in Indonesian education in recent decades. Designed to foster flexible, student-centered learning rooted in the ideals of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila (Pancasila Student Profile), the curriculum mandates a fundamental reconceptualization of teaching, learning, and assessment (Astari et al., 2023; Yuliana & Fitriani, 2024). English language education, as a cornerstone of Indonesian secondary schooling, is directly implicated in these reforms: teachers are expected to design instruction and assessment that cultivates communicative competence, critical thinking, creativity, and authentic language use rather than passive memorization.

Central to the realization of such a curriculum vision is the principle of constructive alignment, a concept introduced by Biggs (1996) and elaborated in Biggs and Tang (2007), which holds that high-quality learning is most likely to occur when intended learning outcomes (ILOs), teaching and learning activities (TLAs), and assessment tasks (ATs) are coherently interconnected. When these three components are mutually reinforcing, students are guided to engage with the level of understanding that the curriculum intends; when they are misaligned, assessment risks measuring the competencies other than those targeted by the instruction, undermining both instructional validity and student motivation (Genon & Torres, 2020; Rouffet & van Beuningen, 2023).

Despite considerable academic attention to constructive alignment in international higher education and foreign language contexts (Zhao & Zhao, 2023; Lameshkani et al., 2024; Deibl et al., 2018; Nurmikko-Fuller & Hart, 2020), empirical studies specifically

examining alignment within Indonesian secondary EFL settings and particularly under the Merdeka Curriculum remain limited. Existing studies have begun to address this gap: Astari et al. (2023) documented assessment implementation patterns under the Merdeka Curriculum; Khoirussulfa and Saraswati (2024) found gaps between learning objectives, activities, and assessments in genre-based textbooks; Tiana and Maruf (2024) revealed misalignments in summative testing; Bajo (2025) analyzed LOTS-HOTS distribution in summative assessments; and Murifqi and Yuliasri (2025) evaluated formative assessment practices. Yet, these studies have not comprehensively examined constructive alignment as a multi-component framework in a specific local educational setting.

Pekanbaru, the capital city of Riau Province, represents a particularly significant research site. As a rapidly developing urban center with a diverse schools population, Pekanbaru's English teachers navigate the dual demands of national curriculum mandates and locally variable resources, teacher preparation, and institutional cultures (Efendi & Arijanto, 2025). Understanding whether and how constructive alignment is realized in this context offers insight into the broader challenges of curriculum reform implementation across Indonesian cities.

This study therefore, the following research questions:

RQ1: To what extent are English language learning outcomes constructively aligned with assessment practices in selected junior secondary schools in Pekanbaru under the Merdeka Curriculum?

RQ2: What factors facilitate or hinder the achievement of constructive alignment in English language assessment in this context?

By triangulating document analysis, classroom observation, and teacher interview data, this study contributes both empirically and theoretically to scholarship on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in EFL settings and offers practical guidance for assessment design, teacher professional development, and curriculum policy.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Constructive Alignment: Theoretical Foundations**

The concept of constructive alignment originates in Biggs's (1996) synthesis of constructivist learning theory and systems thinking applied to curriculum design. Biggs argued that learning is most effective when the curriculum system is internally aligned, that is, when ILOs specify the level of understanding students are expected to achieve, TLAs engage students in activities designed to reach that level, and ATs require students to demonstrate the understanding described in the ILOs. In a subsequent elaboration, Biggs and Tang (2007) refined the framework by linking ILOs to Bloom's derived cognitive verbs, enabling teachers to systematically map the cognitive demand of each curriculum element.

Empirical validation of the constructive alignment framework across diverse educational contexts has been substantial. Deibl et al. (2018) developed and validated an instrument for assessing constructive alignment in educational psychology courses, confirming that higher alignment correlates with improved student outcomes. Nurmikko-Fuller and Hart (2020) demonstrated that constructive alignment paired with authentic assessment produced deeper learning in media-rich undergraduate environments. Lameshkani et al. (2024) found that constructive alignment principles, applied through flipped classroom designs, significantly enhanced academic writing quality and higher-order thinking in EFL university students. Zhao and Zhao (2023) showed that co-constructed CEFR-aligned assessment criteria involving both instructors and students, a participative approach to alignment, improved EFL writing achievement and self-regulation.

In secondary foreign language education, Rouffet and van Beuningen (2023) explored constructive alignment across Dutch secondary schools, finding considerable variation in alignment quality and identifying teacher assessment literacy as a decisive factor. Genon and Torres (2020) examined English language classrooms in the Philippines, concluding that while teachers articulated higher-order outcomes, assessment tasks frequently remained anchored to lower cognitive levels a pattern with direct relevance to the Indonesian context investigated in the present study.

## **2. Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum: Design and Assessment Philosophy**

Launched progressively from 2022, the Merdeka Curriculum represents a significant departure from the preceding Curriculum 2013 (K-13) by emphasizing learning depth over coverage, student agency, and project-based, authentic learning pathways (Yuliana & Fitriani, 2024; Zulfa & Hidayati, 2024). At its pedagogical core is the Profil Pelajar Pancasila, which articulates six interconnected competency dimensions, including critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and global citizenship, that are intended to permeate all subject areas and assessment designs.

For English language education specifically, the Merdeka Curriculum expects teachers to facilitate communicative, genre-aware language use through meaningful interaction and project-based assignments. The curriculum's assessment philosophy distinguishes explicitly between formative assessment (*asesmen formatif*), intended to be ongoing, diagnostic, and process-oriented, and summative assessment (*asesmen sumatif*), which should holistically measure competency attainment at the conclusion of a learning unit or phase (Astari et al., 2023; Murifqi & Yuliasri, 2025).

Implementation studies have revealed considerable variation between the curriculum's design intentions and classroom realities. Astari et al. (2023) found that while many teachers in Bali embraced the Merdeka Curriculum's spirit, assessment remained the most challenging area of reform, with a tendency to revert to traditional, written, recall-oriented tests. Efendi and Arijanto (2025) documented how teacher agency and institutional context mediated Merdeka Curriculum implementation in senior high school English classrooms, highlighting that system-level support was a critical enabler of fidelity. Similarly, a qualitative exploration of Merdeka Curriculum implementation in a secondary school context (*Merdeka Curriculum and English Language Learning, 2026*) identified persistent discrepancies between official curriculum documents and enacted classroom practice, particularly in assessment.

## **3. Assessment Alignment in Indonesian EFL Contexts**

A growing body of Indonesian EFL research has begun to examine the alignment between curriculum requirements and classroom assessment practices, often revealing systemic gaps. Khoirussulfa and Saraswati (2024) analyzed an Indonesian genre-text-based approach textbook used under the Merdeka Curriculum and found that while learning activities were frequently designed to promote higher-order thinking, corresponding assessment tasks failed to capture those same cognitive demands, representing a TLA-to-AT misalignment that mirrors findings from other national contexts. Zulfa and Hidayati (2024) assessed the alignment of the "English for Change" textbook within the Merdeka Curriculum framework and similarly identified partial alignment, noting that reading and writing tasks tended toward analysis and synthesis while assessment items defaulted to comprehension-level demands.

At the macro-assessment level, Tiana and Maruf (2024) investigated summative tests in various Indonesian educational settings and found that test items were frequently not calibrated to the competency levels specified in curriculum documents, raising validity concerns regarding whether assessment data could meaningfully inform instructional

decisions. Bajo (2025) specifically analyzed the distribution of lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) in summative assessments designed under the Merdeka Curriculum, finding a marked preponderance of LOTS items despite explicit curriculum expectations for HOTS integration. This finding suggests that the curriculum's cognitive aspirations have not been fully internalized in assessment design practice.

Regarding formative assessment, Murifqi and Yuliasri (2025) evaluated its implementation under the Merdeka Curriculum across multiple schools and reported significant inconsistencies between official guidelines and classroom practice. Teachers cited insufficient training, time constraints, and large class sizes as primary barriers to implementing formative assessment as envisioned by the curriculum. Yuliana and Fitriani (2024) further documented both the aspirations and challenges associated with learning assessment in Merdeka Curriculum EFL classrooms, concluding that professional development in assessment literacy is urgently required.

Collectively, this literature underscores that constructive alignment, particularly between ILOs, TLAs, and ATs, remains an aspiration rather than a widespread reality in Indonesian EFL settings under the Merdeka Curriculum. The present study extends this scholarship by applying a comprehensive, multi-instrument case study methodology to the specific context of Pekanbaru junior secondary schools.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **1. Research Design**

This study adopts a qualitative case study design, which is well-suited to investigating contextually embedded, complex educational phenomena in their naturalistic settings (Yin, 2018). A case study approach enables triangulation of multiple data sources to construct a holistic, nuanced account of how constructive alignment operates or fails to operate across different classrooms, teachers, and schools. The unit of analysis is the English language classroom, understood as embedded within the institutional context of each school and the broader policy context of the Merdeka Curriculum.

### **2. Research Site and Participants**

Three public junior secondary schools (SMP Negeri) in Pekanbaru, Riau, were selected through purposive sampling, with the criterion that each school had been implementing the Merdeka Curriculum for a minimum of one full academic year. The schools were chosen to represent variation in school location (central urban, peri-urban), resource availability, and teacher professional development exposure, allowing for comparison across cases.

Eight English teachers participated in the study, four female and four male, with teaching experience ranging from three to twenty-two years ( $M = 11.4$  years). All participants held a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in English Education (S.Pd.) and had received at least one formal orientation to the Merdeka Curriculum through the Ministry of Education's Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM). Participant pseudonyms (T1–T8) are used throughout to protect confidentiality.

### **3. Data Collection**

Data were collected through three complementary instruments across one semester (approximately 16 weeks):

- (1) Document analysis. All eight participants' Modul Ajar (teacher-designed lesson plans), assessment rubrics, formative task sheets, and summative test papers were collected and analyzed. A total of 24 Modul Ajar documents and 32 assessment instruments were reviewed.

- (2) Non-participant classroom observations. Each teacher was observed in a minimum of one full lesson (90 minutes). A structured observation protocol, developed from Biggs and Tang's (2007) alignment criteria and adapted for Indonesian EFL classrooms, was used to record the cognitive level of ILOs, TLAs, and ATs evident in each session.
- (3) Semi-structured interviews. Individual interviews of 35–50 minutes were conducted with each teacher, exploring their understanding of constructive alignment, their perceived success in achieving alignment, and the institutional and personal factors they identified as enabling or constraining their assessment practice. All interviews were conducted in Indonesian and professionally translated into English for analysis.

#### 4. Data Analysis

Document analysis employed an alignment rubric adapted from Biggs and Tang (2007), in which each ILO-TLA-AT triad was classified as: (a) aligned the cognitive level of the AT matches or appropriately extends that of the ILO; (b) partially aligned the AT addresses some but not all cognitive demands specified in the ILO; or (c) misaligned the AT demands substantially lower cognitive engagement than the ILO specifies. Interview and observation data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis procedure. Trustworthiness was enhanced through member checking (participants reviewed summaries of interview findings), peer debriefing with a colleague experienced in Indonesian EFL research, and prolonged engagement with the research context.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are organized around the two research questions and presented thematically across the three data sources. Table 1 provides a summary overview of alignment classifications across the document analysis corpus.

Table 1. *Summary of Constructive Alignment Classification in Analyzed Documents (N = 24 Modul Ajar)*

School	Total Teaching Modules	Aligned	Partially Aligned	Misaligned
School A (Urban-Central)	9	3 (33%)	5 (56%)	1 (11%)
School B (Peri-Urban)	8	1 (13%)	6 (75%)	1 (13%)
School C (Urban-Central)	7	2 (29%)	4 (57%)	1 (14%)
Total	24	6 (25%)	15 (63%)	3 (13%)

*Note. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.*

### 1. Extent of Constructive Alignment (RQ1)

#### a. Document Analysis: ILO–AT Alignment

Analysis of the 24 Modul Ajar documents revealed that the majority (n = 15, 63%) demonstrated only partial alignment between their stated learning outcomes and corresponding assessment tasks. In these documents, ILOs were frequently formulated using higher-order cognitive verbs consistent with Bloom's taxonomy, such as "analyze,"

"evaluate," and "produce", yet the assessment tasks associated with these outcomes primarily targeted recall and comprehension operations, such as identifying specific information from a text, completing gap-fill exercises, or selecting the correct form of a grammatical structure from multiple choices.

Full constructive alignment was evident in only six documents (25%), all drawn from teachers who had participated in structured school-based professional development focused on Merdeka assessment design. In these cases, ILOs specifying communicative production, for example; "students can construct a persuasive exposition text appropriate to a given social context", were matched by assessment tasks requiring genuine genre-appropriate writing, evaluated through analytic rubrics addressing both linguistic accuracy and rhetorical effectiveness. Misalignment was identified in three documents (13%), in which assessment tasks demanded significantly lower cognitive operations than the ILOs specified in one case, an ILO requiring critical evaluation of an argumentative text was assessed only through a ten-item multiple-choice comprehension quiz.

This pattern is consistent with findings from related Indonesian studies: Bajo (2025) similarly documented the dominance of lower-order assessment items in Merdeka Curriculum summative tests, and Khoirussulfa and Saraswati (2024) identified comparable gaps between stated learning objectives and assessment task demand in Indonesian EFL textbooks. The present study extends these findings by demonstrating that the ILO–AT misalignment pattern persists even in teacher-designed, locally contextualized assessment instruments, not only in published textbook materials.

#### **b. Classroom Observations: ILO–TLA–AT Coherence**

Classroom observations revealed a more complex alignment picture than document analysis alone suggested. In six of the eight observed classrooms, instruction was rich, interactive, and communicatively oriented: teachers facilitated collaborative writing workshops, structured academic controversies on genre topics, peer feedback sessions, and role-play communicative tasks, all activities well-aligned with ILOs specifying higher-order language use. The TLA-to-ILO alignment in these sessions was generally strong.

However, in these same six classrooms, the transition from instruction to assessment was characterized by a notable drop in cognitive demand. Following a 40-minute collaborative argumentation task, one teacher (T5) administered an individual ten-item True/False quiz assessing only factual recall of the topic discussed, not the argumentative language use the lesson had cultivated. This TLA–AT discontinuity was the most prevalent alignment gap observed and represents a specific form of misalignment that document analysis alone cannot fully capture, as the alignment discrepancy occurs between enacted teaching and formal assessment rather than between written plans and written tests.

Only two teachers (T2, T7) consistently demonstrated full three-component alignment across both document and observation data: their ILOs, classroom activities, and assessment tasks were mutually reinforcing at equivalent cognitive levels. Notably, both teachers had participated in inter-school professional learning community (*komunitas belajar*) activities specifically focused on assessment design.

## **2. Facilitating and Hindering Factors (RQ2)**

### **a. Facilitating Factors**

Thematic analysis of interview data identified two primary facilitating factors. First, participation in structured professional learning communities emerged as the most consistent predictor of higher alignment quality. Teachers T2 and T7 described collaborative processes of reviewing each other's Modul Ajar and assessment instruments, consulting the Platform Merdeka Mengajar for model lesson designs, and inviting peer critique of alignment between ILOs and tasks before implementation. T2 explained: "We do peer

review every two weeks if my assessment does not match my learning outcomes, my colleagues will point that out before I use it in class."

Second, school-based in-house training (IHT) specifically focused on assessment design was associated with higher alignment rates, particularly at School A (33% full alignment versus 13% at School B). Teachers at School A reported attending three IHT sessions per semester devoted to translating Merdeka Curriculum competency standards into aligned assessment tools, facilitated by a curriculum coordinator with formal training in educational assessment.

#### **b. Hindering Factors**

Three major hindering factors were identified. The first and most frequently cited was limited assessment literacy, that is teachers' capacity to operationalize higher-order ILOs into assessment tasks that validly measure those outcomes (Tiana & Maruf, 2024). Several teachers articulated awareness of the alignment principle without possessing the technical knowledge to enact it. T6 described this tension directly: "I know the curriculum wants them to think critically and produce authentic texts, but when it comes to making a test, I always end up writing the kind of questions I know how to mark. It is easier to check grammar than to assess critical thinking."

The second hindering factor was structural time pressure. Teachers averaged five teaching classes per week, with each class comprising two 90-minute sessions, and reported limited planning time for designing innovative assessment instruments. T3 noted: "Designing a rubric that really captures what the curriculum asks for takes time and I have five classes and many administrative duties. So I use what is fast, even if it is not perfect."

The third factor was insufficient curriculum implementation guidance, particularly regarding the translation of broad Merdeka Curriculum competency descriptors into specific, measurable assessment criteria. Teachers consistently reported that official guidance documents provided philosophical direction without sufficient practical exemplars of aligned assessment in English language contexts. This finding aligns with Murifqi and Yuliasri (2025), who similarly found that teachers received inadequate practical training to implement formative assessment as envisioned.

#### **Discussion**

The pattern of predominantly partial alignment identified in this study reflects a theoretically predictable implementation challenge: the Merdeka Curriculum articulates ambitious, higher-order competency aspirations that require correspondingly sophisticated assessment designs, yet the professional infrastructure required to support such designs remains underdeveloped. Biggs and Tang (2007) explicitly argued that constructive alignment is not merely a design principle but an institutional practice that requires systemic support, including institutional policies, professional development, and time for reflective planning, precisely the resources that participating teachers identified as insufficient.

The TLA–AT discontinuity observed in six classrooms where rich, communicative instruction was followed by cognitively impoverished assessment is particularly concerning from a validity perspective. As Genon and Torres (2020) argued, when assessment tasks do not capture the competencies that instruction has developed, the data generated cannot validly represent student achievement of curriculum ILOs. This has downstream consequences for diagnostic and summative decision-making, curriculum evaluation, and student motivation.

Conversely, the success of teachers in professional learning communities in achieving fuller alignment suggests that collaborative, practice-focused professional development, rather than top-down curriculum dissemination, is the most productive pathway toward realized constructive alignment. This finding echoes Rouffet and van Beuning's (2023)

conclusion that teacher assessment literacy, developed through collaborative professional practice, is a decisive variable in alignment quality. Baçoğlu and Zengin's (2026) research on assessment-as-learning further suggests that when teachers are trained to design reflective, criterion-referenced assessments, student calibration and achievement both improve underscoring that investment in assessment design capacity is not merely a compliance exercise but a direct lever for learning outcomes.

## CONCLUSION

This qualitative case study investigated constructive alignment between English language learning outcomes and assessment practices in three junior secondary schools in Pekanbaru under Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum. Drawing on document analysis, classroom observation, and semi-structured interviews with eight English teachers, the study finds that constructive alignment remains predominantly partial: higher-order ILOs are frequently paired with lower-order assessment tasks, and a systematic TLA–AT discontinuity is evident even in classrooms where instruction is well-aligned with learning outcomes. These findings both replicate and extend prior Indonesian EFL studies (Astari et al., 2023; Bajo, 2025; Murifqi & Yuliasri, 2025; Tiana & Maruf, 2024; Khoirussulfa & Saraswati, 2024) by situating the alignment challenge within the specific Pekanbaru context and identifying the mechanisms professional learning communities and structured IHT through which alignment can be meaningfully improved.

The study has several implications. For curriculum policymakers, the findings underscore the need to complement Merdeka Curriculum documents with practical, subject-specific exemplars of aligned assessment design in English language contexts. For school administrators, establishing regular, assessment-focused professional learning communities and allocating protected planning time for teachers represent high-leverage institutional interventions. For English teachers, developing assessment literacy, particularly the capacity to translate higher-order ILOs into valid, rubric-based performance assessments is identified as a priority professional development need.

The study is bounded by its qualitative, case study design, which offers depth of understanding within a specific context rather than statistical generalizability. Future research should examine constructive alignment across a larger, more geographically diverse sample of Indonesian schools, investigate student perceptions of assessment alignment and fairness, and conduct longitudinal studies tracking alignment development as the Merdeka Curriculum matures. Experimental or quasi-experimental designs testing the impact of targeted assessment literacy interventions on alignment quality would further advance the field.

## REFERENCES

- Astari, D. A. M. J., Padmadewi, N. N., & Dewi, N. L. P. E. S. (2023). The implementation of assessment in teaching English in Merdeka Curriculum. *Journey: Journal of English Language and Pedagogy*. <https://doi.org/10.33503/journey.v6i2.682>
- Bajo, S. M. (2025). Analysing the alignment of LOTS and HOTS in summative assessments within the Merdeka Curriculum. *Journal of Language, Literature and Teaching*. <https://jllte.stbapia.ac.id/index.php/jurnal/article/view/278>
- Baçoğlu, E. B., & Zengin, E. B. (2026). Assessment-as-learning in EFL: Effects of CEFR-based reflection on achievement and calibration. *Language Teaching Research*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688261447660>
- Biggs, J. (1996). Enhancing teaching through constructive alignment. *Higher Education*, 32(3), 347–364.

- Biggs, J., & Tang, C. (2007). *Teaching for quality learning at university* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Deibl, I., Zumbach, J., Geiger, V. M., & Neuner, C. M. (2018). Constructive alignment in the field of educational psychology: Development and application of a questionnaire for assessing constructive alignment. *Psychology Learning & Teaching*, 17(3), 293–307. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1475725718791050>
- Efendi, T. A., & Arijanto, A. A. (2025). Exploring teacher agency and instructional practices in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum: A qualitative study of English language teaching in Indonesian senior high schools. *Priviet Social Sciences Journal*, 5(7), 32–42. <https://doi.org/10.55942/pssj.v5i7.386>
- Genon, L. J. D., & Torres, C. B. P. (2020). Constructive alignment of assessment practices in English language classrooms. *English Language Teaching Educational Journal*, 3(3), 211–228. <https://doi.org/10.12928/eltej.v3i3.2460>
- Khoirussulfa, S., & Saraswati, G. P. D. (2024). Conformity between learning objectives, learning activities, and assessment in Indonesian genre-text-based approach textbook. *ELT Forum*. <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/journals/elt/article/view/28923>
- Lameshkani, F. S., Soleimani, H., & Khoshsima, H. (2024). The effect of constructive alignment on academic writing using a virtual flipped classroom: Student learning and higher thinking. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 61(2), 290–303. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2022.2161053>
- Merdeka Curriculum and English language learning: A qualitative exploration in a secondary school. (2026). <https://doi.org/10.22219/englie.v7i1.42493>
- Murifqi, F. I., & Yuliasri, I. (2025). Evaluating formative assessment in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. *Acuity: Journal of English Language Pedagogy, Literature and Culture*. <https://jurnal.unai.edu/acuity/article/view/4177>
- Nurmikko-Fuller, T., & Hart, I. E. (2020). Constructive alignment and authentic assessment in a media-rich undergraduate course. *Educational Media International*, 57(2), 167–182. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523987.2020.1786775>
- Rouffet, C., & van Beuningen, C. (2023). Constructive alignment in foreign language curricula: An exploration of teaching and assessment practices in Dutch secondary education. *The Language Learning Journal*, 51(3), 365–381. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2022.2025542>
- The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in English teaching at SMAN 3 Pangkep. (2025). <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijobec.v3i1.6620>
- Tiana, E. A., & Maruf, N. (2024). Aligning assessment and curriculum: A study of summative tests in educational settings. *JET: Journal of English Teaching*. <https://jurnal.unipasby.ac.id/jet/article/view/8884>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage.
- Yuliana, D., & Fitriani, S. (2024). Learning assessment in Kurikulum Merdeka: Practice and challenges in EFL classroom. *Papanda Journal of English Education*. <https://ejournal.papanda.org/index.php/pjee/article/view/879>
- Zhao, H., & Zhao, B. (2023). Co-constructing the assessment criteria for EFL writing by instructors and students: A participative approach to constructively aligning the CEFR, curricula, teaching and learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 27(3), 640–663. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820948458>
- Zulfa, N., & Hidayati, L. (2024). Assessing the alignment of "English for Change" textbook

within the Merdeka Curriculum framework. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*. <https://ojspanel.undikma.ac.id/index.php/jollt/article/view/15433>