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# POLICY-PRACTICE DISCREPANCIES IN LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT: EXPERIENCES OF JAPANESE LANGUAGE TEACHERS UNDER INDONESIA'S MERDEKA CURRICULUM

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## ABSTRACT

The current study examines the difficulties encountered by Japanese language educators regarding the application of evaluation procedures within Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum. It sought to address the deficiency in research about foreign language assessments by thoroughly examining the knowledge, experiences, perceived challenges, and requisite support for teachers in relation to their utilization of assessments. The study employed a cross-sectional survey, garnering responses from 90 Japanese language educators to a meticulously crafted and tested Likert-scale questionnaire. This tool was made to obtain detailed information on Japanese teachers' skills and problems with how they assess students. The research indicates that teachers' fundamental skills and knowledge surrounding assessment are inadequate; specifically, the teachers encountered the most difficulty with their conceptualization of the nature of assessment, creating meaningful rubrics, identifying assessment resources, utilizing their time, and using new digital assessment tools as relates to assessing productive skills (i.e., speaking and writing). The study clearly underlines that there is a need for continuous professional development programs offered, guidelines around assessment, collaborative group learning communities, and technical support to update the teachers with the current practical use of assessments. The study underscores the importance of targeted interventions, such as specialised professional development and more effective resource allocation, supported by flexible policy revisions to provide smoother assessment implementation. Moreover, the study sheds light on the intricate interplay between Japanese language teacher knowledge, institutional obstacles, and an important support system, providing actionable, and practical suggestions for policymakers, curriculum developers, and teacher educators committed to improving the quality of foreign language assessment practices.

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**KEYWORDS:** Japanese Language Teachers; Merdeka Curriculum; Assessment Implementation; Teacher Professional Development; Foreign Language Education; Assessment Principles; Policy Modification.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In order to keep up with the developing and changing global education, there is a need to consider changing the existing curriculum. In 2021, Indonesia issued its new curriculum, Merdeka Curriculum. It leads to a shift toward its national teaching and learning approach. Approximately 70% of Indonesian schools have adopted the new curriculum, a sign that shows the government's commitment to the freedom for teachers to decide what materials and tests they can use to help their students learn better (Wahyudin *et al.*, 2024). With the Merdeka Curriculum, students learn from a singular view of knowledge. By providing a more thorough view of information, students will increase their understanding and develop skills faster. In addition, project-based learning is being used in line with the Pancasila Student's Profile as a means to promote character development and skills in additional areas besides traditional subjects (Rizky Satria *et al.*, 2022).

Despite the fact that the Merdeka Curriculum is very beneficial given its widespread implementation across Indonesia, its implementation has revealed many difficulties, particularly regarding assessment. Assessment plays a critical role in education by capturing and measuring how well students are achieving and using that information to improve teaching and learning, and ultimately, raising the standard of education (Levy-Feldman, 2025). According to the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation No. 21/2022, assessments must be fair, objective, and educational. This means that all students, no matter their background, must be evaluated fairly, and all stakeholders must get helpful feedback (Standar Penilaian Pendidikan Permendikbudristek No 21 Tahun 2022, 2022). However, teachers experience challenges in actually bringing these ideas into practice; there are those related to the difficulty of measuring learning outcomes, setting specific learning targets, constructing valid figures for assessment tools, and implementing technology (DeLuca *et al.*, 2025; Thamrin *et al.*, 2023). Such new curricula further exacerbate these problems of teacher readiness, affecting the quality and consistency of the processes of assessment.

While assessment implementation problems are faced by many teachers, Specific disciplines like foreign languages have several other factors or areas making it challenging for teachers. The same is true for teachers of Japanese in Indonesia with regard to the Merdeka Curriculum, which creates specific problems for those teachers. Before this, researchers

focused primarily on challenges faced by teachers related to many areas of curriculum implementation, but there has not been much research published specifically related to the assessment experiences of Japanese language teachers and the challenges they may face (Ariasta *et al.*, 2020; Hutami & Putro, 2023). A very vivid research gap in relation to the fact that foreign language education requires specific and detailed ways of evaluation that can measure language skills competencies, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Being able to understand the challenges that are faced by Japanese language teachers will first contribute to the efforts in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of assessment, and that will have an impact on the students' learning outcomes. This gap sheds light on the foreign language education, especially Japanese, which is in accordance with the Curriculum Merdeka. It requires definite and complete methods of evaluation that can thoroughly measure linguistic competencies. Secondly, in terms of the implementation of assessment, understanding the challenges faced by Japanese language teachers will contribute to the ideas of activities, such as professional development training programs, which will help the Japanese teachers improve their effectiveness in doing assessment, in order to help their students achieve better learning outcomes. It will also provide a robust empirical foundation for policymakers to advocate for more effective curriculum implementation.

Previous research has shown that teachers are having difficulty implementing Merdeka Curriculum, mainly due to the complexity of teachers' challenges with assessment, training, guidelines, and technology (Ariasta *et al.*, 2020; Sumarmi, 2023; Windayanti *et al.*, 2023). For example, process-based assessment is highly problematic due to the teacher's inability to create tests that accurately capture what students know (Ariasta *et al.*, 2020). The accelerated shift to a digital environment has caused difficulties for some teachers who have insufficient knowledge of technology and do not have access to the requisite digital infrastructure (Sumarmi, 2023). As a result, these challenges impede the overall success of the Merdeka Curriculum in promoting student-centred, competency-based methods of evaluation, including the development of effective and appropriate assessment procedures.

Many authors in the educational literature have proposed and implemented several strategies for resolving the above article's challenges. Giraldo (2021) argues that through the use of professional

development programs to provide teachers with the necessary skills to produce tests and assessments that meet the academic curriculum called for, teachers are being trained to produce assessments that meet the standards and satisfy their needs. Zamiri & Esmaeili (2024) state that by forming Collaborative Learning Communities and providing access to professionals who can provide expert guidance to teachers, all of these individuals (Collaborative Learning Communities, professionals who assist teachers) can work together to create new knowledge and provide additional ways of resolving problems regarding the assessment process. In addition to Collaborative Learning Communities and the support given to teachers by professional consultants, having accurate and clear assessment standards for specific subject areas, including developed rubrics, also contributes to reducing ambiguity and increasing teachers' confidence in implementing assessments (Pastore, 2023). Finally, providing technological assistance (e.g., intuitive digital assessment platforms) is essential for maximizing the use of digital tools in the assessment process (Viberg et al., 2024).

Even with these enhancements, the research indicates that not enough studies have investigated how these solutions interact in the context of teaching Japanese under the Merdeka Curriculum. Most of the current research is centered around general teacher populations or different topic areas, thus leaving a big knowledge deficit regarding the particular needs and experiences that the Japanese language teachers of Indonesia face. This research, therefore, seeks to bridge this gap by zooming in on the assessment-related issues specifically faced by this group, analyzing their knowledge, views, and practices, along with their needs for support and professional development.

The focus of this study is to provide an overview of the commonly encountered challenges by Japanese language teachers in implementing assessments as mandated in the Curriculum Merdeka. Japanese language teachers find difficulties in understanding the concept of assessment, developing assessment rubrics, and the availability of technology as a resource for education. This present study also investigates the perception of the Japanese language teachers' need for training, guidance, the opportunity for collaborations, and technical support among themselves to increase their assessment quality in assessing their students. This study also contributes to ongoing academic discussion concerning effective assessment methods and their implementation in foreign language instruction, and contributes to the academic discussion surrounding

the implementation of assessment processes and practices associated with foreign language education, and gives information on applicable ways and ideas to develop policies and practices

Taken collectively, this study underlines its contribution to the scholarly literature on how Japanese language teachers have carried out and experienced their assessment procedures based on the Curriculum Merdeka, as well as providing different ways of understanding the various complications and issues related to the Indonesian unique educational system. The findings of this study, in the future will give major influence on the design of curriculum, teacher professional development program, and believe that these findings will have a significant impact on curriculum design, teacher professional development, and strategic decisions in improving assessment strategy and continuous professional development for foreign language teachers to support the success of the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum and at the same time raise students learning outcomes.

## 2. METHODOLOGY.

This research adopted a survey research design to explain the problems that Japanese language teachers face in implementing evaluation within the Merdeka Curriculum. The survey methodology adopted for this study was a cross-sectional survey, which involves collecting data at one single point in time, with no tracking of individual changes over a defined period of time (W. J. Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A cross-sectional design is valid based on literature pointing out its advantages in educational research, especially in explaining teacher-related problems. The advantages of cross-sectional surveys lie in their quickness in data acquisition, as the window is limited; hence, there are minimal effects of temporal variations on respondents, leading to better participant engagement since data is collected only once (Vindrola-Padros & Johnson, 2020). These attributes make it an appropriate method of obtaining a glimpse into how teachers feel about and cope with the issues of implementing assessments.

A systematic flowchart was used to conduct the study. The first phase of the process was the identification of the problem, a review of the literature, and the creation of a proposal. The second phase of the systematic process involved the collection and analysis of data. The final phase of the process included writing reports, delivering seminars, and preparing articles. The systematic methodology allowed for the process to remain clear and comprehensive. The sample for the research

consisted of teachers of the Japanese language who had implemented the Merdeka Curriculum into their educational institutions. 90 teachers agreed to be part of the study and formed the targeted sample representing the group of interest.

A questionnaire instrument was used to collect the data due to it can provide information for the respondents regarding what they have experienced, how they have felt, and what they have learned (Park, 2021). To measure the teachers' perceptions concerning the challenges in implementing assessment, a rating scale in the form of Likert-style response format was included in the questionnaire. The Likert-style was proven to be beneficial, because it eased the respondents in completing the instrument and allowed for a swift quantitative data analysis to be done (Daud *et al.*, 2023). The respondents got access to fill the questionnaire through Google Forms, enabling the respondents to give their respond electronically.

The development of the questionnaire followed a series of phases to ensure all items were clear and genuine. The first phase was designing a blueprint based on the research indicators that covers teachers' experience and expertise, challenges in applying assessments, needs for support, and a general evaluation. Academic supervisors were involved in validating the blueprint before it was transformed into questions listed in the questionnaire. A pilot study was conducted with six Japanese language teachers in Surabaya who were not part of the main sample but shared similar characteristics to test the validity and reliability of the research instrument. In this piloting process, all respondents commented directly on each item regarding clarity and ambiguity, and relevance. This helped to improve the instrument before sending it to a larger group of those surveyed.

The pilot study used best practice in survey research, which states that using pre-test instruments will help identify any areas of confusion and improve the quality of the questions asked, resulting in a more valid instrument (Hill *et al.*, 2022). The use of pilot study instruments allowed for verification that the participants who completed the research instrument were able to read and clearly understand each question before answering.

The descriptive statistics were used to provide a summary of the data collected for the purposes of the study on identifying and describing the main challenges teachers experience while working in the education field.

The study identified equipment quality as the foundation for obtaining valid and

reliable data. Validity was checked through rational validity, which included construct validity because it tested the appropriateness of the instrument items regarding the theoretical constructs being pursued. This was done through the expert review by academic personnel, where the instrument was reviewed and suggestions were made to enhance item wording clarity and appropriateness toward the research indicators as outlined by J. W. Creswell (2015). Suggestions from experts included that unclear language must be made clearer, and sub-indicators must be made more appropriate so as not to confuse the respondents. Expert validation like this is paramount, as it ensures that the instrument measures what it purports to measure, which in turn gives confidence that the findings generated from the data are accurate.

We applied Cronbach's Alpha, one of the most common methods for testing the internal consistency of survey instruments (J. W. Creswell, 2015), to test for reliability. The instrument realized a reliability coefficient of 1.0 in the pilot test, exceeding the minimum permissible threshold of 0.60; hence, it was highly reliable. This result portrays that the items in the questionnaire consistently measure the constructs they were supposed to measure and that the data collected, therefore, is reliable.

The authors feel confident that their research project is sound because it follows several principles from established literature on educational research: those principles are the use of a rating scale questionnaire and the use of a cross-sectional survey design to observe teacher perceptions of assessment under the Merdeka Curriculum without requiring long-term tracking or a longitudinal study. By utilizing best practices for constructing, validating, and testing the reliability of the questionnaire, the authors have ensured that the data produced are valid and reliable for further informing teachers' experiences using assessment under this curriculum. The authors also performed descriptive statistical analyses of the results so that they could better understand the patterns in the data and how teachers perceive those patterns, thus providing them with a solid basis for interpreting the results.

### 3. RESULTS

Results from this segment represent the outcome of a survey of 90 Japanese language teachers from various levels of education regarding their specific experiences, issues, support requirements, and overall thoughts about using Merdeka Curriculum Assessment. The collected survey data were categorized into four principal categories: teacher

experiences/knowledge, challenge and effectiveness of assessment, support and needs of teachers, and overall assessment evaluation. Each subsection incorporates pertinent literature citations and references figures from the study to substantiate the analysis.

### 3.1. Japanese Language Teachers' Experience and Knowledge

Figure 1 illustrates how much Japanese language teachers know and how much experience they have. Most of the people who answered (87.8%) have a bachelor's degree, while the remaining (12.2%) have a master's degree. Also, 76.7% have a professional teaching certificate, which shows that the sample is typically qualified. 64.4% of teachers said they understood the ideas behind assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum. However, 25.6% disagreed, which means that roughly one-fourth of the teachers still don't know enough. Most of the people who answered (60%) said they had gotten enough training on the Merdeka Curriculum-based evaluation. This indicates that the participants believe that the language assessment training is already adequate.

**Figure 1: Teacher Qualifications and Knowledge.**



### 3.2. Problems and Steps for Putting Assessment into Action

Figure 2 shows that teachers said they had a lot of trouble using tests that fit with the Merdeka Curriculum. One of the biggest problems identified by the study was a lack of clarity about the concepts underlying educational assessments. More than 81% of survey respondents expressed their agreement that this issue had a significant impact on the effective implementation of educational assessments, and this suggests that conceptual understanding remains one of the major barriers to effectively implementing assessments.

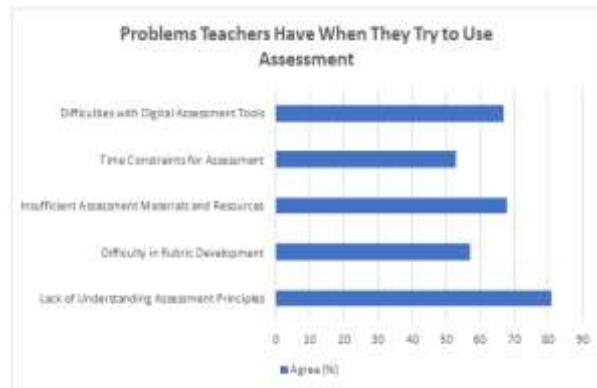
Another issue identified as a major barrier to effective educational assessment was the difficulty in developing rubrics, which at least 57% of the

respondents indicated they experienced difficulty with as well. The creation of rubrics is a challenge for many teachers, and this inconsistency in rubric creation is likely to lead to inconsistent and, therefore, less reliable evaluative results because prior research indicates that evaluative criteria must be precise for assessments to be valid.

Insufficient resources hindered the effectiveness of the assessments. The findings show that 68% of the respondents stated their agreement that their schools do not have enough materials and resources. It implements an effective assessment harder. Moreover, for the process of designing and delivering assessments.

Figure 2 also provides information that time constraints as one of the major challenges. On this point, 53% of the teachers put forward the fact that the time allocated for them to do the assessment was not sufficient. This issue can lessen the quality and lower the evaluation efforts. Additionally, the difficulties in getting access to the digital assessment make the assessment even harder. There were approximately 67% of the respondent's reported difficulty that deals with access to technology and digital assessment tools. This finding reveals the indication that infrastructure and technical support are crucial needed to ease the use of digital assessments.

**Figure 2: Problems Teachers Have When They Try to Use Assessments.**



When disaggregated by skill area, the data indicated that listening posed the fewest problems, with nearly three-quarters of respondents (74 %) feeling confident assessing it through objective tests. Speaking and writing, on the other hand, were rated as the most demanding, with 61 % and 58 % of teachers respectively describing them as "difficult" or "very difficult" to evaluate. Many commented that oral performance tasks consumed excessive time and that large class sizes prevented Equi figure scoring.

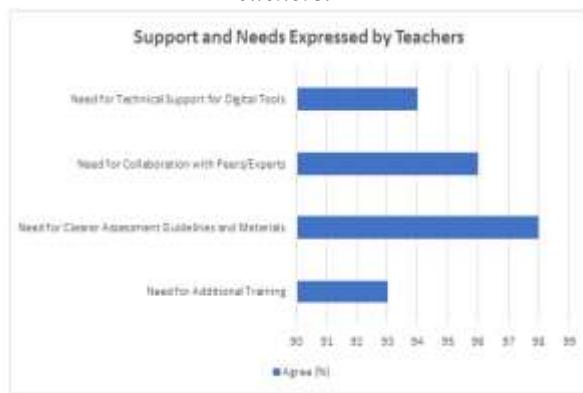
### 3.3. Assistance and Requirements

The findings show that Japanese language teachers really want more help to improve how they grade their students. Even though the participants said they were trained enough, as shown in Figure 1, they said they needed help keeping their language assessment abilities and knowledge up to date. Figure 3 shows that a large majority (93%) agreed or strongly agreed that further training would help them do a better job of using Curriculum Merdeka-based evaluations. Similarly, 98% respondents mentioned that clear standardized materials of assessments are needed to help them easily find the information.

The result of the survey shows that 96% teachers mentioned that it is important for them to have the ability to work with other teachers and experts. The findings inform teachers' beliefs on the importance of professional learning communities and support fellow teachers as a means of sharing ideas and techniques. The response from the teachers is in accordance with previous literature that the urgency of developing professionalism through collaboration will increase the quality of their assessment.

Respondents highlight a strong need for technical support related to the use of digital assessment. Most respondents, 94%, showed an indication that the viability of technical support would reduce the difficulties the teachers faced in relation to the use of digital assessment. Therefore, ongoing training on technical support is crucial for the teachers' continuous professional development in the use of digital assessment tools.

**Figure 3: Support and Needs Expressed by Teachers.**



### 3.4 Overall Evaluation

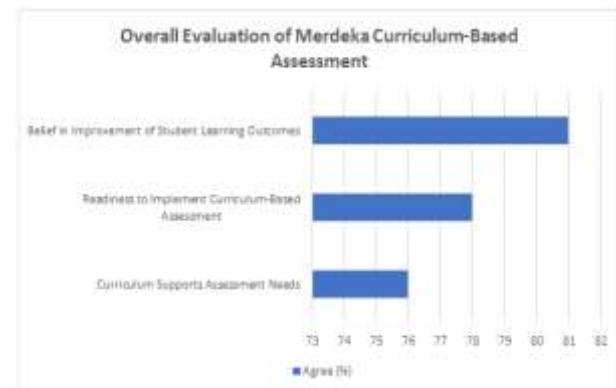
The data, which is presented in Figure 4, illustrates that even though most teachers (76%) affirm that the Merdeka Curriculum provides the necessary assessment information, 24% feel

uncertain whether the information can fulfil their needs. Hence, there is still an opportunity for strengthening the Merdeka Curriculum to adequately meet teachers' expectations.

Concerning readiness, 78% of the teachers stated that they are prepared to apply the new model of examinations based on the Merdeka Curriculum. However, the rest of the participants (22%) expressed some doubt about their ability to implement the new testing method effectively. Many teachers are confident in applying the method in evaluation, whereas some other teachers still need training to make them ready to implement the new approach well.

Notably, 81% of the respondents demonstrate positive perception toward the new testing standards of the Merdeka Curriculum. They believe that the new testing standards will help to improve the students' learning outcomes. Therefore, some of the teachers are optimistic that enhanced testing procedures would improve the quality of education.

**Figure 4: Overall Evaluation of the Merdeka Curriculum-Based Assessment.**



## 4. DISCUSSION

This study examined the challenges encountered by Indonesian Japanese language teachers in using the Merdeka Curriculum to do assessment to their students. The discussion falls into three main areas pointed out from the research findings and relevant literature, namely the influence of teacher experience, knowledge, and challenges on assessment efficacy; the necessity for professional support; and how the findings give guidance for the policy makers to provide training programs regarding foreign language assessment in Indonesia.

#### **4.1. The Interplay Between Japanese Teachers' Experiences, Knowledge, and Issues Related to Language Assessment**

The factual data showed that most Japanese language teachers have the knowledge and understanding regarding the implementation of assessments based on the Merdeka Curriculum. All the subjects examined involved experts with experience in developing and implementing language assessments. This is in line with the theory of education, mentioned by Morales-Obod et al. (2020), Pastore (2023), and Viberg et al. (2024). They stated that educators need to have a complete understanding of what they teach and how to teach well to design effective assessments. How effective a teacher can be in the teaching and learning process relies upon how much knowledge and experience they have. The viewpoint of a professional and experienced teacher yields valuable insights into classroom processes and learners' profiles. The viewpoint supports the approach of differentiated assessment that, in the long run, can improve student learning outcomes (Fitriyah et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, despite this predominantly positive review, the study also revealed significant challenges facing the effectiveness of assessment. One of the major barriers to assessment implementation is indeed a lack of understanding regarding Merdeka Curriculum-based assessment. Besides, developing assessment rubrics that align with the curriculum is also one of the frequent problems faced. These findings also support the presence of a gap between theoretical knowledge and actual practice. This finding agrees with Hermayawati (2020), who found that in a sample of 40 teachers, only 30 were able to fully comprehend the elements of curriculum-based assessment, and metacognitive evaluation was highly challenging.

The findings of this study reveal that there are various levels of teacher perceptions about the difficulty of assessing different language skills. Speaking was perceived to be the most difficult to assess due to the fact that it is an evaluative performance-based assessment; however, the majority of teachers perceived the least amount of concern or difficulty in assessing listening because they believed they could devise an appropriate assessment method for that skill. Assessment of reading and writing fell between the extremes of speaking and listening. Writing was perceived as being extremely difficult by a significant number of teachers, and there was less agreement among teachers regarding reading assessments. Overall, the findings of this study demonstrate that the majority

of teachers have demonstrated a solid grasp of general assessment concepts; however, they have not yet established consistent proficiency in developing assessable competencies for specific skills. This finding is in agreement with Iskandarova (2024), who argued that language is an abstract concept that gives additional hindrances in proficiency assessment within a global proficiency accountability system.

The availability of resources and time constraints are included as factors influencing the process of assessments. The majority of research respondents indicated that the scarcity of assessment materials hinders their ability to execute the assessment effectively. The Merdeka Curriculum encourages the creation of true criterion-referenced assessments; however, the lack of resources makes this hard. The results show problems that can make assessments less accurate and upset the balance of teachers' workloads.

The last part talked about a few technical problems that were thought to be mild but important. Most of the people who answered said that more technical help would make it easier for them to use the digital assessment tools. They also said they had concerns with assessment technology when it came to accessibility, usability, and reliability. The results emphasize the significance of digital literacy and the accessibility of technical infrastructure in facilitating successful assessment methods. This aligns with other research indicating that digital assessment necessitates both technological resources and a paradigm shift in instructional methodologies (Viberg et al., 2024).

#### **4.2. Consequences of Support Requirements for Professional Advancement in Foreign Language Instruction**

Generally, most of the respondents had positive perceptions about the chances of joining Professional Development (PD). They mentioned that Professional Development (PD) programs would give benefits in assisting them to conduct assessments by providing guidelines and equipping tools to perform effective assessments. This present study found that the majority of the respondents hold a Qualified Teacher's Certification. However, most of the respondents agreed that they still need continuous additional training on designing assessments and on how to implement successful assessment strategies. The findings underline the urgent need for PD for foreign language teachers, specifically Japanese language teachers. It is in accordance with Liu and Phelps who highlight the necessity for PD for teachers to connect curriculum

changes with classroom practices (Liu & Phelps, 2020). Moreover, Ramollo and Kanjee (2023) stated that providing a well-structured system of support can increase teachers' self-confidence and lessen teachers' confusion. Continuous Professional Development verified that Certification is inadequate to give assurance regarding proficiency related to assessment strategies, and PD programs must cover special issues concerning the challenges teachers face within their field. The programs are particularly needed in Secondary Language Instruction, due to an increased complexity related to the implementation and development of assessment methods.

The result of this study accentuates the significance for teachers to collaborate with their colleagues and experts, which illustrates how professional learning communities promote collective expertise and problem-solving skills. It is definitely clear that teachers must have the awareness to maintain and develop their professionalism, especially related to assessment skills. Collaborative settings allow for the sharing of ideas about real teaching practices among teachers, the co-development of assessment instruments, and critical reflection on their practices, which are all essential for adapting to curricular innovations (Mphahlele, 2024; Tep, 2024). These findings share a common ground with the social constructivist view of teacher learning, emphasizing interaction and the creation of knowledge through collaboration (Carmona-Medeiro & Cardeñoso Domingo, 2021; Shah, 2022).

#### **4.3. Basis for Policy and Training Program Development to Improve the Quality of Foreign Language Assessment**

In this study, researchers collected a lot of information on Indonesian language learners' progress and assessment quality. The results show that many Indonesian teachers are well-prepared to assess their students; however, there are specific areas in which teachers need additional training/support. Researchers recommend that policy development and program activity be based on these data findings.

In addition to the data findings, researchers also recommend that policies should support the creation of comprehensive assessment standards and samples based on foreign language teaching/learning. There are specific areas of difficulty for most teachers regarding assessing writing and speaking skill development, and therefore, these areas merit additional focus. Researchers suggest that curriculum developers, language assessment

experts, and teacher trainers should work closely together in order to ensure the implementation of successful programs and projects that are relevant and assist teachers in better utilizing materials in a classroom setting.

When developing training programs to create capacity, hands-on activities should be included to show participants how to develop rubrics, design authentic assessments, and utilize digital assessment tools. Because there is also a significant need for improved technical support, including courses on digital literacy and troubleshooting, this will aid in training programs. Additionally, creating professional learning communities (PLCs) at the local or district level can provide a means of implementing collaborative reflective practices as part of the school's culture, resulting in long-term enhancement of the school beyond the initial phases of training.

At the policy level, it is necessary to review the amount of time designated for activities related to assessments so that teachers have sufficient time to complete evaluations. To respond to time-related challenges, potential solutions could include revising teachers' workloads or establishing a new scheduling framework that would balance the instructional tasks and assessment responsibilities.

The majority of responding teachers viewed that the Merdeka Curriculum has met their assessment needs, indicating that the current policy is effective and in place. Similarly, a sustained feedback system must be created to record the changes in teachers' experiences and allow policies to be adjusted dynamically in accordance with the reality in the classrooms.

To summarise, the findings of the present study verify that there is an interplay between teacher knowledge, challenges, and support mechanisms and effective assessment practices in Curriculum Merdeka. The data-driven insights generated by this study may assist policymakers, curriculum developers, and teacher educators in creating adaptive strategies to enhance the quality of foreign language assessments and strengthen students' learning outcomes.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

This present study finds that most Indonesian Japanese Language Teachers have sufficient experience and knowledge that can help them to assess their students effectively within the Merdeka Curriculum. However, there are some obstacles concerning understanding evaluation theory, creating rubrics and rating scales, a lack of available assessment resources, a lack of time, and a lack of

suitable technology to conduct assessments that Indonesian Japanese Language Teachers must face. As a result, it is progressively difficult for teachers to have accurate and consistent assessments to measure their learners' proficiency in Japanese language productive skills.

The teachers mentioned that they need to have opportunities to improve and maintain their levels of professional development, which also include the chances of collaboration with other Japanese language teachers and to have access to standard procedures for assessing students and to the necessary technology. These findings inform areas that necessitate policy adjustment and training for Japanese Language Teachers, while at the same time, enriching scarce literature on how Japanese Language Teachers conduct assessments under the Merdeka Curriculum. This present research underlines the need for ongoing continuous professional development, a more effective

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distribution of resources to teachers, and the establishment of learning communities that will support effective evaluation procedures.

These findings suggest the need of policy initiatives to provide targeted and continuous training or professional development programs related to how to design of rubrics, authentic assessment, and digital literacy, and to revisit time allocations given to different assessment tasks. Future research can be done covering longitudinal research which focuses on interventions on effective assessment and student outcomes. Further research can also be done by comparing across different foreign language subjects to provide generalizable findings. Generally, this study provides clear evidence for policymakers, curriculum developers, and teacher educators to make necessary revisions concerning evaluation practices that can be adapted and applied for the teaching and learning process in Indonesia.

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