



## Assessment as Learning as a Strategy for Joyful Learning in Language Education

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### ABSTRACT

This literature review aims to describe and analyze the role of *Assessment as Learning (AaL)* in supporting the creation of *Joyful Learning* within the language education context. Assessment as Learning emphasizes the active involvement of students in the assessment process, encouraging them to engage in self-reflection, monitor their own learning progress, and develop a sense of responsibility for their learning outcomes. Through this approach, teachers shift from being mere assessors to becoming facilitators and learning partners who guide students in understanding their strengths, challenges, and strategies for continuous improvement. The concept of Joyful Learning, which promotes a positive, inclusive, and motivating learning atmosphere, aligns closely with the practice of AaL, as both position students as active agents in the learning process. This literature study reviews relevant theories, practical implementations, and empirical findings related to AaL in various educational contexts, including supporting factors, implementation challenges, and effective strategies for integration. The findings of this review are expected to provide valuable insights for teachers in designing assessment systems that are more participatory, reflective, and capable of fostering an enjoyable learning experience.

**Keywords:** Assessment as Learning, Joyful Learning, formative assessment, self-reflection, literature review.

### Introduction

Twenty-first-century education demands a transformation in teaching and learning paradigms to effectively address the challenges of globalization, digitalization, and rapid technological advancement (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). One of the critical aspects requiring renewal is the approach to assessment. In many Indonesian schools, assessment practices are still predominantly based on *Assessment of Learning (AoL)*, which emphasizes measuring learning outcomes at the end of instruction through summative tests or standardized exams (Mardapi, 2017). This approach often positions students merely as objects of evaluation rather than active agents in the learning process.

However, contemporary literature emphasizes that assessment should not merely serve as a tool for measuring achievement (summative assessment), but also as a means to support and improve the learning process (formative assessment) (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Earl, 2003). Within this context, *Assessment as Learning (AaL)* emerges as an innovative approach that emphasizes students' direct involvement in evaluating, monitoring, and reflecting on their learning progress continuously (Dann, 2014).

The principles of AaL align with Indonesia's educational vision that places students at the center of the learning process (student-centered learning), as reflected in the *Merdeka Curriculum* policy (Kemendikbud, 2022). Nevertheless, practical implementation faces significant challenges. Teachers often encounter limitations in understanding AaL concepts, a lack of practical training, and a school culture that remains outcome-oriented (Sudjana, 2009; Harris & Brown, 2013).

In the context of language learning, the application of AaL is increasingly relevant, as language acquisition requires active participation, repeated practice, social interaction, and deep reflection to develop communicative competence (Lam, 2014). Through AaL,

students are encouraged to assess their own language abilities, engage in feedback discussions with teachers and peers, and set personal learning goals (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009).

Furthermore, AaL is believed to support the realization of *Joyful Learning*, a learning atmosphere that is positive, inclusive, and motivating, fostering a sense of comfort, safety, and enthusiasm in learning (Hosnan, 2014; OECD, 2018). This study aims to explore how AaL can be implemented as a strategy to create *Joyful Learning*, particularly in language education at primary and secondary school levels in Indonesia. The findings are expected to offer both theoretical and practical contributions for teachers, education practitioners, and policymakers in designing a more humane, participatory, and development-oriented assessment system.

## Theoretical

### Assessment as Learning

Assessment as Learning (AaL) is an innovative form of formative assessment that places learners at the center of the assessment process. This concept evolves from a constructivist approach, which emphasizes that learning is an active process in which students construct knowledge through reflection, social interaction, and conscious engagement (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Earl, 2003). In AaL, assessment is not merely a tool for measurement, but a means of learning—through self-assessment, peer assessment, and metacognitive reflection. The main theoretical foundation of AaL is metacognition theory (Paris & Paris, 2001), which posits that students must understand how they learn in order to manage and evaluate their own learning processes. Additionally, the theory of *self-regulated learning* (Zimmerman, 2002) plays a critical role, explaining how students plan, monitor, and adjust learning strategies based on an awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses. The application of AaL is also influenced by humanistic approaches that value intrinsic motivation, autonomy, and learner self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). When students are empowered to assess their own learning processes, they feel respected as individuals, which enhances their sense of ownership over their learning outcomes. In practice, AaL promotes a more reflective, participatory, and collaborative learning environment. Assessment as Learning (AaL) is a formative assessment approach that focuses on the active role of learners in the learning and self-assessment process. Unlike Assessment of Learning (AoL), which emphasizes final outcomes, or Assessment for Learning (AfL), which is guided by the teacher to inform instruction, AaL positions the student as the central agent in evaluating their understanding, reflecting on learning strategies, and directing future learning actions (Earl, 2003). In AaL, students learn not only from content, but from thinking about how they learn.

AaL is firmly grounded in constructivist learning theory. Constructivism views learning as an active process where individuals construct knowledge through interaction with their environment and reflection on their experiences (Piaget, 1952; Vygotsky, 1978). In AaL, learners do not merely receive feedback; they derive meaning from it to reconstruct understanding.

Metacognition theory (Flavell, 1979; Paris & Paris, 2001) further reinforces AaL. Metacognition refers to the ability to think about one's own thinking. Metacognitive learners are able to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning strategies. AaL, with its emphasis on reflection and self-assessment, directly facilitates metacognitive development.



Assessment as Learning is closely aligned with the theory of self-regulated learning (SRL) developed by Zimmerman (2002). SRL emphasizes the learner's active involvement in goal-setting, monitoring progress, and self-evaluating outcomes. AaL provides the structure that supports this by encouraging learners to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, and adjust strategies for improvement.

Students with strong SRL skills tend to have more control over their learning, which ultimately enhances academic achievement, self-confidence, and intrinsic motivation (Zimmerman, 2002; Schunk & Zimmerman, 2008). AaL not only reflects SRL principles, but also systematically builds them.

According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy—the belief in one's ability to succeed—is a major driver of learning. AaL enhances self-efficacy by involving students in the assessment process, thereby cultivating a sense of control, competence, and confidence.

From a motivation theory perspective, AaL connects strongly with achievement goal theory and self-determination theory. When students engage in self- and peer-assessment, they are more likely to develop learning-oriented goals rather than performance-oriented goals. This shift promotes intrinsic motivation, perseverance, and curiosity.

The effective implementation of Assessment as Learning (AaL) requires a thorough understanding of several interconnected components that shape a reflective learning cycle. First, **self-assessment** lies at the heart of AaL, as it provides students with the opportunity to independently identify their strengths and weaknesses. This activity cultivates self-awareness and develops metacognitive skills such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning strategies (Andrade & Du, 2007). Self-assessment should not be reserved for the end of learning cycles but rather be integrated regularly so that learners can continuously track their development.

Second, **guided reflection** plays a vital role by involving the teacher in facilitating students' examination of their learning experiences. Reflection may take various forms, such as learning journals, reflective questioning, class discussions, or one-on-one learning conferences. The teacher acts as a facilitator who encourages students to think critically about what they learned, why it matters, and how it can be applied in other contexts. Through such reflection, students develop deeper and more meaningful understandings.

Third, **peer assessment** adds value to the learning process by enabling students to receive feedback from their peers' perspectives. When conducted in a supportive and safe classroom environment, peer assessment strengthens communication, collaboration, and empathy among learners. Additionally, the act of giving feedback sharpens students' ability to evaluate others' work based on predetermined criteria, which in turn reinforces their own understanding.

Fourth, **clear and transparent learning goals** are a foundational element of AaL. Students must clearly understand what they are expected to learn, the success criteria, and the standards used to evaluate their progress. With explicit goals, learners can better guide their reflection and assess their development objectively. Involving students in understanding—and even co-constructing—learning goals can enhance their intrinsic motivation and sense of responsibility for their own learning journey.

These four components do not operate in isolation but reinforce one another in building a participatory, reflective, and meaningful learning environment. When implemented consistently, AaL's components can contribute to cultivating a learning culture in which students feel ownership over both the learning process and its outcomes.

Several countries have successfully implemented Assessment as Learning (AaL) systemically in their educational practices, including Canada, Australia, and Finland. In Canada, the concept of AaL was popularized by Lorna M. Earl, who argued that students must be active agents in evaluating and directing their own learning processes. AaL practices in Canada are supported by education policies that promote personalized learning, such as student-led conferences, reflective journals, and self-assessment rubrics. In Australia, the implementation of AaL is strongly influenced by John Hattie's *Visible Learning* theory and formative assessment research by Black and Wiliam. Australian schools apply explicit success criteria, peer assessments, and structured reflective training to enhance students' metacognitive awareness. Meanwhile, in Finland, the AaL approach is deeply embedded in a learning culture that emphasizes trust in students and teachers. Without pressure from national standardized exams, Finnish students are encouraged to engage in reflection through learning portfolios, open dialogue with teachers, and project-based assessments. These three countries exemplify the successful integration of AaL in cultivating a reflective, participatory, and student-centered learning culture—an essential foundation for realizing joyful learning.

The experiences of Canada, Australia, and Finland demonstrate that the success of Assessment as Learning lies not only in technical strategies but also in the development of a strong and contextually grounded theoretical framework. In Canada, Lorna M. Earl developed the theory of AaL based on constructivism and metacognition, emphasizing that optimal learning occurs when students consciously reflect on their own thinking processes. This theory is further supported by the *self-regulated learning* framework (Zimmerman, 2002), which underpins students' ability to set learning goals, monitor progress, and evaluate and adapt their learning strategies. In Australia, AaL is shaped by Hattie's *Visible Learning* model (2009), which highlights the importance of making learning processes visible through feedback data, rubrics, and guided reflection. This reinforces the idea that assessment is not merely about outcomes but also about making thinking processes traceable and coachable. Meanwhile, in Finland, the AaL approach has evolved through the integration of humanistic and motivational theories, such as *self-determination theory* (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which emphasizes autonomy, competence, and relatedness as essential to creating meaningful learning experiences. These theoretical developments show that AaL is not a universal or one-size-fits-all model, but rather an adaptive framework shaped by local educational cultures, systems, and values.

### **Joyful Learning**

Joyful Learning is a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the importance of a positive, enjoyable, and emotionally empowering learning environment. This concept is rooted in humanistic educational theories, particularly the ideas of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, which assert that effective learning can only occur when learners' basic needs—such as safety, appreciation, and recognition of their potential—are fulfilled (Maslow, 1943; Rogers, 1969). Another key theory supporting Joyful Learning is the *flow* theory by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990), which explains that individuals experience happiness and optimal engagement when they are fully immersed in an activity that is both challenging and well-matched to their abilities. In the context of learning, this occurs when students perceive the content as relevant to their lives, feel respected, and are granted freedom to explore and express their ideas.

Joyful Learning is also shaped by constructivist pedagogy, which positions students as active agents in constructing knowledge. In joyful learning environments, peer



interaction, collaboration, creativity, and meaningful activities are central elements. The OECD (2018) highlights that enjoyable learning boosts engagement, intrinsic motivation, and long-term retention of knowledge. Therefore, Joyful Learning is not merely about “having fun” in class, but a deliberate, theory-informed strategy aimed at achieving optimal and sustainable learning outcomes.

Joyful Learning is a pedagogical approach that prioritizes a positive, enjoyable, and emotionally empowering learning environment. In the 21st-century education context, learning is no longer limited to academic content mastery but also involves students' psychological well-being as a prerequisite for meaningful learning experiences (OECD, 2018). Joyful Learning emphasizes that learning becomes more effective when students feel safe, comfortable, engaged, and appreciated.

Theoretically, Joyful Learning is strongly rooted in humanistic psychology, particularly the works of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. Maslow (1943), through his hierarchy of needs theory, argues that individuals can only achieve their full potential when their basic needs—such as safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization—are fulfilled. In the classroom, this translates into the teacher's responsibility to create an emotionally supportive environment where students can focus on learning without fear or pressure. Carl Rogers (1969), through his *person-centered learning* theory, asserts that true learning can only happen in a space of freedom, empathy, and unconditional positive regard. In this model, the teacher acts as a facilitator who nurtures student growth by encouraging exploration, expression, and experiential learning. These principles form the core of Joyful Learning practices.

A significant contribution to Joyful Learning also comes from the *flow* theory by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990). Flow describes a psychological state where individuals become deeply involved in an activity to the extent that they lose track of time, become immersed in the task, and experience intrinsic satisfaction. In the learning context, flow emerges when students are presented with challenges that match their abilities, have clear goals, and receive immediate and relevant feedback. Joyful Learning aims to cultivate the optimal conditions for such flow experiences to occur.

Emotional engagement is another crucial factor. Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris (2004) highlight that emotional involvement is a key indicator of successful learning, as affective attachment to learning activities strengthens students' motivation and perseverance. Joyful Learning incorporates this affective component by designing tasks that spark curiosity, excitement, and a sense of achievement.

Pedagogically, Joyful Learning aligns closely with constructivist approaches. Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes the importance of social interaction, scaffolding, and the zone of proximal development in the learning process. Joyful Learning facilitates these aspects through collaborative learning, group discussions, educational games, and experiential projects. Learners are not passive recipients of knowledge but active constructors of meaning through hands-on involvement.

Activities in Joyful Learning are also contextual and meaningful. Teachers are encouraged to connect lessons to real-world situations or students' personal experiences, making learning feel relevant and purposeful. This principle enhances students' understanding of the practical value of what they learn and fosters long-term retention and motivation. In Indonesian language education, Joyful Learning can be applied through strategies such as role-playing, read-alouds, creative writing competitions, storytelling, and multimodal adaptations of literary texts. These activities are not only

enjoyable but also promote integrated language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—while fostering student participation.

### **Strategy Assessment as Learning on Joyful Learning**

The theoretical framework in this study is developed through a conceptual synthesis between *Assessment as Learning* (AaL) and *Joyful Learning*, both of which are rooted in constructivist and humanistic learning paradigms. Assessment as Learning is based on the assumption that learners are not merely objects of evaluation, but active subjects capable of assessing, monitoring, and directing their own learning processes (Earl, 2003; Andrade & Valcheva, 2009). In this context, metacognition theory plays a fundamental role in explaining how students use their knowledge about learning strategies to make informed and strategic learning decisions (Paris & Paris, 2001). The concept of AaL is also heavily influenced by the theory of *self-regulated learning* (Zimmerman, 2002), which emphasizes personal control over learning goals, progress monitoring, and reflection on the effectiveness of learning strategies. This theory reinforces the role of students as autonomous and empowered learning agents. Therefore, the development of AaL practices should not only involve self- and peer-assessment activities, but also be linked to reflective thinking and higher-order cognitive skills that support independent learning decisions.

Meanwhile, *Joyful Learning* as a pedagogical framework emphasizes the importance of positive emotional climates, affective and cognitive engagement, and meaningful, relevant learning experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; OECD, 2018). Joyful Learning aligns with the notion of *flow experience*, a state in which learners are deeply immersed in learning activities with full concentration, enjoyment, and a sense of achievement. For Joyful Learning to emerge, students need to feel safe to take risks, free to fail, and empowered to express their creative potential. This is where AaL plays a significant role: by involving students in the assessment process, they gain a sense of control over their learning, which in turn enhances their confidence and intrinsic motivation.

In the context of Indonesian language learning, the integration of AaL and Joyful Learning theoretically creates a strong synergy. Language skills develop optimally when students are in a supportive, reflective, and participatory environment—core characteristics of both approaches. Thus, the theoretical foundation developed in this study draws on three main pillars: (1) metacognitive and *self-regulated learning* theories as the basis for self-assessment in AaL, (2) motivation and *flow* theories as the psychological foundation of Joyful Learning, and (3) constructivist pedagogical principles that bridge the two within actual language learning practices. By referencing these three pillars, this article not only offers a robust conceptual understanding but also provides a practical theoretical framework for developing reflective, engaging, and student-centered Indonesian language instruction.

Teachers play a pivotal role in AaL—not as sole evaluators, but as facilitators of learning reflection. Teachers should design guiding questions, provide clear rubrics, deliver constructive formative feedback, and coach students in planning improvement strategies. Earl (2003) describes teachers in AaL as “learning coaches” who actively support students' learning journeys. In language learning, AaL complements Joyful Learning by fostering a collaborative, dialogical, and reflective classroom climate. Activities such as reflective writing, poetry reading followed by group discussions, or



literacy project presentations empower students to take ownership of their learning, leading to increased confidence and emotional satisfaction.

A core element of transformative Assessment as Learning (AaL) is cultivating students' ownership of their learning process through strategies that foster reflection, responsibility, and active participation. This begins with setting *personal learning goals* that are realistic and relevant to each student's context and needs. When students consciously articulate their learning goals, they position themselves not merely as recipients of instruction, but as designers of their own learning experiences. To support the achievement of these goals, students can utilize *self-assessment rubrics* as tools to monitor progress, evaluate achievements, and identify areas for improvement. These rubrics serve as metacognitive guides that shift students' focus toward the learning process rather than solely on outcomes. Furthermore, the practice of *weekly reflections* through learning journals allows students to consolidate their experiences, recognize obstacles, and plan strategic improvements. This reinforces deep learning awareness and provides direction for continuous growth. As a culminating practice, *student-led conferences* offer an opportunity for students to present their learning outcomes to parents and teachers, while reflecting on both the product and the process. This practice not only enhances student accountability but also strengthens school-home connections and fosters a culture of collaborative, transparent, and meaningful learning. Altogether, these processes reflect a paradigm shift from teacher-centered instruction to learning driven by student autonomy and self-awareness.

Effective implementation of *Assessment as Learning (AaL)* requires a shared understanding between teachers and students regarding the direction of learning. Thus, the explicit use of *learning intentions* and *success criteria* becomes a foundational element. *Learning intentions* clarify what is to be learned, while *success criteria* define the standards by which success is measured. When both are communicated clearly, students are better able to assess where they are in the learning process and take appropriate reflective action. To reinforce active engagement, *learning journals* and *daily exit slips* are employed as tools for daily reflection and documentation. Learning journals allow students to articulate their understanding, emotions, and learning strategies, while exit slips provide quick feedback about what they have learned and any lingering questions. These practices support metacognitive development and strengthen the habit of daily reflection. Additionally, regular *peer and self-assessment workshops* give students direct experience in evaluating and giving feedback based on shared criteria. These workshops not only enhance reflective and critical thinking skills but also foster a culture of mutual respect and collective learning. When applied consistently, this set of strategies establishes a student-centered, transparent learning environment that promotes sustained cognitive growth.

The development of comprehensive *Formative Assessment Guidebooks* is a strategic step to support the effective implementation of Assessment as Learning (AaL) in schools. These guidebooks should explicitly include essential strategies, such as the use of clear and mutually understood *learning intentions* and *success criteria* by both teachers and students. Setting transparent learning goals and success standards helps students independently and reflectively steer their learning processes. Additionally, the guidebooks should encourage daily use of *learning journals* and *exit slips* as routine tools for documentation and reflection, which strengthen students' metacognitive awareness in managing their learning. To deepen students' skills in evaluating and providing feedback, the guidebooks must also incorporate models for conducting regular *peer and self-*

*assessment workshops*, training students in critical and constructive evaluation processes. Equally important, teachers need specialized training focused on developing competencies to facilitate reflective dialogues and the use of learning portfolios as dynamic learning instruments. Hence, these *Formative Assessment Guidebooks* serve not only as technical references but also as professional development tools that effectively bridge theory and practice of AaL, enabling student-centered and reflective learning to be optimally realized.

In learning systems that emphasize Assessment as Learning (AaL), assessment approaches shift significantly from summative, standardized national tests to more holistic, formative, and project-based assessments. Without standardized national exams as the primary benchmark, assessment focuses on the authentic and comprehensive learning processes of students. Formative and project-based assessments provide opportunities for students to develop critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration skills in real-world contexts, making learning more meaningful and relevant. Moreover, reflection and feedback are integral components of every learning activity, allowing students to continuously evaluate and guide their own learning processes. Teachers assess not only the final product or task but also consider students' thinking processes and learning strategies throughout the learning journey. This approach helps reveal deep understanding and challenges faced by students while providing timely opportunities for intervention and reinforcement. Consequently, this assessment model not only measures achievement but also fosters metacognitive development and intrinsic motivation within a supportive and reflective learning environment.

## Method

This study employs a library research method as the primary approach to describe and analyze the role of *Assessment as Learning* (AaL) in supporting the implementation of *Joyful Learning* in language education in Indonesia.

Library research was chosen because it allows researchers to critically review theories, practices, and empirical findings from previous studies to formulate a comprehensive and contextually relevant conceptual synthesis for the Indonesian education setting (George, 2008; Ridwan, 2015).

Secondary data were collected through a systematic review of credible sources to strengthen the theoretical foundation and analysis. The reviewed literature includes international reference books (e.g., Earl, 2003; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Hattie & Timperley, 2007), reputable journal articles indexed by Scopus and WoS (e.g., Dann, 2014; Harris & Brown, 2013; Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009), national education policy documents such as the *Merdeka Curriculum* (Kemendikbud, 2022), and literature addressing constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978), metacognition (Paris & Paris, 2001), learning motivation (Bandura, 1997; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), and formative assessment practices across countries (OECD, 2018; Lam, 2014).

The literature was accessed through online academic databases such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, JSTOR, and ProQuest using specific keywords such as *Assessment as Learning*, *Formative Assessment*, *Self-Assessment*, *Joyful Learning*, *Language Education*, *Reflective Practice*, and *Student Engagement*. Inclusion criteria included publications between 1990 and 2024, focus on AaL, reflective learning, student-centered instruction, and learning motivation, and selection from peer-reviewed academic publications or official education policies.



The collected literature was analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), involving close reading, categorizing findings into foundational theory, implementation practices, supporting and inhibiting factors, and optimization strategies. Validity and credibility were ensured by selecting primary and secondary literature from recognized scholars, reviewing at least 30–50 relevant sources in line with Hart's (1998) recommendation, and engaging in peer debriefing to minimize interpretive bias. This approach is expected to yield a comprehensive and applicable understanding that can serve as a reference for teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers in fostering more reflective, joyful, and student-engaged learning.

## Results and Discussion

*Assessment as Learning* (AaL) offers a participatory assessment approach that emphasizes students' active engagement in their learning processes. Research by Sadler (1989) and Harris & Brown (2013) shows that student involvement in assessment reduces anxiety, as students feel heard and valued. In the context of Bahasa Indonesia learning, this is evident when students gain confidence in writing poetry, storytelling, or presenting literary works because feedback is provided not only by the teacher but also by peers. Such assessment practices enhance students' self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) and foster a learning environment that promotes personal expression and ownership of learning outcomes. Moreover, these activities cultivate reflective habits crucial for mastering language skills and shaping independent, critical learners.

Meaningful learning is not solely characterized by content mastery but by students' personal engagement in constructing meaning from what they learn. Within the framework of Assessment as Learning (AaL), meaningful learning emerges when students are given space to experience, reflect on, and consciously make sense of their learning processes. One effective approach to cultivating such learning is through educational dialogue between teachers and students that is egalitarian and collaborative. In this dialogic relationship, the teacher no longer acts as the sole authority of knowledge but as a facilitator who guides students in exploring their own understanding. This pedagogical partnership positions students as active co-learners, rather than passive recipients of instruction. To deepen this process, *learning diaries* can be used as a routine reflective tool, enabling students to document their thought development, challenges encountered, and strategies employed. Through such practices, learning becomes less linear and mechanistic, evolving instead as a dynamic process shaped by individual experiences and awareness. The integration of reflective dialogue and learning diaries creates a learning ecosystem that supports metacognitive awareness and personal connection to content, thus fostering a more authentic, relevant, and joyful learning experience.

In line with this, the implementation of AaL contributes to building a *Joyful Learning* environment, particularly through collaborative and meaningful activities. Group discussions, public reading of literary works in class, and literacy projects allow students to experience Bahasa Indonesia learning as relevant to real life, rather than purely technical. This reflects Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) concept of *flow experience*, in which students are emotionally and intellectually engaged in the learning process. However, effective implementation of AaL requires several supporting factors, including teacher competence in designing reflective and dialogic assessment tools (Harris & Brown, 2013), a safe and supportive classroom culture (Earl, 2003), and student training in

providing constructive peer feedback (Topping, 2010). These components are essential in creating an open, critical, and supportive learning environment.

Nonetheless, real-world practice reveals that implementing AaL faces several challenges. A major issue is the administrative burden on teachers, especially when assessing individual reflective journals, portfolios, or creative assignments. Additionally, student readiness for self-reflection varies, and parents and schools often still prioritize final grades over learning processes (Dann, 2014; Mardapi, 2017).

The theoretical development of Assessment as Learning (AaL) becomes more robust when integrated with Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and metacognition not merely at the practical level, but within its epistemological construction. SRL views learners as epistemic agents who actively construct knowledge through the regulation of their cognitive and affective processes. In this framework, AaL serves as a reflective system that provides an explicit structure for students to monitor, evaluate, and consciously direct their learning. Thus, AaL transcends procedural tools (such as rubrics or reflective journals) and becomes an epistemic practice that cultivates students' awareness of their knowledge construction. Furthermore, metacognition here is not limited to recognizing errors or gaps, but functions as a tool to develop *epistemic agency*—the learner's capacity to take ownership and responsibility for their ways of thinking and learning. Therefore, AaL grounded in SRL and metacognition fosters not only reflective learning but also instills values of autonomy, cognitive responsibility, and a mindset of continuous improvement. This is where the transformative potential of AaL lies in supporting authentic and joyful learning.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the literature review, it can be concluded that *Assessment as Learning* (AaL) is an innovative assessment approach that positions learners as the central agents in their educational journey. In the context of Bahasa Indonesia instruction, AaL enables students to actively engage in self-assessment, peer assessment, reflective journaling, and learning conferences.

This approach aligns with the principles of *Joyful Learning*, as it provides space for students to express themselves, reflect, collaborate, and feel appreciated. Participatory and dialogic assessment processes have been shown to reduce learning anxiety, foster a sense of ownership over learning outcomes, and build students' intrinsic motivation.

However, the implementation of AaL in Indonesia continues to face challenges such as limited understanding of formative assessment among teachers, a school culture focused on summative outcomes, and varying levels of student readiness for self-reflection. Therefore, context-specific strategies and sustained support from multiple stakeholders are essential.

In light of these conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed. For Bahasa Indonesia teachers, it is advised to integrate self- and peer-assessment into language skills activities such as writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Teachers should also employ simple, practical, and student-friendly assessment tools and act as facilitators who guide students through the reflection process with constructive, non-judgmental feedback.

For schools, structural and cultural support is necessary to ensure successful AaL implementation. This includes regular training for teachers on AaL concepts and practices, providing sufficient time and space in the academic schedule for reflective



assessment, and fostering a school culture of collaboration, trust, and open communication. Such a supportive environment strengthens the success of AaL in cultivating reflective, confident, and motivated learners.

For policymakers, it is essential to reinforce the operational and applicable inclusion of AaL in the national curriculum. Developing practical AaL implementation guidelines tailored to different educational levels and subject areas is needed to bridge the gap between policy and practice. Continued support in the form of resources, professional development, and targeted supervision is also critical to ensure quality implementation. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to conduct field studies to examine the effectiveness of AaL in enhancing student motivation and learning outcomes in Bahasa Indonesia across diverse regions. Research can also explore culturally rooted AaL models and context-based literacy practices aligned with the unique characteristics of Indonesian school communities, ensuring that AaL becomes not only relevant but deeply embedded in the national education context. With the right strategies, *Assessment as Learning* can become a driving force in realizing *Joyful Learning*, making Bahasa Indonesia instruction more meaningful, creative, and enjoyable for all learners.

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