

A Systematic Literature Review on Trends and Challenges in Language, Literature, and Cultural Education

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine how the Merdeka Curriculum provides a holistic framework by combining language and literature learning, with the goal of enhancing literacy skills and at the same time nurturing cultural awareness. Using a systematic literature review method, the study reviewed scholarly works—including articles, research reports, and scientific publications published between 2015 and 2025—selected through purposive sampling based on predetermined eligibility criteria. Data were analysed thematically through coding, categorisation, and identification of recurring themes. The findings reveal that integrating language and literature in the Merdeka Curriculum consistently enhances students' critical reading, expressive writing, and comprehension of social and cultural contexts. The incorporation of digital technologies and interactive media further broadens access and encourages active participation in integrative learning. Nevertheless, several challenges persist, such as limited teacher competence, insufficient professional training, and inadequate supporting facilities. The study concludes that the success of language and literature integration within the Merdeka Curriculum is strongly influenced by teacher preparedness, supportive educational policies, and adequate infrastructure. It further emphasises the necessity of continuous professional development for teachers, the establishment of competency-based assessment models, and the expansion of empirical research to evaluate the broader effectiveness of integrative approaches. These findings provide significant implications for policymakers, educators, and researchers seeking to enhance both literacy skills and cultural awareness in the Indonesian educational context.

Keywords: *Indonesian Language and Literature; Learning Integration; Literacy; Cultural Appreciation.*

INTRODUCTION

Language, Literature, and Culture Education has long been one of the key foundations in shaping civilisation, identity, and social integration in modern societies. Amid the currents of globalisation and technological disruption that have intensified since the second decade of the 21st century, attention to the dimensions of language, literature, and culture cannot be separated from efforts to build an inclusive, critical

society with a strong appreciation of diversity. Language, as a medium of communication, not only functions as a tool for exchanging information but also carries ideological content, values, and social constructions that influence patterns of interaction among individuals and across nations. Literature, on the other hand, serves as a vessel of creative expression that reflects social realities, cultural critique, and simultaneously enriches the treasury of human imagination. Meanwhile, culture functions as a framework of values, traditions, and practices that bind communities together, while also providing a space for the dynamics between preservation and innovation. Within this context, research on language, literature, and culture education gains its significance, particularly as the world faces multidimensional challenges such as digital technological change, global migration, identity crises, and the need for new literacies to navigate the 21st century (Garcia & Wei, 2018; Santoso, 2019).

A systematic literature review (SLR) in the field of language, literature, and culture education is therefore required to provide a comprehensive overview of the trends and challenges that have emerged in the past decade. Unlike narrative reviews, SLR adopts a more rigorous, structured, and transparent methodological approach to identify, evaluate, and synthesise relevant research findings. This approach enables researchers, practitioners, and policymakers alike to understand the development of existing research, identify underexplored gaps, and formulate directions for future research and policymaking (Snyder, 2019). Accordingly, a systematic review of the trends and challenges in language, literature, and culture education holds strategic value, as it not only archives scholarly developments but also provides an evidential basis for decision-making in the fields of education and culture.

A dominant trend demonstrates a significant shift towards digitalisation and the integration of technology into learning processes. The concept of blended learning, which combines face-to-face methods with online technologies, has become a popular approach in language teaching. Several studies indicate that the use of digital technologies can enhance student engagement, expand access to learning resources, and facilitate intercultural interaction through virtual platforms (Wang & Vasquez, 2017; Zhao, 2020). In the context of literature education, digital technologies allow for the exploration of literary texts through multimodal media such as video, audio, and interactive simulations, thereby enriching the reader's experience (Alter, 2019; Suryani et al., 2021). However, digitalisation also brings challenges, including the digital divide, limited digital competencies among educators, and infrastructural deficiencies, particularly in developing countries (Rizal et al., 2022).

Another salient development is the strengthening of the multilingualism paradigm in educational practice. Multilingualism is understood as the ability to use more than one language in daily life and, in the educational context, is promoted as a strategy to improve social inclusion and students' cognitive skills (Garcia & Wei, 2018). The translanguaging approach, which encourages the simultaneous use of multiple languages in the classroom, has emerged as a pedagogical trend that challenges monolingual dominance. Research demonstrates that translanguaging can enhance critical thinking skills, reinforce cultural identity, and foster inclusivity in

multilingual classrooms (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021). Yet, implementation remains constrained by institutional resistance, as national curricula in many countries still prioritise a dominant language as the primary medium of instruction (Sivertsen, 2018).

Attention has also increasingly turned to the integration of local and traditional literary works into school and university curricula. This integration is vital as local literature is seen to strengthen identity, foster cultural appreciation, and serve as an effective medium for teaching moral and social values (Ahmad, 2020). Culturally based literacy has also been shown to improve students' reading interest, as they feel more connected to texts relevant to their everyday lives (Nasip & Zulkiply, 2024). Nevertheless, a major challenge lies in the limited availability of quality reading materials aligned with local cultural contexts, as well as insufficient policy support for the development of literacy rooted in local wisdom (Chang et al., 2019).

A number of serious challenges continue to overshadow language, literature, and culture education. One of these is the decline in students' reading habits in the digital era. Studies in Indonesia reveal that the dominance of mobile devices as entertainment tools negatively affects the time allocated to reading, whether academic literature or literary works (Wiranatha & Santosa, 2024). This phenomenon reflects a shift in youth orientation towards consuming visual and instant content, thereby reducing their ability to comprehend long and complex texts. Another related challenge is the low reading culture in society, which hampers the widespread implementation of innovative language and literature education (Angraeni & Yusuf, 2022).

The role of the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be overlooked in this discussion. The global crisis that began in 2020 accelerated digital transformation in education, including language, literature, and culture education. Online learning became the main solution when schools and universities were forced to close. This created the phenomenon of learning from home, which required teachers, students, and parents to rapidly adapt to technology (Maksimova, 2022). Although this transformation accelerated the adoption of technology, it also exposed acute inequalities. Many students in remote areas were unable to participate in online learning due to poor internet connectivity and limited access to devices (Yusuf, 2024). This indicates that digital transformation in education can only succeed if accompanied by inclusive policies that address socio-economic disparities.

Cultural dimensions are equally critical. Research shows that resistance to educational innovation often stems not from technological weaknesses but from entrenched cultural norms. For instance, in some societies, hierarchical structures in education discourage teachers from changing their teaching methods, even when new technologies are available (Panicker, 2020). This highlights the need for education innovations to be culturally and socially contextualised. Globally, language, literature, and culture education also face challenges associated with the dominance of English as the academic lingua franca. This dominance risks marginalising local languages and undermining linguistic diversity (UNESCO, 2021). Consequently, initiatives to promote multilingual publication and open access in various languages are increasingly encouraged (Helsinki Initiative, 2019).

Technological innovations likewise show enormous potential. Artificial intelligence (AI), for example, is being applied to personalise language learning, analyse literary texts, and develop digital cultural content (Sukmalasari & Tarihoran, 2025). AI-powered chatbots can help students practise foreign language conversations, while machine learning algorithms can analyse narrative patterns in literary texts to support academic study. However, the use of AI also raises ethical and pedagogical concerns, including student dependency, data bias, and the risk of replacing teachers with technology (Aji et al., 2022).

One of the most prominent shifts in the past decade is the rise of online learning platforms, language learning applications, and massive open online courses (MOOCs). MOOCs have revolutionised foreign language learning by making it accessible to students across socio-economic backgrounds, enabling flexible, independent learning unconstrained by geography. Recent studies show that MOOCs not only expand access but also enhance motivation due to their interactive and personalised nature (Zhao, 2020; Wang & Vasquez, 2017). However, their potential is still limited by low completion rates, restricted personal interaction, and participation gaps between students in developed and developing countries (Rizal et al., 2022). This suggests that technological integration must be accompanied by adaptive pedagogical models rather than simply providing digital platforms.

The virtual exchange approach has also gained wide attention, particularly after COVID-19 restricted international mobility. Virtual exchange refers to pedagogical practices that connect students across countries to interact, discuss, and collaborate online with the aim of developing language skills and intercultural awareness (O'Dowd, 2016; Verzella, 2018). This innovation not only helps learners enhance foreign language proficiency but also fosters global citizenship skills, including awareness of diversity, justice, and global responsibility (Helm, 2020). Yet, challenges remain, including differences in digital infrastructure, language barriers, and the need for flexible curricula to accommodate cross-border collaboration (Verzella, 2018).

The integration of literature into education has also evolved in interesting ways. In the digital age, literary works are no longer confined to print texts but have migrated into interactive digital formats, enabling readers to explore narratives through multimedia. This phenomenon, known as digital literature or e-literature, expands the boundaries of reading experiences by combining text, images, audio, and animation (Alter, 2019). Studies suggest that multimedia-based literature education can increase student interest while deepening critical interpretation of literary works (Suryani et al., 2021). However, there are concerns that digitalisation of literature may reduce the depth of linear and contemplative reading, as students tend to focus more on visual aspects than textual substance (Nasip & Zulkiply, 2024). Thus, educators face the challenge of balancing traditional and digital approaches in literature curricula.

Culturally based literacy has been increasingly recognised as an effective pedagogical strategy to enhance students' literacy skills. Research across various regions in Indonesia shows that the use of local literary texts, folklore, and cultural symbols in education can improve students' motivation to learn while fostering pride in

their cultural identity (Ahmad, 2020; Chang et al., 2019). This strategy aligns with UNESCO's (2021) recommendations emphasising the importance of education rooted in local wisdom to strengthen cultural identity amid globalisation. However, culturally based literacy still faces obstacles such as a lack of standardised teaching materials, limited teacher training, and insufficient support from local government policies (Suryani et al., 2021).

The development of AI has also influenced the education of language, literature, and culture. AI-powered adaptive learning applications can adjust difficulty levels based on learners' abilities (Sukmalasari & Tarihoran, 2025). Natural Language Processing (NLP) technologies are applied to create chatbots that engage learners in foreign languages and to automatically assess students' writing (Aji et al., 2022). In literary studies, AI is being used to analyse narrative patterns, themes, and linguistic styles across thousands of texts, opening new opportunities in digital literary scholarship (Rizal et al., 2022). Yet, AI integration is not free of ethical controversy, including concerns over algorithmic bias, teacher replacement, and student dependency (Yusuf, 2024). On the policy front, global frameworks also shape language, literature, and culture education. UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report (2021) stresses the importance of multilingual education as a strategy to reduce educational inequality and strengthen social cohesion. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) highlights the need for global competence in 21st-century education curricula, which includes intercultural communication, understanding value differences, and collaborative problem-solving (OECD, 2019). These policies position language, literature, and culture education as strategic components in preparing young generations to face global complexity. Yet, policy implementation often lacks consistency, particularly in developing countries still focused on standardised cognitive outcomes rather than integrating cultural aspects (Santoso, 2019).

Language and literature education also grapple with frequent curriculum changes. In Indonesia, for example, the transition from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum has had profound implications for how language and literature are taught. Although the Merdeka Curriculum emphasises flexibility and project-based learning, challenges persist in terms of teacher readiness, resource availability, and alignment with national assessment policies (Angraeni & Yusuf, 2022). This illustrates that progressive policies only succeed when accompanied by adequate infrastructure, training, and long-term commitment.

Over the past decade, language, literature, and culture education has entered a transformative phase rich in both opportunities and challenges. Digital innovation opens up new pedagogical possibilities but also risks deepening social inequalities. Multilingualism and translanguaging offer inclusive approaches yet face institutional resistance. The integration of local literature strengthens cultural identity but requires consistent policy support. AI holds promise for personalised learning but raises ethical concerns. These dynamics underscore the urgency of a systematic literature review capable of mapping knowledge, identifying dominant trends, exploring major

challenges, and offering relevant recommendations for researchers, educators, and policymakers. This study, therefore, aims to: first, identify major trends in language, literature, and culture education, including pedagogical innovations, culturally based strategies, and technology integration; second, explore the challenges faced, whether structural, cultural, or technological; third, provide recommendations for research directions and educational policies that are more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable. The significance of this research lies in its ability to provide a comprehensive synthesis that can serve as a reference for interdisciplinary researchers, educators, policymakers, and wider society with an interest in literacy and cultural development.

The primary objective is to present a clear mapping of the trends and challenges in language, literature, and culture education over the last decade. This review highlights how digitalisation, multilingualism, translanguaging, culturally based literacy, and AI are reshaping the educational landscape, while also identifying implementation gaps and structural barriers that must be addressed. Its significance lies in contributing a solid theoretical and practical foundation for developing inclusive, sustainable, and globally responsive educational policies. In this way, the review not only functions as an academic documentation but also as a meaningful contribution to building a knowledge society that values linguistic, literary, and cultural diversity as vital pillars of civilisation. Global trends demonstrate immense potential for improving learning quality and literacy, yet challenges such as access inequality, cultural resistance, and language dominance need to be addressed through inclusive strategies. This systematic review is therefore expected to provide meaningful academic contributions by offering a clear knowledge map of trends and challenges, while serving as a foundation for the development of education policies responsive to the needs of the 21st century.

METHOD

This study employed the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, which is recognised as a rigorous and transparent approach for synthesising existing research (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007; Snyder, 2019). The SLR was chosen because it enables researchers to systematically identify, evaluate, and integrate relevant studies in order to produce a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge, highlight emerging trends, and identify research gaps within the fields of language, literature, and culture education.

The review process was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA framework (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses), which has become the standard guideline for reporting systematic reviews across disciplines (Moher et al., 2009; Page et al., 2021). PRISMA ensures methodological transparency and replicability by structuring the review into four main stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion.

Identification Stage

Relevant keywords such as language education, literature education, teaching language, teaching literature, bahasa dan sastra, pembelajaran bahasa, pembelajaran

sastra, and cultural literacy were formulated. These keywords were searched across multiple academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, ERIC, ProQuest, DOAJ, and Garuda. To ensure recency and contextual relevance, the search was limited to the period 2015–2025, capturing publications influenced by curriculum reforms, digital innovation, and globalisation (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003).

Screening Stage

Duplicate articles retrieved from multiple databases were removed. Titles, abstracts, and keywords were then screened to ensure alignment with the scope of language, literature, and cultural education.

Eligibility Stage

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. Only peer-reviewed journal articles and academic publications that addressed teaching, pedagogy, or curriculum within the scope of language, literature, and culture education were retained. Non-scholarly sources, grey literature, and articles lacking methodological clarity were excluded.

Inclusion Stage

Articles meeting the criteria were included in the final dataset for analysis. The process was summarised in a PRISMA flow diagram, showing the number of records identified, screened, excluded, and finally included.

Data Extraction and Analysis

For each article, key information such as research aims, methodologies, theoretical framework, main findings, and practical contributions was extracted. The study employed thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify recurring themes and to cluster them into categories such as: strategies for teaching language and literature, cultural integration in teaching, digital technology in education, critical literacy and evaluation, and curriculum innovation supporting cultural literacy.

This thematic approach not only synthesises existing evidence but also reveals dominant research methods and research gaps, thereby providing a roadmap for future scholarly inquiry (Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2015).

Validity and Reliability Strategies

To ensure methodological robustness, three verification strategies were employed: Source Triangulation – findings were cross-validated across multiple databases (Fink, 2019). Audit Trail – systematic documentation of every stage, from keyword selection to final synthesis, was maintained (Snyder, 2019). Peer Review – interpretations of the thematic findings were validated through consultations with experts in language, literature, and cultural education.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the systematic review of the literature on the integration of Indonesian language and literature learning in the Kurikulum Merdeka show a strong tendency that both aspects cannot be separated in building literacy competence and cultural appreciation in secondary schools. Based on the analysis of 62 journal articles, proceedings, and research reports published between 2015 and 2025, a general pattern was found that integrating language and literature learning is one of the most

frequently recommended strategies to support the achievement of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila (Pancasila Student Profile), which forms the core of the Kurikulum Merdeka. This finding reinforces the assumption presented in the introduction that separating language from literature reduces the quality of literacy, whereas integrating them opens up significant opportunities for the development of linguistic skills as well as cultural understanding (Sigit Apriyanto et al., 2020; Dalman et al., 2020a; Kasiyarno & Apriyanto, 2025; Santoso & Apriyanto, 2020a; Triana et al., 2020a).

Before presenting the data tables, it should be explained that the data displayed are the result of extraction from the articles that passed the PRISMA selection process. These articles were collected from various academic databases such as Scopus, ERIC, Google Scholar, ProQuest, DOAJ, and Garuda. Thematic analysis was employed, producing thematic categories concerning issues, strategies, and research findings directly related to the integration of language and literature. Of the 62 reviewed articles, 43 originated from reputable national journals, 14 from international journals, and 5 from conference proceedings. The following table presents a summary of the main findings based on thematic categories.

Table 1. Summary of Main Findings on the Integration of Language and Literature in the Kurikulum Merdeka

| No | Main Theme | Number of Articles | Research Focus | Key Findings |
|----|--|--------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Integrative learning strategies (Puspitasari, E. 2015) | 18 | Integration of language and literature in curriculum design and classroom practice | Literature-based learning enhances students' writing skills and critical reading |
| 2 | Digital technology integration (Erlam, R., Philp, J., & Feick, D. 2017), (Gamal, A. H. 2021) | 14 | E-learning, digital platforms, and interactive media in language-literature learning | Digital media foster students' active engagement and broaden access to literary sources |
| 3 | Critical literacy and cultural literacy (Ramadhani et al, 2021), (Saputra, H., & Paudel, D. 2022) | 11 | Development of interpretation, reflection, and cultural contextual understanding | Students become more capable of interpreting literary texts by linking them with socio-cultural realities |
| 4 | Competency-based learning evaluation (Hoang Yen, P., & Thanh Thao, L. 2024), (Sumarwati et al, 2023) | 10 | Authentic assessment, portfolios, and literature appreciation rubrics | Project-based evaluation models prove more effective in assessing integrated language-literature competencies |
| 5 | Integration of multicultural and local values (Ramadhani et al, 2021) | 9 | Incorporation of local wisdom and multiculturalism in learning | Local wisdom-based learning strengthens student identity and enhances tolerance |
| 6 | Teacher competence (Erlam, R., Philp, J., & Feick, D. 2017), (Gamal, A. H. 2021) | 6 | Pedagogical competence and literacy of Indonesian language teachers | Teachers mastering integrative approaches are more successful in fostering student motivation |
| 7 | Implementation challenges values (Ramadhani et al, | 4 | Structural, curricular, and facility-related barriers | Limited teacher training and restricted access to digital resources are major |

2021), (Erlam, R.,
Philp, J., & Feick, D.
2017)

obstacles

Source: Extracted literature from Scopus, ERIC, Google Scholar, ProQuest, DOAJ, and Garuda (2015–2025).

To further emphasise the findings, the data compiled from the selected literature are presented in the following table. This table shows the distribution of the main themes most frequently found in studies on Indonesian language and literature learning in the era of the Kurikulum Merdeka. The data were derived from the 62 articles that met the inclusion and exclusion criteria in the final stage of the SLR process.

Table 2. Summary of Main Findings on the Integration of Language and Literature in the Kurikulum Merdeka

| No | Main Theme | Number of Articles | Percentage (%) |
|----|---|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Integrative learning strategies | 18 | 29.0 |
| 2 | Digital technology integration | 14 | 22.6 |
| 3 | Critical literacy and cultural literacy | 11 | 17.7 |
| 4 | Competency-based learning evaluation | 10 | 16.1 |
| 5 | Integration of multicultural and local values | 9 | 14.6 |
| | Total | 62 | 100 |

Source: Extracted literature from Scopus, ERIC, Google Scholar, ProQuest, DOAJ, and Garuda (2015–2025).

The table demonstrates that the majority of studies focus on innovative learning strategies (29%), followed by digital technology integration (22.6%) and the development of critical literacy and cultural literacy (17.7%). Meanwhile, competency-based evaluation (16.1%) and the integration of multicultural and local values (14.6%) also receive considerable attention. This distribution pattern indicates that research in the field of language and literature education in the Kurikulum Merdeka era aligns with national education policy directions, which emphasise flexibility, contextual relevance, and the strengthening of literacy competence.

These findings are relevant to the initial aim of the research, namely to understand how the integration of Indonesian language and literature learning is implemented within the framework of the Kurikulum Merdeka. Interpretation of the data shows that the strong emphasis on innovative learning strategies reflects a paradigm shift in education from teacher-centred to student-centred learning. This is consistent with the findings of Sutanto (2020), which emphasise that the Kurikulum Merdeka requires teachers to be more adaptive and creative in designing learning experiences. Similarly, Anggraini & Puspitasari (2021) highlight that literature learning integrated with digital media is capable of increasing reading interest while enriching students' cultural appreciation.

This review also reveals a noticeable research gap. Although digital technology integration ranks second in theme distribution, many studies remain limited to the use of simple applications such as Google Classroom, WhatsApp Groups, or school-based Learning Management Systems (LMS). Rarely are there studies that explore the use of

artificial intelligence (AI), big data, or gamification in language and literature learning. This highlights significant opportunities for future research to explore advanced technology-based innovations.

Although critical literacy and cultural literacy emerge as important themes, challenges remain in their comprehensive integration into classroom practice. Several articles highlight that teachers tend to remain bound to textual and structural approaches in teaching language and literature, meaning the critical and cultural appreciation dimensions are not yet fully explored. This is consistent with Nurgiyantoro (2019), who shows that literature teaching in schools is still largely focused on cognitive aspects rather than fostering critical and appreciative attitudes.

The consistency of these findings with previous research is evident in competency-based evaluation. The articles analysed show that many schools have sought to develop more holistic assessment instruments, including authentic assessments, creative projects, and portfolios. This aligns with Puspitasari (2022), who emphasises the importance of competency-based evaluation to encourage the achievement of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila in the Kurikulum Merdeka. However, challenges remain, particularly in terms of teacher readiness to design assessment instruments that are truly relevant to holistic learning goals.

The implications of these findings are broad, both for classroom practice and for educational policy. On the practical side, teachers need to be encouraged to explore not only innovative learning strategies but also approaches that are contextually relevant to students' cultural backgrounds and needs. Thematic approaches, project-based learning, and digital literacy integration should be prioritised so that students can develop critical thinking skills alongside an appreciation of literary works. From a policy perspective, these findings underscore the need for continuous teacher training in the development of technology-based learning strategies, competency evaluation, and critical literacy.

Future research directions should emphasise the exploration of advanced technology integration in language and literature learning, such as the use of augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and artificial intelligence to enrich student learning experiences. Furthermore, studies could be directed at examining the effectiveness of cross-disciplinary collaborative learning models, for example, linking language and literature learning with the arts, history, or information technology. Longitudinal studies are also necessary to investigate the long-term impacts of the Kurikulum Merdeka on students' critical literacy competence and cultural appreciation.

The findings of this systematic review show that the integration of Indonesian language and literature learning in the Kurikulum Merdeka has demonstrated positive development, with significant attention given to innovative strategies, technology use, critical literacy, competency-based evaluation, and multicultural value integration. Nevertheless, there remains substantial room for further development, especially regarding technological innovation and the strengthening of critical literacy. Thus, this study not only provides an overview of the current state of affairs but also opens

opportunities for further, more in-depth and transformative research to support the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study affirms that the integration of Indonesian language and literature learning in the Kurikulum Merdeka makes a significant contribution to improving student literacy as well as strengthening cultural appreciation. The review of the literature indicates that integrative learning strategies based on literary and linguistic texts enhance students' writing skills, critical reading, and interpretative abilities regarding socio-cultural contexts. These findings align with the initial research objective, namely to assess the extent to which integrative learning can serve as a holistic approach to improving the quality of language education at the secondary school level. Hence, this study provides empirical evidence that language and literature cannot be separated but must be integrated to deliver more meaningful learning.

The study also found that the use of digital technology and interactive media plays an important role in supporting integrative learning. Digital platforms broaden students' access to diverse literary sources, increase active participation, and foster engagement in the learning process. However, the findings also underline serious implementation challenges, particularly concerning the limited competence of teachers in applying integrative approaches and the scarcity of professional training. Structural barriers and inadequate facilities may also reduce the effectiveness of Kurikulum Merdeka implementation if not addressed systematically by policymakers.

The implications of these findings indicate that the success of integrating language and literature within the Kurikulum Merdeka largely depends on collaboration between teachers, schools, and the government. Strengthening teacher capacity through continuous training, developing competency-based evaluation models, and providing adequate digital infrastructure should be prioritised in policy implementation. This study also opens avenues for further, more in-depth research, particularly in testing the effectiveness of integrative learning models through empirical field studies. Thus, future research should not only focus on conceptual aspects but also examine the direct impact of language-literature integration on students' literacy development, character formation, and cultural identity.

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