



The Interconnection of Curriculum, Learning, and Assessment as the Foundation of Outcome-Oriented Education

Dinda Anugrah Kurniawati^{1*}, Nur Hikmah Gustia², Afnita³, Tressyalina⁴, Syahrul Ramadhan⁵

¹²³⁴⁵Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Negeri Padang, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

*E-mail: dindaanugrah23@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the interconnection between curriculum, learning, and assessment as the foundation of outcome-oriented education within the framework of Outcome-Based Education (OBE). The study focuses on the conceptual relationship among these three components, their systemic integration in educational planning and implementation, and the factors influencing the effectiveness of their interconnection. This research employed a qualitative approach using a library research design. The data sources consisted of official policy documents, scientific journal articles, previous research findings, and reference books relevant to outcome-based curriculum, learning, and assessment. Data were collected through a systematic literature review, while data analysis was conducted using descriptive qualitative content analysis involving data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that curriculum, learning, and assessment are interconnected components that constitute a unified system within the OBE framework. Their integration is reflected in the alignment among learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and assessment systems designed in a continuous manner. The effectiveness of this interconnection is influenced by the complexity of learning outcomes mapping, educators' understanding of the OBE philosophy, and institutional factors, including organizational culture, leadership, and the availability of resources. Therefore, the success of outcome-oriented education largely depends on the consistent implementation of the interrelationship among curriculum, learning, and assessment as a continuous quality improvement cycle.

Keywords: interconnection of curriculum, learning, assessment, outcome-based education

INTRODUCTION

Higher education today faces the demand to produce graduates who not only master cognitive aspects but also possess competencies relevant to the needs of the workforce and an ever-changing society. This paradigm shift has given rise to the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) approach—an educational model that prioritizes learning outcomes as the primary reference for designing all components of educational delivery, ranging from curriculum design and the establishment of learning goals and results to instructional strategies and assessment procedures (Kemenristekdikti, 2018). Unlike traditional approaches that focus solely on the teaching-learning process, OBE uses the com-

petencies demonstrated by students as the starting point for structuring the entire sequence of educational activities (Setiono, Windyariani, & Juhanda, 2023).

The curriculum, as a fundamental element of the education system, serves as the framework determining the direction, content, and objectives of the educational process. From an OBE perspective, the curriculum is not formulated in isolation from expected learning outcomes; instead, it is developed using "backward design," where learning outcomes are established first, followed by the determination of relevant activities and assessments to support their achievement (Badan Standar,

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Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan, 2025). This approach emphasizes that an effective curriculum is not merely a list of materials to be delivered but a systemic design ensuring a logical, explicit, and clearly mapped connection between graduate learning outcomes (CPL), course learning outcomes (CPMK), learning activities, and assessments.

Instruction (or learning) constitutes the second component, inseparable from the curriculum and assessment. In line with the principle of constructive alignment proposed by Biggs and Tang (2011), the learning strategies and methods selected by educators should be designed to align with established learning outcomes; this ensures that learning activities genuinely guide students toward mastering the intended competencies, rather than merely serving as a vehicle for one-way information delivery. In this context, educators are required to design learning experiences that are meaningful and contextual, enabling students to apply their knowledge in real-world situations.

Assessment, in turn, serves as an instrument to gather evidence of the achievement of learning objectives while also acting as a basis for improving future learning processes. Within the OBE framework, assessment is not positioned as a standalone final stage; rather, it is integrated from the moment the learning plan is drafted, ensuring coherence between the learning plan and the assessment plan throughout the entire learning process (Saptaputra, Musthofa, & Arifi, 2023). Results from both formative and summative assessments are used not only to evaluate student achievement but also to provide a data basis for the continuous monitoring of learning outcome attainment (Anita, 2025).

In practice, the three components—curriculum, instruction, and assessment—are often developed in a fragmented manner and lack integration. Studies indicate that the implementation of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in higher education faces challenges regarding the lack of explicit mapping between program learning outcomes

(CPL), course learning outcomes (CPMK), sub-learning outcomes (sub-CPMK), instructional activities, and assessment instruments; consequently, the outcome-oriented approach to learning has not functioned optimally (research on OBE-based curricula, 2024). Yet, a strong interconnection among these three elements is the foundation for successful outcome-oriented education; a high-quality curriculum cannot ensure the actual attainment of graduate competencies without aligned instruction and valid assessment. Conversely, their interconnection enables the establishment of a continuous quality improvement cycle in educational delivery.

Based on this context, this article aims to examine in depth how the interconnection between curriculum, instruction, and assessment can be established as the foundation for outcome-oriented education. Specifically, this study addresses three key issues: (1) the conceptual linkages between curriculum, instruction, and assessment within the Outcome-Based Education framework; (2) how these three components can be systemically integrated into educational planning and implementation; and (3) the factors influencing the effectiveness of this interconnection in supporting the achievement of graduate competencies. Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich academic discourse on outcome-based educational design. Practically, it aims to assist educators and study program administrators in designing interconnected curricula, instruction, and assessment systems to foster education that is more meaningful, relevant, and accountable. Research relevant to this study was conducted by Afrianto & Mulyani (2021) in an article titled "Alignment Between Curriculum Design and Learning Assessment in Outcome-Based Education: A Systematic Review." Their study examined the alignment between curriculum design and learning assessment within the OBE framework using a systematic review approach. The findings indicated that institutions successfully implementing OBE were those capable of establishing robust coordination



mechanisms among curriculum design teams, educators, and assessment management teams, thereby ensuring these three components developed synergistically rather than in isolation. This study is considered relevant as it provides an empirical basis regarding the importance of alignment between curriculum and assessment as a prerequisite for OBE success. However, it differs from the present study in that the latter goes beyond merely addressing the technical alignment between curriculum and assessment; instead, it offers a more comprehensive analysis of how the interconnections among curriculum, instruction, and assessment are constructed as a unified systemic whole within the context of higher education policy in Indonesia.

Another relevant study was conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemdikbudristek) in 2023, titled "Guidelines for Developing Higher Education Curricula Based on Learning Outcomes." These guidelines outline the direction for developing learning-outcome-based higher education curricula in Indonesia, emphasizing that curriculum design must be integrated with coherent learning strategies and assessment systems rather than existing as a standalone document. The guidelines also underscore the importance of involving industry and professional stakeholders to ensure the ongoing relevance of learning outcomes. This study is considered relevant as it provides the national policy framework serving as the normative basis for OBE-based curriculum development in Indonesia. However, it differs from the current study in its analytical scope; rather than stopping at the level of normative guidelines, the current study conducts a deeper conceptual analysis of how the interconnection among these three educational components can be realized practically and systemically in the field.

A further relevant study is that conducted by Boyle and Hutchison (2020), titled "Outcome-Based Education and Its Relationship to Curriculum Coherence in Higher Education." This study

examines the relationship between OBE implementation and the level of curriculum coherence across higher education institutions in various countries. The findings indicate that curricula lacking internal coherence tend to result in fragmented and meaningless learning experiences for students, making curriculum coherence a fundamental prerequisite for establishing an effective OBE system. This study is relevant because it reinforces the argument regarding the importance of internal curriculum alignment as a foundational element of outcome-oriented education. In contrast, the current study goes beyond examining internal curriculum coherence to analyze how a coherent curriculum must be dynamically aligned with learning strategies and assessment systems, and how feedback mechanisms serve as the link ensuring these three components function synergistically.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach utilizing library research. Fraenkel et al. (2012), Razak (2017), states that a library-based qualitative approach is commonly used in social science research.

A qualitative approach was selected because the study's focus is conceptual and interpretive—aiming to understand and reconstruct the interconnections among curriculum, instruction, and assessment as an integrated system within the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) framework—rather than to statistically measure relationships between variables. Library research is defined as a series of activities involving data collection from written materials, in-depth reading, note-taking, and the processing of study materials to address the research problem (Zed, 2003). Under this design, data are not derived from field observations or interviews but rather from the search and analysis of policy documents, prior research findings, and conceptual literature relevant to the topics of outcome-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

The data sources for this study fall into two categories. First, primary sources consist of official policy documents regarding curriculum and assessment issued by relevant ministries, such as guidelines for instruction and assessment and manuals for implementing Outcome-Based Education in higher education. Second, secondary sources comprise national and international scholarly journal articles, prior research findings, and reference books discussing concepts such as curriculum, instructional strategies, assessment, and constructive alignment within an outcome-oriented education framework. Source selection was based on thematic relevance, recency of publication, and the credibility of the publisher or the journal in which the source appeared.

Data collection was conducted through a systematic literature search comprising three main stages. The first stage is source identification, which involves determining search keywords relevant to the study's focus, such as "outcome-based curriculum," "alignment of instruction and assessment," and "Outcome-Based Education." The second stage involves literature selection based on inclusion criteria: topical relevance, methodological clarity of the original source, and the availability of the full text for access and analysis (Adlini et al., 2022). The third stage entails data documentation and recording, specifically organizing findings from each source into thematic categories aligned with the study's three main components: curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Data Analysis Technique: The collected data were analyzed using a descriptive-qualitative content analysis technique. The analysis process involved three interconnected steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting information relevant to the focus on the interconnection of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, while excluding information not directly related to the study's objectives. Data presentation involved grouping findings into themes that reflect the interrelationships among these three components within the Outcome-Based Education (OBE)

framework. Conclusion drawing was achieved by linking patterns emerging from various sources to formulate a comprehensive understanding of how curriculum, instruction, and assessment interconnect as the foundation of outcome-oriented education.

This study employed source triangulation—comparing and confirming information obtained from one source against other sources addressing similar themes. Additionally, the researcher repeatedly read each source to ensure accurate interpretation and to avoid misconstruing concepts presented by the original authors. Through these steps, the study's findings are expected to provide a systematic, credible, and academically sound overview.

RESULTS

1. Conceptual Interconnectedness of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment within the OBE Framework

Study findings indicate that within the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) framework, these three educational components are no longer positioned as standalone entities but rather as an interdependent sequence. The curriculum serves as the starting point, formulating Graduate Learning Outcomes (GLOs)—representing the competency profile a study program aims to produce. These outcomes are then cascaded into more operational Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), which are further broken down into sub-CLOs measurable at the level of specific class sessions or topics (Permendikbudristek No. 53 of 2023). This logic of cascading outcomes signifies that, under the OBE approach, the curriculum is not merely a list of courses but a map of outcomes to be translated into learning activities and measured through assessment.

The relationship between curriculum and instruction is evident in how GLOs serve as the reference for mapping each course, ensuring that every course makes a clear, measurable contribution to the study program's overall outcomes. Once this mapping is established,



lecturers design lesson plans aligned with the predetermined ultimate goals, selecting teaching methods and modules suited to the characteristics of the targeted outcomes.

2. Systemic Integration of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment in Educational Planning and Implementation

At the practical level, the integration of these three components is evident in a tiered series of planning documents—ranging from graduate profiles, program learning outcome (CPL) maps, and the distribution of CPLs across individual courses, to semester lesson plans that detail indicators, instructional formats, and assessment criteria. The development of curriculum documents begins with an analysis of the needs of the labor market and society to formulate graduate profiles; these are then aligned with the study program's academic discipline to determine the subject matter and learning outcomes. This process demonstrates that an outcome-based curriculum is constructed through a systematic and sequential approach, rather than being developed in isolation from real-world labor market demands or academic disciplines.

In other words, the systemic integration of these three components extends beyond the documentation phase to include continuous mechanisms for monitoring achievement, thereby establishing a closed-loop cycle of planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Furthermore, this integration supports the fulfillment of quality assurance requirements at both institutional and study program levels, as the mapping documents linking Program Learning Outcomes (CPL), Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK), and assessments serve as valid evidence for national and international accreditation processes. This underscores that the interconnection of curriculum, instruction, and assessment is not merely a pedagogical necessity but also an institutional imperative for ensuring quality accountability in higher education.

3. Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Interconnection

Although these three components are conceptually designed to be interconnected, study findings indicate that the effectiveness of this interconnection in practice is influenced by several factors.

The third factor involves broader institutional dimensions, including quality management, leadership, a results-oriented culture, resource availability, and leadership commitment to driving successful implementation. Aspects such as clear vision statements, detailed work plans, recognition of achievements, and a culture of open communication tend to act as facilitators, whereas staff resistance and resource limitations often

These findings align with literary studies that view literature as a reflection of societal life. The study's strength lies in its ability to simultaneously link the meaning of polemics with social and psychological aspects, thereby yielding a more comprehensive understanding of the messages embedded within the novel. Furthermore, this study demonstrates that controversy does not necessarily carry a negative connotation; rather, it can serve as a vehicle for learning, self-reflection, and character maturation. However, the study has limitations, as the analysis of the meaning of controversy focused on the narrative context without incorporating reader responses into the meaning-making process. Consequently, the interpretation of meaning relies primarily on the researcher's perspective. Therefore, future research could employ a literary reception approach to explore how readers interpret the controversies within the novel *Perahu Kertas* and their relevance to contemporary social life.

DISCUSSION

The principle of "constructive alignment" proposed by Biggs & Tang (2011) becomes relevant; it explains why learning strategies should be selected based on their alignment with the competencies intended for students, rather than on established teaching habits.

Meanwhile, the link between instruction and assessment is demonstrated by the positioning of assessment: it is no longer placed merely at the end of the learning process but is designed concurrently with the lesson plan itself. Lecturers develop course evaluation plans in parallel with lesson plans, enabling the effectiveness of teaching methods to be gauged through students' achievement of CLOs. Thus, assessment serves a dual purpose: as a tool to measure competency attainment and as a means to evaluate whether the chosen instructional strategies are appropriate or require adjustment.

In practice, the integration of instruction and assessment is evident in the requirement that every lesson plan includes an assessment plan spanning the entire course duration; thus, the assessment process serves not only to evaluate final outcomes but also to guide adjustments to instructional strategies throughout the semester. This approach aligns with the principle that assessment results can serve as an ongoing data source for monitoring the attainment of learning outcomes—both at the course level and cumulatively at the study program level (Anita, 2025).

The first factor is the complexity of mapping the various learning outcomes. The intricate mapping of CPL, CPMK, sub-CPMK, assessment techniques, and grade weighting often makes it difficult for lecturers to manage data consistently, particularly in the absence of an adequate academic information system to support the process (Anita, 2025). Without an integrated system, the link between lesson plans and assessment results tends to be recorded manually and is prone to inconsistency, making it difficult to guarantee the transparency and accuracy of learning outcome data. The second factor concerns educators' readiness and their understanding of the OBE philosophy itself. International studies on OBE implementation in Indonesian higher education indicate that lecturers' understanding of OBE concepts and objectives varies, and the institutional support available to them for translating learning outcomes into daily teaching practice remains

inconsistent (Mufanti, Carter, & England, 2024). This disparity in understanding risks lecturers continuing to design instruction and assessment using conventional methods, even when curriculum documents have been structured according to OBE principles.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings regarding polemical language in the novel *Perahu Kertas* by Dee Lestari, it can be concluded that such language manifests as conflicting opinions, rejections, sarcasm, and clashes of thought. These elements reveal differing viewpoints, critical attitudes, and the characters' internal struggles when confronting various life issues. The functions of polemical language include expressing disagreement, rejecting ideas or actions, conveying criticism and sarcasm, and articulating conflicting thoughts; characters employ this language to express their stances and defend their opinions in both social and personal interactions. Furthermore, the significance of this polemical language reflects clashes of idealism, social and psychological conflicts, and interpersonal dynamics. This demonstrates that polemics serve not only to build narrative conflict but also to represent the dynamics of human life—specifically regarding the search for identity, social relationships, and decision-making.

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