

# Exploring EFL Teachers' Knowledge on the Utilization of Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM): Challenges, Possibilities and Practices

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**Abstract.** In supporting the implementation of The Emancipated Curriculum, Merdeka Mengajar is the main tool that the government use to spread information and help the implementation of The Emancipated Curriculum. In The Pangandaran district, the Emancipated Curriculum has been 100% implemented in formal education. In implementing The Emancipated Curriculum, there are many challenges that teachers face; they need a comprehensive understanding of the Emancipated Curriculum to implement the curriculum. This study aims to give an overview of how the utilization of PMM to support Pangandaran EFL teachers' knowledge in implementing Emancipated Curriculum and the challenges, possibilities, and Practices in the utilization of PMM are based on EFL Pangandaran Teachers' perspective. This study used qualitative methods with using documentation, questionnaires, and interviews to collect the data. Documentations were made by extracting data from the West Java Province BBMP website. The questionnaire involved 50 EFL teachers in The Pangandaran district. Interviews were conducted with two EFL teachers in The Pangandaran district. The result shows that the use of Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) in The Pangandaran district has a score of 41.1% good, 50% quite good, and 8.9% need to be improved. 100% of the samples have installed the PMM application on their devices and have started studying the material and features of the application. Most EFL Teachers still face challenges in the utilization of PMM and the implementation of The Emancipated Curriculum itself.

**Keywords:** Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM), Emancipated Curriculum, Challenges, Practice, Possibilities

## Introduction

To support Indonesian education's vision and address learning loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the government, through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, has introduced the Emancipated Curriculum. This new curriculum, previously known as the prototype curriculum, emphasizes flexibility and focuses on essential learning materials, character development, and competency enhancement (Hasibuan et al., 2022). The government's *Merdeka Belajar*, *Kampus Merdeka* policy empowers educational institutions, to operate autonomously and independently from bureaucratic constraints (Yamin et al., 2020). As outlined in Decree No. 262/M/2022, the Emancipated Curriculum gives teachers the freedom to create quality learning experiences based on the diverse needs of students and their learning environments. This approach prioritizes teaching methods that adapt to students' abilities rather than strictly adhering to grade levels (Kemdikbudristek, 2022).

Every time there is a curriculum change, there will be pros and cons to the policy. In Responding to the pros and cons of curriculum change, teachers, as important figures in curriculum implementation, must respond wisely (Fussalam et al., 2022). The *Merdeka Belajar* policy is very different from curriculum in formal education in Indonesia. Teachers are at the forefront of curriculum implementation because the success of the curriculum is highly dependent on the teacher's understanding of the curriculum concept itself. Therefore, in order for the program to be implemented well, it is necessary to have socialization, training, workshops, and other activities for teachers (Ambawani et al., 2023).

To aid in the curriculum's implementation, the government has developed six essential tools for teachers and educational units, with the *Platform Merdeka Mengajar* (PMM) serving as the primary resource for disseminating information and providing support (Rahayu et al., 2022; ITJEN Kemendikbudristek, 2024). PMM offers teachers equitable opportunities for ongoing professional development by allowing them to engage in self-directed learning and access a wide array of high-quality training materials (Mujahidin et al., 2023). Notably, the platform comprises several features designed to assist teachers in executing the Emancipated Curriculum. These features include resources for implementing the curriculum, strategies for effective teaching practices, and methods for assessing student learning outcomes (Kemendikbudristek, 2023).

The primary goal of *Platform Merdeka Mengajar* (PMM) is to foster a collaborative ecosystem that promotes effective learning and cultivates a positive working environment for educators (Rohimat, 2022). The platform encompasses various features, such as online learning communities, opportunities for self-directed professional growth, and tools for teachers to share their experiences and skills. This design is intended to encourage continuous improvement in teaching methodologies and align with the curriculum's objectives, which prioritize flexibility and student-centered education (Arisanti, 2022; OpenGov Asia, 2024).

In The Pangandaran district, the Emancipated Curriculum has been 100% implemented in formal education, starting from pre-school to the high school level. The implementation of this curriculum varies depending on the readiness of the school. Schools can choose the stages of ready to learn (*Merdeka Belajar*), ready to change (*Merdeka Berubah*) and ready to share (*Merdeka Berbagi*). In

implementing the Emancipated Curriculum, there are undoubtedly many challenges that teachers face at the forefront in the field. They need a comprehensive understanding of the Emancipated Curriculum in order to implement the curriculum (Trichayati & Zaim, 2023; Wazier et al., 2023).

One of the media used by English teachers in Pangandaran Regency in learning Emancipated Curriculum is the *Platform Merdeka Mengajar*. Teachers are required to understand the Emancipated Curriculum through the PMM application. In The Pangandaran district itself, the use of the PMM application is almost evenly distributed. The use of PMM in The Pangandaran district has reached 97%, occupying the first position in the use of PMM at the West Java Province level (BBPMP, 2023). But has the PMM application been maximally utilized? Have English teachers in Pangandaran been able to implement the Emancipated Curriculum only by learning from the app? Do they learn out of their own motivation, or is there any enforcement from superiors? And how do they perceive the maximize PMM Apps to empower the implementation of Emancipated Curriculum? This study seeks to explore the extent to which EFL teachers in Pangandaran have embraced PMM as a tool for professional development and curriculum implementation. It also investigates their challenges and offers recommendations for maximizing the platform's potential.

## **Literature Review**

### **Curriculum Reform in a Post-Pandemic World**

The COVID-19 pandemic served as a catalyst for global educational reforms, with many countries rethinking traditional models of instruction. According to UNESCO (2021), the pandemic highlighted the need for more flexible, adaptive curricula that prioritize both academic competencies and students' well-being. In countries like Finland, educational reforms have focused on competency-based learning, which aligns closely with the principles of Indonesia's Emancipated Curriculum (Sahlberg, 2020). These global reforms emphasize the role of teachers as facilitators of learning rather than mere transmitters of information.

Indonesia's Emancipated Curriculum mirrors these global trends by promoting a flexible approach to education, allowing teachers to tailor their instruction to the needs of individual students (Kemdikbudristek, 2022). However, as Fussalam et al. (2022) note, the success of such curricula depends on the ability of teachers to adapt to new teaching methods and integrate them effectively into their classrooms.

### **Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM)**

*Platform Merdeka Mengajar* (PMM) is a significant breakthrough that goes hand in hand with the Emancipated Curriculum, which is the 15th episode of the *Merdeka Belajar* program. PMM is not only a "*teman penggerak*" for educators but also a fundamental pillar in realizing Pancasila students with integrity (Kemdikbudristek, 2022). The Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) serves as a significant digital tool designed to support the implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum in Indonesia. PMM has three main features—Learning (*Belajar*), Teaching (*Mengajar*), and Creating (*Berkarya*). These features facilitate teacher development by providing access to educational resources, inspiration, and tools for creativity. The platform aims to enhance teaching quality through collaborative spaces where educators share best practices, engage in professional networks, and

create portfolios. Additionally, it provides educational content tailored to various regions and learning needs, making it a versatile tool for adapting to the new curriculum (Ratnasari et al., 2021; Marisana et al., 2023; GovInsider, 2023).

In its utilization, PMM has 3 main functions: providing references for teachers to develop teaching practices in accordance with The Emancipated Curriculum, providing equal opportunities for teachers to continue learning and developing their competencies whenever and wherever they are, and encouraging teachers to continue creating good practices and providing a forum for sharing the good practices (Siregar et al., 2023). The platform's role in supporting the Emancipated Curriculum is crucial, as it encourages inclusive, creative, and collaborative educational practices by equipping teachers with resources and a supportive community to address the demands of modern teaching (GovInsider, 2023). It is also noted for increasing accessibility to training and professional development opportunities for teachers, including those in remote areas (Marisana et al., 2023)

### **Main Features of Platform Merdeka Mengajar**

*The Platform Merdeka Mengajar* (PMM) is a pivotal digital educational tool designed to support the implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum in Indonesia. It is structured around three main features: Learning (*Belajar*), Teaching (*Mengajar*), and Creating (*Berkarya*), each of which contributes to fostering an inclusive, creative, and collaborative educational environment.

#### **1. Teaching (*Mengajar*) Features**

*The Mengajar* section includes critical teacher tools, such as the CP/ATP (Curriculum Planning/Assessment and Teaching Plan), Teaching Tools, and Student Assessment.

- a. The CP/ATP menu provides a variety of curriculum plans and assessment tools approved by the government, enabling teachers to customize their teaching strategies according to their students' specific characteristics and needs, following the guidelines of BSKAP Number 033/H/KR/2022 (Kemdikbudristek, 2022).
- b. The Teaching Tools menu offers a comprehensive collection of resources aligned with the Emancipated Curriculum, facilitating access to materials like lesson plans, teaching modules, and textbooks, which inspire educators (Ratnasari et al., 2021).
- c. The Student Assessment menu aids teachers in conducting rapid diagnostic assessments to evaluate students' literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects. This feature supports educators in implementing tailored learning experiences based on students' developmental needs (Marisana et al., 2023).

#### **2. Learning (*Belajar*) Features**

*The Belajar* section encompasses various features aimed at enhancing teacher professional development and collaboration:

- a. The Independent Training menu offers high-quality training materials accessible for self-directed learning, ensuring all teachers receive uniform training (Fery Herdiansyah, 2022).
- b. The Community menu facilitates the formation of collaborative networks where teachers can engage with peers across Indonesia to discuss and share strategies for implementing the Emancipated Curriculum effectively (Kemdikbudristek, 2023).

- c. The Principal Selection feature streamlines the appointment of school principals and supervisors through a systematic process that enhances transparency and efficiency.
  - d. Competence Reflection allows teachers to assess their competencies and receive personalized learning recommendations aligned with the Ministry of Education's competency model, promoting targeted professional development (Kemdikbudristek, 2023).
  - e. The Performance Management tool enables teachers and principals to establish contextual performance targets tailored to their educational units, enhancing the quality of learner-centred education (Kemdikbudristek, 2024).
3. Creating (*Berkarya*) Features

*The Berkarya* section promotes creativity and resource sharing among educators:

- a. The Inspirational Video menu houses a curated collection of educational videos to improve teachers' professional and personal competencies (GovInsider, 2023).
- b. The Proof of Work menu provides a platform for teachers and principals to showcase their achievements and professional growth, fostering a culture of recognition and sharing within the educational community (Kemdikbudristek, 2023).
- c. The Practice Idea menu presents curated content designed to inspire educators to adopt student-centred learning practices, featuring stories of successful teaching experiences alongside instructional videos and photographs (Kemdikbudristek, 2023).

### **The Role of Teacher Professional Development**

Effective curriculum reform requires that teachers not only understand the new curriculum but also possess the skills and knowledge to implement it effectively. Professional development is, therefore, crucial in ensuring that teachers are equipped to meet the demands of modern curricula (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). In Indonesia, the government has introduced several initiatives to support teacher development, including the creation of *the Platform Merdeka Mengajar* (PMM).

PMM provides teachers with a range of professional development tools, including lesson plans, teaching resources, and student assessment strategies (Kemdikbudristek, 2023). However, as Herdiansyah (2022) argues, digital platforms like PMM are most effective when combined with in-person training and collaborative opportunities. Teachers in rural and remote areas, in particular, may require additional support to fully utilize these digital resources.

### **The Role of *Platform Merdeka Mengajar* in Supporting the Implementation of The Emancipated Curriculum**

*The Platform Merdeka Mengajar* (PMM) is a crucial digital tool designed to facilitate the implementation of The Emancipated Curriculum in Indonesia. By providing various resources and features, PMM aims to enhance teachers' capabilities, foster collaboration, and promote innovative teaching practices that align with the principles of the Emancipated Curriculum.

One of the primary functions of PMM is to support teachers through professional development and collaborative opportunities. According to Kemdikbudristek (2023), the platform includes features that allow educators to

access independent training, join learning communities, and reflect on their competencies. This aligns with expert opinions, such as those from Ratnasari et al. (2021), who emphasize that ongoing professional development is vital for teachers to adapt to the new curriculum effectively. The platform encourages a culture of sharing and collaboration, which is essential for addressing diverse educational challenges faced by teachers across Indonesia.

Moreover, Fery Herdiansyah (2022) notes that the PMM's community features enable teachers to engage with peers nationwide, fostering an environment where educators can exchange ideas and strategies for implementing the Emancipated Curriculum. This collaborative approach is particularly important in a country with varying educational contexts and student needs, as it allows for localized curriculum adaptations.

The PMM also provides a wealth of resources designed to enhance teaching practices. The Teaching Tools section offers curated materials that align with the Emancipated Curriculum, enabling educators to find relevant content tailored to their students' needs (Marisana et al., 2023). These resources include lesson plans, teaching modules, and project guidelines facilitating innovative teaching strategies.

Wazier et al. (2023) emphasize that the accessibility of these resources is a game-changer for educators, particularly in remote areas where professional development opportunities may be limited. By integrating high-quality resources into the PMM, teachers can create more engaging and effective learning experiences, ultimately improving student outcomes.

A critical aspect of the Emancipated Curriculum is its emphasis on student-centred learning. The PMM supports this by offering tools for student assessment and performance management, which help educators tailor their instruction to individual student needs (Kemdikbudristek, 2024). This adaptive approach is crucial for fostering a more inclusive learning environment, allowing teachers to address their students' unique challenges. According to GovInsider (2023), the platform not only aids teachers in assessing student competencies but also provides feedback mechanisms to inform instructional practices. This data-driven approach aligns with the goals of the Emancipated Curriculum, which seeks to develop learners' competencies and character through personalized education.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative approach to explore the utilization of PMM among EFL teachers in Pangandaran. The qualitative approach is particularly suitable for this study as it allows for an in-depth exploration of teachers' perceptions, experiences, and challenges in using PMM (Sugiyono, 2019). Data were collected through a combination of observation, questionnaires, and interviews, which provided a comprehensive understanding of the teachers' experiences with PMM.

### **Site and Participant**

This study was conducted in Pangandaran Regency, a region located in West Java, Indonesia. The region has achieved 100% implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum across all levels of formal education, including elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. The implementation of this

curriculum is supported by the government's digital platform, *Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM)*.

The participants of this study were 50 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers selected using purposive sampling. These participants represent teachers from various educational levels, including elementary schools, junior high schools, and senior high schools in the Pangandaran Regency. The purposive sampling method ensured the inclusion of teachers who were actively involved in using the PMM platform and implementing the Emancipated Curriculum in their teaching practices. These participants provided comprehensive data on their utilization of PMM, the challenges they face, and their perspectives on how the platform supports the implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum.

### **Data Collection**

Documentation was conducted by examining the West Java Province BBMP website, which provided insights into the usage rates and performance of PMM in Pangandaran. The website also offered statistical data on the number of teachers who had adopted the platform, which helped contextualize the findings. The questionnaire was distributed to 50 EFL teachers in Pangandaran, selected through purposive sampling. The questionnaire included both closed and open-ended questions, allowing respondents to provide both data on their usage of PMM and their experiences and challenges. In addition to the questionnaire, in-depth interviews were conducted with two EFL teachers in Pangandaran. These interviews provided further insights into the teachers' perceptions of PMM, the challenges they faced, and the strategies they employed to overcome these obstacles.

### **Data Analysis**

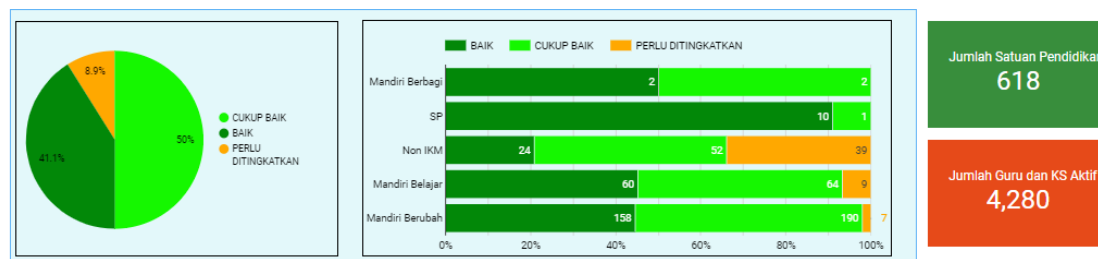
The data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2019). This approach was selected due to its flexibility and suitability for capturing patterns and themes within qualitative data. The analysis began with familiarization, during which the researcher repeatedly read through the interview transcripts and questionnaire responses to gain a holistic understanding of the data. In the initial coding phase, open coding was used to label meaningful segments of the data. Codes were assigned manually using a spreadsheet to organize patterns across different participants. These initial codes included recurring concepts such as "time constraints," "digital literacy issues," "collaborative learning needs," and "self-motivation in using PMM."

In the theme development phase, the codes were reviewed and grouped into broader thematic categories. Codes with conceptual similarities were clustered together, and themes were generated based on frequency, significance, and relevance to the research questions. For example, codes related to "internet access problems" and "device limitations" were integrated into the theme Technological Challenges, while codes on "webinar preferences" and "collaborative practices" contributed to the theme Preferred Modes of Professional Development. Subsequently, in the reviewing and refining phase, the themes were compared against the entire dataset to ensure coherence and internal consistency. The emerging themes were discussed with a peer reviewer to improve credibility and minimize researcher bias. Finally, the themes were defined and named, resulting in three overarching categories: (1) EFL teachers' utilization of PMM, (2) Perceived challenges in implementing PMM, and (3) Opportunities and strategies

for maximizing PMM use. These themes were then integrated into the findings and discussion sections to align with the study's objectives.

## Findings and Discussion

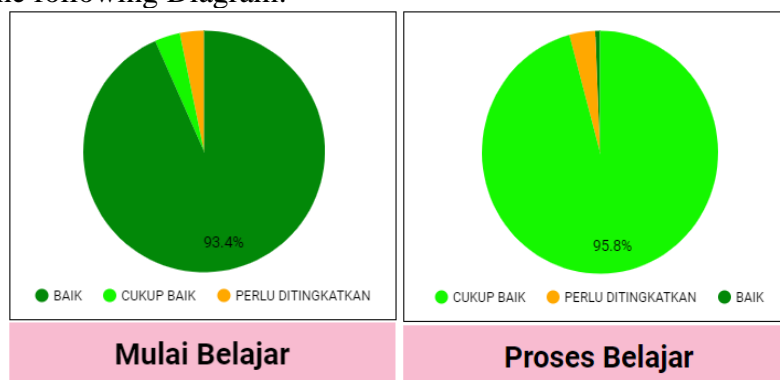
Based on documentation on the West Java *Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka* Data site at <https://ringkas.kemdikbud.go.id/dataikmjabar2023>, it can be seen that Pangandaran has a total of 618 educational units with a total of 4,280 active teachers and principals. The data can be seen in the picture below:



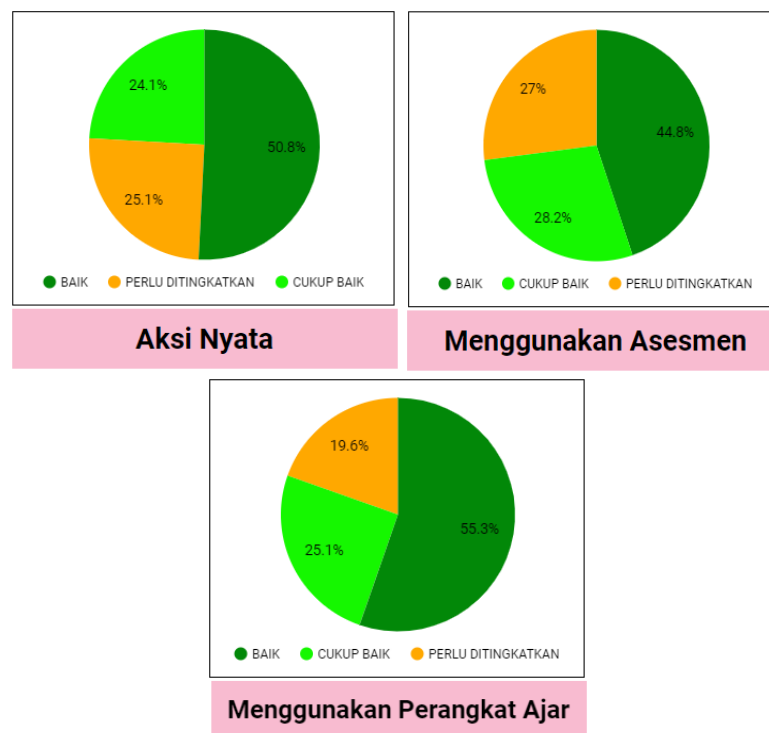
**Figure 1. The utilization of PMM in Pangandaran**

The use of Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) in The Pangandaran district has a score of 41.1% good, 50% quite good, and 8.9% need to be improved.

Specifically, the data on the utilization of the Merdeka teaching platform can be seen in the following Diagram:







**Figure 2. The utilization of the Merdeka Teaching Platform**

According to the BBMP data, it is explained that the use of PMM in Pangandaran Regency is categorized as Schools that implement Emancipated Curriculum at the Start Learning stage scored 93.4% good, 3.4% quite good and 3.2% need to be improved. In the learning process, the score is 0.6% good, 95.8% quite good, and 3.6% needs to be improved. In the use and implementation of Proof of Work, the score was 50.8% good, 24.1% fair, and 25.1% need to be improved. The use of assessment scored 44.8% good, 28.2% fair and 27% need to be improved. Finally, the use of teaching tools scored 55.3% good, 25.1% fair and 19.6% need improvement.

From all the data, it can be concluded that the utilization of PMM in Pangandaran Regency is good, but it still needs to be improved in its implementation because it cannot be denied that in implementing Emancipated Curriculum, schools, especially teachers, still face various challenges. This is in line with research conducted by Fahrani, et al. (2023), which says that there are still many challenges faced by teachers in implementing the Emancipated curriculum. These challenges are ascribed to various factors encompassing insufficient teacher training, limited access to support facilities, reduced self-efficacy levels, inadequate information technology skills, students' diverse backgrounds, financial constraints, limited resources, comprehension, and implementation obstacles associated with differentiated learning strategies, and issues related to time allocation and management.

#### **EFL Pangandaran Teachers Practices in the Utilization of The PMM**

The data collected from 50 EFL teachers in Pangandaran indicate a high level of engagement with PMM. Specifically, 100% of respondents reported installing the application on their devices, suggesting a widespread recognition of its importance. However, the frequency of use reveals discrepancies. Only 16% of teachers reported frequent use of PMM (11-30 times per month), while 60% used

it moderately (5-10 times per month), and 24% accessed it rarely (1-5 times per month). This variation highlights that while the platform is accessible, its utilization is inconsistent.

The uneven frequency of use may be attributed to several factors. For example, as highlighted by Marisana et al. (2023), access to digital tools only sometimes translates into effective use, especially when teachers face time constraints or lack digital literacy skills. This is particularly relevant in the case of Pangandaran, where teachers often balance multiple responsibilities, including classroom duties and administrative tasks. Consequently, despite the platform's potential, its full utilization remains a challenge.

The findings are consistent with research by Siregar et al. (2023), which emphasizes the need for ongoing support and training to maximize the use of digital platforms in education. In Pangandaran, the implementation of PMM is still in the early stages, and teachers may require further guidance to integrate the platform more effectively into their teaching practices.

PMM is designed to support teachers in several areas, including lesson planning, student assessment, and professional development. In Pangandaran, teachers use the platform primarily to access teaching resources, particularly the Curriculum Planning/Assessment and Teaching Plan (CP/ATP) menu. This feature enables teachers to customize their lesson plans based on the specific needs of their students, aligning with the principles of the Emancipated Curriculum (Kemdikbudristek, 2022).

However, while the platform provides a wealth of resources, the findings suggest that teachers in Pangandaran rely on additional sources of information. According to the survey data, only 6% of teachers rely solely on PMM for their professional development. In contrast, 32% supplement their learning through webinars and workshops, 28% engage with learning communities, and 20% participate in teacher working groups (KKG/MGMP). These findings reflect the importance of blended learning approaches, where digital platforms are used alongside more traditional methods of professional development (Rahayu et al., 2022).

Interviews with teachers further revealed that PMM is particularly useful for accessing structured lesson plans and assessment tools. However, some teachers expressed a desire for more interactive features, such as live webinars or discussion forums, where they could engage with peers and receive real-time feedback. This aligns with the findings of Mujahidin et al. (2023), who argue that the collaborative aspects of digital platforms are crucial for fostering teacher growth and innovation.

### **EFL Pangandaran Teacher's Challenges in the Utilization of The PMM**

Despite its potential, the implementation of PMM in Pangandaran is challenging. The most commonly cited barriers include time management, technological difficulties, and the overwhelming amount of content available on the platform. While PMM offers a wealth of videos, readings, and interactive modules, several teachers described the experience as overwhelming. As one respondent noted:

*"Capturing the content of the material from video presentations requires watching more than once. There's a lot of jargon and sometimes I need to pause, rewind, or even rewatch it several times before I really understand"*

This suggests that some teachers struggle with processing and retaining information, particularly when modules are lengthy, abstract, or heavily

theoretical. Such findings reflect the need for more segmented, practical, and accessible content that aligns with the cognitive load and time constraints of frontline educators.

Another significant challenge is the lack of digital literacy among some teachers. A senior teacher with over 20 years of experience, highlighted the digital barrier he faces:

*"I'm still learning how to use smartphones beyond WhatsApp. The PMM interface looks simple to my younger colleagues, but I get confused. I don't know how to make proof of work, find suitable provided lesson plan, and even I confused how to navigate it."*

While PMM is designed to be user-friendly, older teachers or those with limited experience using digital tools may find it difficult to navigate. This issue is compounded by the fact that teachers in rural areas, such as Pangandaran, may have less access to reliable internet connections, making it harder for them to engage with the platform consistently (Wazier et al., 2023).

Time management was also frequently mentioned as a challenge, with teachers struggling to balance their teaching responsibilities with the additional demands of self-directed learning on PMM. One respondent shared her struggle to manage professional development on PMM amid her daily obligations:

*"I want to learn more from the PMM modules, but after teaching from morning to noon, managing students' assignments, and handling school administration, I barely have time. At home, I also have to help my children with their learning and manage the household. It's really exhausting."*

Her account underscores the challenge of time management, particularly for female educators with multiple caregiving responsibilities. Although self-directed learning is a core feature of PMM, it often clashes with the realities of teachers' lives, especially in under-resourced areas. This finding is supported by research conducted by Fahrani et al. (2023), which highlights that teachers often face significant time constraints when implementing new curricula, particularly in rural settings where workloads can be heavier.

These challenges underscore the need for differentiated support strategies within PMM, such as tiered content design, optional offline resources, and scaffolding for teachers with varying levels of digital fluency. By understanding and responding to these nuanced teacher experiences, the platform can better serve as a tool for equitable and impactful professional growth.

### **Possibilities in utilizing PMM**

While challenges remain, there are significant possibilities for improving the utilization of PMM in Pangandaran. The platform's features, particularly the independent training modules and community spaces, offer opportunities for teachers to engage in continuous professional development. However, as noted by Fery Herdiansyah (2022), digital platforms are most effective when combined with face-to-face training and support. One key opportunity lies in expanding the platform's collaborative features. While PMM currently offers community spaces for teachers to share ideas and resources, these spaces could be enhanced by incorporating live discussions or peer mentoring programs. Such features would allow teachers to engage more deeply with the platform and foster a sense of community, particularly in remote areas where face-to-face interaction may be limited (GovInsider, 2023).

Additionally, the platform could be tailored to better meet the needs of teachers in rural areas by providing offline access to key resources. This would allow teachers with limited internet access to engage with the platform more regularly, improving its overall utilization (Ratnasari et al., 2021).

Finally, there is potential to integrate PMM more fully into the broader professional development ecosystem. Teachers in Pangandaran already engage with a variety of learning communities and professional networks. By creating formal partnerships between PMM and these networks, the platform could serve as a central hub for teacher learning, bringing together digital resources and in-person training opportunities.

It cannot be denied that the implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum in Pangandaran Regency has not been 100% as expected, teachers in Pangandaran Regency as implementors of the Emancipated Curriculum are required to be able to think creatively and innovatively in implementing the Emancipated Curriculum so that the learning process becomes meaningful and students can grow holistically. Teachers' competencies must be improved so that they are able to interpret curriculum changes comprehensively. Support from various stake holders is absolutely necessary for the improvement of teacher competence, not only through PMM but through other sources that have a real impact on understanding the implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum.

## Conclusion

In the Pangandaran district, the utilization of PMM application to implement the Emancipated Curriculum is very good. All teachers in The Pangandaran district can access PMM and use it to support the implementation of Emancipated Curriculum. Although there are still many challenges to be faced, with various support, hard work and collaboration, The Pangandaran district has successfully implemented the Emancipated Curriculum at all levels of the education unit. This is evidenced by the achievement of various awards from *Balai Besar Penjamin Mutu Pendidikan (BBPMP)* West Java Province to the The Pangandaran district for its successes in implementing the Emancipated Curriculum and utilizing PMM in implementing the Emancipated Curriculum. Teachers in The Pangandaran district positively welcomed PMM as one of the media that supports the implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum. They are able to learn independently and are more flexible, but they must be good at managing their time so that all activities run well. The learning enthusiasm of the teachers in Pangandaran for using PMM makes the implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum run as expected. In the end, students, as the ultimate goal, can grow optimally and can become Pancasila students.

Based on the findings and identified possibilities in the utilization of Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM), several targeted recommendations are proposed to enhance its implementation. For EFL teachers, it is important to adopt blended professional development strategies by integrating PMM's self-paced modules with face-to-face learning through MGMP or KKG forums. Teachers are encouraged to actively engage with PMM's Community features to foster collaboration, share best practices, and build localized support networks. Setting aside regular time for micro-learning through the platform can also help teachers manage professional development more effectively, even within tight schedules.

For government bodies, including Kemdikbudristek, BBPMP, and local education offices, it is recommended to design tiered and contextualized training programs tailored to varying levels of digital literacy among teachers. These programs should be supported with infrastructure improvements, such as increased internet access in rural schools and the provision of offline PMM content via downloadable modules or USB drives. Institutions should also strengthen community-building initiatives by expanding PMM's interactive features—such as live webinars and moderated discussion forums—and formally recognizing innovative PMM users through incentives or certification. Lastly, for future researchers, further inquiry is needed to examine the long-term impact of PMM usage on teaching practices and student learning outcomes through longitudinal and comparative studies. Research could also focus on evaluating the effectiveness of PMM's collaborative and creative features, as well as incorporating students' perspectives on teacher performance post-PMM engagement. These recommendations aim to support teachers, policymakers, and researchers in maximizing the role of PMM in promoting the successful and equitable implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum across diverse educational settings.

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