

## THE STUDENTS' AND TEACHERS' IMPRESSION TOWARD NEARPOD APPS IN LEARNING ENGLISH OF CURRICULUM MERDEKA PERSPECTIVES

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### ABSTRACT

This article discusses using an application for Education called Nearpod. Nearpod is an application with real-time insights into student understanding through interactive lessons, gamified learning, formative assessment, and other exciting activities. Nearpod can be personalized instruction for individual students, small group assignments, or homework to differentiate and allow students to work independently, which all this feature in line with the framework of Kurikulum Merdeka. This research was done by using qualitative approach. In this article, the author wants to find students' and teacher perceptions or feedback about their experience learning and teaching English by using Nearpod in the classroom. the interview was used as the instrument in collecting main data. Hence, 5 students became the sample in this research. Besides that, the author also provides the observation as the supporting data to look on how the student engage with the apps. The data were taken from a school in Tangerang, Banten province. This school has been applying of Kurikulum merdeka for 4 years. In which, this will have a strong bond between the demand in both curriculum and this app. The result of the research shows thematic dimensions of positive and negative feedbacks. Those are memory of learning retention, creativity and critical thinking, new environment experience, advantages and disadvantages for future suggestions.

**Keywords:** Digital literacy, Nearpod, Technology.

### INTRODUCTION

English language learning has become increasingly important in today's globalization world. Proficiency in English opens doors to numerous educational and professional opportunities, enabling individuals to communicate effectively across cultural and national boundaries. As technology advances, online platforms have become an integral part of language learning, providing flexible and accessible means of instruction. However, the challenge lies in creating interactive and engaging learning environments that promote effective language acquisition. The widespread adoption of technology has significantly impacted various aspects of human life, including education. The emergence of online platforms and applications has revolutionized the way we learn and teach, providing new opportunities for educators to enhance instructional practices. (Pratama et al., 2023)

This is also the pioneer why Indonesia has changed the curriculum. This curriculum was named "Kurikulum Merdeka". Its notion also in line with the needs of the technological age, in which improvements in digital technologies have revolutionized many facets of our life, including education. The use of technology into the educational process has become more crucial in this quickly changing environment in order to better prepare students for the opportunities and difficulties of the digital era. "Kurikulum Merdeka" embraces the potential of technology as a tool to enhance and facilitate student-centered learning. (Junarti et al., 2023)

Digital resources, such as online learning platforms, educational apps, and multimedia materials, can provide students with access to a wide range of learning materials, enabling them to explore their interests and pursue personalized learning pathways. Technology also offers opportunities for interactive and collaborative learning, allowing students to connect with peers,

experts, and resources beyond the confines of the physical classroom. This demand forcing the teacher to find out application which can be fulfilled the outcome of Merdeka Kurikulum. Beyond many recommended applications provided by the government, there is one application namely Nearpod, approximately can be utilized by the teacher to implement the Merdeka Kurikulum objectivity. This app is a versatile tool that offers interactive and engaging learning experiences. So, this research aims to find out the students' impression towards using Nearpod on interactive English learning in Kurikulum Merdeka Framework., It is hoped that awareness on transforming the way teaching English by using Nearpod will give powerful insight to the government and also the school throughout Indonesia.

This research holds significant implications for educators, language learners, and educational policymakers. The findings will help educators make informed decisions regarding the incorporation of interactive tools into their teaching practices, thereby enhancing the quality of language learning experiences. Additionally, language learners will benefit from a deeper understanding of the potential benefits and limitations of using the Nearpod application, enabling them to actively engage with the learning material and improve their language proficiency. Policymakers can also leverage these findings to shape educational policies that promote the integration of effective technology tools in language instruction.

## **METHODS**

In this research, the research was designed to use qualitative descriptive approach. To collect the data was used Interview and observation. Interviews were deemed appropriate as they provide an opportunity to gather in-depth and firsthand information from the students and also the teacher, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of their experiences, perceptions, and impressions of using Nearpod apps in their English learning. Qualitative interviews allow for reciprocal discovery, knowledge, reflection, and explanation along an organic, adaptable, and often stimulating path. Interviews show respondents' subjectively lived experiences and points of view, a concept defined as *verstehen*. Although the interviewer and interviewee are conversational partners in many ways and may even become friends.

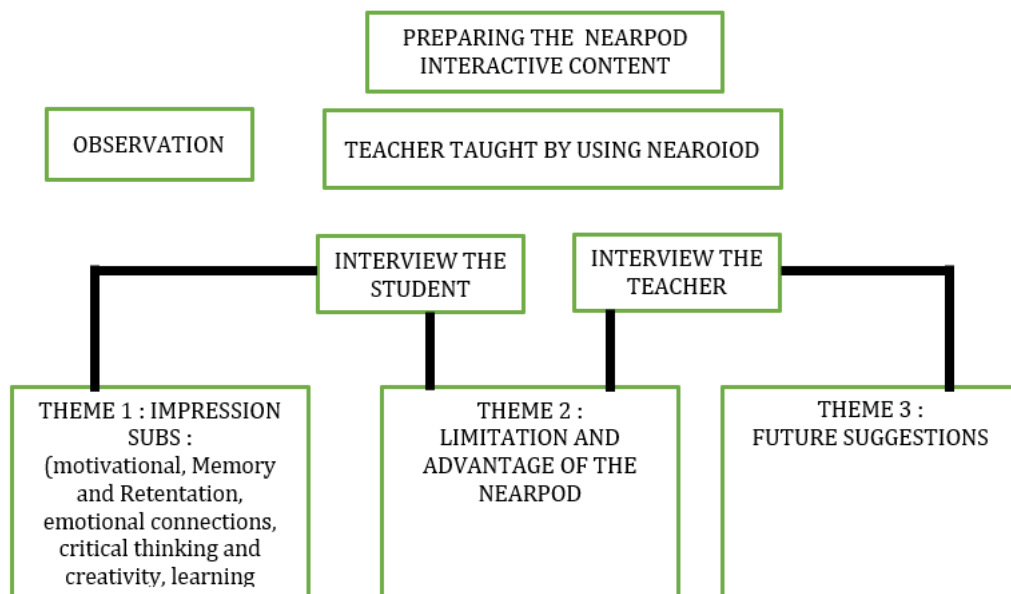
the interviewer nearly always has greater control over dialogue direction and thematic emphasis than the respondent. Because of this disparity in power, the interviewer has an ethical imperative to handle the respondent and the associated data with care. On the one hand, interviewing is like wearing "night-vision goggles". Because interviews allow the researcher to discover and investigate complicated phenomena that would otherwise be hidden or undetected. Interviews, on the other hand, are as much about rhetorically generating meaning and collaboratively producing a story as they are about mining data diamonds. Rather of being stored in the brains of the interviewer or interviewee and transferred back and forth, meaning is formed between participants.(Flick, 2021)

To ensure the research objectives are met to guide the interview process, an interview guide was developed. The guide consisted of a set of open-ended questions designed to encourage students to share their experiences, thoughts, and opinions about using Nearpod apps. These questions explored areas such as favourite features, challenges faced, perceived benefits, and suggestions for improvement. Individual interview sessions were scheduled with the selected students and also the teacher in a comfortable and private environment. During the interviews, the researcher followed the interview guide while also allowing for flexibility to explore unexpected insights or follow-up questions and observation sheet to checklist what is happening during the process of learning by using this app. Detailed notes were taken during the interviews or, with participants' consent, recordings were made to ensure accurate data analysis. After the interviews, the collected data, whether in the form of recordings or notes, were transcribed for further analysis. Qualitative analysis techniques, such as thematic

analysis, were applied to identify recurring themes, patterns, and key findings related to the students' impressions of the Nearpod apps. The findings derived from the analysis were interpreted to draw meaningful conclusions and insights. These findings were then organized based on the research objectives and presented in a clear and coherent manner.

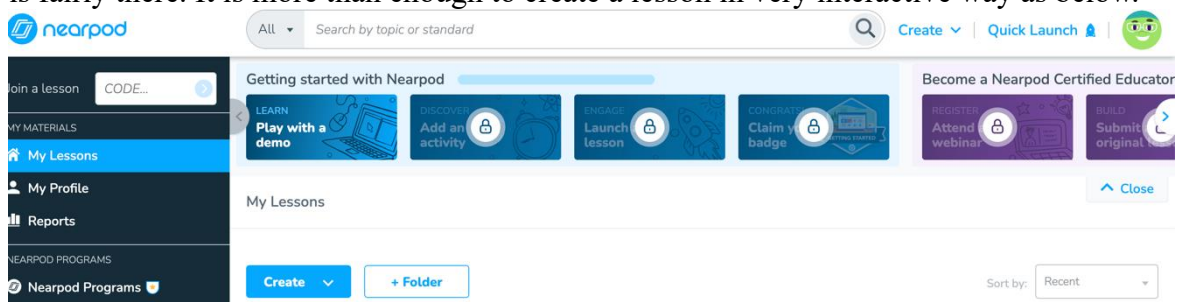
**Result and Discussion**

In this section, the writer aims to provide the result of the data by using thematical analysis that has been taken from the main data interview. Theamatical analysis is about filtering the students’ response in order shaping the theory that could bring together into discussion and corresponding with the theory. From the Interview, there are four big thematical categories. Those are Impression, Limitation, the advantage, and also future suggestion. Those thematics are divided into some subs that affiliated with them together. These schematical would easily be understood on the track of this research trying to reach.



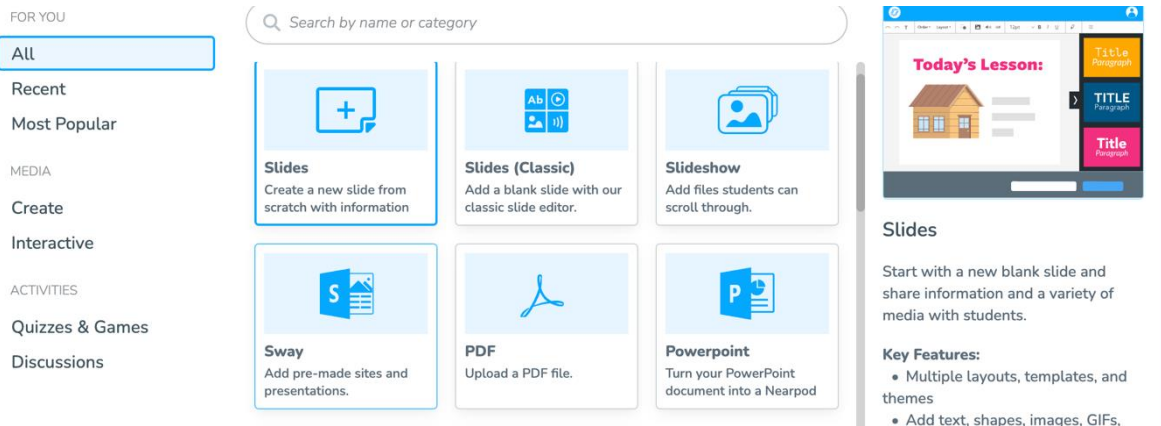
**Preparing the Interactive Content Nearpod**

Before the apps is used to teach an interactive language learning. The writer designs the nearpod content first. It can be accesed in <https://nearpod.com/> for free but the limitation access is fairly there. It is more than enough to create a lesson in very interactive way as below.



The picture above is the first interface of Nearpod. To create the lessons just choose the “create” options right on the right above then choose “lesson” to begin the design.

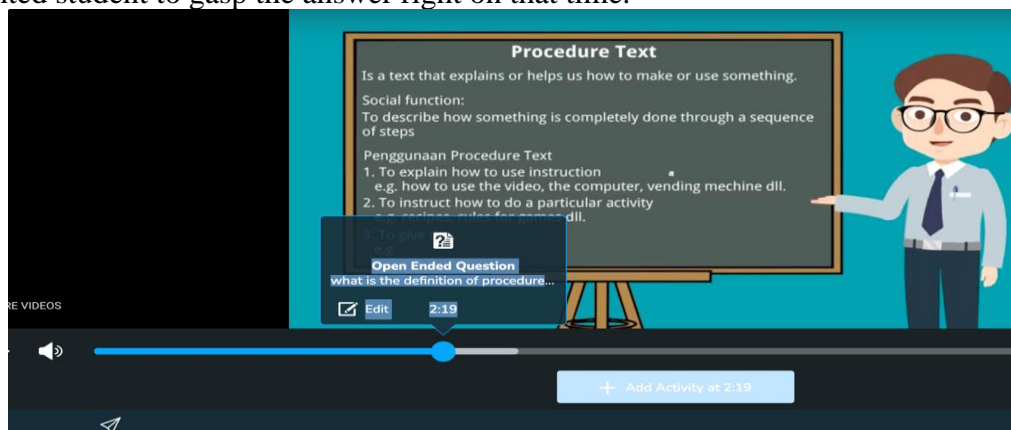
And then, there will be some options you can choose. We prefer to design it with third party apps that mainstreamly used by some of users, Power Point.



Right here, We import the design that we have been made before in Power point. As you can see here below of the design we made

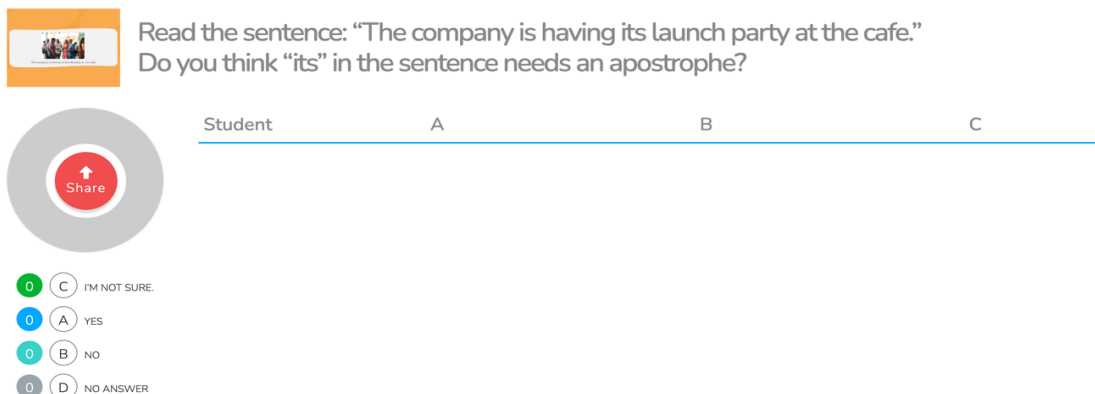


This right after we imported from the power point. One thing that make this Platforms such an interactive point. You can control the class as you like. Such what we have done below by putting the video that has been facilitated by the right time questions in some of the minutes we wanted student to gasp the answer right on that time.



In our design we put the questions in the minutes 2:1, right after the video shows the definition of procedure text. Then it occurs directly the questions “what is the definition of the procedure text.

There are many kinds of interactive actions that we can choose to fill in the design we created. Another things we put on to the material is about the Pool features that can help the student and gave feed back to the teacher on how they react to the material given such below.



Further talking, it also can be shared to know the student answer and give the real time feedback to the students. Many more that can be used in using the Nearpod in the classroom setting. From those feature the writer have choosen some of the students to be interviewed resulting some of the very attractive, excitement, and also future suggestions towards this app.

### Impressions

In this part, there are some of the subs that could be discussed as drag out some categories of integral discussions. **First, Motivation and Engagement**, Impressions have a big impact on how motivated and involved language learners are. Learners get good impressions that feed their intrinsic drive when they are exposed to motivating teachers who exhibit enthusiasm and proficiency in the language. A dynamic learning environment is created through engaging resources, such as interactive language applications, multimedia content, and genuine texts, which piques learners' interests and promotes active involvement. By giving students meaningful situations in which to use language, opportunities for real-world simulations, role-plays, and communicative activities further improve engagement.

One of the student explained on the interview ***“it helps a lot by giving the virtual board. Make it more easier to be understood”***.

It can be seen there is such an exciting point the student felt. Farther more, one of the student add it ***“it make us not feeling bored during the learning time”***. Student engagement and motivation are essential components of their learning process. Students who possess intrinsic motivation are more likely to participate actively in class, finish their assignments, and look for extra opportunities to learn. This internal motivation fosters a lifelong love of learning in addition to improving academic achievement. On the other hand, a lack of motivation can result in boredom, annoyance, and a drop in academic achievement. By showcasing the relevance of what they are learning, incorporating real-world applications into the curriculum can also increase students' motivation. Furthermore, giving students freedom of choice and autonomy during the learning process can increase their motivation and sense of ownership. Teachers can assist students in developing the drive and engagement required for both academic success and personal development by fostering a growth mindset and encouraging them to take on challenges, learn from mistakes, and persevere. This could entail giving students



individualized support, adjusting instruction to fit their varied needs, and giving them chances to pursue their passions and interests.

To sum up, Engagement and motivation are essential elements of the learning process. By fostering a happy and encouraging learning environment and using successful teaching techniques, educators play a critical role in developing these attributes in students. By doing this, teachers can enable students to grow the engagement and motivation required to succeed in the classroom as well as in their personal and professional lives. It's critical to understand that engagement and motivation are dynamic qualities that change based on the situation and the needs of each individual student. Consequently, in order to foster motivation and engagement, educators need to be flexible and adaptive in their approach. Decreased motivation and engagement can be caused by outside variables, such as insufficient support from peers or teachers. Teachers must create a safe, encouraging, and supportive learning environment where students feel empowered to take ownership of their education in order to overcome these obstacles. This can be accomplished in a number of ways, such as encouraging student collaboration, giving constructive criticism, and establishing clear goals.

**Secondly, Memory and retentions,** The human brain is an intricately designed astonish of complexity, as evidenced by its ability to retain language components. Multiple interconnected regions, each with a distinct specialized function, form the core of this process. Producing speech and language is the function of the Broca's area in the frontal lobe. It is essential for speech motor planning, syntax, and grammatical processing. Similar to this, language comprehension and the production of coherent speech are functions of the Wernicke's area, which is located in the temporal lobe. It is essential for comprehending both written and spoken language, as well as for retrieving lexical and semantic data. (14) In order to retain linguistic components in memory, impression is crucial. Through frequent exposure to vocabulary, grammatical constructions, and speech patterns, learners acquire impressions. These impressions are strengthened by contextual awareness, which improves learners' ability to assimilate the language. In order to improve memory retention, mnemonic strategies including chunking, association, and visualization make use of the power of impression. The capacity of learners to remember and use the language is improved by having them conjure up vivid mental images, connecting new terminology to prior knowledge, and grouping language components into comprehensible chunks.

This can be seen from the data, said that *“right after we choose the wrong answer it can be shared by the teacher who is right or wrong, at the same time it makes us easier to remember in the future what is the correct one”*

All this retention and memory in terms of the language cannot be separated by the device provided in brain. Located in the medial temporal lobe, the hippocampus plays a critical role in the creation of news memories, including language-related ones. (Xin & Chan, 2020)Declarative memories—recollections of facts and events—are crucially consolidated by it. By encoding and storing linguistic information, the hippocampal region helps people remember words, phrases, and grammar rules. (The cerebellum, which has historically been linked to motor control, is also involved in language processing. It is involved in learning and automatizing language-related motor skills, such as articulation and pronunciation, as well as in coordinating the timing and rhythm of speech.

The dorsolateral prefrontal cortex in particular is involved in executive functions including working memory, attention, and cognitive control. These abilities allow people to regulate their language production and comprehension, manipulate linguistic information, and concentrate on language tasks—all of which are critical for language learning. Moreover, the primary auditory cortex is housed in the temporal lobe, which is essential for processing auditory information, including speech sounds. It contributes to the first processing and

encoding of auditory information, enabling people to hear and comprehend spoken language. (Friedman & Robbins, 2022)

The processing of emotions and emotional memories is carried out by the amygdala, which is housed in the temporal lobe. Since emotional arousal can improve memory formation and retrieval, emotions can have a big impact on language learning and retention. Last but not least, a collection of subcortical structures called the basal ganglia is engaged in procedural learning and motor control. It contributes to the learning of grammatical rules and language patterns as well as the automatization of language-related motor skills like typing and handwriting.

In summary, the process of language component retention in the human brain is complex and involves a number of interconnected regions and neural networks. Together, these regions enable people to perceive, produce, and remember language by encoding, storing, and retrieving linguistic information.

**Thirdly, Creativity and Critical Thinking,** Impression fosters critical thinking abilities and creativity among language learners. Learners participate in critical and creative language usage by investigating other viewpoints, challenging presumptions, and finding novel ways to convey ideas. Learners are encouraged to consider the language and its intricacies in-depth by analysing texts, working through language puzzles, and completing problem-solving exercises. These exercises enable learners to take chances and experiment with the language, which improves language competency. They also boost higher-order thinking abilities. Critical thinking has been occurred as one of the impressions given by the student. They use the Nearpod freely and anonymously, it creates space to the student to bring out every single authentic ideas they can share. As one of the student said *“it makes us freely express our ideas, no one knows us except the teacher share it”*.

Nearpod are becoming more and more acknowledged in the field of education as effective tools for developing students' critical thinking abilities. Nearpod offers a special platform for students to hone and improve their problem-solving skills through captivating gameplay and interactive challenges. Whether it's making decisions in a simulation, figuring out riddles in a virtual world, or planning in a challenging board game, students are continuously given the chance to reflect critically on the decisions they make and the outcomes that follow. Furthermore, Solving problems is a major way that Nearpod enhance critical thinking. Students must analyse the situation which contextualized by the content. Teachers can use Nearpod's insightful data analytics to guide their decision-making regarding instruction. In order to better understand student learning and pinpoint areas for development, educators can examine student engagement, performance, and feedback. In order to improve student learning, this pushes educators to reflect critically on their methods and make data-driven choices.

In line with that A critical thinking skill is the ability to ask questions, analyse information, and evaluate it objectively and critically. In the context of Kurikulum Merdeka, this is particularly important because students are expected to become self-directed learners who can formulate opinions based on critical analysis. The one and only method to strengthen critical thinking skills in Kurikulum Merdeka is to use project-based learning methodologies. Under this method, students are given projects that require critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration with peers. These projects can also be used to promote innovation and creativity, which is an important aspect of the 21st century. To sum up, Nearpod is an effective teaching tool that can greatly raise students' critical thinking abilities. With the help of Nearpod's interactive lessons, group projects, formative assessment tools, customized learning opportunities, and data analytics, teachers can design stimulating and productive learning environments that encourage critical thinking in students and help them develop into lifelong learners. (Nadhiroh & Anshori, 2023)

**Fourthly, Learning Environment,** The perceptions that students acquire are greatly influenced by their learning environment. It is possible for learners to take chances and advance their language abilities in a friendly, welcoming environment that views errors as teaching opportunities. Students get the chance to engage with others through collaborative tasks, group discussions, and peer feedback, promoting impression development through social interactions. The importance of integrating technology into education has increased in the quickly changing digital landscape of today. Technology is now more than just a tool; it is used in both our personal and professional lives. We can better prepare students for the future, when technological literacy and proficiency are critical for success, by integrating technology into the classroom. The improved learning environment that Nearpod offers is one of its main advantages. With the use of Nearpod, education can become more individualized, dynamic, and engaging. Students can benefit from immersive learning experiences that accommodate a variety of learning preferences and styles through the use of virtual reality, simulations, and multimedia resources. Additionally, students have instant access to a vast repository of knowledge. (Scherer et al., 2019)

This gives students the opportunity to delve deeply into subjects, carry out research, and access materials that might not be found in conventional textbooks or libraries. The encouragement of international cooperation is a key component of technology integration in the classroom. Students can work together with peers and international experts thanks to technology. This fosters understanding between cultures, communication abilities, and teamwork—all of which are critical in today's globalized society. Technology also makes it possible to create customized learning programs that are tailored to the needs and skills of each individual student. By modifying the speed and subject matter of education in response to student performance, adaptive learning platforms make sure that every student gets the help they require to achieve. An ideal learning environment is created by qualified teachers who offer direction, tailored feedback, and scaffolded teaching to help learners' impression-making. Learning experiences are enriched and immersive impressions are made possible through access to a variety of physical and digital resources, including genuine materials, language learning applications, and online communities.

#### **Advantages and Limitation on students' and Teachers' Perspective Review**

##### **Advantages**

Nearpod offers a variety of interactive learning tools, including polls, quizzes, and interactive slides. Students' meaningful participation is encouraged by these interactive elements, which enhances learning. Additionally, they promote active student participation. Activating Multimedia resources, like images, audio samples, and video clips, are added to Nearpod's learning materials to improve their visual and auditory aspects. Students' attention is captured by this multimedia-rich environment, which also promotes sensory stimulation and deeper cognitive processing of the subject matter. Nearpod provides real-time feedback and assessment through the use of polls and quizzes. (Qi et al., 2021)

Teachers can quickly access student responses, which enables them to give prompt feedback and facilitate formative assessment. This insightful feedback helps identify areas for improvement, enables individualized instruction, and directs teacher decisions. cooperation and communication, Nearpod promotes student cooperation and communication with tools like collaborative boards and interactive conversations. Pupils can actively participate in group projects that require collaborative learning, have discussions about concepts, interact with people, and develop their cooperation and communication skills. Data and Analytics: Teachers can monitor students' progress, look over performance data, and find patterns in both individual and group learning with the help of Nearpod's data and analytics tools. The availability of data-



driven analytics facilitates targeted interventions, supports evidence-based decision-making, and eases the implementation of differentiated instruction.

### **Limitation**

For Nearpod to be used effectively, students need to have access to the right devices (such as PCs, tablets, or smartphones) and a reliable internet connection. It might be challenging to utilize Nearpod's full potential in environments with few resources or in places with bad internet. Though Nearpod boasts an easy-to-use interface, teachers might require some time and guidance to fully grasp its features. To create and produce interactive Nearpod courses that are matched with specific learning objectives, it might be necessary to make an initial investment in professional development and instructional design skills. (19) Content modification possibilities may be restricted, but Nearpod offers a variety of pre-made classes and materials. To match content with their own instructional needs, teachers might need to put in more time generating or customizing existing materials. Although Nearpod offers a basic version that is free to use, in order to access the full range of functionality and advanced features, a membership is sometimes necessary. Budget restrictions can prevent schools or teachers from utilizing the app's full capabilities. Since Nearpod runs mostly online, students are only able to access and engage with information in offline settings or places with spotty internet availability. Despite these drawbacks, Nearpod is a useful tool for developing interesting and dynamic learning scenarios. Active learning and student engagement are facilitated by its interactive elements, multimedia integration, real-time feedback, and data analytics. The educational process may be improved by educators using Nearpod to provide relevant learning opportunities, enhance formative evaluation, and get insights into student development

### **CONCLUSION**

Students' ability to retain information can be greatly enhanced when Nearpod is used as an instructional tool. Nearpod's interactive design encourages active engagement, which is a critical component in improving memory retention. Students are more likely to remember material if they actively participate in the lessons through interactive polls, quizzes, and conversations. In addition, the addition of multimedia components, like audio, images, and videos, not only enhances the learning process but also helps reinforce important ideas. For example, infographics or diagrams may be helpful to visual learners, while audio explanations may be more comfortable for auditory learners. Moreover, customized learning opportunities are made possible by teachers' capacity to track the progress of learners and offer prompt feedback. Individual learning preferences and speeds can be accommodated by this tailored approach, which improves comprehension and memory of the subject matter. Furthermore, because Nearpod is interactive, it promotes student collaboration, which can improve memory retention through peer-to-peer learning and discussion.

Teachers can create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that promotes memory retention in the classroom by incorporating Nearpod. This can therefore result in better academic performance and a more thorough comprehension of the material. This is in line with the principles of Kurikulum Merdeka, which prioritize student-centered learning and the use of technology to enhance education, are in line with the integration of Nearpod into the classroom. Kurikulum Merdeka places a strong emphasis on active engagement, in which students participate actively in their education. Nearpod's interactive features support this approach. In keeping with Kurikulum Merdeka's objectives, students are more likely to retain material and grow as critical thinkers when they actively participate in class through discussions, polls, and quizzes.

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