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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

**Consultation on National Assessments and  
Measuring Learning for the Post-2015 Education  
Agenda**

UNESCO Headquarters, 26-27 February 2015

**Connecting national assessments to curriculum, pedagogy and learning  
goals: Nine points of discussion about repositioning assessment in  
education and the curricula  
Mr Renato Operti, UNESCO's International Bureau for Education**

## Summary

The presentation provides a short clarification of the connections between national [assessments](#), curriculum, pedagogy and learning goals and outcomes. Nine points of discussion around re-positioning assessments in education systems and the curricula are specified.

# Consultation on National Assessments and Measuring Learning for the Post-2015 Education Agenda

UNESCO Headquarters, 26-27 February 2015

Session II: How can different types of assessment help to support and improve learning and teaching and promote equity

## Nine points of discussion around repositioning assessment in education and the curricula

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de l'UNESCO

(1) Assessment is to curriculum development processes as curriculum is to the sustainability of educational policies. They go hand in hand. Educational policies, curriculum development and assessment should have a common goal and ground: the continuous democratization of learning opportunities at large across different education levels, learning environments and providers, from zero onwards.

(2) As though the curricula countries reflect the type of society pursued, assessment criteria and tools linked to or embedded in the curricula, stand either for selection or demarcation although there are quite a number of nuances. The discussion around assessment may reveal profound ideological, policy and programmatic disparities across education policies and society.

(3) Refreshing assessment through the lens of learning opportunities, entails rethinking the foundations, mandate and role of the educational system as a proactive facilitator of learning opportunities, and not reactive to a facilitator of provisions. A holistic vision of education and of the curriculum should orientate the discussions and the policy discourse around assessment.

(4) Traditional discourses revolving around narrative and summative assessment, assessment subject or curriculum oriented, assessment criteria around of the curricula, assessment of the learning itself for selection, built on narrow assessment criteria and tools, contribute to create an environment that offers little opportunity to learn. We should avoid discursive "debating" dominating models and treatments per se without reflecting on educational realities and goals, and its implementation.

(5) Teachers are policy makers that can be empowered and accountable for transforming assessment from being a functional tool for push-out learners to becoming a tool for the continuous democratization of learning opportunities.

(6) Assessment values and practice the curriculum tend to function together in forming the learning and learning processes and in thinking that every student is effectively supported in a supportive and sustainable way. Diversity of learning characteristics, abilities and capabilities are vital ingredients of any assessment proposal that seeks to contribute to strengthen learning opportunities.

(7) Assessment can create opportunities to promote learning and learning opportunities, but it can also be a barrier to learning. Assessment should be used to support learning and learning opportunities, and not to create barriers to learning and learning opportunities. Assessment should be used to support learning and learning opportunities, and not to create barriers to learning and learning opportunities.

(8) The knowledge, skills and attitudes of the curriculum and the progressive realization of the Sustainable Development Goals are the main focus of assessment. The assessment should be used to support learning and learning opportunities, and not to create barriers to learning and learning opportunities.

(9) The traditional practice of assessment of the curriculum has been to focus on knowledge and information through the syllabus, and to provide through the curriculum highly structured, organized, sequential, linear and non-learning oriented as well as supporting the development of cognitive and psychomotor skills. There is a need to broaden the theory and the practice of assessment, and find it strongly in curriculum development processes.





# Consultation on National Assessments and Measuring Learning for the Post-2015 Education Agenda

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Session II: How can different types of assessment help to support and improve learning and teaching and promote equity



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## Nine points of discussion around repositioning assessment in education and the curricula

- (1) Assessment is to curriculum development processes as curriculum is to the sustainability of educational policies. They go hand in hand. Educational policies, curriculum development and assessment should have a common goal and ground: the continuous democratization of learning opportunities as large across different education levels, learning environments and provisions, from zero onwards.
- (2) As through the curricula countries reflect the type of society passed, assessment criteria and tools linked to or embedded in the curricula, stand either for selection or democratization although there are quite a number of reasons. The discussion around assessment may reveal profound ideological, policy and programmatic disputes across education, politics and society.
- (3) The national reputation of assessment within the curriculum is usually located on knowledge and information through its validity, and its objectivity through its reliability, high reliability and validity. As the curricula are designed to include the content and assess, incorporating or excluding them and how learning assessment is supporting the development of the underlying objectives, there is a need to include the policy and the practice of assessment, and identify strength in curriculum development processes.
- (4) The increasing digitalization of the curriculum and the expansion of the digital systems are changing the boundaries of education in the on-line learning space, so it provides an opportunity for students to be teachers in innovation and to establish learning networks in their own learning. Having assessment criteria and tools in light of the on-line learning, their learning systems of on-line and on-campus is likely to be different from content of it through the media content as "learning target" and "measured of knowledge".
- (5) Assessment can contribute significantly to promote learning when it is embedded within and across the learning process and clearly challenge to learn through. The assessment practices, including the content, timing and methods, can be a strong determinant of the learning process. It is important to ensure that assessment is designed to support the learning process and to be a part of the learning process.
- (6) National discussions revolving around formative and summative assessment, assessment subject or curriculum oriented, assessment within and out of the curricula, assessment of, for or on learning, should be revisited in light of how assessment criteria and tools contribute in practice to really creating an effective opportunity to learn. We of such order: discussing "what learning" (learning methods and instruments) as well as "what to learn" (educational content, goals and curriculum content).
- (7) Rethinking assessment through the lens of learning opportunities, entails rethinking the foundations, mandate and role of the educational system as a proactive facilitator of learning opportunities, and not narrow to a facilitator of provision. A holistic vision of education and of the curriculum should orientate the discussions and the policy decisions around assessment.
- (8) Assessment within and outside the curricula go hand in hand with regards to improving the learning and teaching processes, and in ensuring that every student is effectively supported in a consistent and sustainable way. Clarity of learning, instruments, data and evidence are vital implications of any assessment proposal that needs to practice and strengthen learning opportunities.
- (9) Teachers are policy makers that can be empowered and accountable for transforming assessment from being a functional tool for push-out learners to becoming a tool for the continuous democratization of learning opportunities.

(1) Assessment is to curriculum development processes as curriculum is to the sustainability of educational policies. They go hand in hand. Educational policies, curriculum development and assessment should have a common goal and ground: the continuous democratization of learning opportunities at large across different education levels, learning environments and provisions, from zero onwards.

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(4) Traditional discussions revolving around formative and summative assessment, assessment subject or curriculum oriented, assessment within and out of the curricula, assessment of, for or as learning, should be revisited in light on how assessment criteria and tools contribute to provide to every student an effective opportunity to learn. We should avoid discussing / idolatring / demonizing models and instruments per se with no reference to educational finalities and goals, and curriculum content.

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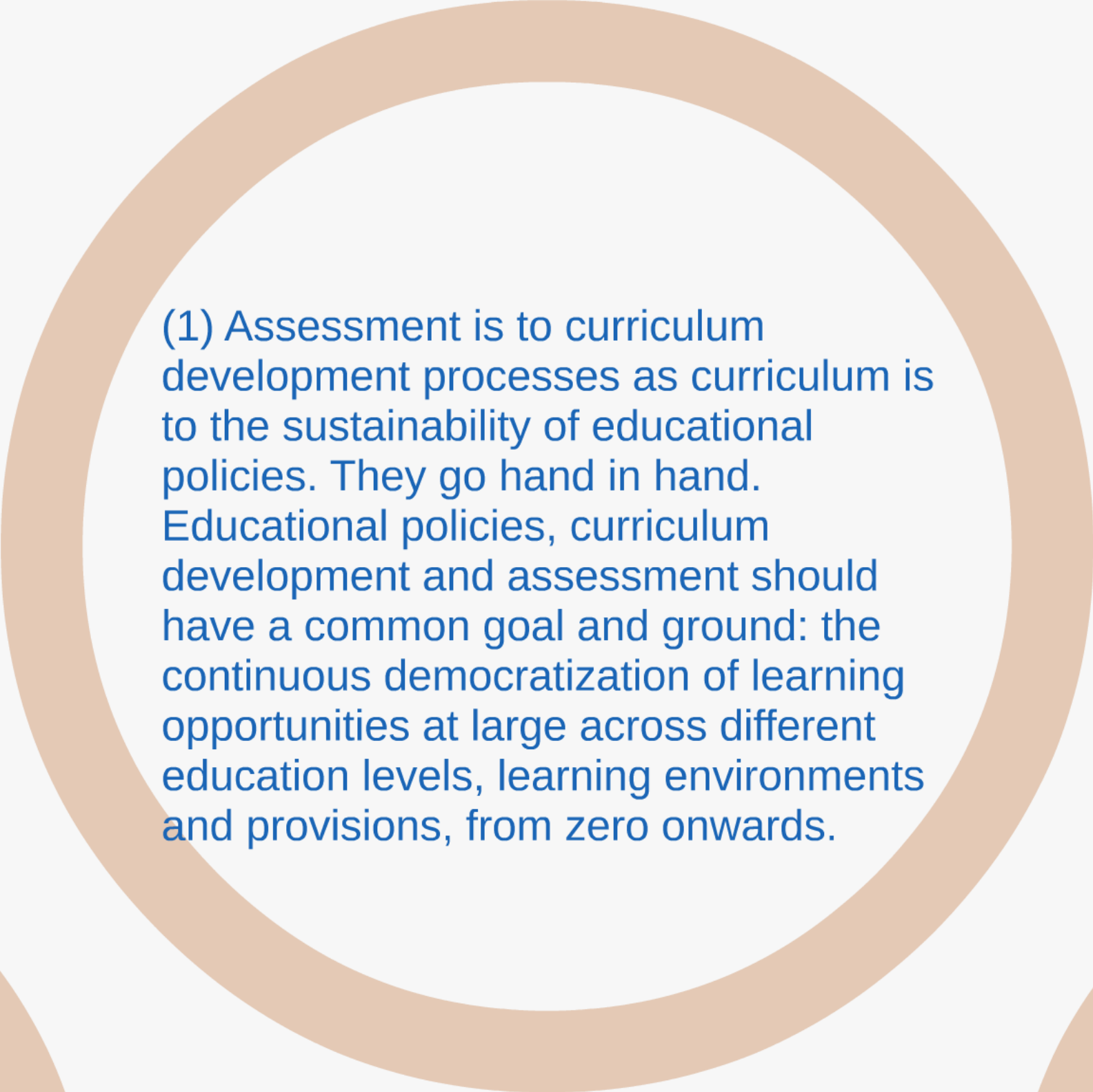
(5) The traditional expertise of assessment within the curriculum has mainly focused on knowledge and information through the syllabus, and in particular through the disciplines highly compartmentalized. As the curriculum has enlarged its rationale, role, content and scope, incorporating cross-cutting themes and new learning areas as well as supporting the development of capabilities/competencies/skills, there is a need to broaden the theory and the practice of assessment, and linked it strongly to curriculum development processes.

(6) The increasing digitalization of the curriculum and the progressive expansion of blended learning, are moving the boundaries of assessment to the on-line learning space, and providing an ample range of opportunities for teacher's innovation and for students taking the lead in their own learning. Thinking assessment criteria and tools in light of the student mastering their learning (issues of content and instruction at large) is quite different from considering it through the student narrow to a "learning target" and "recipient of knowledge".

(7) Assessment can contribute significantly to personalize learning as every student is considered as unique and special (broadened understanding of inclusive education) and she/he is empowered and engaged to revise their own learning progress and identify challenges to move forward. The nature, the context, the scope and the content of learning as well the how are changing, and assessment should be restructured in light of this new learning scenario. The One Size Fits All approach based on the assumption that teacher could teach "the same subjects, in the same way, and at the same pace" clashes with the intention of personalizing education. Customizing the curriculum, and its pedagogical and assessment tools to the motivations, styles and pace of each learner, leads the way forward towards democratizing society and education.

(8) Assessment within and outside the curriculum go hand in hand with regard to improving the teaching and learning processes, and in ensuring that every student is effectively supported in a customized and sustainable way. Diversity of learners' circumstances, styles and capacities are vital ingredients of any assessment proposal that seeks to enhance and strengthen learning opportunities.

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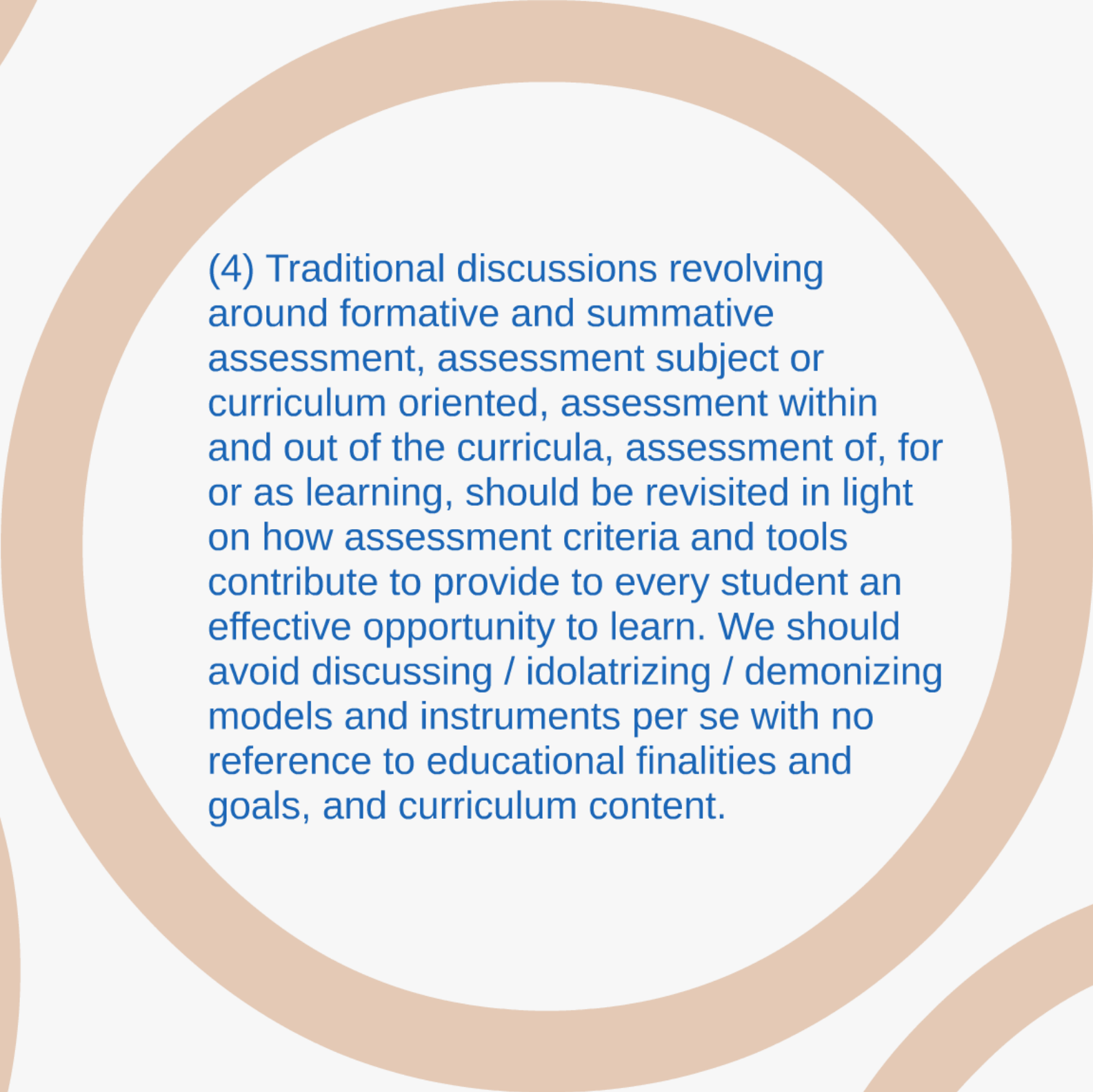
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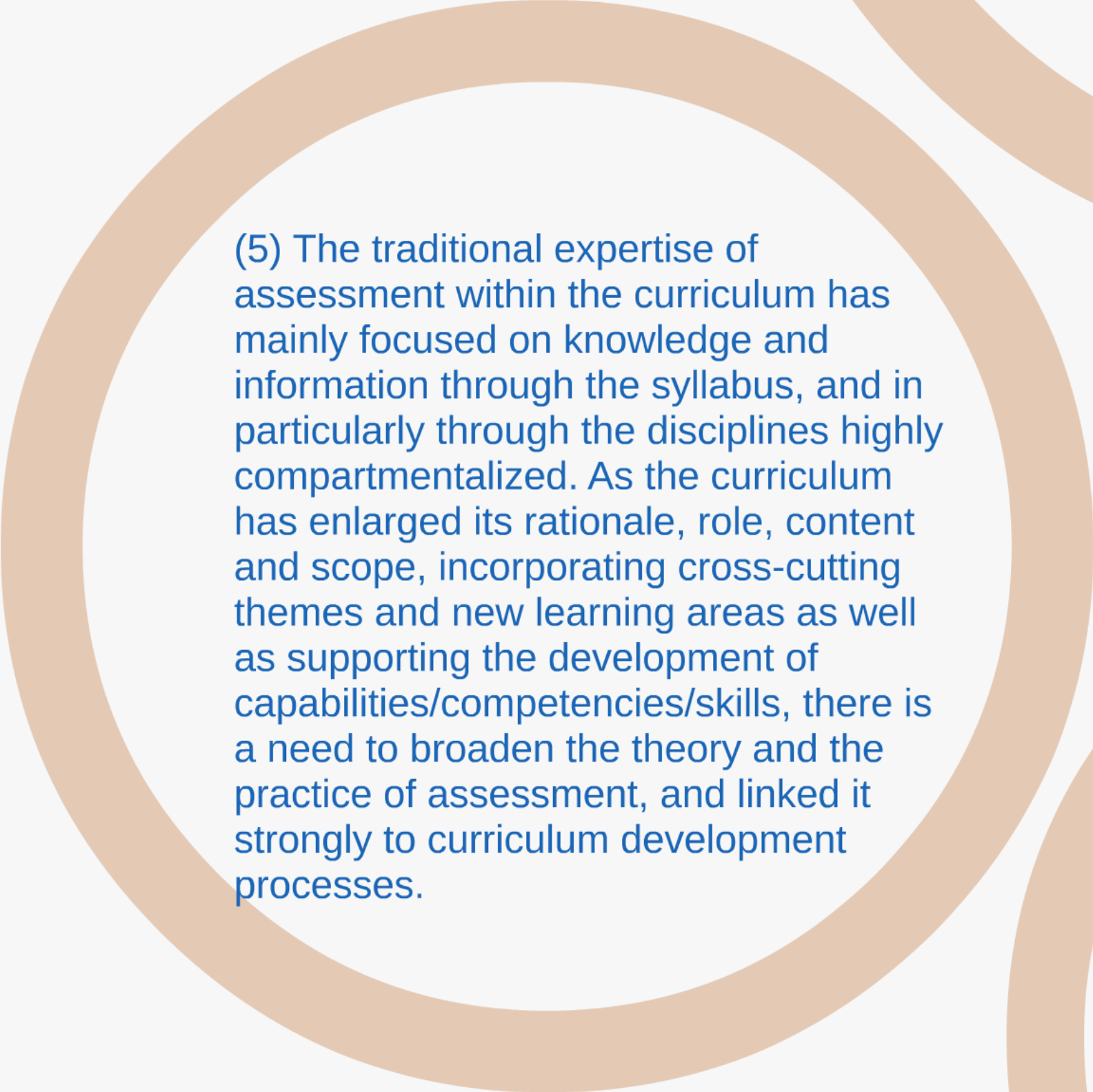
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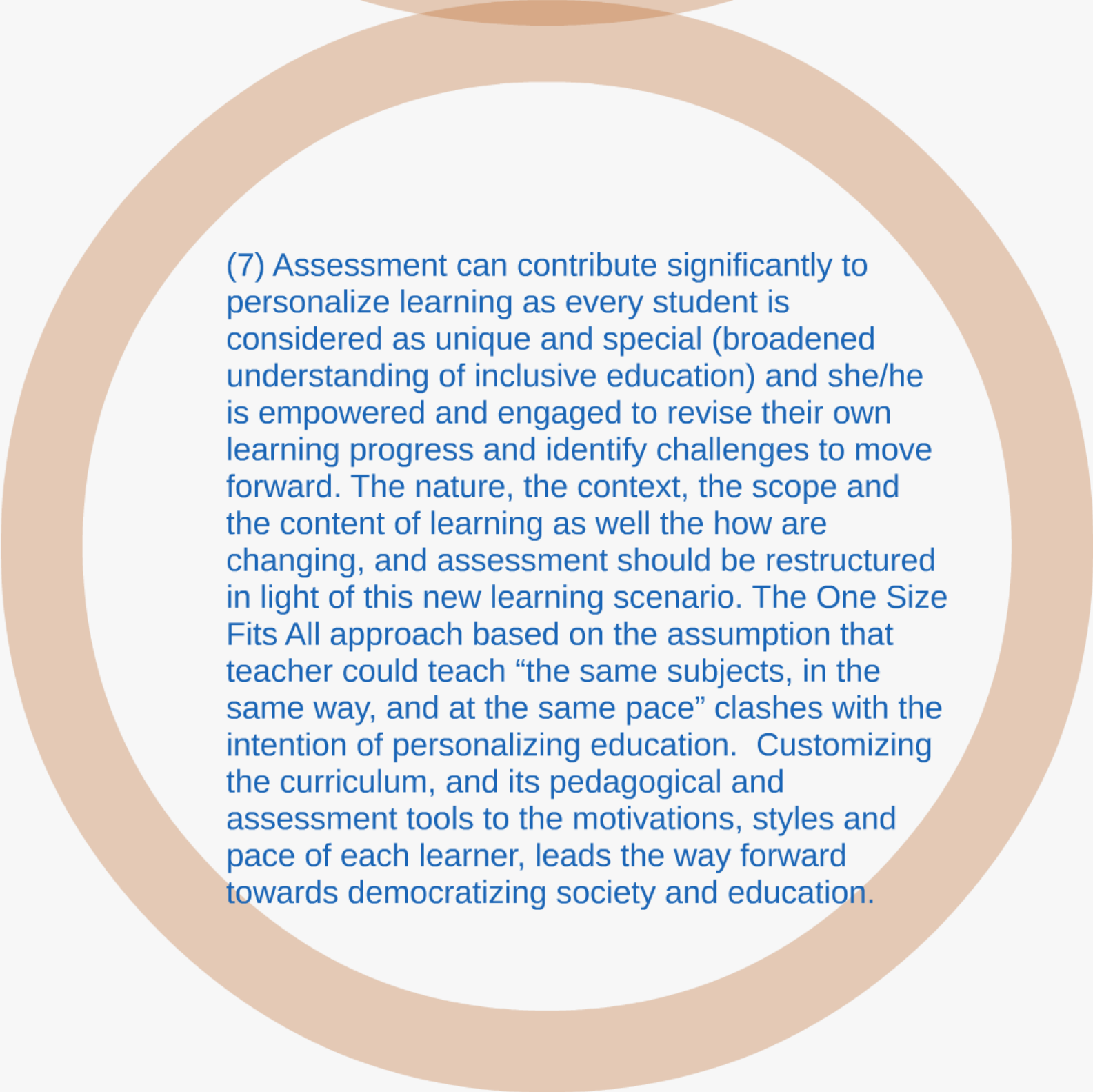
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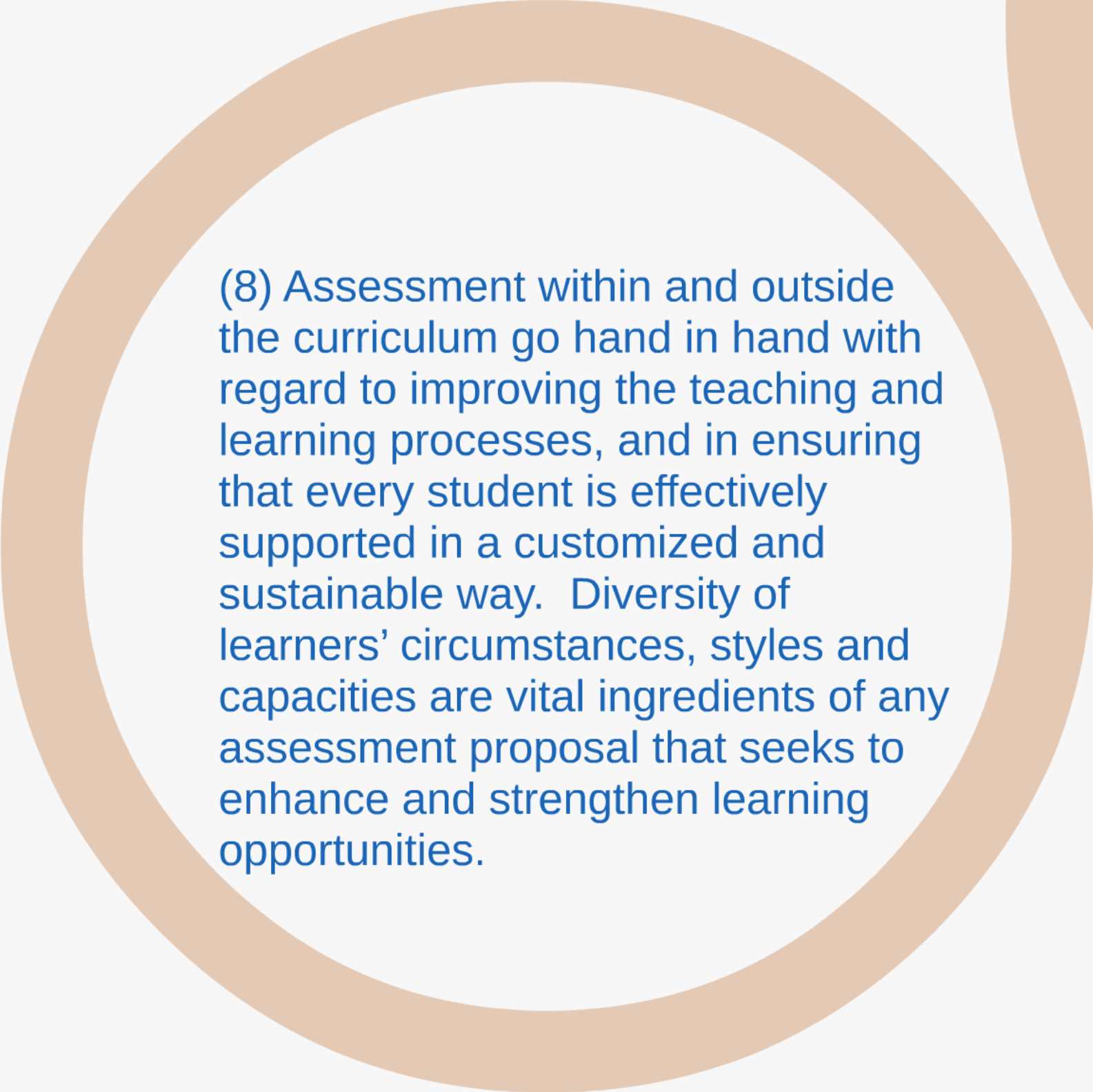
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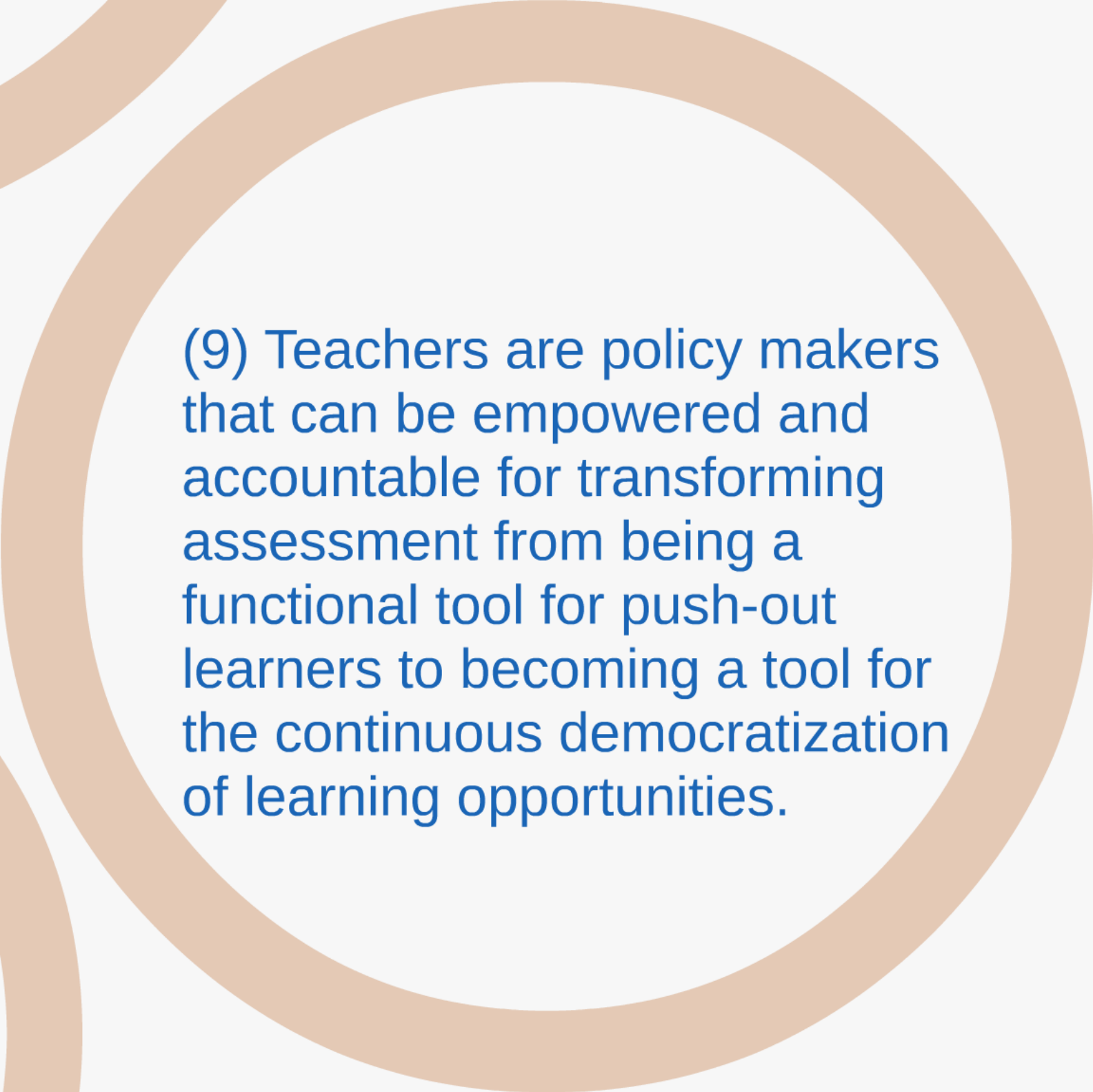


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