

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Framework

This chapter includes expert references that will be useful in giving relevant knowledge on the topic discussed in the following chapter. The researcher will offer a few theories and explain relevant research findings. This chapter will go over each of the study's components in depth.

1. Differentiated Learning

a. The Nature of Differentiated Learning

Differentiated learning is a learning model in which students can learn subject matter according to their abilities, what they like, and their individual needs so that they are not frustrated and feel like they have failed in their learning experience (Tomlinson, 2017). Differentiated learning means understanding students' varying levels of knowledge, readiness, language, learning preferences, and interests and responding appropriately. This is intended to help each student's progress and unique achievement by meeting each student wherever he or she is and supporting in the learning process. In differentiation learning, the teacher must understand and realize that various methods, ways, and strategies are needed in studying a subject matter. The teacher needs to arrange lesson materials, activities, daily assignments both done in class and at home and the final assessment according to the readiness of the student.

b. Principles of Differentiated Learning

Every student has the potential to develop to the best of their ability, according to the teacher's belief, which forms the starting point of the differentiated learning model. Experts in this field, Tomlinson and Moon (2013) developed five fundamental principles to help teachers apply this learning paradigm.

1) Learning Environment

The interior setting in a school or classroom where students spend their time is referred to as the learning environment while the conditions and emotions students feel when learning, connecting, and engaging with teachers and other students are referred to as the learning climate. To address the needs of their students, teachers must adapt their responses based on students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. To identify their students' readiness, interests, and unique learning styles, teachers must establish a connection with students. By valuing their values, skills, and responsibilities, encouraging them to achieve, and actively supporting them, teachers can also help students develop trust. According to Hattie in Tomlinson (2013), building trust with students involves actively and assisting them in succeeding in the subject matter as well as showing appropriate respect for their values, abilities, and responsibilities.

2) A Qualified Curriculum

A good curriculum should lay out the learning objectives in detail and emphasize comprehension over memorization for the students (Sarnoto and Wahyudin, 2018). The primary goal is for students to implement the knowledge in their daily lives. To challenge each student, regardless of their ability level, teachers should modify their lesson plans. More complex tasks are required to keep above-average students engaged and motivated.

3) Continuous Assessment

To ensure that students grasp the information and to enhance teaching strategies, teachers can use the continuous assessment approach, which involves conducting formative evaluations regularly during the learning process (Sasmayunita, 2023). It functions as a diagnostic tool, pointing out difficulties and assisting educators in creating lesson plans that increase comprehension. Initial assessment is also done to understand students' learning readiness and can be done by brainstorming with students before starting the lesson to ask questions related to the subject matter to be learned. Through these questions, the teacher can find out the learners' readiness to learn the material. To test understanding, highlight areas for repetition, provide further support, and evaluate the efficacy of their teaching

strategies, teachers regularly monitor their students' learning process and provide final exams. This evaluation aims to improve learners' comprehension of the material and the quality of their learning, not to assign grades.

4) Responsive Teaching

The end-of-lesson assessment helps teachers identify shortcomings in teaching, enabling them to adjust lesson plans based on current conditions (Sasmayunita, et al., 2023). Effective teachers respond to learning outcomes by modifying lessons based on learners' readiness, interests, and learning profiles.

5) Leadership and Classroom Routines

A teacher who can effectively manage their classroom is considered qualified. In this context, teacher leadership is defined as having the capacity to guide students in adhering to established rules and learning objectives (Sarnoto, 2013). Classroom routines, on the other hand, refer to teachers' abilities to effectively manage their classes through daily routines and activities that students complete to facilitate effective and efficient learning. Based on the differentiated learning development guidebook (Kristiani, et al., 2021), things that teachers can do for example:

- a) Make the learning materials needed by the learners accessible to them.
- b) Provide clear directions in every task that students must do because not all students do the same task.
- c) Keeping the conversations of learners who are discussing in groups group discussions are not noisy.
- d) Provide ways for learners to ask for help when the teacher is helping other learners.
- e) Explaining to learners what they should do after they have completed the given task.
- f) Organizing how learners know when to help their friends who are struggling with learning.
- g) Telling learners how to put away used items or learning materials organized and neatly.

c. Characteristics of Students in Differentiated Classroom

Differentiated learning by content applied to the Merdeka Curriculum includes the knowledge and abilities that students are expected to obtain after learning. Suwasti (2021), suggests the teacher can create creative learning plans that include various materials based on the abilities and needs of the students, as well as learning activities that allow all students to learn and participate in the learning process to achieve the learning goals. Differentiated instruction might include various reading materials, varying subjects based on student interest,

and diverse activities based on individuals' learning profiles and readiness.

1) Readiness

Tomlinson and Imbeau (2011) describe readiness as a student's current knowledge of certain information, understanding, and abilities. They emphasize that readiness is distinct from ability and that high-quality instruction leads to regular changes in readiness. The purpose of readiness differentiation is to make work challenging for students at a certain moment in their development while also providing the assistance they require to achieve at the new level of work. Teachers should gather information about their students' academic preparation and employ strategies such as tiering activities, giving guidance, altering the pace of work, and designing activities that are compatible with students' chosen learning modalities. These activities help students improve their grasp of the material being taught.

2) Interests

A student's attention, curiosity, and participation are all meanings of interest (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2011). As cited by Tomlinson et al. (2003), interest has been connected to motivation and encouraged favorable benefits on learning in both the short and long term. Theory and research also support

the idea that adjusting education to engage students' interests can improve motivation, productivity, and accomplishment. People are more motivated to study and achieve better learning outcomes when they are interested in something. Interest differentiation aims to facilitate students' engagement with new knowledge, comprehension, and abilities by drawing links with what they currently know.

3) Learning Profile

A student's learning profile is A tendency to absorb, investigate, or express material. Tomlinson and Imbeau, (2011). Joseph et al. (2013) write that students are given the chance to learn in ways that are efficient and natural when differentiation is founded on learning profiles. The purpose of learning profile differentiation is to educate students on the most effective methods to learn and broaden their learning options. Experts in several sectors advise using learning style surveys to determine students' preferred forms of learning and categorizing them over time. Cindy Strickland (2007), suggests teachers look for the following;

Table 2.1. Tools for high-quality differentiated instruction by Strickland

Readiness	Interests	Learning Profile
a) Attitude toward school, subject, or topic b) Experience with a topic or an aspect of it c) Knowledge, understanding, and skills in topic prerequisites or related topics d) Misunderstandings about topic or discipline e) Overgeneralizations about the topic or discipline f) Sophisticated use of related vocabulary g) General communication, thinking, reasoning, and other pertinent skills h) Insightful connections between the current topic and other topics i) Evidence of skills in the discipline	a) Passions b) Hobbies c) Family interests or pursuits d) extracurricular activities e) TV viewing preferences f) Vacation destinations g) Music preferences h) Choice of friends i) Elective choices	a) Learning styles: visual, auditory, kinesthetic b) Intelligence preferences c) Environmental preferences: temperature, light, background music, etc. d) Gender- or culture-based preferences: competition versus collaboration e) Group Orientation: work alone or with others

2. Aspects of Differentiated Learning

Supposedly, learning must consider variations in cognitive abilities, interests, and talents to be well facilitated to meet learning outcomes. In line with previous research, it is suggested that the heterogeneity of students in the classroom is a certainty; they have different abilities in terms of emotions, intelligence, social, academic, and various abilities (Mulbar et al., 2018). Tomlinson (2001) already specifies four differentiated learning aspects: content, process, products, and learning environment.

a. Content

Content is what will be taught by the teacher in class or what will be learned by students in class. For enhancing instructional content, a variety of aspects and resources are employed. Acts, concepts, ideas or principles, attitudes, and skills are examples of these. The difference shown in a varied classroom is most often how students get access to critical learning. Then, the teacher needs to connect duties and goals with learning goals. Objectives are usually defined in progressive steps, resulting in a progression of skill-building activities. It makes it easy for students of varied abilities to select the next educational step. Strategies that teachers can use to differentiate the content that learners will learn are:

- 1) Using varied materials. This variety of materials is useful to match students' interests, learning styles, and readiness to learn. An example of an activity with different materials is a dice containing questions with different levels of difficulty.

- 2) Provides mini-lessons. Clayton (2021) defines mini-lessons as concentrated, short, in-class sessions that don't exceed 10 minutes. Mini-lessons are brief and straightforward, with a focus on the basic topic. Mini lessons are used to invite students to recall the learning material that has been learned and how it relates to what they will learn at the meeting.
- 3) Using learning contracts. Learning contracts are made with each learner writing down what resources he or she used to study the subject matter, how he or she will study the subject matter, and to what extent he or she knows about the material or materials to be studied.
- 4) Presenting material with various learning modes. The presentation of material by the teacher plays an important role in learning so the teacher must make different teaching instructions. For example, providing learning using different RAFT (Role Audience Format Topic) according to students' interests (drama/story-telling/cosplay).
- 5) Provide various systems that support the learning process. The system referred to in differentiated learning is the difference in instruction from the teacher in the lesson plan and its implementation in the classroom.

b. Process

The process in this section is the activities carried out by students in class.

The activity in question is an activity that is meaningful to students as a learning

experience in class, not an activity that is not correlated with what is being learned. The activities carried out by these students were not given quantitative assessments in the form of numbers, but qualitative assessments, namely in the form of feedback notes regarding what attitudes, knowledge, and skills were lacking and needed to be improved/improved by students. Activities carried out must meet the criteria as good activities, namely activities that use the information skills possessed by students. Also, differ in terms of difficulty level and how to achieve it. Mumpurniati, et al (2023), examine some strategies that can be applied in differentiating the learning process including;

- 1) Implementing Tiered Activities. Multi-tier learning activities are a way to differentiate learning processes among diverse groups of students with varying characteristics. Teachers divide students into three groups according to their learning level: low, middle, and high. The actions and needs of these groups differ according to complexity, information quality, and abstractness
- 2) Interactive Journal. An Interactive Journal is a written communication between a teacher and students within 10 minutes at the beginning or end of a lesson. The teacher creates a format and directs the activities in the journal, which allows students to write down their experiences, hobbies, hopes and so on and the teacher will respond to the writing.
- 3) Collaborative Activity. One of the collaborative learning techniques is jigsaw. For example, for the topic of narrative text, students are grouped with the themes of folklore, fables, fairy tales, and legends.

Then, the media used varies from textbooks, videos, and storyline posters. During the presentation, students with intellectual disabilities can see the plot drawn by each group, while students with hearing disabilities can read a brief text summary of each group.

c. Products

Product is the result of learning to demonstrate students' knowledge, skills, and understanding after completing one unit of study or even after discussing the subject. Products are summative and need to be rated. Products require a longer time to complete and involve a broader and deeper understanding of students.. Products can be done individually or in groups. Mumpurniati et al (2023) discussed some of the conditions for implementing differentiation in learning products as follows:

- 1) Include clear instructions for students. This prevents students from getting questions wrong because they do not understand the instructions and not because they fail to understand the subject matter.
- 2) Provide students with various task models or types for example, by answering questions in writing, orally, writing a summary, or making diagrams, videos, and others.
- 3) Provide support and footholds for student success in displaying learning products for example, by allowing students to ask 'what needs to be prepared?' to work on, informing students of the assessment rubric, informing the deadline for work, and giving feedback responses after students submit the task.

d. Learning Environment

The actual space for studying in classrooms and schools is referred to as the learning environment. According to Amalia, Rasyad, and Gunawan (2023), a learning environment is the setting and situations in which students learn, including their interactions and connections with teachers and other students. Teachers must respond appropriately to each student's readiness, interests, and learning profile for the learning process to be effective.

In summary, Tomlinson outlines the differentiated learning concept in **Figure 2.1** below.



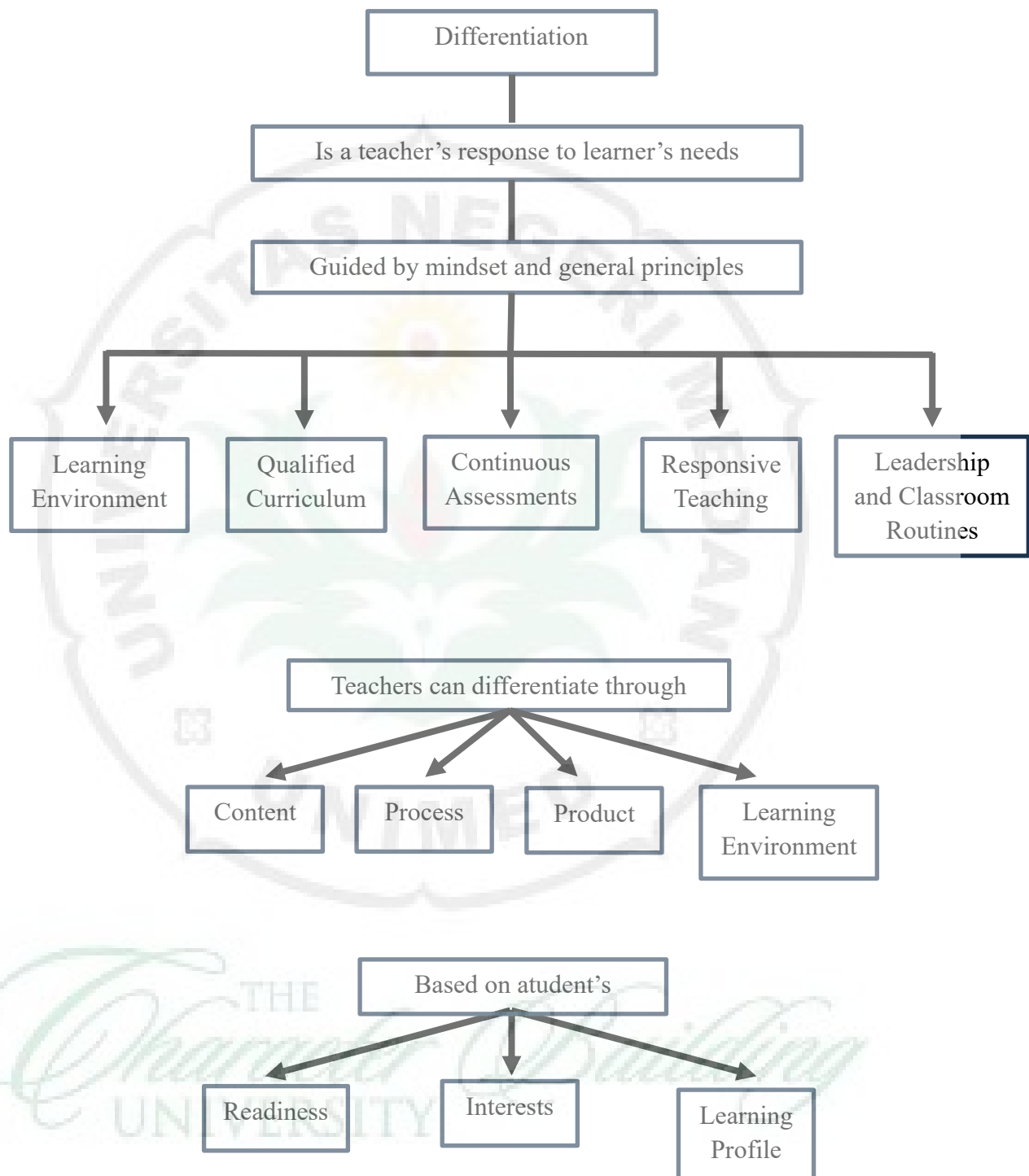


Figure 2. 1 Concept of Differentiation by Tomlinson

3. The Syntax of Differentiated Learning Implementation in English Language Teaching

The use of differentiated learning is expected to have a favorable influence on schools, classrooms, teachers, and most importantly, students. In theory, if the teacher requires all students to acquire the same information, go through the same procedure, and produce the same learning outcomes, they will struggle to meet their goals for learning. On the other, if the teacher uses differentiated instruction, a learning process that is beneficial to students and tailored to their learning needs is produced, allowing learning objectives to be met ideally. By this, the new curriculum mandates English teaching and learning in three different combinations of elements which are listening-speaking, reading-viewing, and writing-presenting.

Differentiated Learning is a learning model offered by the Merdeka curriculum, therefore, in its implementation, the teaching flow of Differentiated Learning proposed by Tomlinson will be adjusted to the regulation of the minister of national education (Permendiknas) number 41 of 2007 where in the learning process, there are three syntaxes implemented, namely pre learning, learning activities, and closing.

a. Pre-Learning

- 1) The teacher pre-assesses students' knowledge, skills, and interests. Pre assessment helps with learner mapping. One example of mapping is mapping based on visual, kinesthetic and audio learning styles.

- 2) The teacher introduces the lesson with the student's knowledge and interests in mind. A well-prepared lesson introduction is a teacher's way of lifting students' moods and preparing them for learning. This draws students in, stimulates learning, throws their minds to balance, and piques their curiosity. Additionally, it connects old and new information, improving whole learning.

b. Learning Activities

- 1) Students read the material at varied reading levels with support, as appropriate. Students need to be encouraged to read or listen to materials according to diversity. This serves as a basis of knowledge for students related to the material to be learned.
- 2) Teacher and students debrief reading for key knowledge, concepts, and principles. A debrief is a reflection on an experience elicited through a guided discussion. It solidifies a lesson. Through debriefing, teachers may help students question presumptions and identify connections between ideas and deeds.
- 3) The teacher gives notes with a guided lecture format accompanied by a demonstration. These notes are a written record of the content and objectives of a lesson. Then, the teacher acts as a demonstrator who prepares some media needed in the demonstration process.

- 4) The teacher assesses student understanding with exit cards.

Teachers can evaluate their students' comprehension of the subject discussed in class by using exit cards, a formative evaluation method.

- 5) Students do an assigned tiered activity matched to their current understanding

- 6) Students complete one of two homework choices they feel will help them most. With student involvement in task selection, uninterested students can be engaged, motivated, and empowered to take responsibility for their education.

- 7) Teacher gives notes with digest, as appropriate. This is done to help students see the important points in the material being taught.

- 8) Students pair journal writing with a teacher-choice partner and student-choice entry. Teachers can monitor students' development in reading, writing, and knowledge through their journal entries.

- 9) Students work on a Jigsaw on the topic, based on their interests. Jigsaw is a cooperative learning method, with students learning in small groups of 4-6 people heterogeneously.

- 10) The teacher assigns products with common elements and student options. For example, by answering questions in

writing or orally, writing a summary, creating diagrams, and so on. Some application-level possibilities include creating a painting, or a movie, explaining how something works, or working on another project. items or other projects.

- 11) The teacher offers review sessions and mini-workshops on product skills. This is feedback that teachers can do to ensure student understanding.

c. Closing

- 1) Class discussion with questions at varied levels of difficulty. This variation of questions is made considering student readiness, so it is hoped that students will not find the questions too difficult or too easy.
- 2) Students take a quiz with common and differentiated elements

Based on the teaching flow made by Tomlinson, teachers can apply different learning starting from the procurement of a Learning Plan (see Appendix A)

4. English Language Teaching (ELT)

a. The Nature of English Language Teaching (ELT)

English Language Teaching (ELT) refers to the practice of teaching the English language to non-native speakers (Vaishnav, 2024). English Language Teaching (ELT) is a dynamic and expanding field that comprises a wide range of teaching methods and approaches designed to facilitate English language learning in various contexts. Haezewindt (2006) argues that ELT has shifted from traditional methods centered on vocabulary and grammatical rules to more current

ways that promote communicative ability, reflecting the changing demands and goals of learners and educational institutions.

ELT aims to provide students with the communicative competence required for successful interaction in a variety of contexts, in addition to language knowledge (Qasseras, 2023). This includes a range of techniques and approaches designed to accommodate students with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Effective English language instruction is ultimately defined by its capacity to adjust to the various demands of students while promoting critical thinking and intercultural awareness (Hossain, 2024).

To summarize, English Language Teaching is a multidimensional subject that involves a variety of teaching strategies and approaches to address the changing demands of learners in a globalized society. It highlights the significance of communicative skills, teacher education, and the environmental sustainability of language teaching practices.

b. The Aspects of English Language Teaching (ELT)

The primary goal of ELT (English Language Teaching) is to offer learners with opportunity to practice using the language in real-life situations. This can be accomplished through a variety of means, including introducing them to real content, allowing them to speak practice, and providing feedback and assistance.

Teachers who focus on these crucial components can help students improve their English skills and become more confident and effective communicators. Several key elements are vital in modern English language teaching (ELT), as shown below.

- 1) Communicative Competence: The primary goal of ELT is to develop learners' communicative competence - their ability to use English effectively for real communication. This includes mastering linguistic competencies (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) as well as sociolinguistic and pragmatic competencies (Richards, 2006).
- 2) Emphasis on authentic language use. Instead of relying solely on artificial classroom exercises, learners are exposed to real-world language samples and assignments. Using authentic materials like as news articles, podcasts, and videos exposes students to actual language spoken by native speakers in a variety of circumstances (Peacock, 1997). This prepares them to communicate effectively outside of the classroom.
- 3) Integrated Skills: The four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) are integrated and taught in a balanced way rather than separated. Sholeh (2023) stated that by integrating these skills, learners can develop a more natural and spontaneous ability to communicate effectively in daily life
- 4) Use of Technology: Modern ELT incorporates technology tools like multimedia, online resources, and computer-assisted learning where appropriate
- 5) Cooperative Learning: Group and pair work is a part of classroom activities that promote communication, meaning negotiation, and peer support.

c. English Language Teaching for Speaking Skill

It is challenging work for English teachers to get the students to speak English. It requires a protracted learning and practice phase. Students often see that English is significantly different from their native tongue, and they have very little opportunity to acquire and use English in their daily lives (Khotimah, 2014). They therefore need to practice speaking English more.

English Language Teaching (ELT) for speaking skills focuses on developing learners' ability to communicate effectively in spoken English. Some key strategies and approaches to enhance speaking skills in ELT can be seen below

- 1) Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): This method places a strong emphasis on interaction as the main way that language is learned. Students are encouraged to practice speaking in real-life situations through activities like role-plays, conversations, and group projects.
- 2) Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT): TBLT involves giving students meaningful speaking tasks to complete. To encourage spontaneous speaking, students can organize field trips, interview people, or work through problems in groups or pairs.
- 3) Practice Pronouncing Words Correctly: Students' clarity and comprehensibility are enhanced when they practice pronouncing words correctly. Drills, minimum pairings, and phonetic training are a few examples of this.

- 4) Fluency Activities: By emphasizing fluency over correctness, activities like storytelling and timed speaking challenges help students become more confident and develop their ability to talk without overanalyzing.
- 5) Cultural Context: Educating students in speaking within different cultural contexts aids in their understanding of nuances, slang idioms, and acceptable language use in various scenarios.

By integrating these strategies into the curriculum, educators can effectively enhance their students' speaking skills in English, preparing them for various communicative situations.

B. Relevant Studies

Various studies have been conducted to see how differentiated learning in English classrooms is implemented. Suryati et al. (2023) composed a study related to the implementation of differentiated learning and the challenges faced by teachers in the implementation. This study discovered that teachers encounter challenges when implementing differentiated learning, such as a lack of time and energy, inadequate support, and student readiness. As a result, schools need to take student readiness and human resources into account to successfully implement differentiated learning.

In its implementation, teachers focus on content, process, and product by reviewing the curriculum, evaluating students' interests and learning styles, and providing formative and summative assessments for monitoring and development (Wahyuni, 2022). Muthiana, Eva and Edi (2023) also conducted a study that looks

at how the Merdeka curriculum is being implemented in English classes. In the classroom, teachers offer activities according to students' capacities, use a variety of media, and provide advice depending on the student's learning styles. According to the study's findings, the Merdeka curriculum successfully satisfies the needs of students in these fields.

In line with the previous study, Andriani (2023) wrote an article that aimed to investigate a case study of the application of differentiated learning at a junior high school in Banyuwangi. The results of the study show that students with varied skill levels can benefit most from well-designed classes that use the differentiated learning approach. Also, the researcher said that differentiation in lesson design allows teachers to meet the requirements of students from a range of backgrounds, including cultural, socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, and gender differences. Additionally, this method improves students' participation in the classroom learning process. Abdilah, et al. (2023), stated that teaching preparation is essential to teaching since it outlines the materials used in class, It offers the foundation for the content and focus of instruction. Through this study, the researchers attempted to describe how the implementation of Differentiated Instruction on Junior High School students in the Teaching Practice of English for English Courses for Adult Learners (Teal). The result is lesson plans with identities, objectives, materials, activities, media, sources, and assessments were skillfully created by teacher-trainees. They used preparation, profile, and interest to differentiate instruction. The majority improved in their shared areas of weakness but had trouble coming up with learning goals.

The next paper was conducted by Rahmantika and Agung (2023). This study explores differentiated learning, an approach that considers the needs, interests, and skills of each student. It demonstrates how differentiated instruction provides outcomes that suit students' learning preferences. According to this research, differentiated learning benefits students by providing organic, student-centered activities and allowing teachers to work together with suitable methods and strategies. It also draws attention to the difficulties encountered in teaching.

The last relevant study examined if using a varied learning technique could improve elementary school pupils' performance in English classes. The study by Hidayati and Sujarwati (2023) showed that employing a differentiated learning technique enhances student outcomes. This approach, which comprises phases for the content, process, and result, is made to consider the unique characteristics of each student and make sure they achieve the desired learning goals. According to the study, to conduct differentiated instruction, students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles must be pre-assessed to allow for curricular adaptations.

Differentiated learning focuses on content, process, and product, addressing students' needs, interests, and learning styles. In general, previous research examines how differentiated learning was implemented in the classroom, and describes the challenges and obstacles experienced by teachers in applying it to students. The difference between this study and the previous relevant studies is that in addition to seeing how the aspect of Differentiated Learning is

implemented, the researcher also wanted to take a look at the Differentiated Learning Process in the classroom.

C. Conceptual Framework

The Merdeka curriculum launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture focuses on a differentiated learning model, where in this model, teachers are given the right to provide instruction or teaching that considers student needs such as learning styles, interests, and student readiness to learn. However, this study will examine how the design and implementation of a differentiated learning model in English classrooms.

Differentiated learning models can be applied to four learning components: process, product, content, and learning environment. Process differentiation refers to how teachers deliver materials and give instructions. Then, content differentiation refers to the materials and learning content used, while product differentiation will be seen from the diversity of final products or study results in the form of works or presentations from students. Finally, learning environment differentiation is the diversity of places where students learn that is tailored to students' interests and comfort.

The research under the title 'Implementation of Differentiated Learning in Teaching English for Grade Seven at MTsN 2 Medan' is raised from the problems that researcher have identified, which is, students cannot be equated with one another, the way they are treated must also be differentiated considering the variations in terms of abilities, learning styles, and student interests. At MTsN 2

Medan students have their own interests and learning styles. From different ways of learning, learning readiness, and interests, students become less focused and interested when following monotonous lessons due to unfilled student learning needs and a lack of student learning activities, especially for students with auditory learning styles. In overcoming these challenges, teachers at MTsN 2 Medan began to implement differentiated learning models for English subjects for class VII along with the use of Merdeka Curriculum books. For this reason, the researcher wants to know whether the differentiated learning that the teacher has implemented is following the differentiated learning theory.

The data collection method that the researcher will conduct is through observation of the teaching and learning process in the classroom, documentation of school data such as Lesson Plans, and interviews with English teachers. Furthermore, it will be analyzed using data analysis techniques: data condensation, data presentation, and data conclusion. The researcher explained in depth and described the differentiated learning activities implemented in class VII, MtsN 2 Medan. The results of data collection will be described through data presentation in the form of analysis and discussion of the formulation of existing problems and drawing conclusions and suggestions from the researcher.

Based on the explanation above, this study will describe the teacher's design and implementation of a differentiated learning model for seventh-grade students. The figure below (see figure 2.1) shows the conceptual framework of the implementation of differentiated learning by an English teacher at MTsN 2

Medan. The conceptual framework of this research can be seen in **Figure 2.1** below;

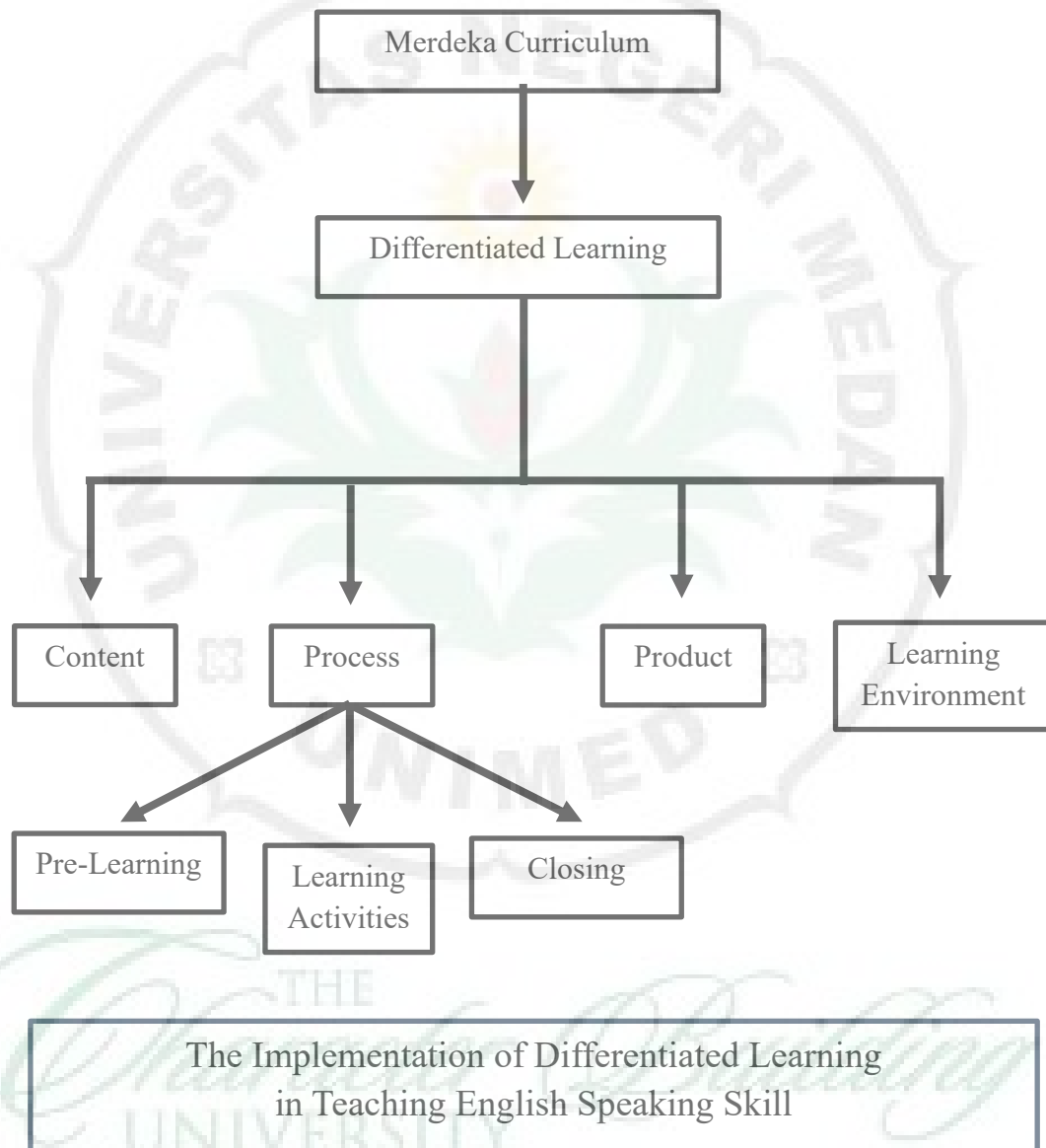


Figure 2. 2 Conceptual Framework