

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Education in Indonesia continues to develop time by time, and one of significant innovation is the development of the 2013 Curriculum which was later updated to become the Emancipated Curriculum. Emancipated Curriculum was introduced with the aim of giving teachers more freedom and flexibility in designing learning processes that suit students' needs and characteristics (Alfiany et al., 2024). This update is intended to increase students' creativity, understanding and skills so that they are better prepared to face the global challenges of the future.

The emancipation curriculum, also known as the Kurikulum Merdeka, represents a significant advancement education in Indonesia. This curriculum was specifically created to foster innovation, creativity, and relevance in the learning process. In addition, this curriculum offers considerable adaptability for teachers to create customized learning experiences that adapt to the specific requirements of students, classroom dynamics, and particular learning settings (Tricahyati & Zaim, 2023). The Kurikulum Merdeka seeks to provide a more effective and efficient learning experience by allowing instructors to customise their teaching tactics. A crucial element in implementing this curriculum is the incorporation of differentiated learning, which involves acknowledging the presence of diverse learning styles, interests, and abilities among students. This necessitates that teachers employ a variety of methods and respond to individual learning needs. In

addition, this strategy offers similar chances for all students, especially those who are at the beginning of their academic journey, to reach their full potential. By incorporating differentiated learning into the Kurikulum Merdeka, teachers may create a more engaging, dynamic, and inclusive educational environment that promotes the growth and development of each person.

Increasing the efficacy of learning in Indonesia requires implementing varied learning in the Kurikulum Merdeka. A learning strategy known as differentiated learning acknowledges that every student has unique learning requirements, learning preferences, and skill levels. Within the framework of an Kurikulum Merdeka, teachers has the flexibility to choose the pedagogical approach based on the attributes and requirements of students. as stated by Tomlinson (2000) in Komang Arie Suwastini et al., (2021:15) which states that by using this approach teachers can use various appropriate tools, strategies and methods to carry out learning that can be reached by all students in the class. Through this approach, students with superior or high abilities can be given more challenging assignments, while students whose abilities are still below average must receive special attention in order to get the opportunity to increase their existing potential and increase their creativity, skills and understanding.

Differentiated Learning is an attempt to adjust the learning process in the classroom, to meet the individual learning needs of each student. Teachers can use a variety of methods, materials, and assessments tailored to students' needs, so that each individual can develop optimally. Through differentiated learning, each student can be guided to achieve their maximum potential, while still paying

attention to the diversity of characteristics and abilities in the classroom (Awaliyah & Tiarina, 2023). Thus, the implementation of differentiated learning in the context of the Emancipated Curriculum not only supports the principle of inclusiveness, but also strengthens the curriculum's vision of creating relevant and meaningful learning experiences for every student.

However in its implementation, teachers often face obstacles such as difficulties in preparing and applying various methods, materials that are suitable and students' needs. In addition, limitations in managing resources and time also be a trigger inhibiting the implementation of differentiated learning effectively (Komang Arie Suwastini et al., 2021:15). Managing a class with diverse student needs requires the use of appropriate techniques and skills, which may often make it difficult for teachers to give individual help. Aside from that, analysing and evaluating the progress in students' skills is difficult, since instructors must utilise a variety of approaches and ways to analyse different results.

Differentiated learning uses multiple approaches in content, process and product. In a differentiated classroom, teachers was paid attention to 3 important elements in differentiated learning in the classroom namely: (1) Content (input) which is about what students learn, (2) Process (process) which is how students was got information and make ideas about what they learn, (3) Product (output), how students demonstrate what they have learned. The three elements above was modified and adapted based on the assessment conducted according to the students' ability, interest and learning profile. Teachers can also use this approach to ensure that each student receives a learning experience that is fit for their

characteristics and needs. As a result, differentiated learning allows students to optimally develop their potential. However, teachers need enough support, either in the form of training or other resources, to effectively use differentiated learning strategies in the areas of an independent curriculum.

One of the subjects that has experienced significant changes in the Emancipated Curriculum is English, specifically in teaching recount text. English teachers should use differentiated learning because it is an effective approach to addressing students' diverse needs throughout the learning process. Nevertheless, teachers have encountered obstacles while attempting to use this kind of instruction, owing to several circumstances. Because of the problem above, the researcher was interested to conduct pre-observation in analyzing difficulties that faced by English teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi in teaching Recount text for VIII students and had tried to find out the possible way to overcome with English teachers' difficulties in applying differentiated learning for students.

From the pre-observation research, it was found that SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi is one of the junior high schools in Indonesia that has adopted the Emancipated Curriculum. The implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum in English language learning at SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi demands a different approach. In SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi, the implementation of the independent curriculum has been implemented since 2022 while continuing to carry out emancipated by teachers. This is because the implementation of the independent curriculum has not been optimal, so teachers need to adapt to the new learning curriculum. Teachers said that differentiated learning is difficult to apply in the

field. However, they continue to face challenges in fully embracing it, leading to the need for adaptability in teaching methods. One of the teacher difficulties that researcher found after pre observation is the diversity of students ability in English. Their ability in English is a crucial point which affected to their readiness in learning recount text. Because of this case, the way teacher teach one student with another students should be different. Differentiated learning, in particular, has proven difficult to integrate seamlessly into classroom practices. To facilitate student engagement and comprehension, teachers have resorted to various strategies.

Teachers who do not fully comprehend the concept of Emancipated Curriculum may influence varying implementations among them. For instance, a study titled "Teacher Difficulties in Implementing Teaching Materials Using the Emancipated Curriculum at SMP Negeri 2 Pamona Barat" in 2024 stated that teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Pamona Barat face several challenges in applying the Emancipated Curriculum (Awaliyah & Tiarina, 2023). The primary challenge involves a lack of effective communication between teachers and the school, potentially impacting coordination and shared understanding of the curriculum.

Based on this problem, researcher was analyzed teachers' difficulties of differentiated learning process in teaching recount text grade VIII SMP N 1 Tebing Tinggi. This research is important because the suksesfull of implementing differentiated learning is from teacher it self. By knowing the difficulties in its implementation, researcher can provide solutions to reduce the difficulties.

The grand theory of this research is the theory of differentiated learning by Carl Tamlinson, he states that differentiated learning process is how teachers teach and how students come to understand new information. This theory states that every student has different learning styles, interests, and readiness levels, thus teachers must employ a variety of teaching approaches to meet each student's individual needs. The observed phenomenon is the difficulty experienced by teachers in implementing differentiated learning process. These teachers teach recount texts to 8th-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi.

The research gap in this study is the lack of information regarding the difficulties encountered by teachers in implementing differentiated learning in the context of teaching recount texts in Indonesia, especially at SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi. Previous studies have primarily focused on the general concept of differentiated learning and have not paid much attention to specific types of teaching materials, such as recount text. The findings of this study was help deepen understanding of difficuties faced by teachers and identify solutions to overcome these difficuties.

B. Problems of the Study

Based on the background above, the research problems are :

1. What are the types of teacher difficulties in the differentiated learning in the teaching recount text for VIII grade students in SMP N 1 Tebing Tinggi?

2. What strategies can be used to overcome teachers' difficulties in the Differentiated Learning process in teaching recount texts for 8th-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi?

C. Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems of the study above, the research objectives are :

1. To investigate the types of the teachers' difficulties of differentiated learning process in teaching recount text for VIII grade students in SMP N 1 Tebing Tinggi.
2. To analyze the strategies can be used to overcome teachers' difficulties in the Differentiated Learning process in teaching recount texts for 8th-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi.

D. Scope of the Study

In this study, the researcher focused on the teacher's difficulties in teaching differentiated learning process recount text for grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi. This research is expected to find out what difficulties teachers encounter when learning differentiated process recount text and also how to overcome with teachers' difficulties when teaching differentiated process recount text.

E. Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the findings of this research was provided the expected information useful and contributes both theoretically and practically, as follows:

1. Theoretically Benefits:

This research can provide theoretical contributions to the development of the Emancipated Curriculum, particularly in the context of applying differentiated learning processes.

2. Practically Benefits:

a. For Researcher: to increase insight into what are the difficulties in implementing differentiated learning so that in the future researchers can minimize the difficulties.

b. For Teachers: Teachers can gain a deeper understanding of the difficulties they may encounter in implementing the Emancipated Curriculum with a differentiated learning approach. This can help solve the difficulties in implementing the differentiated learning strategy.

c. For Future Researchers: This research can serve as a foundation for future researchers interested in exploring more about the implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum with a differentiated approach or related topics. The research findings can pave the way for further studies in this field. This can assist future researchers in developing improved methodological approaches.