

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Curriculum etymologically comes from the Latin word “currere,” meaning to run or hurry, described as a route or path that leads to a final destination. Based on Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (Sisdiknas), the curriculum is defined as a set of plans and arrangements regarding the objectives, content, and learning materials as well as the methods used as guidelines for organizing learning activities to achieve certain educational goals. Therefore, the curriculum is the path that enables students to achieve the set goals. Currently, the new curriculum used in Indonesia is the Merdeka Curriculum. The concept of Merdeka Curriculum is considered capable of meeting the needs of students and allowing teachers to identify each student and teach them according to their abilities.

Based on observations with the teacher regarding the student learning process in class on July 22, 2023, it can be concluded that the Merdeka curriculum used as a learning process for tenth grade students at SMA Negeri Tanjung has begun to be implemented by the school in the new academic year 2022. The curriculum used previously was the 2013 curriculum by implementing the 2013 curriculum which is considered rigid with only one correct way (Purba, 2021). Basically, the government has freed and given independence to schools to be able to implement the 2013 curriculum more flexibly according to the circumstances or conditions of their respective schools, even specifically according to the

conditions of the students in their education units in order to increase the potential, intelligence, and interests of students. However, in reality, education units have not fully developed a flexible curriculum according to the circumstances of the learners in their respective schools. It is known that in a school or even a class, there are various kinds of students who have different levels of learning readiness, interests, talents, and learning styles. Therefore, students need different teaching services so that they can understand competencies and learning materials according to their own characteristics and uniqueness so that they can develop optimally.

Preliminary data for this study were obtained through initial classroom observations and teacher interviews conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Pura. The researcher has conducted the interview between the researcher (R) and the teacher (IS), the following are the results of the interview:

R : What are the problems faced by the teachers in the school? Explain!

(Apa permasalahan yang dihadapi guru di sekolah? Jelaskan!)

IS : The curriculum used so far in schools focuses students to learn rigidly by having only one correct way to achieve learning objectives, while not all students have all abilities, meaning students have different abilities and skills. Students who have high abilities will understand the material, get maximum scores and can follow further learning, but for students who have low abilities will not understand the material and will be left behind in learning, so they will get scores below the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM), which is below 75. to meet the needs of different students, the application of different instructions in the Merdeka

curriculum can meet the needs and improve students' abilities in learning so that all students can get maximum scores.

(Kurikulum yang digunakan selama ini di sekolah memfokuskan siswa untuk belajar secara kaku dengan hanya memiliki satu cara yang benar untuk mencapai tujuan pembelajaran, sementara tidak semua siswa memiliki semua kemampuan, artinya siswa memiliki kemampuan dan keterampilan yang berbeda-beda. siswa yang memiliki kemampuan tinggi akan memahami materi, mendapatkan nilai yang maksimal dan dapat mengikuti pembelajaran lebih lanjut, namun bagi siswa yang memiliki kemampuan rendah tidak akan memahami materi dan akan tertinggal dalam pembelajaran, sehingga akan mendapatkan nilai di bawah Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM), yaitu di bawah 75. untuk memenuhi kebutuhan siswa yang berbeda, penerapan intruksi yang berbeda dalam kurikulum Merdeka dapat memenuhi kebutuhan dan meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam belajar sehingga semua siswa bisa mendapatkan nilai yang maksimal.)

R : What are the difficulties of teachers and students in differentiated instruction?

(Apa saja kesulitan guru dan siswa dalam pembelajaran berdiferensiasi?)

IS :Teachers have difficulty finding learning methods and strategies that suit students' needs and interests. Lack of facilities and infrastructure to fulfill differentiated instruction activities, for example teachers need learning activities outside of school, but conditions do not allow students to study outside of school or go on study tours for several reasons.

(Para guru mengalami kesulitan dalam menemukan metode dan strategi pembelajaran yang sesuai dengan kebutuhan dan minat siswa. Kurangnya fasilitas dan infrastruktur untuk memenuhi kegiatan pembelajaran berdiferensiasi, misalnya guru membutuhkan kegiatan pembelajaran di

luar sekolah, tetapi kondisi tidak memungkinkan siswa untuk belajar di luar sekolah atau mengikuti studi banding karena berbagai alasan.)

The data revealed that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka) has encouraged the use of differentiated instruction to address diverse student learning needs, particularly in teaching recount text writing. Students were found to have varying levels of readiness, interests, and learning profiles, requiring the teacher to implement flexible and adaptive teaching strategies. However, several challenges were identified, including difficulty in selecting appropriate learning strategies, limited facilities and resources, and the need for more time and effort in preparing differentiated instruction activities and assessments. To address these challenges, the teacher conducted diagnostic assessments, grouped students based on their abilities, and adjusted teaching strategies and materials to suit student needs. These findings suggest that while differentiated instruction has the potential to improve students' writing skills, its implementation still requires careful planning, adequate resources, and ongoing teacher development.

An educator Carol A. Tomlinson in 1995 has written a book titled "How to Differentiate Instruction in a Mixed Ability Classroom" is about a course that pays attention to individual differences in students, whose ideas came to be known as differentiated instruction. In differentiated instruction, the teacher prohibits materials by paying attention to the level of readiness, interest, and learning styles of students. This is also explained by Tomlinson (2001) in his book How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability, which says that differentiated

instruction is an attempt to adjust the learning process in the classroom to meet the individual learning needs of each learner. Teachers proactively plan various strategies to what students need to learn, how they will learn it, and how they will demonstrate what they have learned to increase the chances that each student will learn as much as possible and as efficiently as possible. Tomlinson (2001) categorized student learning needs based on three aspects: (1) student readiness to learn, (2) student interest, and (3) student learning profile.

Teachers must realize that students will perform better if assignments are based on their previous skills and understanding (readiness to learn). Then, if the task triggers students' curiosity or desire (interest) and if the task provides an opportunity for them to work in the way they like (learning profile). In all classes, teachers deal with at least three curricular elements: (1) content, input what students study; (2) process, how students walk about understanding ideas and information; and (3) product, output how students demonstrate what they have learned. The teacher can also modify the lesson content (what is learned), the process (how to learn it), the products or learning outcomes that are taught (what is produced after learning it), and the learning environment based on students.

Through the implementing of this learning process, the teacher can serve students according to their respective circumstances. Schools can apply differentiated instruction processes to give the freedom for the students in learning because the students are not required to be the same in all respects, but can express themselves according to their uniqueness. The use of differentiated instruction will involve the implementation of a flexible curriculum that only

believes in one way to achieve educational goals in schools. Therefore, this study will discuss differentiated instruction as an implementation of a flexible curriculum and get to know that differentiated instruction will be effectively used to teach writing.

Suprayogi (2022) regarding some of the advantages and disadvantages of performing differentiated instruction. Some of the advantages of differentiated instruction are being able to meet the needs of students, maximizing the quality of students learning if the learning that students receive is by their needs, and then obtaining maximum knowledge to increase their learning motivation. Students can connect lessons with the values what they have if learning is done based on their interest and mastered their self management skills to achieve a certain learning target. Students will improve their learning achievements when they receive instruction in accordance with their learning needs.

Some of the disadvantages of differentiated instruction are time consuming preparation because of the many processes to be carried out, such as learning tools and evaluation tools. Therefore, the teachers do not have enough preparation time to apply them. The teachers must be able to accompany and handle all students in the class so the teacher must have good management skills. Teachers are also required to organize themselves, identify steps and strategies, and create teaching materials for students based on student learning needs. Some of the problems faced by teachers at school are differentiated instruction activities feel unfamiliar to students due to the lack of socialization of differentiated instruction to them. So that students do not understand the implementation of differentiated instruction

activities, and each teacher conducts differentiated instruction activities with different processes so students must be able to adjust because the teachers use different learning strategies and methods.

This study focused on teaching writing recount text for the tenth grade at SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Pura. In English, four basic skills must be understood: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, in writing, learners must learn many things. In education, writing is also the most difficult thing for students to understand. In writing, students have to know about grammar, punctuation, the kind of text, etc. Students also need to understand how to design the dialogue, the text, and other things regarding the idea. The teacher must also find other ways to make students understand. Using text to develop students writing skills by making a sentence, students can make paragraphs more easily and simply. The teacher can make it step by step, from the easiest to the hardest.

Recount is an example of a story genre with a social function or purpose. Garot and Wighnell (1994:194) stated that the social function or purpose of informing or entertaining, means that recount text tells about something that has happened to retell events. The recount text begins by telling the reader who was involved, what happened, where the event took place, and when it happened. In a recount text, past experiences are reconstructed. Based on the explanation above, it can be stated that the recount text deals with a series of events that retell something that happened in the past. The language feature of the recount text used the simple past, as it indicates that the activity or situation began and ended at a particular time in the past.

There are several reasons why the researcher chooses recount text to analyze. First, because this text is one of the five text types (genres) studied at the high school level, English is officially included as one of the subject content in the formal learning curriculum in Indonesia. Second, because the text is not only studied at the high school level but also even up to the university level. Third, the recount text uses the simple past tense in the grammatical concepts that are introduced and studied. So that, through the recount text students can apply the simple past tense directly. Then the teacher can review students' mistakes in writing recount text so that students understand and correct these mistakes. Therefore, SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Pura applied differentiated instruction in teaching recount text for tenth grade students to improve their learning abilities towards writing skill according to their different needs in a more flexible curriculum to support learning activities.

Most previous research has concentrated on the application of differentiated instruction in reading, science, or mathematics, rather than in developing students' writing skills in English. In addition, there has been a limited number of studies that investigate in depth how differentiated instruction strategies are implemented in Grade 10 senior high school classes to address students' differences in learning readiness, interests, and learning styles, particularly in writing recount texts. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this research gap by providing a clear description of the implementation of differentiated instruction in teaching writing recount texts and by examining teacher and students' responses toward the use of such strategies.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the description of the background of the study stated above, the problem of the study is formulated as follows:

1. How is differentiated instruction implemented in teaching writing recount text for tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Pura?
2. What are the teacher's difficulties in implementing differentiated instruction in teaching writing recount texts for tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Pura?

C. The Objective of the Study

Based on the problem of study above, the objectives of the study is:

1. To describe differentiated instruction implemented in teaching writing recount text for tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Pura.
2. To analyze teacher's difficulties in implementing differentiated instruction in teaching writing recount texts for tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Pura.

D. The Scope of the Study

To achieve the research's expected goal, this study limits the problem to the following terms: This research will be conducted with tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Pura. This research will focus on analyzing the implementation and teacher's difficulties of differentiated instruction in teaching writing recount text.

E. The Significances of the Study

The researcher hopes that this study will contribute to the following:

- 1) Theoretically, this research can help obtain prior information and theories for students writing activities.
- 2) Practically, the findings are useful for:

- a. For the teacher

The benefit of the research is that it proves that differentiated instruction is effective in teaching writing so that students can improve their writing ability optimally. This can motivate teachers to find new methods or techniques that are appropriate for teaching writing. It also encourages teachers to develop creativity to improve the teaching-learning process.

- b. For the students

The implementation of differentiated instruction in the teaching and learning process will surely attract students' attention to study, improve their writing skills, and solve their problems in writing.