

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

An essential component of social progress is education. Education is becoming increasingly significant in today's globalized world and is filled with information because it helps develop competent and prepared individuals to compete on a worldwide scale. The most significant must recognize how important it is to design successful and meaningful learning experiences in the context of English language teaching (ELT). Enhancing the standard of English language instruction in Indonesia is imperative due to the language's importance in various disciplines, such as global communication, employment, and education.

The Indonesian government launched the Independent Curriculum in 2020 as one of its initiatives, enabling students to follow their passions and skills and integrate technology into their education. The term "curriculum" refers to a collection of ideas and structures that include goals, subject matter, instructional materials, and organizational strategies for arranging learning activities to best meet predetermined learning objectives. Law No. 20 of 2003 Regarding the Academic System National regulates this definition.

The Independent Curriculum is the most recent; it was created in 2022 by the Indonesian Ministry of Culture, Education, Research, and

Technological Development (*Kemendikbudristek*) (Jayanti et al., 2023). Independent Curriculum is a curriculum approach where students are free to select their learning, which is carried out through extracurricular and extracurricular learning. This Independent Curriculum focuses on content that is suitable and useful for students (Novita et al., 2023).

Hidayati and Sujarwati (2023) highlighted that differentiated learning is nothing new in education; instead, it has grown more sophisticated since the declaration of independent learning. Differentiation in instruction is anticipated to help pupils reach their full potential. Through the differentiation learning strategy, students are given the opportunity to learn in their own way and style, resulting in successful learning. Teachers must be able to grow personally through autonomous learning to recognize and support students' independent learning.

Differentiated learning techniques are a beneficial approach for this situation. Differentiated learning and instruction that supports students go hand in hand with the Independent Curriculum. Learning that meets the needs of each student is known as differentiated learning. Teachers support their students based on their individual needs because each student is different, and they are not all treated the same way during the learning process. Teachers must prepare lessons with unique treatments and decisions for each student when implementing differentiated learning. This study aims to investigate innovative approaches to gaining proficiency in English. Even though differentiated

learning has gained traction in the educational community, there is still a dearth of research defining this approach within the Independent Curriculum, particularly in English language instruction.

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۚ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا

أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

Verse 269 of Al-Baqarah emphasizes the value of knowledge and wisdom, which can be attained by utilizing efficient teaching and learning techniques like differentiated instruction.

The purpose of this study is to learn more about students' English language learning satisfaction and progress when utilizing the differentiated learning approach within the framework of the Independent Curriculum. The independent curriculum allows for adapting different learning materials and methods to suit student characteristics. In the future, teaching strategies will be based on each student's interests. As a result, there will not be any better or worse classes because students will be learning through approaches that best fit their skills and interests.

As stated by Andriani (2023), *Implementing Differentiated Instruction In Social Studies Teaching at a Junior High School In Banyuwangi*. In order to improve student learning in diverse classrooms, this research aims to demonstrate how differentiated teaching can be

applied in three main areas: content, process, and learning outcomes. The research results demonstrate that differentiated teaching can be applied well in these fields while offering a solution for dealing with classes with students whose abilities are different.

As the global community becomes more diverse with students from different cultural, economic, racial, ethnic, and gender backgrounds, this research also emphasizes that each student can be actively involved in their unique way despite differences in ability. However, effective differentiation requires careful consideration of three crucial characteristics: readiness, interest, and student learning profiles. These characteristics guide teachers in focusing on content, processes, and learning products to match individual student needs.

In this research, the researchers encountered limitations, so they provided suggestions for further research, focusing on investigating the effectiveness of differentiated instruction by employing controlled participant selection and assessing the attitudes and knowledge of teachers. The objective is to gain comprehensive results and an in-depth understanding of the influence on particular students. Further investigation into this topic might provide more insights into how teachers and students can maximize the advantages of differentiated instruction, including preparation and satisfaction. Understanding how important it is to fill these gaps, the researcher intends to conduct

additional research in this study on student progress and satisfaction with differentiated instruction in ELT within an independent curriculum.

In an attempt to raise the standard of English instruction in Indonesia, this research will give educators, teachers, and policymakers essential insights into the whole range of applications of differentiated learning in English language teaching under the independent curriculum. Furthermore, The results of this study could significantly advance our understanding of the field, which is concerned with creating more effective and satisfying English language learning strategies for application in education.

B. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation of the title, the researcher explains the technical terms such as below:

1. Students Progress

The term "student progress" describes the measurable and accessible advancements students make in their studies within a particular educational setting. It includes gaining knowledge, mastering learning objectives, and developing various skills. Assessments, evaluations, and performance indicators can be used to determine progress and show how learners evolved. Furthermore, student progress recognizes the comprehensive approach to education and the significance of attending to learners' various needs and aspirations by encompassing both academic progress and socio-emotional development. In this research, student

progress refers to the growth or advancement made by students in their proficiency with the English language. A differentiated learning approach, which emphasizes instruction specific to each student's needs, interests, and learning style, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic, helps to facilitate this progress.

2. Students satisfaction

Student satisfaction refers to students' positive and contented feelings about their educational experiences, including teaching, curriculum, learning environment, and support services. It involves evaluating various aspects of the learning process, such as teacher efficiency, material relevance, instruction clarity, student participation opportunities, and meeting individual needs. It also involves assessing students' enthusiasm and drive to engage in diverse learning activities. It also involves evaluating their sense of value, support, and respect in their classrooms and their perception of the curriculum's relevance to their academic and personal goals. This research aims to determine how satisfied students are with differentiated instruction and whether they believe it improves their comprehension of the subject matter in English classes.

3. Differentiated Learning in ELT

Within the English Language Teaching (ELT) program framework, differentiated learning in ELT refers to an instructional strategy designed to satisfy individual students' various needs, learning preferences, interests, and skill levels. It includes systematic modification and

customization of instructional techniques, resources, and tasks to consider students' diverse backgrounds, skill levels, and learning preferences. Educators utilize various instructional strategies, resources, and assessment approaches in differentiated learning. This learning may mean offering students access to various learning resources at a range of difficulty, allowing for adaptable organizing variations, combining different teaching modalities (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic), and also giving them opportunities for freedom of choice in their assignments. In this research, differentiated learning accommodates students' visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles. The study aims to determine whether teaching strategies used in the classroom successfully raise students' interest in learning English. Teaching strategies will, therefore, be customized to each student's interests in future learning environments, offering that no class is considered better or worse than another. This method allows students to learn in ways that suit their skills and interests.

4. Independent Curriculum

The Merdeka Curriculum offers a variety of other educational possibilities with optimal content to give students many chances to enhance their conceptual understanding and solidify their skills. Teachers can select from various instructional resources to customize instruction to each student's interests and learning needs. With the freedom provided by the independent curriculum, teachers can design high-quality lessons that fit the needs of their students and the classroom environment. In this

research, the independent curriculum allows adjustments to learning materials and methods to suit student characteristics.

C. Research Questions

1. What are the factors of differentiated learning within an independent curriculum contribute to students' progress and satisfaction with ELT?
2. What are the challenges discovered by teachers in putting differentiated learning strategies in an Independent Curriculum for ELT?

D. Objectives of Study

1. To identify the factors that contribute to students' progress and satisfaction with differentiated learning approaches in ELT in the independent curriculum
2. To examine the challenges discovered by teachers when putting differentiated learning strategies into practice within the context of the Independent English curriculum.

E. Significance of Study

1. For Teachers: Within an independent curriculum, the research can offer knowledge about how differentiated instruction can be used to satisfy the different needs of ELT students.
2. For Students: Through individualized and interesting learning experiences that provide to each student's needs and interests, the research can enhance students' progress and satisfaction with learning ELT within an independent curriculum.