

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Education is one of the most important aspects of human life. Humans need education to increase knowledge, skills, and shape individual personality. In addition, education also has a huge impact on social life because education can create intelligent, forward-thinking, and inclusive human beings.

Education certainly has goals that must be achieved. In this case, the curriculum is needed to achieve these educational goals because curriculum and education are closely related. The curriculum is essential to the learning process since it guides the path of study to meet learning objectives (Agustiana & Asshidiqi, 2021). The curriculum sets out the educational process in a way that makes it more focused.

One of the most important components in achieving educational goals is curriculum. The curriculum is a plan regarding the objectives, content, materials in learning. The curriculum serves as a roadmap for carrying out teaching and learning activities in order to meet learning objectives (Martin & Simanjorang, 2022). So, the curriculum can also be interpreted as a design or plan made to provide direction and become a guide in the educational process, content of the lesson, learning

methods, as well as assessment.

The curriculum aims to improve the quality of human resources, therefore the curriculum is something that must be improved (Muthoharoh, 2023). The curriculum has to be updated to reflect the conditions that are occurring since times are changing and so are situations and things that happen.

The latest curriculum that is widely used recently is the independent curriculum. With the implementation of independent curriculum, learning is expected to be student-centered, giving students the freedom to innovate, and also appreciating the uniqueness of each individual student (Barlian et al., 2023).

An educator since 1995, Carol A. Tomlinson shares his thoughts on individual differences in teaching in his book *“How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability Classrooms”*. Tomlinson said that the foundation of differentiated instruction is the notion that engaging, interesting, and relevant teachings are the ones that help students learn the most. It follows that not every student will always find the same method of instruction to be equally fascinating, pertinent, and engaging. Differentiated learning also acknowledges that not every student starts a particular study with the same base of knowledge and that succeeding information, skills, and understanding must build on earlier knowledge, skills, and understanding (Tomlinson, 2017).

So, differentiated learning is the effort made by educators to modify lesson plans in the classroom to meet the requirements of students in terms of their learning preferences, learning profiles, learning styles, and openness to receiving new knowledge.

Islam recognizes that everyone has different abilities and talents, as Allah has stated in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Isra' verse 84:

قُلْ كُلٌّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَىٰ شَاكِلَتِهِ ۖ فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ سَبِيلًا

This verse theologically acknowledges that people learn and develop in different ways according to their unique “molds” or profiles. The teacher’s role in differentiated learning strategies is to identify these students’ interests and learning styles so that the teaching methods used are precisely tailored to their needs.

Differentiated learning is not a new concept in education, but many teachers have yet to optimize it and incorporate it into their learning strategies. Currently, many teachers still use conventional methods, which are teaching methods that are still teacher-centered rather than student-centered learning. The teacher still acts as the source of learning and the students only focus on the material that the teacher’s provide whereas in one class there are various characters and interests of the students. The process of learning runs monotonously because it only uses the same method from time to time. Many teachers are not creative in producing educational materials and engaging classroom environments. Furthermore,

teachers solely evaluate cognitive components of the assessment procedure. (Barlian et al., 2023)

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that many teachers are still not fully implementing differentiated learning. One of the reasons is the different perceptions of differentiated learning and teachers' lack of understanding about differentiated learning. This research was conducted to find out what learning strategies and methods are used by high school English teacher in Kapuas to implement differentiated learning strategies, and how high school English teacher in Kapuas perceives differentiated learning strategies.

B. Definition of Key Terms

Several words connected to this research are defined to prevent misunderstandings.

1. Differentiated learning means learning that pays more attention to the different characters and interests of each student in a class. In this research, differentiated learning refers to an approach used by an English teacher in SMAN 2 Kapuas
2. Strategies means method, media, material, and assessment that used to implement differentiated learning. In this research, strategies refers to the specific teaching and learning approaches used by an English teacher in SMAN 2 Kapuas to teach.

3. ELT refers to English Language Teaching. In the context of this research, ELT specifically refer to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign or second language.
4. Independent curriculum (*Kurikulum merdeka*) means the latest national curriculum in use which focuses on student-centered learning. In this research, independent curriculum refer to a curriculum that currently being implemented by SMAN 2 Kapuas in the leaning process.

C. Research Questions

The main questions for this research are:

1. How is the perception of English teacher in senior high school in Kapuas towards differentiated learning strategies implementation?
2. What are strategies that used by the High School English teacher in Kapuas to implement differentiated learning strategies?

D. Objectives of Study

Considering the research questions, this study intends to investigate:

1. To find the perception of the English teacher in senior high school in Kapuas towards differentiated learning strategies implementation.
2. To find strategies that used by the High School English teacher in Kapuas to implement differentiated learning strategies.

E. Significance of Study

The research benefits English teachers in senior high schools that implement differentiated learning, along with researchers. Considering that differentiated learning has only recently been implemented by a few schools, especially schools in Kapuas, and there are still many teachers who have not been precise in implementing it. This study will be beneficial in understanding how differentiated learning is implemented and what tactics are employed.

It is expected that other researchers looking into the application of differentiated learning would utilize this study as a reference. The findings of this study will surely be beneficial to all the readers.