

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

English is an important language to be mastered (Ilyosovna, 2020; Oktaviani & Fauzan, 2017). As an international language that has been used worldwide, nowadays, billions of people from different countries use English to communicate with each other (Uddiniyah & Silfia, 2019). Teaching English to Senior High School students will provide them with a view of various progress that happens in the world (Nishanthi, 2018). For example, the development of technology, science, and culture (Yulfi & Aalayina, 2021). Since many of the latest scientific discoveries are documented in English, and there are large numbers of books that are written in English (Tillayeva, 2020), learning English enables students to access broader sources of information. Previous research shows the significance of learning English. Habok and Magyar (2018) studied the effect of language learning strategies on proficiency, attitudes, and school achievement. Sutarto et al. (2020) further indicate that proposed ways of teaching used by teachers have a significant effect on students' learning outcomes. Implementing various ways of teaching English has a positive impact on the students' achievement in learning English.

An English language class is made up of students who are all diverse, they come from various backgrounds and cultures that vary in their interests, readiness, needs, and development (de Graaf et al., 2019). It is not new to believe that pupils learn in a variety of ways (Magableh & Abdullah, 2020). An English class has accelerated learners, struggling ones, the talented, the disabled, the auditory, the visual, the reading/writing, and the kinesthetic learners. Students from multiple backgrounds try to learn the languages and the behavior. The ones with advanced learning abilities sit next to the students who might struggle using the language. That diversity of students' characteristics demands teaching strategies that can cater to the various mixability in a classroom (Moosa & Shareefa, 2019). Therefore, the researchers and policy-makers need teachers to embrace diversity and adapt their instruction to the diverse learning process based on the needs of students in their class (UNESCO, 2017). However, a significant number of teachers adopt one-size-fits-all teaching instruction for all students (Alsubaie, 2020).

Differentiated instruction is one of the teaching approaches that enable students to learn in various ways based on their valuable individual differences (Bondie et al., 2019; Tanjung & Ashadi, 2019). Tomlinson (2017) defines differentiated instruction as the adaptation of curriculum components in the parts of content, process, and product refers to the needs of students according to their interest, readiness, and learning profiles. The process can be done by the teachers in their classes whenever they want, during the individual learners, small groups, or whole course. Moreover, Endal et al. (2013) define differentiated instruction as a process that happens in the teaching and learning

activity for students of differing characteristics in the same class. The researchers further explain that differentiation implies the aims of schools that should maximize the capabilities of each student. Differentiated instruction is a bridge to meet each of the students' diversity in order to increase their learning (Benjamin & Aguilar, 2020). The usefulness of differentiated instruction in enhancing EFL Secondary School Students' reading comprehension skills has been studied by Hussein and Saleh (2021), and the other research that was conducted by Alsalmi et al. (2021) examined the effect of implementing differentiated instruction on students' performance in an intermediate school course and their attitudes toward it.

The learning process during the pandemic of Covid-19, which was conducted in a virtual classroom, is different from the learning process, which is usually done in the classroom. When the research was conducted, the Ministry of Education and Culture implemented a learning policy known as learning from home to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Learning from home enables students to conduct a distance learning system using online learning (Efriana, 2021). Unfortunately, the contribution of online learning causes students to be less enthusiastic about participating, especially when the teachers adopt one-size-fits-all teaching instruction for all students. Implementing differentiated instruction is considered essential, as it has been discussed in module 2.1 of the motivator teacher program (Faiz et al., 2022). It is a teacher training program which is established by the Ministry of Education and Culture to improve teachers' performance in order to edify education in Indonesia by

creating student-centered learning and leading to a better education ecosystem (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi).

In *Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 1 Ubud*, an English teacher who teaches tenth-grade students has implemented differentiated instruction in teaching through online learning. Primarily, it was observed based on the characteristics of differentiated instruction which distinguished it from traditional teaching, in order to seek to know how differentiated instruction is implemented in the classroom generally. The implementation of differentiated instruction in teaching English to students with autism spectrum disorder has been studied in previous research by Sandra and Kurniawati (2020). The study that was conducted by Kotob and Arnouss (2019) investigated the effect of differentiated instruction on learners' achievement in kindergarten, and the research that was conducted by Ismail (2019) found the impact of differentiated instruction on writing process of ESL learners.

The novelty of this research lies in the use of online learning in implementing differentiated instruction in the teaching-learning activity. An English teacher in *Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 1 Ubud* used various ways of teaching the students during distance learning. The teacher was aware of her student's different needs and considered it in designing the way how she taught students to maximize their potential. The study focused on describing the implementation of differentiated instruction in teaching English during the Covid-19 pandemic in a specific context qualitatively.

1.2 Problem Identification

During the social distance and the school's closure, the government has implemented a learning policy, which is known as learning from home. Even though it allows the teaching and learning process to be conducted, yet the interaction between teachers and students that is usually done face to face or physical learning in the classroom cannot be done. Both pupils and educators barely meet virtually when the educator schedules synchronous learning through video conference. Therefore, there is a lack of proper communication between students and teachers, especially when students' online interactions are text-based lectures with a variety of writing and reading tasks (Alawamleh et al., 2022; Mirza et al., 2021). The learning process, which was only conducted through online learning, brought problems related to teaching and learning English. Students suppose the online classes to lack quality (Nambiar, 2020). They become lack of motivation, are more stressed, and quickly get bored or distracted during online learning. Students found teacher did not give explanations about the material and only provided students with the assignment that required only one day to submit, which caused them to get anxious (Prayudha, 2021). Furthermore, students complained about the strategies used by the teacher (Yuzulia, 2021). Some teacher only shares the materials on WhatsApp, which makes them bored and not interested to read it. Researchers investigate that learning material, tasks, level of difficulty, and monotony in the classroom, among others, trigger boredom (Fisher, 1993; Miklaus & Vodanovich, 1993; Titz, 2001; Kanevsky & Keighley, 2003, Lohrmann, 2008, as cited in Dumancic, 2018). The researchers believe that boredom will occur if

the learning material does not adjust to the students' abilities and characteristics. Besides, today's classrooms are becoming more academically and culturally diverse. Students differ in terms of culture, interest, abilities, perspectives, and exceptionalities that vary their needs in learning (Onyishi, 2022). When a teacher presents their instruction without taking into account students' differences, their learning may degrade since the learning activities that were designed may work for some students and may not work for others (Kado et al., 2022). Theoretically, implementing differentiated instruction has a positive effect on the students' achievement in learning English. Empirically, differentiated instruction is an approach to teaching that enable students to learn in various ways based on their valuable individual differences (Sandra & Kurniawati, 2020; Tanjung & Ashadi, 2019).

1.3 Research Scope

The proposed research was limited to the implementations of differentiated instruction in teaching biography text during the pandemic of Covid-19 in Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 1 Ubud, especially for class P BB 1 tenth-grade students in the school academic year 2021-2022. It was considering the fact that the teacher in Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 1 Ubud, who had been implementing differentiated instruction, taught a biography text for tenth-grade students in class P BB 1. The online learning platform that was used for learning from home during the pandemic of Covid-19 was restricted to Zoom Video Conference and the eLearning platform of the school, namely eLearning SMA Negeri 1 Ubud.

1.4 Research Questions

Related to the background of this study, the research questions are:

1. How did the teacher implement differentiated instruction in teaching biography text during the pandemic of Covid-19 at Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 1 Ubud?
2. What challenges were encountered by the teacher in implementing differentiated instruction in teaching biography text during the pandemic of Covid-19 at Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 1 Ubud?

1.5 Research Objectives

Related to the research questions of this study, the research objectives are:

1. To analyze how the teacher implemented differentiated instruction in teaching biography text during the pandemic of Covid-19 at Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 1 Ubud.
2. To investigate the challenges that were encountered by the teacher in implementing differentiated instruction in teaching biography text during the pandemic of Covid-19 at Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 1 Ubud.

1.6 Research Significance

Theoretically, the implementation of differentiated instruction has a significant role in catering to students' diverse needs in teaching English in a mix-ability classroom (Said & Ehsan, 2019). It provides the teacher with an

opportunity to bring all students together despite each individual uniqueness and give equal learning opportunities to all students (Kamarulzaman et al., 2021).

Practically, the significances of the research are 1) For teachers, the research provides knowledge on how to implement differentiated instruction, especially in an online class. Through reading the research, the teacher may recognize the importance of teaching students based on their diverse needs and start to see their students as an individual who is unique. Besides, the result of the research can also be used as a consideration in implementing differentiated instruction, especially for English as a Foreign language teacher who teaches biography text. 2) For parents, the study may lead them to know their children's potential better and recognize that each child has their own uniqueness. Thus, it prevents parents from comparing their children with others when their children do not show great achievement in one of many subjects that they learn in school. Otherwise, parents take a role in giving support to their children to maximize their potential in learning. Besides, when teachers come up with other avenues for their children to learn, which may be different from some other classmates, parents understand that it is done due to catering to the child's individual needs. 3) For the researcher, the study encourages the researcher to dig deeper into knowledge and understanding related to differentiated instruction as an approach to teaching. By observing the implementation of differentiated instruction when being applied during the pandemic of covid-19, the researcher deeply gains an overview of how differentiated instruction is implemented in online learning. That experience is beneficial for the researcher as a consideration when implementing differentiated instruction in the future. 4) For the other researcher, the research

has advantages in qualitatively describing the implementation of differentiated instruction. The study can be used by the other researcher as a reference for exploring research about the implementations of differentiated instruction in teaching biography text in Sekolah Menengah Atas during the pandemic of Covid-19.

