

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Background

Planning an assessment is a crucial stage in the young learners' classroom. This research was focused on 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students of elementary school aged between 10 and 11 years old, which was categorized as young learners (Slattery and Willis, 2001). Teachers are required to make appropriate assessments that consider each individual's learning to ensure the assessment is realistic and achievable. Assessment for young language learners must pay attention to the student's side based on their needs and characteristics (Andhini, 2019). However, the preliminary interview shows that the assessment used for grade 5 is only a general assessment without specific instruments and does not depend on the newest curriculum implemented. The assessment instrument is only used for the 6th-grade students at the end of the semester. Additionally, the currently implemented curriculum, namely the Emancipated curriculum, underlines differentiated learning and assessment.

Presently, a new curriculum, known as the Emancipated Curriculum, has been implemented in Indonesia. The Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia stated Merdeka/Emancipated Curriculum is designed as the government's effort to restore education and save from learning loss (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Based on press release number 58 on the fifteenth episode, entitled “Emancipated Curriculum and Emancipated Teaching Platform,”

it is concluded that the Emancipated Curriculum seeks to create a more adaptable and student-centered educational environment in Indonesia (Kemdikbud RI, 2022). There are 3 key characteristics of an emancipated curriculum: Project-based learning with the application of the Pancasila student profile, emphasis on literacy and numeracy, and teachers' implemented differentiated learning according to each student's abilities (Digna & Widyasari, 2023). This aligns with the Emancipated Curriculum's objective and principles, focusing on students' needs and abilities. In the Emancipated Curriculum, Besides the learning process, the implementation of this curriculum changed in terms of the assessment as well. Based on the preliminary interview, the teachers stated there are significant changes in terms of assessment in the Emancipated Curriculum with the previous curriculum, namely the 2013 curriculum, this proves that curriculum changes affect not only the learning process but as well as the assessment process.

There are three distinct types of assessment used to assess students in the Emancipated Curriculum, there are diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment (Astari et al., 2023). Diagnostic assessment is one of the specific components in the emancipated curriculum, which aims to identify student characteristics, readiness, and learning styles, making it easier to design learning with diverse student conditions (Aringka, 2023). Based on the preliminary interview, the teacher stated that diagnostic assessment is the most different assessment and is one of the main differences compared to the previous curriculum assessment. There were no diagnostics in the previous curriculum because every student was considered the same, and the teacher ignored whether all students could understand the learning. Meanwhile, in the Emancipated Curriculum, which

highlights differentiated learning, diagnostics are necessary to find out the differences in student interests and learning styles so that appropriate learning can be prepared for the diversity of the students (Aringka, 2023). After a diagnostic assessment is carried out at the beginning of learning, an assessment that aims to determine how students have improved during learning is conducted, namely formative assessment. Furthermore, at the end of the learning period, a summative assessment is carried out, for example, an end-of-semester assessment, to determine whether students have achieved the learning objectives (Astari et al., 2023). These assessments are based on the principles of the emancipated curriculum.

In implementing the emancipated curriculum, differentiated learning is emphasized (Nurani et al., 2022). Differentiated means have various methods of learning and various assessment steps, and they need analysis to ensure the academic goals are based on the differences between students (Ortega et al., 2018). However, based on the preliminary interview with the teacher, it was found that differentiated learning is not implemented optimally because the curriculum is implemented gradually, and grade 5 recently implemented the curriculum. Therefore, it is still in the adjustment process. In the Emancipated Curriculum, there are four differentiated components, including content, process, product, and learning environment (Tomlinson and Moon, 2013). These three things need to be differentiated when implementing an Emancipated Curriculum. Based on the preliminary interview, the teachers have limitations in differentiating between those three components. It takes a lot of time to prepare different learning content or media. Additionally, the differentiation of these components is only in the initial planning and is not yet optimal. In differentiated learning, teachers consider

students' readiness, interests, and learning styles when teaching the materials (Tomlinson and Moon, 2013).

Each student has different characteristics that influence how they learn; this phenomenon is called learning style. According to Asadipiran (2016), the phrase "learning styles" refers to how different students use one or more senses to understand or remember. Fleming (2001) more deeply characterizes learning style as personal traits and preferred methods of gathering, arranging, and processing information. In this research, the researcher adopted 4 learning styles according to Fleming (2001), often referred to as V-A-R-K; there are visual, aural/auditory, read/write, and kinaesthetic learning styles.

Some previous studies have examined the assessment in emancipated curriculum. This study focuses on analyzing the use of assessment based on the Emancipated Curriculum in senior high school. The results of the findings show that teachers have implemented the three types of assessments based on the curriculum but teachers still faced several challenges including the lack of training for teachers in implementing more effective assessments based on the curriculum and the limited learning resources both in terms of media and materials (Astari et al., 2023). Meanwhile, in the emancipated curriculum, learning media and materials are included in the content, which is one of the components that the teacher needs to differentiate (Tomlinson and Moon, 2013). Another related study also shows that most do not have a good understanding of assessment based on the curriculum, this is also one of the challenges of teachers, including the lack of training on assessment and limited resources (Shadri et al., 2023). Another study analyzed the content of a textbook used as a learning medium but only focused on the formative assessment

in the textbook, the application of formative assessment in the textbook that being analyzed is still needs to be further identified to determine whether it is used by teachers optimally (Nooralam & Sakhiyya, 2022).

However, from these previous researches, it was found that no specific study on assessment for elementary school students, specifically grade 5. And, no study has developed differentiated learning media that included assessment instruments that can be used for young learners in English language learning that can be applied optimally to assess students' different learning styles. It is essential to fill this gap because, in implementing an Emancipated Curriculum, differentiated assessment is required to assess students' different learning styles and provide an optimal implementation based on an Emancipated Curriculum. The conclusion of the preliminary interview that has been conducted shows: a) The gradual implementation of the curriculum makes the teachers need a deeper understanding of the curriculum because still in the adjustment process, b) The teacher has difficulty in differentiating the contents and preparing different learning media, materials, and activities for the differentiated learning, c) The teacher lack of understanding on how to prepare appropriate assessment instruments for 5th-grade students and only used general assessment, d) The teacher has not done the diagnostic assessment based on students' learning styles so, they don't pay attention to the diverse learning style of the students, e) Teachers' assessment processes usually only describe the final results of students without specifically focusing on the student's learning styles. These problems have an impact on the learning process because the learning process was not adapted to the student's learning style,

therefore, the students did not accomplish the learning process optimally specifically in English learning.

Due to these issues, this study aims to help teachers with problems in assessing students based on their different learning styles, especially in the 5th grade of elementary school, by developing differentiated assessments aimed at elementary school students, especially in English learning. This study used the ADDE development model to develop the product in four main stages: analysis, design, development, and evaluation, as described by Richey and Klein (2007). In addition, the differentiated assessment adjusted to the 4 main learning styles from Fleming's (2001) theory: Visual, Aural/Auditory, Read/Writing, and Kinaesthetic. The information needed to develop the differentiated assessment was obtained from the teachers and the students who were the subjects of this research, including regarding the learning process, the assessment process, and the challenges of the teaching and assessing process. Through this study, the product was created to help the teachers assess students in primary school, especially 5th-grade students, in English learning.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

Based on the research background explained, the problem is identified:

1. The implementation of the emancipated curriculum was not evenly distributed at every grade level, which affected the use of differentiated learning and assessments.
2. The teachers found it difficult to find an appropriate assessment instrument specifically for grade 5 and still used only general assessments.

3. The teachers have not paid attention to the student's learning styles in creating assessments.
4. Teachers' assessment processes usually only describe students' final results without specifically focusing on their learning styles.
5. The teachers have limitations in preparing the learning activities, learning media, and materials that are differentiated based on the student's needs, specifically students' learning styles.

### **1.3 Problem Limitation**

This research is limited to the design and development of differentiated assessment instruments in Emancipated Curriculum without the implementation stage, the teachers' responses about the product that has been developed based on learning methods to assess 5th-grade elementary school students, which can be used in English language learning. The differentiated assessment instrument was developed and adapted to the 4 main learning styles of the students: visual, auditory/aural, read/write, and kinaesthetic.

### **1.4 Research Question**

Based on the research background and the problem identification, several research questions can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the needs of students and teachers for developing differentiated assessments based on learning styles, especially for English language subjects in the Emancipated curriculum for assessing 5th-grade elementary school students?

2. How to develop differentiated assessment in English language subjects in the Emancipated curriculum based on learning styles for assessing 5th-grade elementary school students?
3. How is the quality of developing differentiated assessment in the emancipated curriculum based on learning styles for assessing 5th-grade elementary school students?

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The research objectives of this study are:

1. To find out the needs of students and teachers used in developing differentiated assessment instruments in the Emancipated Curriculum based on their learning styles to assess 5th-grade elementary school students.
2. To develop differentiated assessment instruments in the Emancipated Curriculum based on their learning styles to assess 5th-grade elementary school students.
3. To find out the quality of the differentiated assessment instruments developed in the Emancipated Curriculum based on their learning styles for assessing 5th-grade elementary school students.

#### **1.5 Research Significant**

There are two research significances of this study:

1. Theoretical Significance

Through this research, it is expected that it can become a guide for researchers with similar research topics, which is about developing an assessment for young



learners, specifically developing a differentiated assessment for elementary school students. Additionally, this research is expected to positively contribute to progress in the field of science, especially in developing differentiated assessments that used to assess students.

## 2. Practical Significance

### a. For students:

Students are expected to have a better and more enjoyable English learning experience in an Emancipated curriculum by using differentiated assessments.

### b. For teachers:

Teachers are expected to be able to gain more knowledge about differentiated assessment and be able to develop and use differentiated assessment in an Emancipated curriculum.

### c. For other researchers:

This study is expected to be a reference for other researchers who did related research on developing differentiated assessments for elementary school student

