

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

The English assessment is an evaluation process designed to measure students' proficiency in the English language. Assessment in language learning varies for each skill and is tailored to measure listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities (Darwin et al., 2023). Assessment is a critical process that involves collecting data to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in learning to achieve learning objectives. It is a continuous procedure employed to evaluate a student's learning progress. An assessment is a method to measure an individual's skills, knowledge, and accomplishments. Additionally, it is a continuous process that consistently evaluates an individual's ability, competence, and performance (Brown, 2004).

In consideration of students' age, young learners possess limited capabilities and life experiences. Fourth-grade primary school students are considered to be young learners. Young learners are divided into two groups: children under the age of seven are considered very young learners, while those aged 7-12 are referred to as young learners (Slattery & Willis, 2001). It is crucial to tailor the assessments provided to young learners to align with students' characteristics and learning experiences. Teachers need to understand students' personalities to gauge their success in learning, and young learners are naturally inclined to be the center of

attention, have difficulty focusing for extended periods, possess active imaginations, enjoy storytelling, prefer learning through play, and tend to imitate others (Norasiah & Sugirin, 2023). Assessment for young learners should be customized to their age, life experiences, and classroom experiences, including considering the tasks, formats, and procedures to accommodate the needs and abilities of students (Butler, 2019). Indonesia's new curriculum encourages assessment that could be adjusted to the student's capacities.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology has implemented a priority program known as independent learning, which includes a new emancipated curriculum. This curriculum was introduced in 2022, following the ministry's decision on guidelines for implementing the curriculum to restore learning (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). The emancipated curriculum adopts Ki Hadjar Dewantara's ideas, emphasizing the need to tailor learning to students with diverse characters and requirements (Irawati et al., 2022). The core idea of this curriculum is in line with differentiated learning popularized by Tomlinson and Moon (2013). Differentiated learning is a process that considers students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles (Tomlinson & Moon, 2013). However, the implementation in two schools in Buleleng Regency has not shown differentiation in learning, and it was revealed that teachers must fully differentiate learning, especially in English language learning.

Assessment for learning involves evaluating the learning process and providing continuous feedback to guide learning and teaching (Westbroek et al., 2020). Assessment based on the emancipated curriculum involves diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment (Maulida, 2022). The diagnosis assessment

examines the student's psychological and cognitive condition. On the other hand, formative assessment examines the student's learning process. A summative assessment is the assessment that takes place at the end of the process of learning (Sudirtha, 2022). It is important to acknowledge that students possess diverse abilities, meaning their needs may differ from those of their peers. In differentiated learning, diagnostic assessment is used to identify students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. Two schools in the Buleleng Regency have conducted diagnostic assessments. However, there is a need to further implement follow-up based on the assessment results to enhance lesson planning.

In differentiated learning, assessment is designed to align with the existing learning process. Differentiated assessment considers students' readiness, interest, and learning profile (Tomlinson & Moon, 2013). To conduct differentiated assessments, teachers have the option to modify the content, process, and product of learning. Modifying learning should involve content, process, and product adjustments to enhance student academic performance (Ortega et al., 2018). There is no assessment instrument tailored to readiness, interest, and learning profile for differentiated assessment in two schools in the Buleleng Regency.

Teachers may adjust content, process, and product based on students' readiness, interest, and learning profiles to create differentiated assessments. Readiness is a student's capability to process new knowledge. Interest is something students are excited about, attracted to, and curious about. Learning profile refers to preferred learning styles (Herwina, 2021). Learning style refers to the preferred way in which students learn, making it easier for them to grasp learning material (Rini et al., 2020). There are four learning style categories: visual, aural, read/write,

and kinesthetic (Fleming et al., 2005). Visual is a learning style in which students learn best through visual elements such as diagrams, charts, and pictures. Aural learning is a learning style in which students learn best through listening or speaking. Read/Write is a learning style where students learn best through reading and writing activities, and kinesthetic is a learning model where students learn best through hands-on activities and real-life experiences (Chaudhry et al., 2020). However, two schools in Buleleng Regency have not adjusted learning and assessment based on students' learning styles.

Several studies have examined assessment in emancipated curriculum and assessment development. The implementation of diagnostic assessment in primary school revealed that the full potential of diagnostics has not been realized (Elizasri & Ilyas, 2023). Moreover, teachers encountered difficulties preparing, implementing, and following up on diagnostic assessments (Antika et al., 2023). Thus, the development of differentiated assessment in an emancipated curriculum based on learning is still insufficient. The development of authentic assessment in the curriculum 2013 in fourth-grade elementary schools is based on learning methods (Purnami et al., 2022). The development of assessment in the emancipated curriculum, which has been carried out, is the development of authentic assessment to assess 10th-grade high school students based on learning methods (Cristiana et al., 2023). Some previous research findings indicate that there has been no follow-up on diagnostic assessments based on student learning styles. This means that the assessments carried out have not been differentiated according to student learning styles. Furthermore, the development of assessments has not been aligned with the emancipated curriculum and student learning styles.

This research is designed to assist teachers in making assessment instruments based on student's learning styles, thus helping teachers implement differentiated learning with the development of learning styles-based assessment in the form of an assessment book. The preliminary analysis results indicate that two schools in Buleleng Regency face problems implementing differentiated learning and assessment. Teachers have not implemented differentiated learning in English class in the 4th-grade, semester one, and lack of assessment tools based on students' learning styles. Thus, the focus of this research is to assist teachers in creating differentiated learning, particularly in assessment. The VARK learning style model was proposed by Fleming et al. (2005) as the basis for developing differentiated assessments. The development of the differentiated assessment book followed the ADDE development model (*Analysis, Design, Development, and Evaluation*) by Richey and Klein (2007), ensuring that the differentiated assessment book is well-suited for teachers to use in differentiated learning.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the information previously provided, it is feasible to outline the research problems as follows:

- 1) The emancipated curriculum has not been evenly distributed among primary schools, leading to a lack of understanding of differentiated assessment and ineffective use of assessment.
- 2) Teacher needs clear guidance on effectively using assessment instruments to ensure access to suitable tools.

- 3) Teachers encounter challenges when implementing differentiated learning because they need to provide learning activities and learning media tailored to students' diverse learning styles.

1.3 Problem Limitation

The research problem in this study is limited to differentiated assessment instruments, which prioritize the assessment principles in the emancipated curriculum to assess fourth-grade students in elementary schools in the first semester of English subject. The differentiated assessment instrument developed is tailored to different learning styles: aural, visual, read/write, and kinesthetic.

1.4 Research Question

The background and problem identification provided before the research questions can be formulated as follows:

- 1) What needs of teachers should be considered when creating a differentiated assessment instrument based on learning style for first-semester English subjects in an emancipated curriculum for 4th-grade elementary students?
- 2) What needs of students should be considered when creating a differentiated assessment instrument based on learning style for first-

semester English subjects in an emancipated curriculum for 4th-grade elementary students

- 3) How to develop an effective differentiated assessment instrument based on a learning style in an emancipated curriculum that is applied to assess 4th-grade elementary school students?
- 4) What qualities should be included in the differentiated assessment instrument designed regarding the emancipated curriculum established learning style to evaluate 4th-grade elementary school students?

1.5 Research Objective

The research objectives are as follows:

- 1) To identify the needs of students and teachers for designing differentiated assessment instruments regarding the emancipated curriculum that established learning styles to assess first-semester English subjects for the 4th-grade primary school students.
- 2) To develop a differentiated assessment instrument for the emancipated curriculum based on learning style to assess first-semester English subjects for the 4th-grade primary school students.
- 3) To examine the quality of the designed assessment instruments about the emancipated curriculum for first-semester English subjects for the 4th-grade primary school students.

1.6 Research Signification

There are two significant in this research:

1. Theoretical Significance

This research is anticipated to serve as a guide for academics engaged in related themes in differentiated assessment. It can positively contribute to developing knowledge about young learners' assessment, particularly in developing differentiated assessment instruments for students.

2. Practical Significance

a) To the students:

The researchers anticipate that the product of differentiated assessment would enhance students' learning experience in the English language subject.

b) To the teachers:

This research expects teachers to possess profound knowledge and competence in utilizing and creating differentiated assessments within the framework of the emancipated curriculum.

c) To the other researchers:

This study is intended to serve as a reference for other researchers researching the development of differentiated assessment instruments identical to the study that the other researchers would conduct.