

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Background

The learning process currently uses the emancipated curriculum. Many think the Kurikulum Merdeka in English is called the independent curriculum. However, based on the Ministry of Education and Culture website, if translated into English, it becomes emancipated curriculum. That is why the researcher used the term emancipated curriculum in this research. The emancipated curriculum allows students to explore ideas and develop their skills through various intra-curricular learning opportunities and content optimization (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). The emancipated curriculum is designed to be more flexible and adapt to the needs of each student with a greater emphasis on student-centered learning (Zidan, 2023). The emancipated curriculum is simpler and deeper, more independent, relevant, and interactive. The principle of independence empowers teachers to design the learning experience. Teachers can utilize three assessment techniques, namely diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment, to evaluate students' learning outcomes within the emancipated curriculum (Shadri et al., 2023).

Assessment is a critical component of the learning process. Assessment is critical because the assessment has several functions, such as finding out the students' progress, motivating students to learn, overcoming students' learning difficulties, knowing the students' achievements, and knowing students' abilities (Jambia et al., 2016). Other assessment functions include improving learning,

determining students' learning outcomes, and evaluating the quality of learning (Jambia; et al., 2016). Assessment encompasses a wide range of activities carried out by both teachers and students with the purpose of collecting data that can be used to enhance the learning and teaching process by analyzing and observing student work (Tekyiwa Amua-Sekyi, 2016).

In the assessment process, learning activities must be supported by appropriate learning methods, such as 21st-century learning methods (Cristiana et al., 2023). The types of 21st-century learning methods are project-based learning, problem-based learning, and discovery learning. In project-based learning, students tackle real-world problems or answer challenging questions by working on a single project for a long period of time (anything from a week to a semester) (Bytyqi, 2021). A learning method that facilitates students' active engagement with meaningful problems is known as problem-based learning (Yew & Goh, 2016). Discovery learning is a learning method where the primary knowledge to be acquired is not provided but instead must be autonomously uncovered by the student (Hanafi, 2016). This learning method is suitable because it follows the demands of the emancipated curriculum.

Each student has different learning styles. The student's learning styles are visual, auditory, read/write, and kinesthetic (Fleming et al., 2005). Due to variations in student needs and learning styles, teachers employ differentiated instruction (Halimah et al., 2023). In differentiated instruction, teachers employ varied teaching activities and assessments based on their students' needs, abilities, and learning styles (Tomlinson, 2017). Differentiated instruction and differentiated assessment must be implemented simultaneously. A differentiated

assessment is an assessment process strategy that accommodates, serves, and recognizes students' learning diversity according to their learning styles (Pasira, 2022). The idea behind differentiated assessment is that different students' needs cannot be addressed in the same way. However, there are still obstacles to implementing differentiated assessment in SMP Negeri 6 Singaraja. Three problems were found based on the preliminary observation, which was done by doing observations and interviewing an English teacher and 8th-grade students. First, the teacher did not apply diagnostic assessment optimally during the learning process. No follow-up activity on the diagnostic assessment has been conducted. Second, the teacher still does not optimally implement 21st-century learning methods like project-based, problem-based, and discovery. The teacher only applied this learning method to certain topics. Third, the teacher encountered difficulties when implementing differentiated assessment using 21st-century learning methods such as project-based learning, problem-based learning, and discovery learning because the teacher had never implemented differentiated assessment in the learning process.

For this reason, the researcher developed the differentiated assessment instrument based on the emancipated curriculum because differentiated assessment instruments have several benefits, including providing different assessments for each student based on their learning style, providing informative and timely feedback, helping to maintain consistency of assessment and fair assessment, and encouraging student learning and self-assessment (Chowdhury, 2018). The school that the researcher used was SMP Negeri 6 Singaraja. The researcher chose this school as the research setting because it is a school mover

implementing the emancipated curriculum. This research focused on grade 8 because that grade is considered the most stable. This research only focused on differentiated assessment instruments (only process) based on student learning styles: visual, auditory, read/write, and kinesthetic, and also 21st-century learning methods: problem-based learning, project-based learning, and discovery learning.

## 1.2 Problem Identification

The results of the preliminary observation, which was done in SMP Negeri 6 Singaraja, found three problems in the learning process. First, the diagnostic assessment is not being used effectively by the teacher to enhance the learning process. There has been no activity to follow up on the diagnostic assessment that has been carried out. Second, 21st-century learning methods such as project-based, problem-based, and discovery-based learning are still not being fully utilized by the teacher. The teacher only applies this learning method to certain topics. Third, the teacher faced difficulties when adopting the differentiated assessment using 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning methods such as project-based learning, problem-based learning, and discovery learning due to the teacher's lack of expertise in the area of differentiated assessment, it has never been used in the classroom to evaluate student progress.

If these three problems are permitted to persist, the teaching and learning process will never improve, and students' potential to learn and master English will be jeopardized. To address this, differentiated assessment instruments based on the emancipated curriculum in line with 21st-century learning methods are necessary to help teachers provide better student assessments. In addition, these

differentiated assessment instruments can help students develop their abilities based on the VARK learning styles. These differentiated assessment instruments are suitable for learning in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade of Junior High School.

### **1.3 Problem Limitation**

This research is limited to developing differentiated assessment instruments based on the emancipated curriculum for 8th-grade junior high school. The assessment instruments were developed according to the 21st-century learning method, such as project-based learning, problem-based learning, and discovery learning, and also based on the VARK (Visual, Auditory, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic) learning style.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

According to the background of this research that has been presented above, the research questions are as follows:

1. What are the needs of the teacher and the students for designing and developing differentiated assessment instruments based on the emancipated curriculum for assessing 8th-grade junior high school?
2. How to design and develop differentiated assessment instruments based on the emancipated curriculum for assessing 8th-grade junior high school?
3. How is the quality of the differentiated assessment instruments based on the emancipated curriculum for assessing 8th-grade junior high school?

### **1.5 Research Objectives**

There are three research objectives formulated in this research:

1. To determine the needs of the teachers and the students for designing and developing differentiated assessment instruments based on emancipated curriculum for assessing 8<sup>th</sup> grade Junior High School.
2. To design and develop differentiated assessment instruments based on the emancipated curriculum for assessing 8<sup>th</sup> grade Junior High School.
3. To determine the quality of the differentiated assessment instrument based on the emancipated curriculum for assessing 8<sup>th</sup> grade Junior High School.

### **1.6 Expected Specifications of the Product**

The expected specifications of the product in this research are as follows:

1. The differentiated assessment instrument developed is expected to help teachers provide differentiated assessments tailored to 21st-century learning methods, such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, and discovery learning, which can improve students' skills in communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.
2. The differentiated assessment instrument developed is expected to help teachers assess students with different learning styles to improve their learning assessment process, performance, and skills that suit their learning styles.

### **1.7 Research Significances**

Generally, this research provides two expected research significances, which are:

1. Theoretical Significance

This research is expected to generate knowledge in a better direction, especially in developing differentiated assessment instruments based on the emancipated curriculum.

## 2. Practical Significance

In practical significance, there are some things addressed by this, which are:

### a) For English Teachers

This research is expected to enhance the comprehension and knowledge of the English learning process among English teachers in junior high schools and establish appropriate learning assessment procedures. English teachers are expected to develop and construct differentiated assessment instruments that can undoubtedly assist students in enhancing their English learning experience.

### b) For Students

Through this research, the students are expected to get a better English learning class, especially in assessment. The students also expected to experience an increase in the quality of learning after getting a proper assessment.

### c) For Other Researchers

Later, this research is expected to serve as a reference for other researchers engaged in similar research on developing differentiated assessment instruments based on emancipated curriculum.

### 1.8 Assumption and Limitation of the Development

The assumptions and limitations of developing the differentiated assessment instrument are as follows:

1. The differentiated assessment instruments were developed in response to the needs of the teachers and the 8th-grade junior high school students at SMP Negeri 6 Singaraja in the second semester. Therefore, the instrument is used to assess the 8th-grade junior high school students in the second semester at SMP Negeri 6 Singaraja.
2. The developed differentiated assessment instruments can be improved according to the demands of the curriculum.
3. The developed differentiated assessment instrument can be used as a reference for future teachers to assess offline and online learning students.

### 1.9 Definition of Key Terms

Differentiated assessment, assessment instrument, 21st-century learning methods, and learning style are four key terms discussed in this research. The definition of key terms are classified into two types: conceptual and operational definition. The definitions of key terms are as follows:

#### 1. Conceptual Definition

A conceptual definition is a definition that is found in experts' theory. The conceptual definition of the four key terms are as follows:

##### a. Differentiated Assessment

Through the use of differentiated assessment, teachers are able to create more equitable learning opportunities for students from a



wide range of academic backgrounds. Also, it opens up a world of possibilities for teachers in terms of the tools and strategies they can use to track students' development as they study (Tomlinson & Moon, 2013).

b. Assessment Instrument

An assessment instrument is a precise tool utilized for gathering data, which comprises elements such as assigned assignments for students and criteria used to assess the quality of student performance (Hodge et al., 2015). Assessment instruments, according to the definition provided by (Popham, 2009) are tools or approaches that teachers utilize to measure students' learning, skills, and comprehension.

c. 21st-century Learning Methods

The 21st-century learning method refers to learning skills, such as communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity, that students must cultivate to thrive in the modern era, which relies heavily on information (Rotherham & Willingham, 2009).

d. Learning Style

A learning style is a unique approach to learning that is unique to each individual (Pritchard, 2009). Students learning styles can influence their cognitive processes, acquisition of knowledge, information assimilation, and ability to showcase their understanding (Reisdorfer, 2020).

## 2. Operational Definition

An operational definition is a definition of procedural used in this research. The operational definition of the four key terms are as follows:

### a. Differentiated Assessment

Differentiated assessment uses several assessments to accommodate all student learning styles, creating an optimal learning and assessment process. It can help teachers provide different assessments for each student's learning style.

### b. Assessment Instrument

An assessment instrument is an assessment that contains a list of certain criteria in a task to assess students' skills. It is a tool that can be used as a learning guide for teachers to create an effective learning and assessment process.

### c. 21st-century Learning Methods

The 21st-century learning methods are the learning methods that are intended to equip students with the skills necessary for contemporary life and work by emphasizing critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication.

### d. Learning Style

Different ways or approaches to learning are referred to as learning styles. Teachers can develop and execute instructional strategies tailored to learners' diverse preferences by comprehending their learning styles.