

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Background

In Indonesia, curriculum development to improve educational quality continues to be carried out over time. This is similar to how the Emancipated Curriculum is currently used as a reference and guide in the learning process. The Emancipated Curriculum was introduced by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, directed by its creator Nadiem Anwar Makarim, as a new idea following the Emergency Curriculum, which was a temporary remedy during the COVID-19 pandemic (Ellen et al., 2023).

According to the official website of the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, it is explained that the Emancipated Curriculum is another term for the *Merdeka* Curriculum. Many people, educators, and researchers wrongly interpret a *Merdeka* Curriculum as an Independent Curriculum, but the correct term is that if translated into English, a *Merdeka* Curriculum is an Emancipated Curriculum. Moreover, during the virtual remarks to launch discussion sessions in a conference between the Indonesian Business Forum and Latin America and the Caribbean in 2021, the Minister of Education and Culture interpreted *Merdeka Belajar* as Emancipated Learning (Sundari, 2023).

The main objective of the Emancipated Curriculum is to give opportunities for students to develop their potential in innovation and collaboration to

improve the quality of learning independently based on the needs and passions of each student, even when the students are required to participate in activities that are outside of the research program in which they are enrolled (B. Yulianto et al., 2023). The Emancipated Curriculum is implemented in the independent learning program. The independent learning program creates an environment in which teachers and students are allowed to explore and learn independently and creatively (Nugraheny et al., 2023). Therefore, the learning process involves a more flexible, contextual, and particular approach to student needs.

The actual realities of the schools indicate that not all junior high schools, particularly in Singaraja, have adopted the Emancipated Curriculum as a framework for teaching and learning. This is in accordance with initial observations made by the researchers that, among the junior high schools visited, only three had implemented the Emancipated Curriculum. It turns out, as (Wantiana & Mellisa, 2023) explained that implementation in the field is not as easy as explaining the theory in new schools implementing an Emancipated Curriculum still has obstacles such as a lack of truly clear information related to implementation in the field, especially since the independent curriculum has not yet been made into a national curriculum, so in only grade seven in junior high school uses an Emancipated Curriculum and schools use two curricula namely the Emancipated Curriculum and the 2013 Curriculum.

In every curriculum, a learning process cannot be separated from the assessment, this also applies to the Emancipated Curriculum. Learning and assessment principles are part of the initial curricular framework, which refers to the National Education Standards Process and Assessment Standards (Hadi

et al., 2023). Assessment in learning refers to a process of evaluating and measuring a student's knowledge, skills, abilities, and understanding of a specific subject or topic. The evaluation of learning outcomes by teachers must be done properly as it has a wide impact, both on the mindset of students and on the practical implementation of the learning program, therefore a good assessment guideline must be used (Setiawan et al., 2019). To measure learning outcomes, a good assessment guideline can help teachers determine how well students have mastered the material and achieved the required learning outcomes. The result of the assessment can be crucial for both students and teachers to assess development and identify areas that may require additional attention. In addition, H. Yulianto (2022) describes that the assessment was carried out not only to fulfill responsibilities in teaching and learning activities but also to achieve the following goals: a) to determine the level of the achievement of basic competency indicators of a subject that students must achieve; b) to evaluate individual student knowledge as necessary; c) to diagnose student learning needs; d) to enhance students' learning motivation in achieving learning objectives; and e) to serve as a guide for teachers in determining learning strategies.

Focus on the Emancipated Curriculum, there are three kinds of assessment, namely diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment (Shadri et al., 2023). Diagnostic assessment is an approach that identifies and understands students' characteristics, competencies, abilities, limitations, and learning styles (Aringka, 2023). On the other hand, Formative assessment components include observing teacher-student interactions, communicating

about the students' success criteria, collecting detailed information about learning activities, offering learning feedback, and making instructional corrections (Filsecker & Kerres, 2019). Additionally, summative assessment is a form of evaluation that is used to determine whether or not overall learning objectives have been achieved (Muktamar, 2023).

As a follow-up to the diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment, it is important to consider a differentiated assessment as well. Differentiated assessment is a kind of assessment that requires note of the differences between students (Reisdorfer, 2020). Differentiated assessments evaluate student performance by their preferred individual learning styles (Ihalon & C, 2022). Referring to the results of diagnostic assessments that group students based on abilities and learning styles, it is important to carry out differentiated assessments.

Related to differentiated assessment, several studies discuss the implementation of differentiated assessment in the learning process. According to Noman (2014) those who have conducted research about differentiated assessment. The results of the research state that assessment is an important component in the learning process and cannot be considered separate from learning. It is an important tool for determining a student's learning experience. Although significant progress has been made in integrating differentiated teaching in the classroom, differentiated assessment remains largely neglected. Not only that, Koshy (2013) also researched differentiated assessment activities in customizing to support learning. The results of the research show

that differentiated assessments have been applied successfully in a variety of topics, particularly as a formative task.

Regarding the matters of differentiated assessment, the researcher conducted preliminary research at one of the junior high schools in Singaraja. The school has implemented an Emancipated Curriculum which has implemented a 21st century learning model. However, in its implementation, there has not been any differentiated assessment carried out on students even though in fact what was observed during the observation process was that students' learning styles and abilities were different. The teacher already implemented the diagnostic assessment but it has not been implemented optimally. During the interview with teachers to obtain data, it was found that diagnostic assessments were only carried out at the beginning of learning and there was no follow-up to the results of the diagnostic assessments.

Henceforth, based on these circumstances, it is necessary to develop an instrument for the teacher in junior high school in Singaraja which is adjusted with an Emancipated Curriculum and differentiated assessment. Developing an instrument as a differentiated assessment also becomes the novelty of the research as there are products that developed from the research which later enable teachers to appropriate an effective assessment based on the student's learning style.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

Based on the preliminary observation done in one of the junior high schools in Singaraja, three main issues were found in the learning processes.

Firstly, the teacher has never implemented differentiated assessment in the learning process. Differentiated assessment is a new concept for the teacher, so several factors prevent the teacher from implementing it in the classroom. The factors influencing teachers' inability to implement differentiated assessment include a lack of understanding regarding differentiated assessment and the limited number of teachers who have implemented it. Secondly, the next problem was found in the implementation of assessment in the learning activities. The teacher explained that there are three assessments used during the learning process: diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment. Among these assessments, issues were found in the implementation of diagnostic assessment, which has not been maximized. During the observation and interviews conducted, the teacher stated that after conducting the diagnostic assessment, no follow-up actions were taken. Lastly, the 21st-century learning model includes project-based learning, problem-based learning, and discovery learning, which are not yet fully implemented. Teachers only apply this learning model to certain topics. However, in reality, teachers have not been able to implement these three learning models optimally. Based on difficulties one and two, it is possible to conclude that the next problem is related to assessment implementation. Teachers continue to struggle with adopting differentiated assessment using 21st-century learning methods such as Problem-Based Learning, Project-Based Learning, and Discovery Learning.

By seeing this situation, the research considers that it is very important to help the teachers in junior high schools by developing an instrument as a

differentiated assessment as a follow-up to the diagnostic assessment that was carried out previously. With this instrument, teachers can assess the abilities and learning styles of different students. The development of instruments as a differentiated assessment is designed in line with three teaching methods namely Problem-Based Learning, Project-Based Learning, and Discovery Learning. The three learning methods can assist the teacher in providing meaningful learning experiences for the students by which they are encouraged to learn based on real-world tasks. Having a differentiated assessment in the form of an instrument thoroughly establishes a good and optimal teaching-learning process between the teachers and the students.

### **1.3 Problem Limitation**

The scope of this research has been limited to better focus on the research. The research was focus on the development of an instrument as a differentiated assessment for assessing eighth-grade junior high school students in Singaraja regency, particularly for the first semester of the academic year 2023/2024. The instruments used in this developmental research are adjusted for both online and offline learning. Furthermore, the instrument was developed using three different teaching methods such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, and discovery learning.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

To develop an instrument as a differentiated assessment, in this research three main questions can help the researcher to develop the product.

1. What are students' and teachers' needs for designing and developing an instrument as a differentiated assessment in English subjects in the Emancipated Curriculum to assess eighth-grade junior high school students?
2. How to design and develop an instrument as a differentiated assessment in English subjects in the Emancipated Curriculum to assess eighth-grade junior high school students?
3. How does the quality of the differentiated assessment in English subjects in the Emancipated Curriculum assess eighth-grade junior high school students?

### **1.5 Research Objectives**

The aim of this research is as follows:

1. To determine the needs of students and teachers for designing and developing an instrument as a differentiated assessment in English subjects in the Emancipated Curriculum to assess eighth-grade junior high school students.
2. To design and develop an instrument as a differentiated assessment in English subjects in the Emancipated Curriculum to assess eighth-grade junior high school students.
3. To find out the quality of the differentiated assessment in English subjects in Emancipated Curriculum to assess eighth-grade junior high school students.



## 1.6 Research Significant

This research consists of two significances expected to be achieved in this research. There are theoretical and practical significances which are explained as follows:

### 1. Theoretical

For the theoretical significance, it would be expected that this research can serve as a guide for researchers conducting similar research. This research contributes to increasing knowledge and skills, especially in developing differentiated assessment instruments based on the Emancipated Curriculum and students' learning styles, especially in assessing eighth-grade students' knowledge and skills in English subjects.

### 2. Practical

#### 2.1 For Teacher

For teachers, it would be expected that this research can help teachers understand effective assessment procedures. Apart from that, it is hoped that teachers can implement this differentiated assessment instrument in their teaching process so that can achieve learning objectives and help teachers in designing and developing differentiated assessment instruments that suit students' learning needs.

#### 2.2 For Students

For students, it would be expected that this research can help students benefit from the results of the assessment process carried out by their teachers using different assessment instruments. Apart from

that, this research can improve the quality of student learning and be effective in the English language learning process.

### 2.3 For Other Researcher

For the researcher, it would be expected that they can use this research as their reference to conduct similar research about developing an instrument as a differentiated assessment in different levels or contexts of learning.



