

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Assessment is an important factor in the learning process that is used as a determiner for learning quality and success. An effective assessment activity should be able to provide the students with critical thinking in learning context because they are required to evaluate their own learning process (Macmath, et al 2009; cited in Lora & Rosidin, 2020). It is an essential element in a learning process that the teacher provides an evaluation of their methods of teaching regarding the learners' progress, therefore the teacher could receive the required information as the guidance to improve the methods that they used while learning in the classroom (Alahmadi et al., 2019).

Recently, a new paradigm of learning in Indonesia emphasizes that assessment should not focus on the product in the form of a test. According to Torres (2019) the numeric score does not tell the students about how far they have learned something, instead it only tells the students whether they passed or failed the course. In this paradigm, a new curriculum model that refers to the formation of a Pancasila students' profile with the aim to strength the character and various skills of learners as an important component in the implementation of learning which is called Emancipated curriculum (Nurasiah et al., 2022; Rizaldi & Fatimah, 2022). This curriculum also regulates the principles that must be considered by the teacher in designing the learning process and its assessment, as well as some

competencies that students need to master, the characters that need to be developed and build and the materials that students need to learn and master (Rizaldi & Fatimah, 2022). It means that the way teacher conduct assessment must not in the form where students required to remember all the material at once just to conduct the traditional assessment by doing a test as the method to measure their learning progress. But the teacher must be focused on giving some freedom and opportunity for the students rather than limiting them in the learning process.

In the Emancipated curriculum, conducting an effective assessment process must consider the approaches of assessment. According to Padmadewi and Artini (2019) stated that the approaches of assessment divided into Assessment of Learning (AoL), Assessment for Learning (AfL), and Assessment as Learning (AaL). All of these assessments have their own function in assessing and evaluating the learning process of the teacher and student (Padmanabha, 2021).

Assessment for learning (AfL) is being more emphasize to be implemented in the classroom by the teachers, where occurs in the middle of the learning process and often more than once not at the end of learning, which provides assistance as part of the assessment process. It emphasizes the learning competence where the students will have the information about how, when, and where they can use their knowledge. Thus, this assessment should appear frequently in the learning process for both teacher and students.

In addition, each of these approaches have different purposes in assessment. Diagnostic assessment has been defined as the approach to see the students'

strength and weakness in relation to their knowledge and skills in the target of the learning process (Lee & Sawaki, 2009; cited in Fan et al., 2021).

In addition, the assessment process that composes all the activity that is undertaken by the teacher and the students' which provide information that can be used as feedback in each learning they are involved (Black and Wiliam, 1998, pp. 7–8; cited in Zeng and Huang, 2021). This feedback will be used to modify the teaching and learning activities, which are known as Formative assessment.

Furthermore, Summative assessment is known as the traditional assessment in the educational system that has the longest history to use in the learning process. This assessment is commonly implemented at the end of the learning process to figure out the student's capability in moving to the next level of learning (Torres, 2019). Thus, the teachers are expected to conduct assessment process by considering the purposes of assessment itself, especially English teachers. Furthermore, the government has promoted that in a learning process it must conduct these all assessments when conducting assessment in the classroom.

The assessment process does not only happen at the end of the learning process by using tests on their students in order to find students' improvement in the learning they are involved in (Bharti, 2024). The teacher can assess the students during the learning process by using a multiple assessment to measure students' progress effectively rather than ordering them to conduct a test at the end of the learning process (Sugiono, 2022). In fact, engaging students in the assessment of their own learning progress could enhance their high thinking order to perceive the

improvement of their skills in the learning process (D'Ambrosio, 2021). Thus, they must be supported in interpreting the assessment through various sources to use them as the reference and guidance to make a decision for their learning and improvement (Lora & Rosidin, 2020).

According to Brown (2019) stated the use of authentic assessment would make the learning and assessment process more meaningful for the students. Thus, the teachers are expected to implemented a variety of authentic assessment strategies in assessing the students in the learning process.

Emancipated curriculum also promoted differentiated instruction in order to assess the students. Through a variety of strategies that adapt curriculum and instruction to each student's unique requirements, differentiation aims to accommodate the diversity of learners in the classroom (Renzulli, 1977; Tomlinson, 2000; cited in Reis & Renzulli, 2018). Differentiation serves to address the variation of students' abilities, interest, and prior knowledge by matching the content, instruction, and assessment to those variation of students. According to Tomlinson (1995) stated that when teachers differentiate curriculum, they stop acting as dispensers of knowledge and serve as organizers of learning opportunities (cited in Reis and Renzulli, 2018). In addition, differentiation is not a strategy but rather a way of teaching that takes consideration among students' diverse so that all are learning on an ongoing basis (Roberts & Inman, 2009:2; cited in Partami, Padmadewi, and Artini, 2019).

By considering the variation of students in their abilities, rate learning, language proficiency, literacy, and numeracy skills, this knowledge can use to adapt

the way the curriculum and learning activities are presented (Westwood, 2016; cited in Partami, Padmadewi, and Artini, 2019). According Tomlinson (1999, 2001, 2004) stated a process in ensuring of what and how a student learns, then how a student demonstrates what he or she has learned is a match for that student's readiness level, interests, and preferred mode of learning, through differentiated the elements to make instruction, which are content, process, product and learning environment, which all of these elements are interconnected and can be adjusted based on students' readiness, interest, and learning profile.

In a similar way, differentiated assessment is a practice of teachers to adjust their assessment in the classroom according to the individual wants and needs of their diverse students (Jung & Guskey, 2010; cited in Noman & Kaur, 2020).

According to the preliminary data, the teacher at SMP Negeri 2 Sawan have already given training and overview of differentiation in learning based on what the Emancipated curriculum emphasizes for students' diversity in understanding the material. It also found that the teacher also implemented a differentiation in assessing the students. Based on the observation in the classroom, the English teachers implemented the differentiation in several assessment strategies that depends on the competencies in the curriculum as well as the learning objectives. It also spotted there was a differentiation in the form of peer tutoring in the classroom where the teacher providing different instruction for a few students to help their friends of other students that still did not understand the task or material that have been taught earlier. The teacher also provided different grade for those students while doing the peer tutoring activity. In addition, another teacher

implemented differentiation in the form of peer discussion where teacher provided the students a space and freedom to discuss with their partner in understanding the material and doing the exercise. The teacher also accommodated the students when they want to share their discussion directly in front of the classroom or in the form of written text.

Based on the interview with the teacher about why they did not implement differentiation in others assessment strategies, the teachers' still find it difficult to maximize the implementation of differentiation in other assessment strategies in the classroom. Those difficulty are related with how the teacher should provide the instruction, learning, and assessment integrated in the classroom. Based on the preliminary data, it concluded that there is a phenomenon at SMP Negeri 2 Sawan, where the English teachers were employed differentiation of assessment strategies as promoted in Emancipated curriculum. Thus, the information needs to be elaborated in order to find out how and why teachers implement the assessment strategies that the teachers used in differentiation learning context and the difficulty of conducting differentiated assessment strategies.

Numerous studies have discussed about the teachers' assessment strategies that is used to assess their students in the learning process, especially in language assessment. One of the studies found that an assessment process refers to implementing multiple methods or range of strategies to make decisions regarding instruction and gathering information about students' performance and behavior, diagnoses students' problems, monitors their progress and gives feedback for improvement, which beneficial to help the teacher triangulated the evidence for a

complete picture of student comprehension and understanding, rather than a single assessment. (Sugiono, 2021)

In other hand, Sabir, Wang, and Zou (2024) revealed that differentiation strategies such as flexible grouping and culturally relevant content significantly improved student engagement and participation. In addition, they also found that the challenges conducting differentiation strategies include managing diverse learning needs while adhering to standardized curricula. In addition, another study by Ojong (2023) discovered that differentiated instruction significantly influences learners' motivation and engagement in second language acquisition.

However, there is a lack of empirical evidence on its efficacy, indicating a need for more research in this area. Furthermore, Hidayat, Ruhiat, Anriani, and Suryadi (2024) revealed that positive correlations were found between differentiated learning and adversity intelligence, as well as between learning outcomes and peer tutoring. Those studies proved the practice of some assessment strategies by considering differentiation have been implemented in the teaching learning process and given a positive impact in assessing students' abilities in learning.

Some studies revealed that there were challenges faced by the teacher whether in planning the authentic assessment strategy or conducting the assessment strategy with differentiation. According to Rifqi (2023) study revealed that teachers face challenges in organizing and delivering differentiated instruction, including material section, intrinsic factors, large class sizes, and time constraints. The study also provides suggestions for improvement include exploring varied learning

activities and recognizing student personalities. In addition, a study that conducted by Hajis and Othman (2024) with their aim to explore the fundamentals of differentiated instruction, the challenges encountered in its implementation, and strategies to navigate these challenges, revealed that teacher readiness, administrative support, and infrastructure limitations were being the challenges in implementing differentiated instruction. Therefore, they suggested some strategies to handle those challenges includes continuous professional training, effective classroom management, and fostering creativity.

In other hand, another study conducted by Čepić and Papak (2022) found that the major problem that teacher faced in conducting the effective assessment was allocating the time between implementing and organizing the efficiency of assessment in each lesson stage. It can be assumed that in implementation of a variety of assessment strategies in differentiation context are not implemented optimally in the teaching and learning process because of some challenges that appeared.

These studies only focusing on differentiated instruction only with a slight information about the differentiated assessment strategies and the impact of the use of a particular assessment strategy with differentiation in the classroom.

There still lack of study that exploring and describing the variety assessment strategies within differentiated learning in which assessment approach that used the most, includes the differentiated assessment itself that teacher implemented as what have been promoted in Emancipated curriculum. Thus, it is the urgency to conduct a study in how English teachers' implemented differentiation on assessment

strategies in the long-term of the purpose of assessment such as diagnostic, formative, and summative and whether teachers implemented assessment strategies in assessment for learning more frequently as expected in Emancipated curriculum. Furthermore, this study also revealed in the challenges experienced by the teacher in implementing differentiated assessment strategies in the classroom. Therefore, it gives clear picture and develop a deep framework in how are assessment strategies implemented by the English teachers in the learning process.

This study allows us to identify the variety of assessment strategies that teacher used in the classroom, by considering the function of assessment and the approach of assessment as well as differentiated assessment within differentiated learning context. The result of this study could be a basis for developing an assessment strategies guideline that are more appropriate to assess students within differentiated learning based on what Emancipated curriculum promoted.

In addition, describing the English teachers' differentiated assessment strategies in detail through the reason how, why, and how many they used a particular differentiated assessment strategy based on its function will give us a broad information about teachers' differentiated assessment strategies that implemented. Through this study EFL teachers were not only provided information about how they used a particular assessment strategy by considering the function of assessment and differentiation in Emancipated curriculum, but also provided the information about the challenges that appeared while implementing the differentiated assessment strategies in detail.

According to the description above, this research implemented in secondary school area where the teacher has implemented a variety of assessment strategies within differentiated learning context at SMP Negeri 2 Sawan.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the background that has been described above, there some phenomenon that raise;

- 1) Emancipated curriculum promoted and emphasized on differentiated instruction in the process of teaching and assessing including the differentiated assessment in assessing students as well as reckonable of student's diversity ability in learning. It means that teacher should provide the students with an opportunity to involve them in order to assess themselves through several assessment strategies with differentiation, in the learning process regarding the function of assessment as diagnostic, formative and summative and the approaches as learning, for learning, and of learning.
- 2) The teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Sawan implemented differentiation in the form of peer tutoring as one of assessment strategies. However, it raises a concern regarding how will the teachers implement the differentiated assessment strategies and others differentiated assessment strategies that teachers used and exploring the reasoned why the teacher did not conduct differentiation in others assessment strategies as what have been demanded in Emancipated curriculum.

- 3) Nowadays, there is a limited study that purpose to mention and explore the assessment strategies in differentiated learning context that implemented by the EFL teacher in assessing the students as what have emphasized in Emancipated curriculum.

1.3 Limitation of Study

Based on the problem statement above, this research focused on differentiated assessment strategies that used by 3 English teachers and the challenges experienced by the teachers in conducting the assessment strategies in the learning process. This research used observation and interview research design with a qualitative approach. The context of this assessment strategy limited to English teachers' assessment strategies and considered differentiation. The school observed was limited to a secondary school in Sawan district, especially English teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Sawan, where this school is one of school that used Emancipated Curriculum in rural area and the teachers have implemented differentiated assessment strategies in assessing students as what have required in the Emancipated curriculum, as well as one of the English teachers in this school have interesting assessment strategies within differentiated learning context.

1.4 Research Questions

According to the background, this research focuses on two research questions as follow;

1. What assessment strategies are implemented by English teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Sawan in teaching and learning process?

- a. What assessment strategies are implemented within differentiated learning context?
 - b. Is there any differentiation of English teachers' assessment practice within differentiated learning context?
2. What are the challenges encountered by the English teachers at SMP N 2 Sawan in implementing assessment strategies within differentiated learning context in the classroom?

1.5 Research Objectives

There are two objectives in this research as follow;

1. To describe the assessment strategies implemented by English teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Sawan in teaching and learning process.
 - a. To describe assessment strategies implemented by English teachers within differentiated learning context.
 - b. To describe differentiation of English teachers' assessment practice within differentiated learning context.
2. To describe the challenges experienced by the English teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Sawan when conducting the assessment strategies within differentiated learning context in the classroom.

1.6 Research Significance

1. Theoretical Significance

The findings of this study are expected to enrich and extend the knowledge of teachers' assessment strategies within differentiated learning context in the classroom by providing an extended theory, information, and data, about teachers' assessment strategies used and challenges within differentiated learning context. This study also expected to support the empiricism of the previous study of experts and researchers.

2. Practical Significance

a. For Teacher

This study is expected to provide teacher an overview of how various assessment strategies are implemented by English teachers in differentiated learning when assessing students. So, they can choose and adapt an appropriate assessment strategy for students and enrich their priory knowledge in conducting differentiated assessment in differentiated learning context in their classroom.

b. For Educational Institutions

This study provides a broad and in-depth understanding of the English teachers' assessment strategies within differentiated learning context by considering the function of assessment itself in the learning process, which supports Emancipated curriculum vision on using a variety of strategies with differentiation in the assessment process in differentiated learning context. By understanding the English teachers' assessment strategies in differentiated learning context as well as

the challenges, educational institutions can design appropriate assessment strategies in differentiated learning context, involving the students and considering differentiation of student's diversity ability in each assessment, in accordance with Emancipated Curriculum.

c. For Other Researchers

The findings could be served as a reference for other researchers in their research of English teachers' assessment strategies for assessing students within differentiated learning context as emphasized in Emancipated curriculum. Thus, this study could help the other researchers in supporting and performing on the related themes to this study.

