

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Teacher-teaching strategies have a significant impact on student learning outcomes. The English classroom comprises students from different backgrounds and cultures with different interests, readiness, needs and development. Students commonly learn differently (Gorghiu et al., 2015; Magableh & Abdullah, 2020). Students' perspective and drive towards English, learning style, aptitude (internal factors), and learning environment (external factors) all impact the English learning process. (Gertie, 2020). Therefore, using inappropriate learning methods for each learner can result in boredom and disinterest in the material. Therefore, researchers and policymakers should encourage teachers to embrace diversity and adapt their teaching to the diverse learning processes of the students in their classrooms.

Unfortunately, traditional learning has not met the needs of these different students, who place the instructor at the centre of the learning process. As a result, differentiated teaching and its curriculum have been established as a suggested teaching strategy by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Tomlinson (2017) says that differentiated teaching provides diverse ways for students to gain knowledge, process or generate an understanding of concepts, and produce products, which enables students to learn exceptionally well. Furthermore, Tomlinson (2017) adds that differentiated teaching are based on the idea that educational activities are most efficient when students find them fun, applicable and engaging, which can be interpreted as a student-

centred approach. In short, differentiated teaching is a learning system meant to facilitate the diversity of students' learning characteristics.

Therefore, for differentiated learning to function well in its implementation, teachers must understand it. According to Tomlinson (2017), teachers must understand how to provide materials, media, and assessments adapted to students' diversity in a differentiated classroom. Magableh and Abdullah (2020) state that many benefits are gained when differentiated teaching is used. Students become more engaged, interaction increases, classes become more diverse, and students take responsibility for their education. Meanwhile, several research studies found that teachers face various obstacles, including a lack of time for preparation and teaching, resources, administrative burden, and student behavior (Gibbs, 2022; Suryati et al., 2023). The only emphasis of both studies is on the difficulties school teachers face when implementing differentiated teaching. This study identifies the difficulties of English teachers when implementing differentiated teaching, in contrast to previous studies that only discuss the problems faced by the parties involved (teachers and schools). This research also determines what strategies can help teachers implement differentiated teaching in the classroom.

Therefore, this study aims to analyse teachers' practices and challenges in implementing differentiated teaching in English classes in public and private junior secondary schools in Purwokerto. The results is helpful for policymakers, namely the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, to improve the quality of education in Indonesia.

B. Reasons for Topic Selection

The topic "Practices and Challenges in the Implementation of Differentiated Teaching in English Language Classes in Junior High Schools" was chosen due to the increasing diversity in students' needs, abilities, learning styles, and interests in junior high schools. Differentiated teaching has emerged as a crucial approach to address this diversity, particularly in English language classes, where linguistic and cultural factors amplify variations among learners.

This study examines the practical strategies teachers use to implement differentiated teaching and identifies their challenges. By doing so, the research intends to contribute to a better understanding of effective methods and support mechanisms needed for teachers. The findings can inform future teacher training programs, curriculum development, and policy-making to improve student outcomes and promote inclusive education.

C. Research Question

After understanding the research background, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. How do English teachers implement differentiated teaching in the English classroom?
2. What challenges do teachers face when implementing differentiated teaching in the English classroom?

D. Research Objectives

This research is aimed at:

1. Describing the implementation of differentiated teaching by English teachers.
2. Identifying common challenges faced by English teachers in implementing differentiated teaching.

E. Research Significance

Research on the difficulties junior secondary school teachers face when implementing differentiated teaching in English classes is critical to conduct for several reasons.

a. Theoretically

The study may indicate areas where professional development programmes or curriculum materials must be enhanced or improved.

Better resource allocation can be made to support differentiated teaching in English language learning.

b. Practically

1) For Teachers

The study can point out specific areas where teachers need additional assistance, such as time management or resource access. By addressing these challenges, schools can empower teachers to implement differentiated teaching effectively. Understanding teachers' challenges can help develop best practices for differentiated teaching in English language classrooms. Teachers and curriculum designers can use this information to create more valuable and effective differentiated teaching strategies.

2) For students

Differentiated teaching meets the needs of every student, increasing engagement and understanding. Students gained the benefit from effective differentiated teaching implementation, which can be ensured by developing solutions that consider teachers' challenges.

