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ANALYSIS DIFFERENTIATED ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT FOR GRADE 9 JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN EMANCIPATED CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT

Emancipated curriculum in Indonesia has been introduced to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. Differentiated assessment is important to determine students' learning and development needs. However, many schools still experience difficulties in implementing differentiated assessment in accordance with the emancipated curriculum. This study aims to find out the differentiated assessment implemented in schools that have implemented the emancipated curriculum in grade 9 and identify the factors that influence its implementation. This study used qualitative methods and collected data by interviewing teachers and analyzing curriculum documents and teaching materials. The results showed that differentiated assessment according to the emancipated curriculum in grade 9 in junior high school is still limited and not optimal. Teachers face several barriers, such as the lack of appropriate teaching materials and the lack of time to develop differentiated assessment.

Keywords: Emancipated Curriculum, differentiated assessment, young learners

INTRODUCTION

As time goes by, education in Indonesia is always changing. This change is not without reason, but to give birth to a more qualified generation by following the times that also affect the quality of education of the younger generation. In the implementation of learning that involves students, the government has set a curriculum as a reference for the implementation of learning. The curriculum has an important role that guides the progress of education in a country, which starts from the realm of understanding concepts to implementation in the field (Dhomiri, 2023). The curriculum in Indonesia has changed from year to year and what has just been announced by the Ministry of Education and Culture is the Emancipated



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Curriculum. The implementation of this curriculum has started since 2021. At least 70% of educational units in Indonesia have implemented the Merdeka Curriculum and it is planned that by 2024 all schools in Indonesia will have realized the Merdeka Curriculum (Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2023a). This curriculum prioritizes optimal content delivery, giving students sufficient time to explore concepts and improve their competencies (Rohmah et al., 2024). It is designed to encourage the development of soft skills and character, focuses on essential content, and emphasizes flexible learning methodologies.

In curriculum implementation, assessment is important to achieve student learning goals (Kapitariyani Kimpo Ellen & Lala Bumela Sudimantara, 2023). Assessment not only refers to students' ability to proceed to a more difficult stage, but can provide an overview of students' abilities and as a tool to determine their weaknesses (Naf'iah et al., 2023). This assessment not only has an impact on students, but can also improve teaching strategies carried out by teachers in the classroom. In the emancipation curriculum, there are two assessments used by the government, namely formative assessment and summative assessment (Helmie, 2022). In addition to these two assessments, teachers also use diagnostic assessments as an initial stage to determine students' learning styles, learning models that are suitable for students' abilities which will have an impact on the teacher's strategy in creating learning materials (Mardiana et al., 2021)

The Merdeka Curriculum introduced in Indonesia is undergoing phased implementation starting in 2021, with an initial focus on Driving Schools in 111 districts. In 2022, the Independent Curriculum for Independent Pathways will be introduced. Based on data from Kemdikbudristi and the Center for Curriculum and Learning Culture (Zaim et al., 2022) nearly 70 percent of education units nationwide have adopted the Independent Curriculum through various programs, such as the Driving School Program, the Center for Excellence Vocational High School, and the Independent Pathway Implementation. Mapping this assessment system is important given that the implementation of the independent curriculum will continue to increase every year. As most education systems move to the Independent Curriculum, it is important to ensure that the grading and assessment mechanisms are aligned with the principles and objectives of the curriculum.

Such understanding is what this research aims to achieve because the assessment system can contribute to improving education policy, any real and evidence-based insights gained from this research can help all stakeholders in the education system to understand how assessments can be aligned with curriculum objectives to policy adjustments that improve the overall effectiveness of Merdeka Curriculum and even its success in the near and long term. Clear communication about the assessment system fosters public awareness and understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum (Putri et al., 2023). This, in turn, builds confidence in the fairness and effectiveness of the curriculum in the early stages of implementation



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such as the present and the next few years. Over time, a well-understood and refined assessment system will form a quality assurance framework. This framework helps maintain and improve the overall quality of education under the Merdeka Curriculum.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Differentiated Assessment

In teaching and learning activities, assessment is important to find out how far students master the material and from the assessment can also find out the weaknesses of students in a material. The assessment used is divided into several types, namely formative assessment, summative assessment and differentiated assessment. In the emancipated curriculum, the government uses all three assessments. However, the interesting thing is the differentiated assessment. While formative assessment takes place during the learning process and summative assessment is used as the final assessment to determine students' understanding, differentiated assessment prioritizes students to be more active in the learning process by collaborating with students' readiness, interest and learning profile (Tomlinsom, 2003). In other words, differentiated assessment is an assessment that focuses on improving student weaknesses to meet student needs through learning with specific strategies. This assessment is always related to formative assessment because it is able to prioritize student weaknesses that can later be corrected with strategies that are in accordance with student abilities. During the learning process, there are three perspectives that can be used for the implementation of assessment, namely : 1) assessment for learning: One of the assessments that takes place during the learning process whose main purpose is used as a basis for making improvements to the student learning process where in this assessment a formative assessment is used which is a continuous assessment; 2) assessment of learning: assessment that is used after the learning process or called summative assessment; and 3) assessment as learning: assessment that invites students to be more active in the learning process and the assessment used is formative assessment.

Emancipated Curriculum

Education in Indonesia at this time has undergone many changes, especially in the aspect of curriculum. Looking back at the previous year, the government was very active in developing relevant education for students who would later become the nation's future successors. The government has set a curriculum as a reference for teachers in teaching and learning activities. In accordance with the decree Kementrian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset dan Teknologi Nomor 033/H/KR/2023 about learning outcomes in early childhood education, primary education and secondary education levels in the Emancipated Curriculum. The Emancipated



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Curriculum, which was originally called the prototype curriculum, was refined by the Government of Indonesia, which became the first stage in the preparation of flexible learning and focused on essential material and character development that had an impact on the competence of students (Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2023b). In this latest curriculum, there are five main characteristics to support learning which consist of: 1) learning that focuses on essential material to get more meaningful learning; 2) application of P5 as a form of competency and character development of students; 3) flexible learning outcomes that result in more enjoyable and meaningful learning for students; 4) freedom of educators in the selection of teaching tools in accordance with curriculum development and implementation of quality learning; and 5) prioritizing mutual cooperation to support the implementation of Emancipated Curriculum. With these characteristics, Emancipated Curriculum has three stages, namely: 1) Diagnostic Assessment; 2) Planning; and 3) Learning. In the emancipated curriculum, the government also uses summative assessment to support formative assessment. Summative assessment is an assessment that uses a numerical index as the final result of this assessment. If the formative assessment does not use a numerical index, the summative assessment is inversely proportional to it. The purpose of implementing summative assessment is to find out the final results of student learning which can be seen in the end-of-semester assessment whose final results will be reported through the student's report card. This assessment uses several subject areas to find out how far students understand the material that has been given in the last semester. To get the final results of this assessment, teachers can use several methods such as final exams, standardized tests or final projects.

The Characteristic of Secondary Learners

Secondary learners are individuals who are in the formal education stage called junior high school before going on to a higher level. Junior high school children are said to be early adolescents aged from 13-15 years which results in children at this age experiencing self-adjustment with themselves and the people around them (Hendriati, 2009). At this age, children will begin to be provided with development through intellectual, social, and emotional skills through what they see and feel in the surrounding environment. In the context of VARK learning styles, junior high students exhibit a wide variety of learning styles including visual, auditory, read-write, and kinesthetic. These learning styles can help students in the process of receiving material in a fun way.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative methods as a solution to the problems that exist in the school that is used as a subject. Qualitative research is research based on post-positivist philosophy to find out the condition of the object under study (Sugiyono,



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2014). Data collection was carried out through interviews with subject teachers and analyzed documents such as the syllabus and teaching modules used in the school. Data collection was carried out in one of the junior high schools in Buleleng Regency which is located in Seririt. For the interview session, the author prepared 24 questions related to the assessment conducted in the school with the current emancipated curriculum assessment. In addition to conducting interviews with teachers, the author also analyzed the syllabus documents and teaching modules used in the school.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section describes the analysis. Analysis is one of the steps that aims to examine the important components needed to complete the research. At this stage the author uses two instruments consisting of questionnaires and interviews.

Teacher Interview

The researcher conducted an interview with the English teacher at SMP Negeri 1 Seririt which aims to find out the assessment process in the 9th grade using the emancipated curriculum. The interview was conducted face-to-face at SMP Negeri 1 Seririt. The questions given were designed to be brief but easily understood by the respondents. The questions given were about twenty-four questions that were related to one another. The results of these questions will be summarized briefly and easily understood below:

The first question relates to the emancipated curriculum. The implementation of the emancipated curriculum at SMP Negeri 1 Seririt, especially in grade 9, begins with planning, implementation, and evaluation. In the classroom learning process, teachers use the Learning Merdeka flow which begins with “starting from self” where in this activity invites students to carry out learning activities from themselves, such as the example of literacy that they usually do before the teacher enters the classroom and the implementation of real action according to collaborating with previously given lessons which can later be used as a reflection material for students and teachers. The learning methods used are differentiated according to learners' interests and involve the use of audio, video, text, etc. After conducting activities in the classroom, of course, teachers will carry out assessments to find out the abilities of students.

The assessment used at the beginning of learning is a diagnostic assessment where this assessment includes cognitive and non-cognitive. The use of this assessment aims to find out the weaknesses of students and as a reference for future learning planning. The diagnostic assessment process begins with compiling non-cognitive questions (questions to find out the psychology of student learning) then preparing several questions about related material to make it easier for teachers to



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analyze suitable material for teaching materials later. This can be used as a consideration for planning the learning process starting from the selection of materials to effective learning methods. In this case, teachers will determine the criteria for diagnostic assessment at the beginning of learning by dividing the categories of students who fully understand, partially understand, and do not understand. In addition to diagnostic assessment, teachers also use formative assessment and summative assessment. The formative assessment process is carried out in writing and orally by using quizzes or observing student activeness during the learning process. This assessment aims to monitor and improve the learning process. Reflection and evaluation of learning carried out by teachers is done by analyzing the results of the diagnostic assessment obtained. So that teachers can find out the competence and psychological state of students and this can be used as material for reflection and evaluation. Meanwhile, summative assessment is only carried out at the end of each chapter which aims to determine the achievement of student learning outcomes and this assessment is carried out in the form of a written test.

In addition to several assessments used in the classroom, teachers also use several learning methods that will make the learning process not boring. The learning methods that teachers use are problem-based cooperative learning models, discussions, technology, inquiry, etc. The application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method is applied by asking students to look for or find a problem that is around them which will later be identified the cause and later will be found a solution. Then, the application of the Project-Based Learning method is applied by giving projects to students on Saturdays with a block system (adjustment of effective learning hours in the classroom). And finally, the application of the Discovery Learning method which has been incorporated into the independent learning flow in the concept exploration section and has been applied in the classroom.

From the methods described, teachers also adjust assessment techniques to learning methods. The assessment techniques that teachers apply by making and determining plans and learning objectives, determining appropriate assessment techniques, implementing the assessment process, analyzing assessments and adjusting learning. These stages are of course always used by the teacher to get the desired results. This is also related to differentiated assessment. Where this assessment is based on the different needs and abilities of students. The process of applying differentiated assessment in the emancipated curriculum by giving learners the option to choose learning materials that are of interest to learners. This makes students who master certain materials will excel in that material which is in accordance with the interests and talents of students. In implementing differentiated assessment, of course, teachers experience obstacles, one of which is the large number of students. Where each class consists of an average of 40 people, which means that it will require more varied learning media. Meanwhile, the facilities



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from the school are less supportive and the narrow classroom makes it difficult for teachers to organize more varied activities in the classroom.

Result of Document Analysis

In this section, the researcher obtained the ATP (Flow of Learning Objectives) used when learning English in grade 9. This ATP contains topics used in grade 9 for 2 semesters. The purpose of making this ATP is to provide a reference for teachers in developing differentiated assessments. The researcher has analyzed the ATP given to grade 9 which consists of topics and activities developed for differentiated assessment according to the existing learning methods. The learning topics in question will be presented in the form of a table below:

Table 1. Flow of Learning Objectives

No.	Semester	Topics
1	1st Semester	Past Activities
		Recount (Self/someone experience)
2	2nd semester	Narrative (fable, legend, true/imagination story)
		Report (nature, events)

The researcher focuses on English ATP semester 1 for grade 9. Differentiated assessment instruments will be developed through these topics which will be adjusted to the learning methods used in the emancipated curriculum. The learning methods include: Project Based Learning, Problem Based Learning, and Discovery Learning. The learning topics used can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. English ATP semester 1

No.	Semester	Topics
1	1st Semester	Past Activities
		Recount (Self/someone experience)



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After the author collected data through interviews and analyzed the syllabus and teaching modules, the author found several important points. In the interviews, the teachers said that they have used the emancipated curriculum as their curriculum benchmark for grades 7, 8, 9. The application of the emancipated curriculum in this school is relatively new especially for grade 9 and the teachers are still groping for this application. The author found that assessment according to students' learning style has not been implemented well in this school. This can be seen when teachers only focus on cognitive assessment of students at the beginning of learning or the beginning of the semester which causes some students to have difficulty accepting learning that is not in accordance with each learning style. In addition, teachers also experience difficulties when implementing learning because of the large number of students in the classroom which results in students not being able to focus on their work. In addition, teachers experience a lack of learning media when implementing learning.

CONCLUSION

Emancipated curriculum is the latest curriculum that aims to catch up with learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the emancipated curriculum is also useful for developing teachers' ability to design and implement the curriculum. This can be seen in one school that has implemented the emancipated curriculum at all grade levels. The teachers have implemented this curriculum as well as possible and in accordance with the existing rules. However, there is still confusion when teachers implement this curriculum directly. One of them is when implementing diagnostic assessments conducted at the beginning of the semester. This assessment aims to find out the strengths and weaknesses of students and group students according to their learning styles so that the learning material is well received. However, this is still not getting enough attention. The author expects teachers to deepen their knowledge of assessment, especially assessment according to learning style because this is important for students when receiving learning.

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