

**ENGLISH TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN APPLYING
DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION IN THE MERDEKA
CURRICULUM**

A THESIS

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana
Pendidikan* in English Education Departmenet**



By :

Meimunah Luthfiana

2521104

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN
2025**

LEMBAR PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN SKRIPSI

Yang bertanda tangan dibawah ini:

Nama : Meimunah Luthfiana

NIM : 2521104

Fakultas : Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan

Dengan ini menyatakan bahwa skripsi yang berjudul **“ENGLISH TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN APPLYING DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION IN THE MERDEKA CURRICULUM”** adalah benar-benar hasil karya penulis, kecuali dalam bentuk kutipan yang telah penulis sebutkan sumbernya.

Demikian pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sebenar-benarnya.

Pekalongan, 26 Februari 2025



Meimunah luthfiana

2521104

Dr. Muhamad Jaeni, M.Pd, M.Ag
Perumahan Graha Naya Permata 2B, RT 06/RW 04,
Pekuncen, Wiradesa

NOTA PEMBIMBING

Lamp : 3 (Tiga) Eksemplar

Hal : Naskah Skripsi

Sdr. Meimunah Luthfiana

Kepada

Yth. Dekan FTIK UIN K.H Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan

c.q. Ketua Program Studi TBIG

di

PEKALONGAN

Assalamu 'alaikum Wr. Wb.

Setelah diadakan penelitian dan perbaikan, maka bersama ini saya kirimkan naskah Skripsi:

Nama : Meimunah Luthfiana
NIM : 2521104
Jurusan : FTIK/Tadris Bahasa Inggris
Judul : English Teachers' Strategies In Applying
Differentiated Instruction In The Merdeka
Curriculum

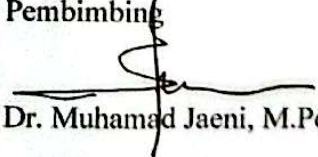
Dengan ini mohon agar skripsi tersebut segera dimunaqosahkan.

Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatian bapak/Ibu, saya sampaikan terima kasih.

Wassalamu 'alaikum Wr. Wb.

Pekalongan, 26 Februari 2025

Pembimbing


Dr. Muhamad Jaeni, M.Pd, M.Ag

NIP. 19750411 200912 1 002



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN
FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN ILMU KEGURUAN
Jalan Pahlawan KM. 5 Rowolaku, Kajen, Kabupaten Pekalongan
Website : <https://ftik.uingusdur.ac.id>/Email : ftik@uingusdur.ac.id

APPROVAL SHEET

The dean of Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, confirm that the undergraduate thesis by:

Name : Meimunah Luthfiana

NIM : 2521104

Judul : English Teachers' Strategies In Applying Differentiated Instruction In The Merdeka Curriculum

Has been examined and approved by the panel of examiners on March 17th, 2025 as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for Degree of Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd.) in English Education.

The Examiners,

Examiner I

Dewi Puspitasari, M.Pd
NIP. 19790221 200801 2 008

Examiner II

Riskiana, M.Pd
NIP. 197606121999032001

Pekalongan, March 16th 2025

Assigned by

The Dean of UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan



Prof. Dr. H. Moh. Sugeng Sholehuddin, M.Ag.,
NIP.197301122000031001

MOTTO

“ Surah Al-Insyiroh ayat 5-6 “

“Bahwa setiap kesusahan pasti ada kemudahan”



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ABSTRAK

Pembelajaran diferensiasi dalam Kurikulum Merdeka adalah pendekatan pengajaran yang disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan, minat, dan profil belajar siswa, sehingga setiap individu dapat berkembang sesuai dengan potensinya. Pendekatan ini memberikan fleksibilitas bagi guru dalam merancang strategi pembelajaran yang beragam untuk memastikan setiap siswa mendapatkan pengalaman belajar yang optimal. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi strategi yang digunakan oleh guru bahasa Inggris dalam menerapkan pembelajaran diferensiasi dalam kerangka Kurikulum Merdeka serta tantangan yang mereka hadapi dalam proses tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan analisis tematik untuk menganalisis data yang dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dengan dua guru bahasa Inggris di sekolah menengah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru menerapkan berbagai strategi diferensiasi dalam hal konten, proses, dan produk untuk menyesuaikan dengan kebutuhan belajar siswa yang beragam. Strategi tersebut mencakup penyediaan materi pembelajaran yang bervariasi, penggunaan metode pengajaran yang fleksibel, dan pemberian berbagai bentuk asesmen. Namun, guru juga menghadapi tantangan seperti keterbatasan waktu dalam merancang pembelajaran, jumlah siswa yang besar, dan tingkat motivasi siswa yang beragam. Meskipun menghadapi kendala tersebut, guru berupaya menyesuaikan pendekatan pengajaran mereka untuk menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang inklusif dan efektif. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman tentang pembelajaran diferensiasi dalam konteks Kurikulum Merdeka serta menyoroti perlunya dukungan lebih lanjut dan pengembangan profesional bagi guru dalam menerapkan strategi ini.

Kata kunci: Pembelajaran Diferensiasi, Guru Bahasa Inggris, Strategi

ABSTRACT

Differentiated instruction in the Merdeka Curriculum is a teaching approach tailored to students' needs, interests, and learning profiles, allowing each individual to develop according to their potential. This approach provides teachers with flexibility in designing diverse instructional strategies to ensure that every student has an optimal learning experience. This study explores the strategies used by English teachers in implementing differentiated instruction within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum, as well as the challenges they face in the process. The research employs a qualitative approach with thematic analysis to examine data collected through interviews with two high school English teachers. The findings reveal that teachers implement various differentiation strategies in terms of content, process, and product to accommodate students' diverse learning needs. These strategies include providing varied learning materials, using flexible teaching methods, and offering multiple forms of assessment. However, teachers also encounter challenges such as limited time for lesson planning, large class sizes, and varying levels of student motivation. Despite these obstacles, teachers strive to adapt their instructional approaches to create an inclusive and effective learning environment. This study contributes to the understanding of differentiated instruction in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum and highlights the need for further support and professional development for teachers in implementing these strategies.

Keywords: Differentiated Instruction, English Teachers', Strategy

PREFACE

Praise and gratitude are always given to Allah SWT, who has given health, grace and guidance, so the author is still given the opportunity to complete this thesis entitled **English Teachers' Strategies In Applying Differentiated Instruction In The Merdeka Curriculum**, as one of the requirements to obtain a bachelor's degree. Although far from perfect, the author is proud to have reached this opportunity, which finally this thesis can be completed on time. This thesis can be completed because of the help from various parties. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude and dedicate this thesis to:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LEMBAR PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN SKRIPSI.....	i
NOTA PEMBIMBING.....	ii
APPROVAL SHEET.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
MOTTO.....	vi
ABSTRAK.....	vii
ABSTRACT	viii
PREFACE	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background Of Study.....	1
1.2 Formulation Of Problems.....	3
1.3 Operational Definition.....	3
1.4 Aim Of Study.....	4
1.5 Significance Of Study.....	4
CHAPTER II THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK	6
2.1 Literature Review	6
1.1.1 Merdeka Curriculum In Education	6
1.1.2 Differentiated Instruction (Di) In English Lessons.....	11
1.1.3 English Teachers' Strategies Using Differentiated Instruction	13
2.2 Previous Studies	17
2.3 Conceptual Framework	20

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	21
3.1 Research Design	21
3.2 Research Context.....	21
3.3 Research Setting And Participants.....	22
3.4 Data Collection	22
3.5 Data Analysis.....	23
3.6 Research Steps.....	24
CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....	26
4.1 Findings.....	26
4.1.1 Implementation Strategies Of Differentiated Instruction In The Classroom.....	26
4.1.2 The Challenges Faced By English Teachers In Applying Differentiated Instruction In The Classroom	33
4.2 Discussion.....	35
4.2.1 The Strategies Used By English Teachers To Apply Differentiated Instruction In The Classroom	35
4.2.2 The Challenges Faced By English Teachers In Applying Strategies.....	45
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION.....	50
5.1 Summary of Findings.....	50
5.2 Recommendation	51
REFERENCES	52
APPENDICES.....	55

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The curriculum is a guideline for designing, implementing and evaluating the results of learning activities. Suryana (2014) argues that Curriculum is an organized framework that describes content, the learning process to help children achieve curriculum goals, what teachers do to help children achieve goals, and the context in which teaching and learning occurs. In addition, Beauchamp (1968) argued that the curriculum is a written document whose content contains subjects that will be taught to students through various subjects, choice of disciplines, problem formulation.

The Merdeka curriculum is a new policy from the Indonesian government which aims to provide flexibility and autonomy to schools and teachers in designing student-centered learning (Kemendikbud, 2021). This curriculum emphasizes developing student character and competence, as well as providing space for students to learn according to their interests, talents and abilities (Darmadi, 2022). In practice, Differentiated Instruction involves modifications in various aspects of teaching, such as content, process, product, and learning environment. Hall, et.al (2003) assert that differentiated instruction is a method of designing and delivering instruction to best reach each student." This

includes adjusting teaching materials, teaching methods, and the ways students demonstrate their understanding of the material. This approach is highly aligned with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, which provides flexibility for teachers to develop student-centered learning.

However, despite the theoretical support for Differentiated Instruction, its implementation in the field, particularly in the context of Indonesian education, faces various challenges. According to Subban (2006), The challenge for teachers is to manage a classroom that is inherently diverse in abilities, interests, and backgrounds. Teachers in Indonesia, especially at the high school level, often encounter difficulties in applying this approach due to limited resources, lack of training, and high workload.

This research aims to explore the strategies of English teachers in high schools in applying Differentiated Instruction under the Merdeka Curriculum. These strategies encompass various aspects such as planning, execution, and evaluation of learning. According to Hattie (2009), Effective teaching requires teachers to be adaptive and responsive to students' needs and backgrounds. In this context, a deep understanding of how teachers implement Differentiated Instruction can provide valuable insights to improve teaching and learning effectiveness.

Furthermore, this study seeks to identify the challenges faced by teachers and the strategies they use to overcome these obstacles. Gregory and Chapman (2007) note that Differentiated instruction requires a great deal of planning and effort on the part of the teacher. Therefore, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of Differentiated Instruction practices in Indonesian high schools, particularly in English subjects. As such, the findings of this research can offer concrete recommendations to support the effective and efficient implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

1.2 Formulation of the Problems

The Problem to be discussed in this research are as follows:

1. How did english teachers apply Differentiated Instruction (DI) in the merdeka curriculum?
2. What were the challenges faced by english teachers in applying Differentiated Instruction in the Merdeka Curriculum?

1.3 Operational Definition

The researcher provides the following definitions of this study:

1. Differentiated Instruction : Allison & Wood (2021) argue that differentiated learning is a student-centered teaching approach where teachers tailor instruction to the ways students learn, what they are interested in, and how they develop. Tomlinson (2001) stated that the implementation of Differentiated Instruction

involves three key approaches or strategies: differentiation of process, content, and product. These strategies are highly contextualized to teaching practices in Indonesia, for instance, by assigning reading comprehension tasks tailored to students' abilities and interests.

2. **Merdeka Curriculum** : Kemendikbud Ristek (2021) states that the Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum that provides learning freedom to students, teachers, and schools.
3. **Teachers' strategies** : a set of approaches used by teachers to create a supportive learning environment that guides students toward educational goals. According to them, Teaching strategies are the patterns of teacher's actions designed to facilitate students' learning in specific ways (Joyce & Weil, 1986).

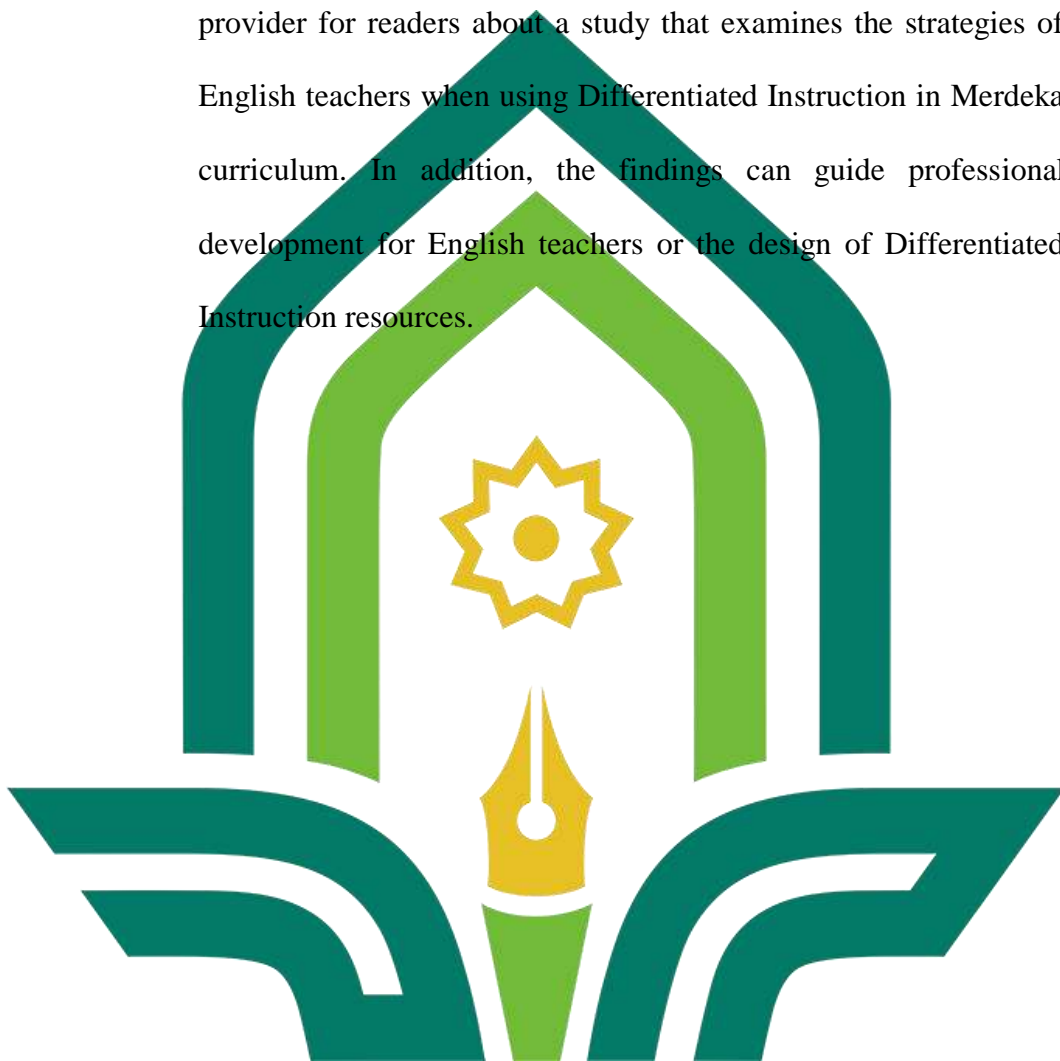
1.4 Aims of the Research

This research aims to find out what the strategies of English teachers are when using Differentiated Instruction in the Merdeka Curriculum. In addition, this research also aims to explore the challenges teachers face in applying Differentiation Instruction.

1.5 Significance of the Research

1. **Theoretical significance**: This research contributes and supports Differentiated Instruction Theory by Carol Ann Tomlinson (2001) related to differentiated Instruction problems

2. Empirical Significance: This research provides insight and increases practical knowledge for teachers in applying Differentiated Instruction in the classroom.
3. Practical Significance: This research can be used as an information provider for readers about a study that examines the strategies of English teachers when using Differentiated Instruction in Merdeka curriculum. In addition, the findings can guide professional development for English teachers or the design of Differentiated Instruction resources.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

Based on the findings presented in Chapter IV, this study has identified the strategies used by English teachers in applying differentiated instruction within the Merdeka Curriculum. The study revealed that teachers employed three primary differentiation strategies.

First, Content Differentiation. Teachers tailored learning materials based on students' interests, abilities, and learning styles. Through initial assessments, they provided varied content to match students' preferences, ensuring better engagement and comprehension. The second is Process Differentiation. Different instructional approaches were used to accommodate diverse learning styles. Teachers implemented strategies such as Project-Based Learning (PBL), Discovery Learning, and audiovisual aids to cater to students with different needs. The third is Product Differentiation. Students were given the flexibility to demonstrate their understanding through various outputs, such as essays, videos, infographics, presentations, and role-plays. This approach allowed students to express their knowledge in a way that aligned with their strengths and interests.

This study also highlights challenges such as limited preparation time, diverse material needs, and classroom management. Despite these, differentiated instruction enhances student engagement and learning outcomes. When implemented effectively, it meets diverse needs, fosters active learning, and supports the Merdeka Curriculum's goals.

5.2 Recommendation

Researcher provide several recommendation for readers and future researchers, including the following :

1. English Teachers

In this research, it is recommended that English teachers adapt their teaching strategies to suit the needs of their students. In learning, there is no absolute right or wrong strategy. A good strategy is one that enables students to achieve learning objectives while being oriented toward their individual needs.

2. Further Research

In further research, it is expected that there will be more references and participants relevant to the research topic on the strategies used by English teachers in implementing differentiated instruction as part of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Additionally, further studies should explore the strategies teachers use based on students' needs, interests, and abilities to achieve optimal learning outcomes.





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CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Detail

Name : Meimunah Lutfiana
Place/ Date of Birth : Pekalongan, 6 Mei 2003
Gender : Female
Citizen ship : Indonesia
Religion : Islam
Address : Jalan Jlamprang Krapyak Lor gang 5, RT 03
RW 07

Formal Education

- 2009 – 2015 : MSI 11 Nurul Islam
- 2015 – 2018 : MTs Nurul Islam
- 2018 – 2021 : MA K.H Syafi'i

