



## Differentiated Learning in Teaching English Subject of The Merdeka Curriculum

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study examines the implementation of differentiated learning in teaching English at the senior high school level, focusing on its strengths and challenges within the Merdeka Curriculum framework. Differentiated learning is applied through content, process, and product, allowing teachers to tailor instruction to students' needs. The findings highlight benefits such as enhancing student engagement, accommodating diverse learning styles, and fostering personalized instruction. However, challenges include complex lesson planning, inadequate school facilities, and inconsistencies in teaching approaches. The study emphasizes the need for teacher training, technical support, and infrastructure improvements to optimize its implementation. **Method:** This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach at Senior High School 1 Garawangi, Kuningan Regency, West Java. Data were collected through classroom observations and teacher interviews with 13 structured questions. The analysis explores how differentiated learning aligns with the Merdeka Curriculum, along with its practical challenges. **Results:** The study reveals that differentiated learning enhances student participation and learning outcomes but presents difficulties such as complex preparation, resource constraints, and varied teacher competencies. The study suggests enhancing teacher training, providing technical guidance, and improving school facilities. **Novelty:** This research provides new insights into differentiated learning within the Merdeka Curriculum, specifically in English language teaching, contributing to effective instructional strategies in Indonesia.

### INTRODUCTION

The Merdeka Curriculum, which was developed as a new strategy that theoretically incorporates both institutions and students in the learning process, is one of the solutions to the educational problems caused by the post-COVID-19 education crisis. It is intended that this curriculum will bring about improvements in Indonesian education that emphasize the growth of character and abilities based on learner competencies (Indarta et al., 2022). Rahina and Syamsi (2022) state that the Merdeka curriculum introduced by the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim, is a philosophy of change from the learning approach that has occurred so far. The Merdeka curriculum allows the educational environment to choose the optimal method to maximize learning. The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in the 2022/2023 school year in education units is carried out through Merdeka channels. Based on the Decree of the Head of the Education Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Agency of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 025/H/KR/2022 concerning the implementing education unit for the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum through Merdeka channels in the 2022/2023 academic year phase I, schools can implement a Merdeka curriculum with three categories, namely: a) Merdeka belajar; b) Mandiri berubah; and c) Merdeka.

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