

## ABSTRACT

**Permana, Ratu Asil (2025). Exploring Teachers' Assessment Practices for Students' Different Speaking Abilities in Differentiated Learning under the Merdeka Curriculum: A Case Study at Senior High School.**

Speaking is a fundamental skill in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), yet students often display different levels of speaking abilities, making assessment a complex task for teachers. Within the context of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum—which promotes differentiated learning—teachers are expected to implement flexible and fair assessment methods that cater to students' varied proficiency levels. This study investigates how EFL teachers assess students' speaking abilities through differentiated instruction and the challenges they face in doing so.

This qualitative case study involved one EFL teacher and several students from a Senior High School in Bandung, West Java. The data were collected through classroom observations and teacher interviews. The researcher analyzed the assessment methods based on formal and informal strategies and categorized student speaking abilities into three levels: low, medium, and high. The assessment practices were examined using the four pillars of differentiated learning: content, process, product, and learning environment.

The findings show that the teacher used both formal and informal methods, including presentations, picture-based tasks, and peer feedback. These were adjusted based on students' speaking abilities. However, challenges such as limited time, student confidence, and resource constraints affected assessment practices.

This study emphasizes the importance of adaptive assessment aligned with differentiated learning. Support and professional development are crucial to help teachers implement effective speaking assessments under the Merdeka Curriculum.

**Keywords:** *Speaking Assessment, Differentiated Learning, Merdeka Curriculum, Student Speaking Levels, EFL.*