

# Differentiated Instruction in English Language Teaching: Meeting the Needs of All Students

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## Abstract

An approach to teaching English as a second language (ESL) that takes into account the wide range of student backgrounds, talents, and requirements is known as differentiated instruction. This approach modifies lesson plans, course materials, and evaluation tools to accommodate students' unique learning styles. The goal is to make school a welcoming place where all students can thrive and develop to their maximum potential.

This study delves into the theory and practice of ELT differentiated instruction, looking at how it might boost student engagement, motivation, and performance. We review some differentiation tactics, like tiered assignments, personalized feedback, and flexible grouping, and show you how to use them in an English language teaching setting. We also discuss potential problems that educators may have and how to fix them so that differentiated teaching can be more widely used.

This paper reviews recent research and case studies to show how varied instruction can help ELT become more learner-centered. Differentiated education promotes academic success and an inclusive classroom culture by catering to each student's unique requirements.

**Keywords:** teaching, method, ELT, language, case study.

## 1. Introduction

English is the first foreign language taught and learned as a compulsory subject in more countries than any other language. It also has more learners than all other languages combined. As a result, the language courses served in formal education systems face an increasing

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diversity of learners, often existing within the same classroom. One of the recent pedagogical movements that focuses on the special needs of each learner for enabling the potential to become more productive is differentiated instruction.

Differentiated instruction in English refers to the approach of recognizing the individual "spectrum of diversity" and ranges of differences learners possess with regard to their language levels, cognitive abilities, and learning styles quite obviously. In other words, if we want our learners to develop competency in any standard of language – whether in reading and writing a language or speaking and listening to spoken discourse in and of our languages – we will need to use appropriate methods to enable meaningful development to occur for each one of them such that they become more able to participate and understand within the spectrum of situations they encounter. Despite many controversies regarding the implementation of adaption (differentiation) in complex textbook materials, this method has recently grabbed much attention. To trace the development of the application of differentiated language teaching innovation in foreign language teaching, the geometrical proportion between the students' English competencies, learning objectives, methods, and materials can describe a variety of learning outcomes based on what they are capable of learning. These considerations are the main idea in developing the pyramid of the differentiated instruction adopted from Tomlin's DVD of the Teaching and Developing the Four Language Skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing in 2006.

To be sure, many educators are now aware of the fact that learning differences are inevitable among students and indeed are to an extent positive; for instance, language learning strategies ought to vary among learners. Given the above, English language teachers are challenged to be able to create a student-centered learning atmosphere. This paper provides discussions and suggestions as to how to deal with such a mosaic of learning differences in terms of their needs, goals (learning objective), and interests as well as learning proficiency. Differentiated instruction (hence DI) is a "philosophy that enables the teacher to effectively teach a diverse classroom". An English Class can no longer be considered as a single-unit class; hence the mix of top, average, and slower learners must be taken into consideration and dealt with. Hence, it is the idea of educational bar which has been interpreted based on the pyramid instruction to meet the individual, whole-class, and environmental differences of learners. In addition, psychological and physical differences between students motivate the teaching method by providing students with a safe and successful educational environment. In such a differentiated classroom, teachers should promote a whole host of student abilities, such as reading directions, listening to spoken instructions, speaking, and examining study materials, in contrast to the sterile and standardized performance on large-scale exams. As a teacher, you must be able and ready to offer work based on the students' readiness. Remember that it is essential that you teach your students up, rather than the other way around. It is like allowing students to reach the top of a step ladder at their own rate in ascending order so that they can maintain a healthy pace.

### **1.1 Background and Rationale**

Differentiated instruction is not new, but it seems to be the "new buzz phrase" in education. When the No Child Left Behind Act was signed into law in the United States,

differentiation became mandatory. The U.S. government requires differentiation to meet the needs of academically diverse students. Consequently, schools and teachers are required to use different patterns in curriculum, instruction, and assessment to serve all students. The Indian government has also recently declared that students should be taught according to their interests, needs, and pace. Differentiation is the principle of teaching in accordance with student differences.

According to Brown (2004), the "Differentiated Instruction" concept is an idea from the 1990s, echoing Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the 1760s, to permit students to learn as they wish. Nowadays, differentiation is based on the principles of various educational thinkers: Dewey and Piaget stressed the need to adapt to the individual; Vygotsky concentrated on the effect of social interaction on the development of understanding; Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and kinesthetic learning; the theory of Learning Styles developed by Gregorc and McCarthy. Differentiating instruction is a teacher's response to learners' needs guided by general principles of differentiation, such as communication, instruction, and assessment. At that time, differentiation is a must for teachers to implement in the classroom. In the case of teaching language, for example, Wilbur (2003) suggests teachers respect the students' heterogeneities and understand the level of their students and prepare the lessons to include every student. To ignore any group of students is to the training of illiterate people, regardless of the students' entrance level.

## **2. Understanding Differentiated Instruction in English Language Teaching**

Differentiated instruction (DI) has become a frequently mentioned element of modern education, including English as a foreign (EFL) or second language (ESL) teaching and learning. Despite this, it is a complex and multifaceted concept which is difficult to define and categorize exactly. Furthermore, while many in the teaching profession agree that DI can benefit both students and teachers, students' and teachers' perceptions of DI may differ, especially in the international context like Vietnam where students do not understand leveled teaching in Vietnamese culture. As a new teaching approach in the Vietnamese context, DI seems to be far from being understood and well applied in our school contexts at different levels. Therefore, based on these points, the present paper aims to define or characterize DI applying in Vietnamese schools, knowledge of these principles should help teachers to more fully understand and apply this new teaching strategy.

Differentiated instruction is seen as a modern approach to learning, and it can be flexibly adapted to English language teaching. Authors argue that teachers typically use this teaching method to help students have a facility in a new language learning environment and improve suitable methods to meet the learning needs of the majority of students. In closing, teachers' use of DI is expected to elicit their successful benefits in a new educational system. Differentiated instruction (DI), developed by Tomlinson (2001) is currently commonly referred to by researchers in terms of English language teaching and learning in the international context. Many educators and writers, such as Beck (2004), Tomlinson (2005), and Yuksel (2009), have introduced and elaborated on the concept with the aim to provide its fundamental ideas and objectives, developed principles, characteristics, and operations, and most importantly discussed the actual or potential impact of the method in different school settings.

## **2.1 Definition and Principles**

Differentiated instruction is an approach to teaching and learning that is tailored to the needs of individual students with their learning preferences, abilities, and also their learning styles. Differentiated instruction provides opportunities for learning and making progress according to one's own pace as well. In the context of ELT, Brown (2007) explains that differentiated instruction is the 'planned teaching approach in "mixed-ability" classes that considers the varying learning needs of students and provides strategies to help teachers develop lessons based on the assumption that it is not effective to teach an entire class in a traditional manner based on the average learning preferences of individuals'.

Based on the aforementioned statement, several principles can be used to identify the differentiated instruction's theoretical basis. To begin with, differentiated instruction is an embedded teaching approach that is built upon quality instruction. This implies that good teaching may not be effective for all students. Therefore, according to the term 'one size does not fit all', differentiated instruction is based on the assumption that students' learning needs are different. In addition, greater emphasis is placed on what the student has learned rather than what the teacher teaches. According to this principle, the modification of the contents, materials, curriculum, and activities is oriented towards enhancing student learning outcomes (Tomlinson, 1999). Third, differentiated instructions are focused upon high and achievable expectations. The differentiated, similar standards are also expected from all students. The more techniques that are tailored to fit individual learners' needs, interests, and talent enhances the rate of learning achievement. Finally, a variety of activities and products may be employed to demonstrate what learners know, as well as different ways to support them in gaining new knowledge and skills. As Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) put it, 'Differentiated classrooms require that teachers be good content experts, great teachers, able to look at their students' differences and take them on a journey that helps them to use their strengths to learn whatever needs to be learned'.

## **3. Benefits and Challenges of Implementing Differentiated Instruction**

Differentiated instruction has been utilized by educators in various fields across the world in the 21st century. A study conducted by Orias et al. (2016) in the Spanish dental learning sector identified benefits to both students and educators. These advantages include improved learning, higher motivation for students, and teachers gaining personal satisfaction. It is believed that the use of this instructional approach can result in even more benefits, as students increasingly come to expect a more user-centered classroom and heterogeneous groups become the norm. However, there are still only a relatively small percentage of teachers implementing aspects of differentiated instruction in the traditional English as a second language classroom. The low rate of implementation may be due to several potential challenges teachers perceive when including differentiated instruction.

Educators must be prepared to teach lessons that have been modified, altered, or even developed from scratch to create a learning experience that is effective for a variety of learners. Harackiewicz (2002) posits that the primary challenge is that differentiated instruction is not inherently a "one size fits all" approach. If teachers do not have a deep understanding of their students on both a personal and an academic level, it can be challenging to differentiate lessons.

In order for a lesson to be successful, it is also important for the class to be given clear expectations and receive feedback on those assignments to ensure they successfully meet those expectations. In an English language classroom, assigning completely different readings or tasks to students based on their differing abilities can result in students feeling uncomfortable and singled out (Barton & Heidema, 2002). Typically, students do not like to be perceived as "different" in a language classroom.

### **3.1 Benefits**

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#### **3.1. Benefits**

Research shows that the use of differentiated instruction in the classroom has the following positive consequences:

1. Students' learning strategies are individualized and cater to diverse learning styles, fostering success in lesson goals.
2. Highly impactful and effective intervention offers enhancement in students' learning outcomes because the lesson content embraces what students already know, what they like to learn, and how they want to learn.
3. Task development for teaching and learning practices supports student cooperation while increasing student motivation.
4. Students' creativity in using English regarding real data generated by the students reflects the needs of EFL learners.
5. Individualized support and the provision of opportunities for sustainable success contribute to task completion for and among students within the classroom.
6. Inclusion with a view towards creating and sustaining a culture of cooperative teaching and instructional dialogue improves rapport among students while creating learning-oriented classrooms.

#### **3.2. Challenges**

Challenges are inevitable in implementing DI in classrooms because they are multifarious and complex and directly impinge on our ability to teach effectively. Integrating DI in English language teaching and learning creates some disequilibrium for many concerned educators. A whole range of variables should be taken into account carefully. Unquestionably, not all teachers can seamlessly integrate different strategies taught at universities. Also, teachers often face different sets of problems with different students. They often deal with slow learners who do not engage fully with the learning materials, average learners who get bored easily with routine class activities, fast learners who are too aggressive or too passive in the classroom, students with special needs, etc.

Besides, there are some practical problems to take into account that need to be analyzed carefully. Whether teachers like it or not, workload is always a threat in a public school with its big classes. What happens more often is that teachers are not given enough time to design individual learning needs for every student, particularly when it is insisted that all students must have the same material to cover. The number of students also deters teachers from giving more attention to individual learners. Even if schools allowed for such differentiation, one would question its practicality. It may be a tall order to make a student with a beginning proficiency level feel good and worthy in the PLP course, where all other students who have completed four or five levels already are exposed to higher order thinking skills. It may pose

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pedagogical and practical challenges to teachers who are supposed to adjust their teaching methods to meet each student's different individual needs.

#### **4. Strategies for Implementing Differentiated Instruction in the English Language Classroom**

1. Use authentic materials. a. Level Students are on different proficiency levels. Some students will benefit from reading a text, while others might need an audio recording with textual information. Low-interest materials can be highly engaging.

2. Use topical materials. a. Students guessing the lesson topic can offer insight into what interests students in the class. b. Student and teacher-developed materials. Buy-in is important, especially if the students' input or effort is required. That being said, not all students will be interested in all of the lessons, and not all topics will meet all of the individual needs of the students in the class.

3. Individualized or peer group support. It is important for the teacher to mediate support from students, rather than letting it be voluntary. Choosing group mates for an activity or project, as well as determining each member's role in the group, can be useful. A round-robin, rotating support schedule is also a useful strategy.

4. In-depth support. In-depth support is important as it assists in involving the less interactive students. The types of in-depth support can be level-based (low levels may use a dictionary, while higher levels may simply check definitions), interest-based (comics instead of newspapers; mystery stories instead of fantasy), or even language dominant. For example, a Vietnamese-dominant student and a Russian-dominant student might be paired to support each other throughout the lesson.

##### **4.1. Tiered Assignments**

The term tiered assignments is often associated with Carol Ann Tomlinson's theory of differentiated instruction. In its most simple form, a tiered assignment entails an assignment that is broken down into its parts or to some degree level of a different pedagogical sophistication. The emphasis here is on providing all students with access to the content, facts, and skills that meet their ability and interest level as well as the instructor's teaching purpose. Breaking down an assignment into its more simplified segments seems to relate to differential instruction per the work of cognitive psychologist Lev Vygotsky. According to Vygotsky's cognitive constructivist theory, different individuals will be able to grasp different pieces of data. Some students will be able to grasp data for a greater cognitive packing, while others only for lesser measures of cognitive packing. Therefore, by breaking these cognitive data into their smallest components, all learners can "fill their ZPD Zone of Proximal Development".

In contrast to that point of view, requiring higher functioning students to complete a higher level of assignment prior to working on the simpler assignments may be setting up the higher functioning students to fall into the pattern of negative processing beliefs. When

students with varied learning profiles can effectively engage in the same instructional process, what is a higher level or a lower level? A tiered assignment can afford to be a simple solution that allows students with varied levels of functioning to productively learn the same content or skill.

#### **4.2 Flexible Grouping**

Flexible grouping, which can be of two types: informal or formal, aims at organizing students into different types of small groups to work at different tasks depending on the learning objectives. Teachers can arrange or rearrange the groups according to the activities and the objectives they have in mind. Informal flexible grouping is recommended by some practitioners for it can reflect the teaching practice in English language teaching lessons in China. Teachers actually tend to gather students together into groups based on informal formulations rather than according to varied learning capacities and learning needs that are well-offered in differentiated instruction. This phenomenon could be explained by the Chinese teachers' own educational experience in China or the region in which they grew up or were schooled. The teachers' groups as a whole could obtain valuable information from observing or interacting with each other and develop their expertise in differential grouping and assignments. Formal flexible grouping appears to be found more in more developed EFL teaching practices in other regions and that could be useful to English language teaching as a field rather than as helping individual teachers in the field.

Flexible grouping and regrouping can provide additional holistic information to place students in the right categories; enhance linkage among students to exchange information and bring out the feeling of "I can do"; and build up good rapport among the students to benefit from the collaborative teaching and learning environment. The positive grouping experience can make students work more efficiently and develop a better personality. Furthermore, the students' performance shall be improved because students are provided with opportunities to work on the tasks with like-ability peers for gaining a great sense of achievement, developing an external locus of control, and being challenged. The major advantage of flexible grouping and regrouping is that, as far as the learners can perform a certain task, they will have a chance to be placed at different levels, allowing only about one-fourth of the original group of the students at the same level to remain at different levels for further placement through more detailed information obtained from a variety of tests and other activities.

#### **4.3. Learning Contracts**

Description A learning contract is an individualized behavioral strategy presented in written form. It helps learners begin to develop goals, strategies, and timelines to address difficulties and to build their strengths. Ideally, the document provides individualized information about the student and the intensity of the services implemented, the appropriateness of this particular intervention to meet the student's low and high achievement levels, and any adaptive materials, supplemental strategies, interventions, and supports.

Construction of a Learning Contract Administrators, teachers, and personnel from other academic area content courses can assist in creating learning contracts. Ideally, these contracts are completed as a team effort with student and parent input. Learning contracts should not be

used to dictate specific protocols for assessment or instruction. Rather, they should serve to guide how instructional content is selected and presented.

Implementation of a Learning Contract Implementing a learning contract encourages student involvement and responsibility for learning. The process of identifying learning characteristics and negotiating a contract with student participation enhances teacher and student communication. Performance on the contract assessments will generally improve over time, assuming that the underlying purpose of the document is being addressed. This will be reflected in final grades and attitudes concerning personal self-worth on the part of the student. Writing instructions in smaller incremental steps, using daily or frequent conferences, and including students in the assessment and grading of their own work promote the effectiveness of learning contracts. Besides serving as a tool to increase individualization, learning contracts foster in students a more positive approach to their work. Casual responses from observation or teacher opinion show that these inventive approaches tend to create a sense of pride and positive motivation for the student. The results of using learning contracts to differentiate instruction clearly demonstrate that writing such contracts is worth the time and effort to produce them.

### **5. Assessment in a Differentiated Instruction Environment**

Assessment is an important component of instruction and should match the philosophy of differentiated teaching because it provides the teacher with an idea of students' readiness, interests, and learning style. Differentiated assessment evaluates students' learning after acquiring appropriate knowledge and skills and at a level at which students are learning. In identifying students' readiness levels, assessment should include formative assessments that should meet the needs of the students for differentiation to be successful. Formative assessments occur after planning and during instruction, while summative assessments are cumulative and are given at the end of the instruction. Several examples of formative assessments in implementation for differentiated instruction are learning centers, graphic organizers, open response questions, journal writing, student-led conferencing, and questioning. Advantages of formative assessment in a differentiated classroom go beyond just helping children. Formative assessments help identify effective teaching strategies and areas that need attention in planning differentiation via small groups based on in-process learning data as well as group assessment in progress and at the end of a topic.

Principles to consider in formative assessments in a differentiated environment include the recognition by students of the alignment between daily learning objectives and the formative assessment process. Teachers support students through verbal mechanisms when a formal assessment of student learning is implemented, recognizing the support including feedback, questioning, and acknowledgment of all students. Formative assessments' connection to teacher planning for the next learning opportunity must acknowledge the need to differentiate. As a part of formative assessment, differentiation can be applied in advance of enacting responses to the data from assessments. Formative assessments must acknowledge how they work in concert with formal (synchronic and pertinent to state standards) assessments.

#### **5.1. Formative Assessment Strategies**



Moreau (2014) suggested that teachers can use a continuum of assessment strategies to assess students formally and informally. It is important to gather information on students' learning preferences and then further divide the students according to their English language learning readiness. Formative assessment can occur on a daily basis in the English language classroom and can occur in a variety of methods. Some formative assessment strategies that teachers may use include engagement, probes, response logs and journals, observation, and conferences.

To increase inquiry and metacognition of the English language content, some assessments that Moreau suggests include engagement and probes. The teacher asks those students who were actively engaged in the material at their level about their thoughts. They could respond to their peers' voices, sounds, and movements and ponder how the sounds could help them improve their pronunciation. The teacher might ask what specifically they heard - vowel sounds, tongue placement, voice pitch, and word stress.

The teacher also probes for students' understanding of vocabulary and grammar structures. The teacher asks students to refine described steps in their own words and increase their understanding from inaccuracies or inaccuracies in their interpretation of the assignments. Another assessment strategy that teachers can use for continuous assessment is response logs and journals. In writing journals, students respond to teacher-initiated questions with their collaborative discussions, questions, and second language or concept learning. Teachers can observe and give a response journal grade based on the depth of inquiry the student has initiated into the English or targeted subject matter.

When the teacher conferences with students during the writing process, conclusions for present and future learning of the English language are informal formative assessment tools. The student shows through talking and writing the linguistic concepts that the student has mastered. The teacher sets conferences when they can provide students with the most instructional value, and the student will view it as a valuable learning experience.

## **6. Technology Integration in Differentiated Instruction**

Integration of technology: The facilitator of differentiated instruction in English language teaching

Technology has already impacted teaching and learning processes significantly. Instructors have sought to integrate technological tools into their instructional processes not only to avoid becoming "outdated" or "traditional" teachers. EFL/ESL teachers who often use unconscious differentiated activities have recently aimed to personalize them according to students' ability levels, learning styles, and preferences by integrating digital tools. Thus, they can sustain suitable activities for every student so as to induce achieving the pre-decided goals. Identifying the differences and using them to service the teaching-learning process in classrooms via digital platforms, they aim to facilitate the process and material-related adaptations to an appropriate difficulty level for each learner. Here are some of the most popular digital platforms and tools that contribute to differentiated instruction in English language

teaching. Moreover, since the advent of language teaching and learning, teachers have long been asked and tasked to meet the diverse needs of the students.

Incorporating the technological tools into traditional teaching to realize student differentiation via challenging, high-level critical-thinking activities, one of the most popular video response platforms is Flipgrid, which allows students to express themselves with short video clips. Another one is Edpuzzle, which is used to make normal video clips more interactive. ClassDojo is another tool teachers can use to communicate with students' families. Teachers can take and post pictures of students undergoing various educational activities and behaviors. They can receive positive, negative or "needs to improve" Dojo points that the parents can view in their child's profile online. These tools contribute to providing accessibility to varied activities, such as tutoring activities and adapted work packet activities relevant to all the students, including low-, at-, and above-grade-level students.

### **6.1. Digital Tools for Diverse Learners**

Technology can help provide an adaptive or personalized learning environment for diverse learners. These digital tools can automatically measure each student's individual reading level, automatically assign reading materials that best match their level, and track their progress. Likewise, digital tools can assess the reading level or someone's current proficiency in a certain subject, providing a personalized recommendation for their studies. For example, as OER, at the Center for Open Education's College Open Textbooks there are a variety of textbooks in various levels of history and science, which were assembled from chapters by College OPEN using the A.S. Alejano-based tool Reading Levels and can be found at Transitioning or Below or Independent Reading.

There are so many digital resources and tools for reading and writing in English and other languages that it would be impossible to include them all. This list includes some digital tools, websites, apps, and computer programs to serve the needs of diverse learners while some of the benefits can change with app updates or new operating system releases. When considering the use of digital tools with diverse learners, additional factors to consider are the overwhelm. These digital tools have been classified into subcategories based on their functions. It is important to remember that digital tools should be used to support instruction, meet the needs of diverse learners, and emphasize the "who" and the "what" of instruction. The use of digital tools should be driven by the learning objectives and the diverse needs of the students who use them.

### **7. Cultural and Linguistic Considerations in Differentiated Instruction**

It is important for teachers to align differentiated instruction with students' linguistic and cultural needs. A culturally relevant curriculum that takes students' cultural capital, or what they know from their own lived experience and culture, into consideration can help support English language learning. When students feel that their teacher respects their cultural and linguistic identities and can connect their students' various forms of capital with the lesson, students feel seen and heard. It is important for teachers to show through their curriculum design that all students are capable of learning. Presenting students with an optimistic narrative of possibility can also show students that their teacher reasons that English language learners

can learn grade-level material during the regular school day with an accomplished, capable teacher.

Discussing behavioral, academic, social, and medical factors with bilingual teaching professionals can help provide required data about individual learners. These will help all English language educators understand administrative policies and increase their understanding of or expose any hidden assumptions about differentiated instruction and necessary skills and program goals for English language learners. Regardless of the subject, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities in a lesson helps make the lesson more accessible to students who learn in different ways. Use disposable gloves when collecting papers or using hand sanitizer prior to writing in or marking homework. Teaching students the science-based diseases of importance and measures to prevent or reduce spread on pathology is a direct way to support the whole child. Ensuring student understanding of lesson priorities is also important in differentiating instruction for English language learners.

### **7.1. Supporting English Language Learners**

Supporting English language learners - Differentiated instruction in English language teaching: Meeting the needs of all students.

English language learners bring a diversity of learning needs to our classrooms. English language learners (ELLs) may need linguistic and cultural accommodations to be successful, and as English language teachers, we need to find effective strategies for offering English language learners a supportive and welcoming environment, while also challenging them academically. This paper presents the concept and approach of differentiating instruction (DI) as applicable to the English language classroom. Insights are provided on what DI is and is not, the principles for successful implementation of DI, suggestions for planning and teaching from a DI perspective, the support that teachers will need when implementing DI, and a practical demonstration and approach of how to effectively differentiate an English language lesson.

Today's classrooms are diverse in culture, language, and academic readiness. Teachers are searching for ways to meet the many needs of students and recognize that a lack of appropriate challenge or an inability to make content comprehensible to ELLs compromises instruction. ELLs all have varying proficiency levels in the varying domains of the language skills - reading, writing, listening, speaking - and their varied degree of literacy in their first language must inform instruction. The background of ELLs also greatly differs. Some may have studied in their countries of origin, while others may not have had any formal education histories to speak of. Others may have studied in academically stellar schools, while some may have come from years spent as unschooled farmers in remote rural areas. Although we cannot alter these life circumstances, we can, however, modify our curriculum and language objectives to be in line with the students' experiences.

### **8. Professional Development for Teachers**

Definitely, it is a must that all stakeholders pull together, including the administrators, on professional development programs that support differentiated instruction, especially in a more diverse classroom. Gardner, in her book on Differentiated Instruction, stresses that "conferences, summits, seminars, and special workshops now support teachers who are delving

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into differentiated instruction." In fact, even in countries which practice centralized education where everything is dictated by the ministry, many schools can still modify and innovate. Teachers need to be given enough education, skills, and practical training in the embodying or translating in the classroom, differentiating everything including assessments and feedback.

As aforementioned, differentiated instruction benefits everyone. It is a belief system that grows into a methodology or method of instruction that is based on cooperation, inclusiveness, and common understanding. It is a classroom for all possible learning outcomes where nobody is eliminated thanks to differentiated instructional practices exercised. Nonetheless, to be knowledgeable, skillful, and manage a differentiated classroom profitably, English teachers, including the administrators, must undergo continuous training in the context of workshops and seminars in which differentiation is presented distinctly. Then workshop methods are conducted to turn the content to learn about into activities and assessments. This method provides the opportunity for teachers, especially new teachers, to process, practice, and use the materials in possible formats.

### **8.1. Training Programs and Workshops**

#### **8. Support for practicing teachers**

##### **8.1. Training programs and workshops**

Differentiated instruction is often referred to as best practice in contemporary pedagogy, as it caters to the needs of the whole class, integrates a wide range of teaching and learning techniques, and motivates each student while valuing their unique contribution to the learning experience. However, although one of the best starting points for contemporary approaches to differentiated instruction lies in the reformer's appeal to the vast majority of teachers who believe in a student-centered approach and the value of learning through active experiential approaches, it requires teachers to have certain skills and competencies. A learner-centered approach seems to have always been a part of teacher training courses that aimed to prompt from the trainee teacher skills developed under traditional training conditions and methodologies, for instance, as well as to think about individual sympathies and individual preferences in comparison to standardized assessment.

So far, the competencies needed for a successful and practical implementation of differentiated instruction are looked to be best acquired through training and professional development provided by ongoing one-shot workshops and short-term experiences in districts, often called the hungry, hurried, and harassed. Mastering fundamentally new approaches like differentiation is best accomplished by practitioners doing so in the course of other working relationships, like in Study Circles, Critical Friends Groups (CFG), or Professional Learning Communities (PLC) where projects grow over time based upon established norms. Ongoing, job-embedded (DC) support has a significant impact on the likelihood that educational reform will lead to higher levels of teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Ignoring this support is a strategy for failure.

## **9. Research and Evidence Supporting Differentiated Instruction in English Language Teaching**

There is a growing body of research studies and empirical evidence showing that differentiated instruction is a powerful instructional tool for diverse learners, particularly in

second language classrooms. Scholars have shown that learning is inherently differentiated: learners come with diverse background knowledge, experiences, skills, interests, and cultural and linguistic proficiency. Teachers and teacher educators, therefore, need to be prepared to offer diverse options to meet the diverse learning needs of 21st-century students. The Common Core State Standards in the United States, as well as educational standards in other countries, also emphasize the importance of addressing the needs of diverse learners. Meeting diverse learners' needs in the classroom is good pedagogy and is increasingly grounded in international standards and beliefs about education's role in promoting social justice.

Differentiated instruction is fundamentally learner-centered, underscores the importance of formative assessment, and encourages teachers to build on learners' assets and strengths. As Zabel stated: "Creative ESL [teachers] and resource teachers move away from traditional skills monitoring to take on problem-solving or instructive teaching... Indeed, cooperative learning (or some version of language groups) and tutoring are natural extensions of the orientations of those who continue learning about learner-centered instruction." Differentiated or responsive instruction is an appropriate pedagogy for the domain of foreign and second-language education as it enables students to make solid progress in language learning through working with the language modalities in which they are characterized by potential.

### **9.1. Studies and Findings**

Studies and findings directly pertaining to differentiated instruction

A number of studies provide evidence for those advocating for the use of a differentiated learning approach in English language teaching. Data from a small-scale study undertaken during the course of this research supports the potential of differentiated instruction to meet the varying needs encountered in language classes, thus promoting learner achievement, motivation, and self-confidence. According to the author, the adoption of a differentiated approach appeared to affect students' communicative confidence most directly. Another study, investigating the effectiveness of differentiated instruction in reducing foreign language anxiety, supports the potential of this approach to this end. While findings in support of a differentiated approach appear promising, several further, larger in scale studies have supported the efficacy of differentiation.

Gibbons (2002), for example, has insisted upon the importance of catering to the needs of English language learners in mainstream classrooms and of differentiating content, process, and outcome by modifying both the input made available to the learner and the manner in which language acquisition is assessed. A number of researchers advocate in favor of the theory of differentiated instruction, in addition to outlining the key principles upon which this learning approach is based. Mattesich and Mattesich (2010) describe differentiated instruction as a useful framework within which to develop a pedagogical sense that transcends traditional constraints. Moreover, Edwards, Adams, and Brown describe differentiated instruction as "a set of principles for effective teaching that offer students a range of choices and spread the responsibility for learning across all of the learners.

## **10. Conclusion and Future Directions**

The rich bibliography reviewed has revealed that differentiated instruction, in the form of flexible grouping, sharing learning outcomes, and collaborative and co-generative assessment, is a promising practice to meet the complex nature of inclusion that challenges schools and their staff. However, empirical research reveals that there is still a long way to go in educating all children from the diversity of their learning dispositions and biographical experiences.

This study made several contributions to the existing literature on English language teaching. Firstly, in line with the perspectives of Leonhard and Wieland, it has situated this work in the field of language, society, and education, and thus views English not only as a tool for communicating but also as the domain of power, education, and socio-politics. Therefore, the discussion has moved beyond the critical analysis of the three-tier education system to explore how the use of activity theory from the opportunities provided by differentiated instruction.

Secondly, it has critically reconceptualized how English language teaching appears among different student teachers. Thirdly, the paper traced the outcomes of using differentiated instruction by the student teachers in English language classrooms. Thus, in creating a chain, this research explores how a three-tier education system is experienced by primary student teachers and how it is delivered in the classroom once they qualify as teachers.

To develop the nascent recommendations above, research would have to fulfill the following aims in investigating the design and deliverability of differentiated instruction in English language teaching classrooms. The paper will provide a methodological tool that, in itself, offers state-of-the-art and accessible insights into how to draw from research methods driven by dialectical and social theory. This study was an attempt to bring to the fore the sociologically grounded insights into the implementation of differentiated instruction. Given the small-scale exploratory nature of the research, a research question was drawn primarily to understand the effect of differentiated instruction on teaching and learning.

The empirical research and discussion explored the role of English in society and the student teachers' identity, the implications for English language teacher education, and revealed the drivers and constraints that underpin preservice teachers' practice. It has also investigated the way English language teaching appears in students' perception and their actual English language teaching practice.

### **10.1. Summary of Key Points**

This essay examines differentiated instruction and its application in the language classroom. Differentiated instruction adapts to learner needs and outcomes. As it concerns the language arts, differentiated instruction is a way to compensate for the diversity of teaching contexts, content, individual readiness, and interest in taught students. It has a wide scope, as it aims to offer systematic learning for all while also meeting the needs of diverse students. This leads to a more individual-based approach with more choices for individual learners. The traditional classroom provides one point of view on the mass level for all learners in the field

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of language, literature, and writing. Differentiated instruction makes use of a variety of learning settings, evaluation strategies, and teaching methods.

English language teaching (ELT) is no longer based on books and newspapers only; the communicative competence of the individual is essential. Although there is a need to speak English for international comparability, there is little time for ELT in the traditional classroom to guarantee subject completeness. Differentiated instruction is a step towards integrating the teaching of grammar with a variety of beginners, middle-aged, premature, and advanced student benchmarks while overcoming the language barrier existing in ELT. A practical application of differentiated instruction, teachers' attitudes, and classroom evaluation can be used in a separate research that determines the impact of differentiated instruction on student schooling.

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