

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTIONS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES: EMERGENCE, COMPONENTS AND TRENDS

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Abstract:

Since the middle of the 20th century, differentiated education has been a subject of study and interest for foreign language teachers. However, as educators and researchers started looking into creative ways to fulfill the various requirements of language learners, it received more notoriety and recognition in the field of language education in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The article reviews the idea of differentiated instruction, its emergence points, main components and trends in teaching a foreign language today. The article also highlights the actuality of differentiated instructions and provides recommendations for educators and institutions to effectively integrate it in their teaching strategies.

Key words: differentiated instruction, individualized education, CLT, SLA, educational phycology

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What is differentiated instruction and how it emerged?

Differentiated instruction is a method that takes into account the various learning styles and demands of each learner when teaching foreign languages. Using this approach, training is customized to each student's unique needs, taking into consideration their learning preferences, aptitudes, interests, and prior knowledge.

The fields of education and pedagogy more broadly serve as the foundation for differentiated instruction in the teaching of foreign languages. A response to the realization that students have a variety of learning needs, skills, backgrounds, and interests is the concept of differentiated instruction. Rather than taking a one-size-fits-all strategy, the goal is to deliver individualized and flexible training that matches the needs of all learners. [1]

The principles of differentiation have long been used in language education, even though the history of differentiated instruction in foreign language teaching explicitly may not be as well-documented as in other subject areas (Tomlinson, 2001).

The followings are some significant historical advancements and factors influencing foreign language training that is differentiated:

1. Individualized instruction: Language education has long included the idea of individualized instruction, which adjusts learning activities to each student's needs. The necessity of modifying education to take into account students' diverse interests, learning preferences, and language skill levels has been acknowledged by language educators.

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2. Research on second language acquisition (SLA): Differentiated instruction in foreign language instruction has been impacted by research on second language acquisition. Teaching strategies that are more tailored to the needs of each individual student have been made possible by an increased understanding of how pupils pick up language skills and the variables that influence language learning.

3. Communicative language teaching (CLT): During the 1970s and 1980s, CLT became a well-known method of teaching languages. In addition to encouraging teachers to design realistic and interesting learning experiences for their students, CLT places a strong emphasis on meaningful communication and engagement in the target language. Because it encourages student-centered and participatory language acquisition, this strategy fits in nicely with the ideas of differentiated education.

4. Theories of learning and educational psychology: Instructional strategies in differentiated instruction are informed by theories of learning and educational psychology. Theorists like Lev Vygotsky (sociocultural theory), Benjamin Bloom (taxonomy of educational objectives), and Howard Gardner (multiple intelligences) have shed light on how children learn best and how teachers may accommodate a varied range of learners in the classroom. [2]

How it works? Key components of differentiated instruction.

Three essential components make up differentiated education, according to Tomlinson (2001): content, procedure, and product. To fulfill the needs of students at different competence levels, teachers can present content that is varied in terms of difficulty, complexity, or depth. For instance, advanced students might be assigned writing projects or reading texts that are more difficult, while failing students would be given easier reading materials or more help.

Teachers can provide students with several methods to interact with the topic in terms of process. Multimedia materials, individual projects, group work, and practical exercises are a few examples of this. Teachers can accommodate a range of learning preferences and styles by offering a variety of learning experiences.

Lastly, teachers might let students use various methods to exhibit their grasp of the material. Students may decide to write a conventional essay, make a multimedia presentation, or act out a skit in the language of instruction. Students can demonstrate their hobbies and strengths while still achieving learning objectives thanks to this flexibility.

Trends in differentiated instruction.

As it was noted above this strategy promotes the provision of different pathways to learning success while acknowledging that learners have diverse backgrounds, interests, and skills. Diversified instruction has seen a number of trends in recent years, which are indicative of continuing advancements in educational theory and practice (Tomlinson, 2010).

Here are a few significant developments in differentiated education:

- Personalized Learning: Stressing the value of student-centered and tailored instruction, personalized learning has become a popular trend in education. Personalized learning in differentiated education is designing lessons based on the individual strengths, interests, and learning styles of each student.

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL): This framework offers several avenues for representation, expression, and involvement in order to support

inclusive teaching practices. UDL emphasizes adaptability and accessibility in instructional design to serve all learners, which is closely aligned with the ideas of differentiated teaching.

- Technology Integration: Personalized learning experiences are made possible by the growing prevalence of technology integration in differentiated instruction. Adaptive learning platforms, digital materials, and online evaluations are examples of technology tools that teachers can use to tailor their lessons to the needs of their varied student body.

- Collaborative Learning: To accomplish shared learning objectives, students are encouraged to collaborate in groups or pairs using collaborative learning practices. Collaborative learning exercises in diversified education can offer chances for peer assistance, group problem-solving, and customized feedback based on the requirements of each learner.

- Competency-Based Education: Unlike traditional grade levels or seat time, competency-based education places an emphasis on mastery of particular learning outcomes or competencies. With differentiated education, competency-based approaches can be strengthened since students can advance at their own speed and show mastery of specific information or skill areas.

- Culturally Responsive Teaching: This method of instruction emphasizes appreciating and acknowledging the identities, experiences, and cultural backgrounds of students throughout the educational process. Culturally responsive practices in differentiated instruction entail using a variety of viewpoints, resources, and teaching techniques that honor students' cultural history and encourage inclusivity.

- Data-Driven Instruction: This method entails making instructional decisions based on assessment results and student performance measures. Teachers can use formative assessment data to determine students' areas of strength and growth in differentiated instruction, then modify the lesson to match each student's unique learning needs. [3]

Conclusion

In conclusion, in order to address the various needs of students and encourage language learning for all learners, differentiated instruction is a useful approach when teaching foreign languages. Teachers can establish a welcoming and stimulating learning environment that supports language acquisition and competency by offering a range of instructional methodologies and chances for student choice and autonomy. Teachers can effectively help all learners in learning language skills by using a variety of teaching strategies, materials, and evaluations.

A growing emphasis on individualized, inclusive, and learner-centered methods to teaching and learning is reflected in the trends in differentiated instruction. These trends can be used into teaching strategies to help instructors build dynamic and productive learning environments that meet the various demands of all learners.

References:

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