

Insight into The Concept of Differentiated Approach in Teaching English As A Foreign Language

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Abstract: Differentiated approach (variable approach) is considered as one of the peculiar and effective methods of teaching a foreign language in various educational establishments. The major advantage of this method is that variable approach takes in consideration needs, abilities, learning styles, the level of subject knowledge and interests of learners. Therefore, there is a great necessity for educators to research much more and study the beneficial potentials of the differentiated approach. In this article the author analyzed the latest scientific literature and resources in attempt to discover more theoretical and practical significance and implication, methodology and implementation, benefits, drawbacks and instructional strategies of this variable approach in the foreign language teaching pedagogy.

Keywords: Differentiated approach, variable approach, method, English, TEFL, ESP, EAP, EFL, ESL, ESOL, TESOL, needs, level, foreign language, technology, educator.

Introduction: Differentiated approach in foreign language teaching is used by educators around the world. Each of these approaches has its own advantages and disadvantages. Teaching a foreign language is a multifaceted task for every teacher and involves certain problems in the learning process.

It is a requirement of the time that foreign language teachers effectively use teaching approaches to improve students' foreign language skills in the learning process. In the pedagogy of foreign language teaching, scientists have proposed various approaches to foreign language teaching over the years. It should be emphasized that each approach has its strengths and weaknesses.

Nowadays, one of the modern and innovative approaches to foreign language teaching is the differentiated approach.

Carol Ann Tomlinson, who conducted extensive research and written about the differentiated approach (also variable approach), believes that a foreign

language teacher should not forget that each of his students has his own unique talents, interests, abilities, and specific learning styles.

Variable approach, among other approaches to education, is considered as the practice of developing the most effective and useful ways and methods for each student to master knowledge and adapting foreign language teaching to the individual needs of students [1].

Furthermore, in this approach, the ability to set clear learning goals is of particular importance. C.A. Tomlinson in her book "Variation of Teaching in a Group with Different Levels of Knowledge" notes that in a class with different levels of knowledge, common features are taken into account and justified and differences in students' learning styles also become important elements in teaching and learning a foreign language.

According to Tomlinson, at the most basic level of instruction, "variable instruction means 'invigorating' the classroom process in a positive way, and students

have multiple choices in how they receive new knowledge, how they understand it, and how they ultimately express what they have learned. That is, a differentiated classroom provides each student with a variety of ways to effectively learn, to acquire the material (the content), to understand the new information (the process), and to express the knowledge they have learned as a final product" [1].

Tomlinson's emphasis on "content," "process," and "product" is fundamental to the theory and practice of variable instruction.

The journal *Leadership in Education*, founded in 1943 by the Association for Monitoring and Developing Science Programs (ASCD), devoted an entire issue of 1953 to the topic of "The Problem of Individualized Variability."

The journal invites its readers to read and analyze Carlton W. Washburn's article "Adapting the Science program to the child." The article also deeply analyzes the importance of providing methodological support and developing strategies for each student "to achieve high educational results according to his abilities" by Frederick Burke and other educators in the 1910s.

According to the definition of the Russian online pedagogical encyclopedia, "Differentiated education" is education that is aimed at the diverse educational needs of students (from the Latin - "variable"), adapted to the specific culture, region of residence, interests of society, and educational tasks.

METHODS

Variable learning provides the student with the opportunity to make free, personal choices, make independent decisions, and also creates the basis for independently finding unique ways to understand knowledge and gain experience in a changing world.

Differentiated teaching is variable and changes based on the factors influencing it. In fact, this is a searchable education that allows for the establishment of various educational institutions, the development of various subject programs, textbooks, and technologies" [3].

Variable education is a system of education in which each student has the right to master the appropriate level of education and choose the subjects and topics that best suit his needs, interests and level of knowledge. According to the online pedagogical encyclopedia cited above, varied education is "the

separation of curricula and subject programs in higher education."

The meaning of the word "differentiated" (from the Latin "differentia" - difference) is the division, separation, and stratification of the whole into parts, forms. The differentiation of the educational process is the task of separating students in the educational process according to their interests, needs, and level of knowledge in order to achieve the main goal of the lesson and take into account the learning characteristics of each student.

From a social point of view, the goal of differentiation of education is to form each member of society as a creative, intellectual member of society and professional potential, capable of rationally using their capabilities when interacting with society. From a didactic point of view, the goal of differentiation of education is to solve educational problems by creating a new didactic system of differentiated teaching based on a completely new motivation of students.

From a psychological and pedagogical point of view, the ultimate goal of variatization lies in individualization based on identifying the educational needs of each student and creating optimal conditions for the development of their interests and abilities.

When analyzing the concept of "differentiation of education", it is significant to critically analyzed the concept of "differentiated approach". Because in pedagogical literature, the analysis of "variable approach" is often associated with the concept of "differentiation of education".

For example, M.L. Antonova defines the variation of education as a method of organizing the educational process, taking into account the individual typological characteristics of the individual. M. Antonova puts forward the point of view that the variable approach is determined by the application of the principle of individualization of education in practice.

E.S. Rabunsky, not agreeing with this opinion, defines the variation approach in education as a pedagogical approach that takes into account, first of all, the characteristics of individual and didactic conditions.

In the process of analyzing the differentiated approach, it is necessary to consider the technology of an individual approach to students at all stages of education in order to determine the level of their

knowledge, skills and abilities. The application of the variation approach in foreign language teaching in practice involves teaching students with different levels of knowledge, skills and abilities based on curricula that differ in the content and volume of lesson material.

Properly organized independent education of the student is of great importance. Future foreign language teachers form the foundations of professional skills and skills of independent professional activity during their studies at a higher educational institution. It is very important to understand that this inextricably linked relationship is developed for students who have mastered knowledge and methods of obtaining it - independent work - to consolidate the acquired knowledge.

The resolution of the problem of organizing independent work of students at a modern university is associated with the existing contradictions identified in the analysis of the processes taking place in the higher education system of Uzbekistan.

On the one hand, the expansion of the information space, the emergence of electronic resources, technologies, their widespread use, their increase in their level, and in general, and in particular, the process of organizing independent work of students at the university has led to non-systematic changes in the educational process.

It is undeniable that in accordance with the requirements of modern information systems, the need for students to acquire independent work skills and be able to use new information technologies is increasing. On the other hand, the actual state of students' readiness and skills to independently solve professional problems is necessary for improvement [5].

Differentiated approach is a holistic approach to education, the essence of which is explained by education advocate Ferlazzo: "All of our students have different strengths and weaknesses, and as foreign language teachers, we must be able to understand these differences.

Doss and Zidon emphasize that varied teaching is based on previous learning experiences and has different levels of readiness, interests, and ways of gaining attention [6].

Successful implementation of variable education requires continuous professional development, all

types of assessment, and ongoing monitoring [7] and is considered an effective approach to meet the diverse learning needs, readiness, and interests of students [8].

"If you use one approach for students with different levels of knowledge in the lesson, this approach will work for your excellent and some average students. "But a single approach may not work for some students with lower levels of learning. With a varied approach, we can reach students with all levels of learning," says Dave Steckler, principal of Red Trail Elementary School in North Dakota and president of the National Association of Elementary School Principals. "Varied instruction brings success to our students, which in turn fosters a love of learning," concludes Steckler.[8]

According to Carol Tomlinson, a researcher and scholar who has conducted extensive research on alternative learning and assessment, alternative learning can be the basis for effective learning. It can provide a variety of methods for understanding new information in a group of students with different levels of knowledge (often in the same group): for example, understanding the content, understanding the ideas.

In addition, it is of great importance to develop educational materials and assessment criteria so that all students in the group, regardless of their abilities, can learn effectively [9]. In alternative learning, it means using a variety of tools, diverse lesson content, and a lesson process that actively involves all students in order to effectively include all students in the lesson process.

Carol Ann Tomlinson [10] states that variation in teaching "reflects what a student learns, how they learn it, and how they demonstrate what they have learned, reflecting the student's level of preparation, interests, and preferred learning styles" [11].

According to Boelens and other experts, variation in teaching can occur at two levels: 1) at the administrative level and 2) in the classroom. Variation at the administrative level takes into account the socio-economic status of students and gender equality.

RESULTS

In the classroom, variation in teaching includes the content of the lesson, the process of the lesson, the final product (mastery of the lesson topic), and the results. Within the content of the lesson, the teacher adapts the teaching material to the needs of the students.

This involves making the material (content) more difficult or simpler depending on the level of knowledge of the students. The teaching process can also be directly varied. The foreign language teacher can teach students individually at the same time, or give small groups or the whole group the task of analyzing problem situations and proposing solutions, depending on the educational needs of the students.

By varying the “product” (mastery of the topic), the teacher can choose how students will demonstrate their mastery of the topic. This can be in the form of creating videos, graphic organizers, photo presentations, written and oral presentations. All of this is done in a safe, positive classroom environment, in which it is of great importance to treat students with respect and value their work [12].

When the main factor of the variant instruction is the foreign language, Echevarria et al. advocates of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) strongly support and direct the variation of the course material in the process of teaching students who are learning English as a second language and have different levels of foreign language proficiency (beginner, intermediate, and advanced). The differentiated instruction organized in this way means adapting a completely new educational strategy [13].

Differentiated groups are described as classes that take into account the level of readiness, interests, and learning styles of students. In this case, all students are involved in the educational process and all students are given the opportunity to succeed during their studies. To do this, the teacher allows students to choose from a variety of tasks to complete the given task, based on their individual learning needs [14].

DISCUSSION

Foreign language teachers can vary the educational process in four ways: 1) Through the content of the lesson (lesson material), 2) The lesson process, 3) The final product (Mastery of the lesson topic), and 4) Through an educational environment focused on each individual student[15].

As Algozzine and Anderson have noted, variation is one of the methods that actively adapt teaching and learning methods to meet the educational needs of each child, taking into account the learning styles and personal interests of students, so that they can achieve

maximum growth in the educational process [16].

At the same time, some skeptical critics have criticized the theory of different learning styles and variation in education. In Education Week, Mike Schmoker, after a lengthy email exchange with variationist learning researcher Ann Carol Tomlinson, also argued against the variationist approach, stating that there is "no clear research or evidence" to support it [17],[18].

In his article published in the journal Educational Research, John Jick notes that “evidence consistently shows that adapting instructional approaches to students’ learning styles does not lead to improved learning outcomes” and that the use of learning styles, particularly VAK (visual, auditory, kinesthetic learning styles), “does not reflect the way our brains learn and the individual differences in learning styles that we observe in teachers [19].

According to Pashler, an expert in the field of “public interest psychology,” “the scientific literature is lacking in methodological guidelines for the application and assessment of science learning styles in school settings.” In addition, several studies that have used appropriate research methods have found evidence that contradicts the learning styles hypothesis... [We] conclude that it is not reasonable to widely use measures of students’ learning styles in educational settings and waste of limited resources”[20], Pashler puts forward the idea in his research work.

The existence of such contradictory opinions in scientific research sources regarding the variational approach indicates the need for further research and studies on this topic.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the differentiated approach is a teaching approach that is a method that is flexible to the educational needs of all students. All students pursue the same educational goal. However, the variational teaching method changes, taking into account the interests of students, their unique learning style, students' strengths in foreign language knowledge and areas that need improvement.

As a result of our research of Uzbekistan scientific sources, it can be concluded that the issue of developing the qualifications of future English teachers through the differentiated approach has not been sufficiently studied by our scientists. Among the Uzbek scientists

who have conducted scientific research on variational education, N.Sh. Abdullayeva's PhD dissertation on the topic "The development of preschool education based on a variant approach" and N.A. Mamajonova's PhD scientific works are an example.

Having analyzed the above scientific literature, came to the following conclusion and I would like to offer my own definition of the "Differentiated approach": "Differentiated education - (variable approach, variable assessment, differentiated learning) is a student-centered teaching approach that serves to meet the student's interests and needs in education by adapting the content and process of the lesson, creating a positive and supportive learning environment, and developing the student's creative thinking, collaborative work and critical thinking skills" (the article author's definition).

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