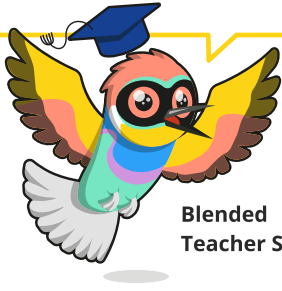


OLS BLENDED



Blended
Teacher Support

The DIFFERENTIATION strategy

Differentiation requires a commitment to understanding each student's strengths and challenges and providing diverse avenues for students to access content, engage with material, and demonstrate their learning.

Carol Ann Tomlinson, Education Specialist



In a nutshell

Differentiation is a pedagogical strategy that recognises and adapts to the diverse learning styles of students, offering multiple options for each to assimilate material effectively. Just as students differ in their personalities and abilities, they also differ in their learning processes. Teachers must acknowledge these differences to facilitate an effective learning.

True or False?

1. Differentiation challenges each learner at the appropriate level.
2. Differentiation means that each student must be taught individually.
3. Differentiation only applies to students with learning difficulties.
4. Differentiation allows each student to progress at his or her own pace, fostering self-esteem and self-efficacy by feeling valued and supported.

1. T.
2. F; differentiation tailors teaching strategies to diverse learning needs, not necessarily teaching students individually.
3. F; Differentiation applies to all learners, aiming to tailor teaching and resources to diverse abilities and foster an inclusive environment.
4. T.

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In the classroom



Traditional

- Homogeneous activities.
- Direct teaching.
- Structured and rigid classroom setting.

Differentiated

- Tailored activities to accommodate different levels.
- Collaborative and participatory methods. E.g.: peer reviews, editing workshops so that students can give and receive feedback.
- Flexible classroom setting. E.g.: assess student's profiles to strategically organize groups and enhance their intellectual capacity.

Outside the classroom



Traditional

- Online assignments uniformly given.
- Emphasis on memorizing information.
- Limited access to external resources. E.g.: grammar books.
- Generalized online feedback.

Differentiated

- Personalized online assignments.
- Practical application of knowledge. E.g.: project-based learning with real-world problems.
- Variety of resources, such as videos, podcasts, apps. E.g.: OLS available content that allow students to engage at their own pace.
- Individualized and tailored online feedback.

VET (Vocational education and training)



Applying this approach to language teaching for VET students can be highly effective in ensuring that each learner progresses at their own pace and according to their specific needs, skills, and career-related goals. Here are several steps to apply this concept:

1. Assess Learners' Levels and Needs

You could administer an initial level test and a questionnaire focused on their specific professional sector to identify any prior knowledge and their expectations for the course.

2. Design Personalized Projects and Activities

Although the group may be in the same professional sector, students may have different career aspirations. You can create a variety of role-playing activities that allow them to practice in the contexts most relevant to them.

3. Incorporate Audiovisual Support

For learners with language difficulties, using audiovisual materials can help them better understand specific concepts and industry-related vocabulary. It will be more practical and engaging if you use real recordings from their field of work.

4. Provide personalised feedback

Learners should receive feedback tailored to their needs and expectations. While some may require support with grammar, others may need more emphasis on pronunciation or technical vocabulary.

You could also explore peer-to-peer learning, where stronger or more experienced students support their classmates, enhancing collaboration and practical language use!