

A study on students' perceptions of differentiated instruction in learning English grammar in Nonlinguistic Institutions

Samarkand Economy and Service Institute
"Teaching Language" department, teacher

Abulkhayirov Doston Fayzullo ugli
Samarkand Economy and Service Institute
Economy faculty Group-IK523

Bo'ltakov Behruz Baxtiyor o'g'li
boltakovbehruz@gmail.com

Annotation: Differentiated instruction has been hardly recognized and/or used in the local EFL class. Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore high school students' perception of differentiated instruction as translated into classroom practices through flexible grouping, tiered activities, anchored activities, scaffolding techniques in learning English grammar. The findings further revealed that learning via differentiated instruction provided students time to think and complete activities at their own pace and time. Overall, the study concluded that students had favorable perceptions of differentiated instruction in learning English grammar and suggested that making flexible use of differentiated EFL class.

Keywords: Differentiated instruction; one-size-fits-all instructions; instructional practices; students' perceptions; teaching English Grammar;

Introduction

Using the one-size-fits-all conventional approach disregards students with different readiness levels that likely affects students learning. This mode of instruction no longer supports learning in a meta-modern mixed-ability classroom consisting of students with different amounts of grammatical and vocabulary knowledge, reading and listening skills, writing and speaking skills, fluency, and accuracy work. It is not only teaching to the middle level that fails to promote learning for all but also teaching to the top levels and/or lower. Regarding the problem of teaching to the one end, Reed has the following to note:

"Teaching to the lower level of class perpetuates the problem of low achievement, along with boredom and disengagement on the part of the middle-high end learners. Teaching to the middle level causes the less prepared students to struggle and fall far behind while the better-prepared students, who remain unchallenged, lose their motivation to learn. Teaching to the high end also seems untenable, given the probable struggle and likely disengagement by less-prepared students"
The problem related to teaching to the one end, while compromising the quality

of our teaching, most dominantly teaching to the middle level, necessitates teachers to use innovative way(s) that benefits all as all teachers are expected to make sure that they are prepared to work with all students' and achieve their common goal of helping all learners reach learning by using the means that promotes learning for all.

Besides, it is recognized to be an important tool for engaging students and addressing the individual needs of all learners in foreign language education. It also provides different learning opportunities for students in the language classrooms. As argued by its proponents, differentiated instruction is the most preferable way for promoting learning for all students in a mixed ability classroom situation consisting of students with different amounts of grammatical and vocabulary knowledge, reading and listening skills, speaking, writing skills and increasingly viewed as the panacea most teachers, including EFL/ESL teachers, are looking for. Though most studies were conducted in economically rich classroom situations and findings may not be applicable in other contexts due to contextual factors. Some other studies empirical have also evidenced the efficacy of differentiated instruction in the classrooms of typical learners in L1 situations, indicating the positive outcome of differentiating instructions. Consequently, the current study was intended to investigate high school students' perceptions towards differentiated instructional approaches, after interventions, in learning English grammar which is an essential component of language teaching and/or learning in an EFL class without which communication will be hardly effective. In line with its purpose, the study attempted to answer the following research question: How do high school students perceive learning English grammar via a differentiated instructional approach?

2. Research Methodology

The objective of this study was mainly to investigate high school students' perceptions of a differentiated instruction in learning English grammar instructions after instructions. This study used the mixed methods that made use of quantitative and qualitative data from the participants. In this study, an intact class consisting of 41 students was randomly chosen using a simple random sampling technique and taught English grammar through differentiated instructions. After the instruction, relevant quantitative and qualitative data were gathered through a five-point likers scale questionnaire (with scales 1: strongly agree, 2: agree, 3: =undecided; 4: disagree, and 5: strongly disagree) and a semi-structured interview respectively. Regarding the advantage of questionnaires in gathering relevant data, it gives privacy to participants, especially when identity is not required and the researcher's direct interaction is minimized, thereby encouraging participants to express themselves freely. In processing the data, the mean serves to give the average value for all respondents to a specific item(s) with the implication that the groups of respondents were in favor of or against a particular item. This helps discuss and interpret the data because using percentages alone appears to be somewhat weaker for interpreting and discussing the collected data.

3. Results and discussions

This study was intended to investigate students' perceptions of differentiated instructions in the context of learning English grammar through a differentiated instructional approach that was translated into practices through flexible grouping, tiered activities/tasks, anchored activities or assignments, and scaffolding strategies. Accordingly, the data presented in the following table shows the findings of the study.

4. Results of students' interview

To substantiate the data obtained from the students' questionnaire, the interview was used to collect additional data about students' perceptions through semi structured interviews. In doing this, six interviewees were randomly selected from the struggling students, grade level students, and advanced ones or most commonly called low achievers, average achievers, and high achievers. This was done to avoid biases in selecting the interviewees that may probably bias the outcomes. The results from students' interview revealed that the students favorably perceived differentiated instructions. The students' responses indicated that learning through a differentiated instructional approach was widely considered engaging, supportive, enjoying. The students also expressed their agreement that differentiated instruction accommodated their different readiness levels, enjoyed doing the grammar learning or practice activities/tasks, improved their learning achievements, and changed their views towards learning English grammar via DI. The participants also expressed their favorable views stating that the flexible grouping provided them with ample learning opportunities.

The list of used literature

1. Abate Demissie (2013). The effects of differentiated instructional approach on grade eight students' attitude and vocabulary learning achievements. Addis Ababa University, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation.
2. Alavinia, P., & Farhady, S. (2012). Using differentiated instruction to teach vocabulary in mixed ability classes with a focus on multiple intelligences and learning styles. *International Journal of Applied Science & Technology*, 2(4), 72–82.
3. AlHashmi, B., & Elyas, T. (2018). Investigating the Effect of Differentiated Instruction in Light of the Ehrman & Leaver Construct on Grammar Learning. *Arab World English Journal*, 9 (3), 145-162.
4. Alfahaid, A. F. T. (2011). Developing an ESP curriculum for students of health sciences through needs analysis and course evaluation in Saudi Arabia. University of Leicester.
5. Alkutbi, D. (2018). Bridging the gap: A study of academic language-learning needs of Saudi international students. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis.