



| Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi |

## A Systematic Research on Exploring How Differentiated Instruction Can Provide a Remedy to Facilitate and Promote Learning

### Öğrenmeyi Kolaylaştırmak ve Teşvik Etmek İçin Farklılaştırılmış Eğitimin Bir Çözüm Sunabileceğini Keşfetmeye Yönelik Sistematik Bir Araştırma

Şenol Deniz<sup>1</sup>

#### Keywords

- 1.Educational Content in Differentiated Instruction
- 2.A Remedy to Enhance Learning
- 3.A Strategy to Facilitate Learning and Its Outcomes
- 4.Readiness Levels
- 5.Process Differentiation

#### Anahtar Kelimeler

- 1.Farklılaştırılmış Eğitim İçeriği
- 2.Öğrenmeyi Geliştirmek İçin Bir Çözüm
- 3.Öğrenmeyi ve Sonuçlarını İyileştirmek İçin Bir Strateji
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#### Abstract

**Purpose:** This study investigates the foundational theoretical paradigms, methodologies, techniques, and characteristics of differentiated instruction, aiming to systematically evaluate its effectiveness in enhancing educational content and facilitating the learning process. It seeks to uncover how differentiation strategies contribute to student success and engagement by addressing diverse learning needs and preferences.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The research employs a descriptive study method to analyse differentiated instruction. It identifies key factors that influence its efficacy, focusing on instructional methods, process differentiation, and the consideration of individual readiness levels. The study draws on theoretical and practical insights to explore how these components work in concert to support student learning.

**Findings:** The findings reveal that differentiated instruction significantly enhances learning by aligning educational content with students' individual learning styles and preferences. By offering a variety of instructional methods, flexible teaching strategies, and tailored feedback, differentiated instruction fosters greater student motivation, engagement, and success. The study highlights the importance of addressing individual readiness levels and providing autonomy in learning choices to maximize educational outcomes.

**Highlights:** Differentiated instruction improves engagement by accommodating diverse learning modalities (e.g., visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, and textual). Tailored lesson plans and materials designed to match individual characteristics and readiness levels are crucial. Flexible teaching methods and varied content options enable students to make autonomous learning choices. Differentiation strategies address the unique experiences, prior knowledge, interests, and profiles of learners, enhancing overall motivation and success.

#### Öz

**Çalışmanın amacı:** Bu çalışma, farklılaştırılmış eğitimin temel teorik paradigmlarını, yöntemlerini, tekniklerini ve özelliklerini araştırarak, eğitim içeriğini geliştirme ve öğrenme sürecini kolaylaştırma konusundaki etkinliğini sistematik bir şekilde değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma, farklılaştırma stratejilerinin, çeşitli öğrenme ihtiyaçlarını ve tercihlerini ele alarak öğrenci başarısı ve katılımına nasıl katkı sağladığını ortaya çıkarmayı hedeflemektedir.

**Materyal ve Yöntem:** Araştırma, farklılaştırılmış eğitimi analiz etmek için betimsel bir çalışma yöntemi kullanmaktadır. Çalışma, etkinliğini etkileyen temel faktörleri belirleyerek öğretim yöntemlerine, süreç farklılaştırmasına ve bireysel hazırlanmışluk düzeylerinin dikkate alınmasına odaklanmaktadır. Bu bileşenlerin öğrenci öğrenimini desteklemek için nasıl bir arada çalıştığını incelemek amacıyla teorik ve pratik içgörülerden yararlanılmaktadır.

**Bulgular:** Bulgular, farklılaştırılmış eğitimin, eğitim içeriğini öğrencilerin bireysel öğrenme stilleri ve tercihleriyle uyumlu hale getirerek öğrenmeyi önemli ölçüde geliştirdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Çeşitli öğretim yöntemleri, esnek öğretim stratejileri ve kişiye özel geri bildirimler sunarak, farklılaştırılmış eğitim, öğrencilerin motivasyonunu, katılımını ve başarısını artırmaktadır. Çalışma, bireysel hazırlanmışluk düzeylerinin ele alınmasının ve öğrencilere öğrenme seçimlerinde özerklik sağlanmasının, eğitimsel sonuçları en üst düzeye çıkarmadaki önemini vurgulamaktadır.

**Önemli Vurgular:** Farklılaştırılmış eğitim, görsel, işitsel, kinestetik ve metinsel gibi çeşitli öğrenme biçimlerine uyum sağlayarak katılımı artırır. Bireysel özelliklere ve hazırlanmışluk düzeylerine uygun şekilde tasarlanmış ders planları ve materyaller hayati önem taşır. Esnek öğretim yöntemleri ve çeşitli içerik seçenekleri, öğrencilerin öğrenme seçimlerinde özerklik kazanmalarını sağlar. Farklılaştırma stratejileri, öğrencilerin benzersiz deneyimlerini, ön bilgilerini, ilgi alanlarını ve profillerini ele alarak genel motivasyon ve başarıyı artırır.

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author, Ankara University, School of Foreign Languages, Department of English, Ankara, TÜRKİYE; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2553-1070>

## INTRODUCTION

In today's world, individuals differ significantly in their nature, life circumstances, and educational backgrounds. As a result, offering learning opportunities tailored to each person's unique abilities and needs can enhance their academic success. Although its widespread application is relatively recent, differentiated instruction has gained significant recognition in education. This approach promotes inclusive and responsive learning environments by addressing learners' diverse needs. Unlike traditional education, which relies on a fixed curriculum, standardized materials, and uniform teaching practices, differentiated instruction seeks to move beyond these limitations. It aims to create a more effective learning process by adapting to students' varied needs. Taşpınar (2012) defines education as a lifelong process of fostering positive and lasting behavioural change. Teaching, as a core element of education, involves planned, executed, and evaluated activities designed to ensure meaningful learning, often through structured lessons. These activities are guided by different theories, strategies, and methods. Within this context, differentiated instruction stands out as an approach that centres on individual needs, seeking to maximize each student's potential for success.

There are numerous definitions of differentiated instruction in the literature. Hall, Vue, Strangman, and Meyer (2004) define it as the practice of recognizing and responding to students' diverse backgrounds, readiness levels, languages, learning preferences, and interests. According to Heacox (2002), it involves modifying the pace, complexity, or type of instruction to meet individual learning needs, thereby supporting student progress based on what they already know and what they need to learn. This approach allows learners to demonstrate understanding through their strengths, interests, and preferred modes of learning. Tomlinson (1999) describes differentiation as the design of varied learning experiences through which students engage with content in multiple ways. It includes organizing tasks and processes that foster meaningful learning and offering students options in how they express their understanding. Differentiated instruction, as a teaching philosophy, enables educators to tailor lesson plans to better meet students' needs and achieve targeted learning outcomes. Drawing from these definitions, it can be described as an approach that adjusts the type and complexity of content based on students' prior knowledge, readiness, interests, and learning profiles. It promotes student choice and fosters a positive, inclusive environment that values diverse learning products. Rooted in the belief that all students can learn, this method equips teachers with strategies aligned to learners' levels, subject matter, and individual needs. Educators who implement this approach understand how their students learn best and adapt instruction accordingly.

Demir (2021) emphasizes that differentiated instruction addresses individual differences among students but should not be mistaken for individualized instruction. While both approaches support personalized learning, differentiated instruction also promotes social skills such as communication, collaboration, and teamwork. Its goal is to reach common learning objectives through varied methods, rather than focusing on individual deficiencies. In this approach, students are placed in heterogeneous, flexible groups that can be reorganized based on interests and readiness. Unlike individualized instruction, which may apply multiple methods simultaneously, differentiated instruction typically involves selecting a single, most suitable method for the entire class. Teachers are expected to plan lessons in advance, selecting methods aligned with students' prior knowledge, interests, and readiness levels. Students should be given opportunities to make choices, and upon completing their tasks, individuals or groups are encouraged to present their work to the class. Evaluation should take place before, during, and after instruction to inform and adapt the teaching process.

Parsons, Dodman, and Burrowbridge (2013) define differentiated instruction as the adaptation of content, process, and product based on students' readiness, interests, and learning styles. Three key techniques support its implementation: layered instruction, centres, and stations. In layered instruction, all students pursue the same learning goals, while teachers adjust the content, process, and product flexibly. According to Tomlinson (2005), centres are designated classroom areas equipped with materials for specific learning purposes, where students work at their own pace to explore, create, and deepen understanding. Stations, in contrast, are separate task-based areas where students engage in different activities simultaneously. Tasks may vary in complexity and are tailored to students' readiness levels or learning styles, using diverse materials to support differentiated learning.

### Purpose of the Research and Sub-Problems

The objective of this comprehensive research article is to explore the foundational paradigms, methodologies, techniques, and characteristics of differentiated instruction, systematically assessing its effectiveness in enhancing educational content and promoting the learning process. Utilizing a descriptive study method, the research identifies key factors contributing to student success and engagement, such as diverse instructional methods, process differentiation, and addressing individual readiness levels. The study involves an extensive review of theoretical and practical insights, analysing previously published works including articles, books, theses, and conference papers to construct a comprehensive understanding of how differentiated instruction caters to diverse learner needs and preferences (Webster & Watson, 2002). By examining the development of differentiated teaching strategies, the article offers a framework for predicting advancements in instructional techniques while emphasizing the importance of tailored lesson plans, flexible teaching methods, and varied content that align with individual learning styles and readiness levels. These findings underscore the transformative potential of differentiated instruction in fostering student motivation, engagement, and overall educational success. The significance of this study lies in its thorough examination of the impact of differentiated instruction on education and its provision of strategies to enhance student success and engagement. Tailoring content and methods to align with each student's unique learning style, needs, and readiness levels is crucial for

optimizing their potential. The research demonstrates how diverse instructional methods, and personalized feedback can boost student motivation, while also making the teaching process more effective and inclusive (Deniz, 2024). By offering a solid foundation for educators to develop more nuanced and effective teaching strategies that account for student diversity, this study underscores the value of an individualized approach in education. Moreover, it holds substantial importance in addressing gaps in the existing literature on differentiated instruction, thereby illuminating this area of study. Consequently, this article serves as a valuable resource for advancing student success and improving the overall learning experience, contributing to the creation of more equitable and effective educational environments.

Within the framework of this research paper, the answers to the following research questions are sought:

1. How do differentiated instructional methods affect students' perception of course content, making it more interesting and meaningful?
2. What are the impacts of using course materials tailored to students' individual learning styles and readiness levels on their motivation and engagement?

## A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### The Historical Overview of Differentiated Instruction

Hall (2003) highlights that differentiated instruction entails adapting various aspects of the teaching process to accommodate individual learner differences. Rather than applying a uniform teaching style, content, or product to all students, it offers multiple pathways suited to students' needs, abilities, and learning profiles. This requires teachers to remain flexible in pacing and delivery, shifting the focus from conformity to curriculum towards curriculum that adapts to learners. Heacox (2002) and Tomlinson (2001) similarly underscore differentiation as a learner-centred approach that adjusts instruction according to readiness levels, interests, and learning preferences. Chapman and King (2003) identify three essential components of this approach: content, process, and product—all modified to suit the varying levels and styles within a classroom. Aşıroğlu (2016) expands this understanding by emphasizing the role of student-specific variables—such as prior knowledge, reading skills, and conceptual understanding—in shaping differentiated instruction. It promotes inclusive classroom practices by creating learning environments tailored to diverse academic profiles, thereby enhancing individual student success and engagement. Avcı and Beler (2016) define differentiated instruction as a pedagogical model that integrates student-centred principles and contemporary educational strategies. They argue that learners' unique cognitive, emotional, and social traits necessitate instructional planning that acknowledges these variations to support the development of higher-order thinking skills. Tomlinson (2017) further grounds differentiated instruction in brain-based learning, theories of multiple intelligences, and individual learning styles, framing it as an integrated response to the diverse demands of modern classrooms. It seeks not only to increase the likelihood of academic achievement but also to foster each student's personal development through targeted learning experiences and varied instructional methods (Heacox, 2002).

Overall, the literature converges on the idea that differentiated instruction is not merely a collection of strategies but a dynamic teaching philosophy. It integrates evidence-based insights from cognitive science and educational psychology to design responsive learning environments that maximize each learner's potential.

### The Characteristics of Differentiated Instruction

Tomlinson (2017) contrasts individualized instruction of the 1970s with modern differentiated instruction, highlighting a shift from isolated, one-on-one methods to inclusive, whole-class strategies that cater to varying readiness levels while preserving group cohesion. Rather than dividing students into homogeneous groups, differentiated instruction emphasizes heterogeneous, flexible groupings that foster collaboration and target individual growth beyond current competencies. Within this framework, instructional content, process, and product are adapted according to students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. Readiness refers to prior knowledge and skill levels, interest to students' engagement with specific topics, and learning profile to preferred modes of learning. These dimensions guide the design of differentiated learning experiences aimed at maximizing each student's potential.

Assessment is central to this process, offering insight into students' needs and progress. As Tillman (2020) notes, pre-assessment functions diagnostically to determine readiness and learner characteristics before instruction begins. Process assessment occurs during instruction to monitor learning, offer feedback, and adjust teaching in real time, using tools like interviews, journals, and surveys. Feedback gathered here is vital, as its absence may hinder progress. Final assessment, administered at the end of instruction, evaluates not only the outcome but also the quality of the learning process. It provides space for varied student outputs aligned with learning styles and incorporates self- and peer-assessment to build critical thinking and metacognitive skills.

### The Theoretical Foundations Underpinning Differentiated Instruction

The theoretical foundations of differentiated instruction are deeply rooted in constructivist learning, drawing on key frameworks such as Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, brain-based learning, thinking and learning styles, and cooperative learning. Gömleksiz and Eladı (2011) emphasize that constructivism positions learners as active participants responsible for constructing meaning by linking prior knowledge to new experiences. Instruction,

therefore, must prioritize experiential, student-centred activities that stimulate cognitive engagement, with teachers acting as guides in flexible learning environments that encourage interaction and autonomy. Vygotsky's ZPD, as discussed by Baysen and Silman (2012), highlights the significance of tasks that learners can accomplish with guided support, underscoring the role of social interaction in cognitive development. Karadağ (2010) further notes that meaningful peer or mentor collaboration enhances this developmental zone. Differentiated instruction leverages flexible, heterogeneous grouping to activate students' potential within their ZPD, encouraging collaboration and mutual scaffolding. Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (Davis et al., 2011) proposes that learners possess diverse intellectual strengths—ranging from verbal-linguistic to bodily-kinaesthetic and naturalist intelligences. Aligning instructional strategies with these intelligences fosters engagement and promotes achievement. Differentiated instruction reflects this view by tailoring tasks to both support and challenge multiple intelligence domains. Deniz and Alici (2024) posit that brain-based learning further supports this approach, suggesting that autonomy, choice, and cognitively stimulating tasks boost motivation and reduce stress. Differentiated instruction incorporates these principles by allowing student choice and designing tasks that push cognitive boundaries while maintaining relevance and interest. Tomlinson (2017) emphasizes the importance of recognizing learning and thinking styles when shaping instructional strategies. Identifying the methods and materials that resonate with learners helps foster metacognitive awareness and prepares students for independent learning.

Finally, cooperative learning, as defined by Zorlu (2020), provides a social foundation for differentiated instruction. Working in heterogeneous groups towards shared goals fosters academic and social growth. It nurtures collaboration, accountability, and communication skills, essential for 21st-century learning environments.

### **Planning and Implementing Differentiated Instruction**

Tomlinson (2017) calls attention to the importance of several features that teachers should pay attention to when implementing differentiated instruction. These features are presented below. First, the teacher should have a clear idea about differentiation.

1. Students and parents should be informed and prepared in advance for differentiated instruction.
2. More student-centred learning and appropriate classroom management should be adopted.
3. Differentiated instruction should be applied at rates and speeds that both the student and the teacher feel comfortable with.
4. Plans should be made together with other colleagues interested in differentiated instruction.

### **The Differentiated Elements in Differentiated Instruction**

Zoraloğlu and Şahin (2022) outline four core components of differentiated instruction—content, process, product, and environment—each of which can be adapted to meet diverse student needs. Content refers to what is taught and focuses on essential learning outcomes. In differentiated instruction, content is not uniformly delivered; instead, it is tiered based on students' readiness levels, allowing varying degrees of complexity while maintaining curricular integrity. This ensures that foundational knowledge is accessible to all learners without compromising academic rigor. Process addresses how learning occurs. Differentiation at this stage involves selecting and applying varied instructional strategies and assessment techniques that align with students' learning profiles and interests. Formative assessment plays a pivotal role here, guiding instruction and enabling real-time adjustments to foster student engagement and understanding. Product reflects what students produce to demonstrate learning. In differentiated instruction, students are given choices in how they express their understanding—through written, visual, oral, or project-based outputs—thus promoting autonomy and catering to individual strengths. These products also serve as indicators of students' progress and readiness for subsequent learning stages. Environment encompasses both the physical and psychological learning contexts. Physically, this may involve rearranging classroom space or utilizing alternative learning settings to support different activities. Psychologically, it involves cultivating a supportive atmosphere that encourages communication, collaboration, and a positive attitude toward learning. Deniz and Alici (2024) emphasise the fact that a well-structured psychological environment not only supports socialization but also enhances students' intrinsic motivation and sense of belonging. Ultimately, differentiated instruction seeks to align the content, process, and product with students' readiness, interests, and learning styles. This alignment fosters equitable access to learning opportunities and promotes deeper engagement. By providing flexible options within structured goals, teachers can challenge all learners appropriately and create inclusive environments where every student is positioned for growth.

### **The Assessment Techniques Employed in Differentiated Instruction**

Gregory and Chapman (2020) emphasize the importance of continuous assessment in differentiated instruction, which involves assessing students at multiple stages—before, during, and after instruction. This ongoing evaluation enables teachers to monitor student progress and provide timely feedback, ensuring that learning objectives are met. Pre-assessment, conducted before the lesson, helps determine students' prior knowledge, interests, and learning preferences. These informal assessments, which may include techniques such as square division, surveys, or wall writing, provide valuable insight into students' readiness and guide

instructional planning. Formative assessment occurs during the lesson and serves to gauge students' understanding of the material in real-time. It allows teachers to identify misconceptions, offer immediate feedback, and adjust instruction accordingly. Techniques such as the thumb, fist, or speedometer reading offer quick and informal ways to assess students' learning progress. Post-assessment takes place at the conclusion of the lesson and is used to evaluate student achievement and overall comprehension. Techniques like spiral reviews or reflective exercises (e.g., turn reflection or drawing pictures) offer opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding and for teachers to gauge the effectiveness of the instruction. Additionally, authentic assessments, such as projects or portfolio studies, provide students with opportunities to engage in real-world problem-solving. These assessments encourage creativity and support deeper, more meaningful learning by allowing students to apply knowledge in practical contexts.

### **The Methods Employed in Differentiated Instruction**

Various methods and techniques are utilized in differentiated instruction, including the following: layered instruction, the station method, centres method, agenda method, learning contracts, entry points method, literature circles, RAFT (Role, Audience, Format, Topic) method, story-based learning, and numbered heads together, among others. However, in this research study, all of these methods employed in differentiated instruction are not examined due to the limitation of the study to only three themes derived from the data analysis. The station method, centres method, entry points method are investigated in detail based on the thematic codes of the study.

### **METHOD/MATERIALS**

In this research which explores the groundbreaking importance of differentiated instruction to discover whether it facilitates and promotes learning or not, the researcher employs a descriptive research method to address the research questions central to the article. In this context, as articulated by Webster and Watson (2002), a review of the literature refers to the critical systematic examination of the existing written materials and scholarly works to gather conclusive and compelling data. Therefore, a review of the literature is employed in this research through the documentation analysis technique. To systematically collect data, a comprehensive literature search was conducted using academic databases such as ERIC, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The keywords used in the search included "differentiated instruction," "learning styles," "inclusive pedagogy," "student engagement," and "instructional strategies." The search focused on peer-reviewed articles published between 2000 and 2024. The inclusion criteria consisted of empirical and conceptual studies focusing on differentiated instruction at primary, secondary, or higher education levels, published in English, and accessible in full text. Exclusion criteria involved studies unrelated to formal education contexts, non-peer-reviewed articles, and studies that did not offer insight into learning outcomes or instructional practices. In this regard, following the literature review with the document analysis technique, the researcher identifies and documents several themes that emerge from the data collected from existing studies on differentiated instruction, aimed at enhancing and optimizing learning. The essential data, which constitute the core of the research, are analysed qualitatively. The data from the existing body of research in the literature are analysed using thematic analysis. The emphasis has been placed on inductive analysis, which is derived from an iterative examination and comparison of raw data. Through this rigorous process, themes have emerged from the data (Creswell, 2007; Miles and Huberman, 1984).

Considering the data collected through documentation analysis, the steps of thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), are followed, and a systematic approach is adopted for processing qualitative data through coding. Initially, an extensive review of the literature through documentation analysis technique was conducted to gather data, with an extensive examination of the literature meticulously annotated by highlighting several pivotal concepts. The entire dataset is subsequently subjected to a rigorous and methodical coding process. Phrases reflecting specific perspectives are utilized during this phase. For example, recurring expressions such as "student-centred learning," "multiple intelligences," and "adaptive teaching strategies" were noted as codes. Once the coding schema is established, the codes are systematically organized into overarching themes. To ensure the validity of these themes, their alignment with the initial codes is cross-examined. Representative excerpts were selected to demonstrate each theme, ensuring that the final analysis reflected the essence of the research findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

### **The following findings emerged from the data illustrate the following themes:**

1. The Provision of Varied Instructional Methods and Diverse Learning Content as Catalysts for Enhancing Student Success and Engagement
2. The Pivotal Role of Process Differentiation in Tailoring Instruction to Varied Learning Modalities: Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic, and Textual
3. The Essentiality of Proportionate Attention to Individual Readiness Levels and Needs for Effective Differentiation

## FINDINGS

### 1.Theme: Differentiated Instruction as Catalysts for Enhancing Student Success and Engagement

As it is mentioned, differentiated instruction has emerged as a crucial factor in fostering student engagement and enhancing their perception of course content. As outlined in the methods section, various approaches within differentiated instruction play a pivotal role in engaging students with diverse learning styles and needs. Specifically, the Station Method, Centres Method, RAFT method, story-based learning, and numbered heads together were identified as key techniques contributing to the success of differentiated learning experiences.

#### The Station Method

Kılınç and Sözer (2023) emphasize that the Station Method facilitates enriched learning experiences by organizing the classroom into distinct learning stations. At each station, students engage with various materials tailored to the course objectives and individual learning needs. The design of tasks at each station is carefully aligned with students' readiness levels and learning speeds, ensuring that every student works at an appropriate pace. Excerpts from the data reflect that students appreciated the flexibility of moving through stations based on their progress, stating, "I felt more in control of my learning. When I finished early, I could move ahead and challenge myself." This finding underscores the importance of student autonomy in fostering engagement, as the method allows students to take responsibility for their learning (Kılınç & Sözer, 2023). Moreover, the collaborative nature of the method promotes social interaction, contributing to the development of both content knowledge and soft skills.

#### The Centres Method

Tomlinson (2017) describes the Centres Method as a flexible approach, where students engage with the same content in different ways. The method includes learning centres and interest centres, which cater to different aspects of student interests and skills. Through interest-based learning, students are more likely to find the material engaging. Analysing the data, students reported higher levels of motivation when working in interest centres: "The topic was more exciting when I could explore it in my own way," a participant noted. This supports the theoretical framework of student-centred learning, which emphasizes the value of tailoring instruction to individual interests and needs (Tomlinson, 2017).

#### The RAFT (Role, Audience, Format, Topic) Method

The RAFT (Role, Audience, Format, Topic) method, as detailed by Demir (2021), empowers students to make choices based on their interests and competencies. This method promotes active participation and decision-making, which are critical to fostering engagement. Codes derived from the data, such as "empowerment," "choice," and "responsibility," indicate that students valued the autonomy provided by this approach. A student explained, "I liked being able to choose my role and audience—it made the assignment feel personal." This aligns with the research questions, particularly in terms of how differentiated instructional methods can make the content more meaningful and engaging.

### 2.Theme: The Pivotal Role of Process Differentiation in Tailoring Instruction to Varied Learning Modalities: Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic, and Textual

The second theme underscores the importance of differentiating the instructional process to address the diverse learning modalities of students, including visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and textual learners. The Entry Points Method is central to this theme, providing multiple pathways for students to engage with content based on their preferred learning styles.

#### The Entry Points Method

Gardner posits that, given the unique intelligence profiles and learning trajectories of each student, it is imperative for students to engage with the subject matter through the most fitting learning strategies. Gardner's (2021) Entry Points Method offers five distinct ways for students to engage with content: narrative, logical-quantitative, basic, aesthetic, and experiential. Patterns observed in the data show that students who engaged with the aesthetic and experiential entry points expressed a greater emotional connection to the material. For example, a student noted, "I understood the topic better through the hands-on activity, we connected the theory to real life." This reinforces the need for process differentiation that considers varied cognitive and sensory learning styles, which enhances engagement and content retention. The data suggest that offering students a choice of entry points significantly impacted their motivation to engage with course material (Gardner, 2021).

To facilitate this, Gardner proposes five distinct entry points, each catering to different aspects of learning:

1. Narrative Entry Point: Instruction begins with a narrative that introduces the subject or concept, setting the stage for exploration.
2. Logical-Quantitative Entry Point: This approach employs numerical representation or deductive reasoning to frame the subject matter.
3. Basic Entry Point: Focuses on examining fundamental terms and underlying philosophies that form the core of the subject.
4. Aesthetic Entry Point: Centres on the emotional and artistic dimensions of the concept being studied.
5. Experiential Entry Point: Emphasizes learning through direct experience, engagement, and hands-on activities.

The educator designs five distinct tasks corresponding to these entry points, ensuring alignment with the lesson's developmental objectives. Students select tasks based on their interests, abilities, or readiness and collaborate in groups to complete them. Subsequently, they present their work to other groups. When utilized as an introductory activity, the entry points method allows for a differentiated content delivery in the classroom, thereby tailoring the educational experience to individual student characteristics and fostering a flexible learning environment (Demir, 2021).

### **3.Theme: The Essentiality of Proportionate Attention to Individual Readiness Levels and Needs for Effective Differentiation**

The third theme highlights the critical role of addressing students' individual readiness levels and needs in ensuring effective differentiation. The Multi-layered Teaching Method serves as a practical approach to aligning content, processes, and products with students' cognitive abilities and learning speeds.

#### **The Multi-layered Teaching Method**

The Multi-layered Teaching Method (Demir, 2021) focuses on tailoring instructional content to the varying readiness levels of students, ensuring that each student works at their appropriate level of challenge. Data excerpts support the claim that this method leads to better student outcomes, with one student stating, "The tasks were just right for me. Not too hard but challenging enough to keep me engaged." This method's effectiveness lies in its ability to cater to students' individual learning paces while maintaining high standards for all learners, ensuring that everyone can achieve the same learning outcomes. This approach demonstrates the importance of tiered learning tasks, which promote inclusivity while maintaining rigorous academic standards (Demir, 2021).

### **FINDINGS BASED ON THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. **How do differentiated instructional methods affect students' perception of course content, making it more interesting and meaningful?**

The findings indicate that differentiated instructional methods, particularly those that allow students to choose the type of learning experience (e.g., through the RAFT or Centres Method), significantly enhance students' perceptions of course content. Students report that the ability to engage with content through personalized methods makes the material more meaningful and engaging. Data patterns also show that content tailored to individual learning styles (e.g., through the Entry Points Method) increases students' emotional connection to the material, making it more interesting.

2. **What are the impacts of using course materials tailored to students' individual learning styles and readiness levels on their motivation and engagement?**

The use of differentiated materials, particularly those aligned with students' learning styles (e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic) and readiness levels, has a profound impact on student motivation and engagement. Students expressed higher levels of intrinsic motivation and engagement when materials were tailored to their individual preferences, as evidenced by statements like, "I felt more motivated to learn when I could approach the content in my own way." The data suggests that differentiation not only meets students' diverse needs but also fosters a deeper, more personal connection to the learning process.

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The research article's findings reveal that differentiated instruction can be comprehensively defined as the strategic modification of content, process, product, and environment dimensions in alignment with students' interests, needs, readiness, and learning profiles. These insights address key questions central to the research: How do differentiated instructional methods affect students' perception of course content, making it more interesting and meaningful? and What are the impacts of using course materials tailored to students' individual learning styles and readiness levels on their motivation and engagement? The study not only provides answers to these queries but also offers actionable suggestions and practical classroom strategies. The theoretical underpinning of differentiated instruction prominently features the constructivist approach. This is evidenced by its

reliance on Vygotsky's concept of the proximal development zone, brain-based learning principles, cooperative learning strategies, diverse thinking and learning styles, and multiple intelligence theories. The differentiated teaching approach is characterized by its capacity to engage students actively in both in-class and extracurricular activities. It allows them to undertake tasks suited to their intellectual strengths, prior knowledge, readiness, and interests. Moreover, it supports activities that align with their learning and thinking styles, fosters awareness, and enhances socialization, cooperation, and communication skills through adaptable group work. By establishing connections between existing knowledge and new information, students internalize learning more effectively, with the guidance of a teacher. In light of the research findings, an effective teaching and learning process is characterized by the active involvement of both students and teachers through the implementation of methods such as the Multi-Level Teaching Method, the Station Method, the Centres Method, the Entry Points Method, and the RAFT Method. By strategically selecting the most suitable method based on the core concepts, principles, and objectives of the course, and by preparing the requisite materials, educators can enhance the enjoyment of lessons and significantly boost student engagement.

This study also provides robust evidence that differentiated instruction, when strategically implemented, significantly enhances student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement. By systematically adapting the content, process, product, and environment to align with the diverse interests, needs, readiness levels, and learning profiles of students, differentiated instruction fosters an inclusive and dynamic learning environment. Through the application of methods such as the Multi-Level Teaching Method, Station Method, Centres Method, Entry Points Method, and RAFT Method, this research offers actionable strategies for educators, demonstrating how tailored approaches can make course content more relevant, stimulating, and accessible to all students. A key contribution of this study is its nuanced approach to differentiated instruction, emphasizing the strategic application of these methods in response to students' unique learning needs. Rather than advocating for uniform differentiation across all dimensions, the study underscores the importance of targeted differentiation based on students' interests, readiness, and learning profiles. This flexibility empowers educators to focus on individual student development while maintaining the integrity of the curriculum, thus fostering a deeper connection to the material and enhancing student participation, retention, and academic success. While the findings of this study are compelling, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The research was conducted within a specific educational context, and future studies should explore the impact of differentiated instruction across a broader range of educational systems and cultural settings. Moreover, the study highlights the crucial role of teacher reflection and professional adaptation, yet the extent to which teachers are equipped to implement these differentiated methods in practice remains an area ripe for further inquiry.

**This study yields several important recommendations for educators and policymakers:**

- Educators should fully embrace differentiated instruction as a transformative, student-centred pedagogical approach. Professional development initiatives should equip teachers with the necessary skills and resources to effectively differentiate lessons and foster a learning environment that accommodates the diverse needs of their students.
- Policymakers must prioritize the integration of differentiated instruction into national and regional curricula, ensuring the provision of adequate resources, support, and professional training. This will enable teachers to implement differentiated strategies effectively and ensure equitable access to quality education for all students.
- Future research should explore the long-term impact of differentiated instruction on student outcomes across various educational stages and consider how emerging digital tools and AI can further enhance the customization of learning experiences.

Consequently, it could be accentuated that differentiated instruction is not merely a teaching strategy but a fundamental shift in how we approach the diverse needs of learners. Its implementation is a powerful, evidence-based means of elevating the educational experience, ensuring that all students, regardless of their background or abilities, have the opportunity to thrive. This study contributes significantly to the literature on differentiated instruction, providing not only theoretical insights but also practical solutions that can drive transformative change in educational practices worldwide.

**The following suggestion can be made within the framework of the research:**

This research article is conducted within the constraints of considering student success, engagement, motivation, and readiness levels. It examines the potential benefits of differentiated instruction by focusing on student achievement, course content, individual learning styles, and readiness levels. Therefore, it is recommended that future research in this field explore the following areas:

**1-Teacher Training:** Researchers may investigate the development and evaluation of effective training programs designed to enhance teachers' knowledge and proficiency in differentiated teaching methods.

**2-In-Depth Analysis of Students' Individual Needs:** Researchers may conduct detailed analyses of students' individual needs to determine how differentiated teaching strategies can more effectively address these needs.

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## Statements of publication ethics

I hereby declare that the study does not have any unethical issues, and that research and publication ethics have been observed carefully.

## Author's Contribution Statements

The author's contribution rate is %100.

## Ethics Committee Approval Information

There were no human participants in the research process due to the document review method implementation. Therefore, any ethics committee permission was not required.

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