

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION AND TASK BASED LEARNING: MEETING THE NEEDS OF HETEROGENEOUS STUDENTS IN A BILINGUAL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

English is formally used as a foreign language in Bali Indonesia and the awareness of its importance in the international network and global era is of paramount importance and is consequently often introduced from early childhood.

The teaching of English so far has been directed toward the paradigm of communicative language teaching which is based on a student centered approach. However, not many teachers have the skill of how the approach can be effectively implemented in the classroom. A major reason for the problem lies primarily in the number of the students in the classroom who have different interests, levels of understanding and competencies. Besides that, it cannot be denied that the children's path to acquire and learn English successfully varies greatly. This is partly because of individual traits and also environmental factors. However, most teachers do not understand how heterogeneous students can be best treated in the classroom. Students are often treated equally and teachers do not try to modify the instruction in order to suit the students' need. This paper will, therefore, discuss how differentiated instruction is implemented along with a task based learning paradigm in kindergarten.

There are three methods of differentiating instruction implemented; including modifying the content, the process of learning and the end product. In terms of content, the instructions and tasks are modified based on the interest of the students, and the process of learning is adapted based

on student levels of competency, while the end products are directed based on the depth and the amount of the product. Whether a learning environment is bilingual or an EFL environment, the same principles apply and the results show great improvement and students' enjoyment of learning can be maximized.

Keyword: differentiated instruction, bilingualism, kindergarten

การเรียนการสอนแบบ DIFFERENTIATED และ การเรียนรู้จากการทำงาน เพื่อตอบสนองความต้องการของนักเรียนที่แตกต่างกันในห้องเรียนสองภาษา

บทคัดย่อ

ประเทศอินโดนีเซียใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศอย่างเป็นทางการและตระหนักถึงความสำคัญอย่างยิ่งของภาษาอังกฤษในการสร้างเครือข่ายระหว่างประเทศทั่วโลกและในยุคโลกาภิวัตน์ จึงเป็นภาษาที่เริ่มเรียนตั้งแต่วัยเด็ก

การสอนภาษาอังกฤษตั้งอดีตจนปัจจุบันเป็นการสอนเพื่อการสื่อสารซึ่งอยู่บนพื้นฐานวิธีการให้นักเรียนเป็นศูนย์กลาง แต่ครูจำนวนน้อยมากที่มีทักษะการสอนแบบมีประสิทธิภาพในแนวทางนี้ในห้องเรียน เหตุผลที่สำคัญของปัญหานี้เนื่องมาจากจำนวนนักเรียนในห้องเรียนที่มีความสนใจในระดับความเข้าใจและความสามารถที่แตกต่างกัน นอกจากนั้นยังไม่สามารถปฏิเสธได้ว่าเส้นทางที่นักเรียนจะได้รับและเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษอย่างประสบความสำเร็จนั้นแตกต่างกันมาก ส่วนหนึ่งเป็นเพราะลักษณะของบุคคลและยังมีปัจจัยด้านสิ่งแวดล้อมอีก อย่างไรก็ตามครูส่วนใหญ่ไม่เข้าใจวิธีการสอนนักเรียนที่มีความสามารถแตกต่างกันให้ดีที่สุด ในห้องเรียน นักเรียนมักจะได้รับการปฏิบัติอย่างเท่าเทียมกันและครูไม่พยายามที่จะปรับเปลี่ยนการสอนเพื่อตอบสนองความต้องการของนักเรียน บทความนี้จะกล่าวถึงวิธีการสอนที่แตกต่างกันและการดำเนินการสอนในรูปแบบการเรียนรู้กระบวนการทำงานในโรงเรียนอนุบาล

มีวิธีการเรียนการสอนที่แตกต่างสามอย่าง รวมทั้งการปรับเปลี่ยนเนื้อหา กระบวนการการเรียนรู้และผลการเรียนรู้ ในแง่ของเนื้อหา มีการปรับเปลี่ยนการสอนตามความสนใจของนักเรียนและกระบวนการการเรียนรู้ตามระดับความสามารถของนักเรียน ในขณะที่ผลการเรียนรู้จะขึ้นอยู่กับปริมาณของการเรียนรู้ ไม่ว่าจะเป็นสภาพแวดล้อมการเรียนรู้แบบสองภาษาหรือสภาพแวดล้อมแบบการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ โดยใช้หลักการเดียวกันและผลแสดงให้เห็นถึงการพัฒนาที่ดีและความเพลิดเพลินที่มากขึ้นของนักเรียนในการเรียนรู้

คำสำคัญ: การเรียนการสอนที่แตกต่าง การใช้สองภาษาโรงเรียนอนุบาล

Introduction

Sukma Helen Flavel Kindergarten (SHF Kindergarten) is located in a suburb near the central city of Singaraja, in the Northern part of Bali Indonesia. It is designed as a bilingual kindergarten and teaching instruction is mostly introduced in English. As the only bilingual kindergarten in the area, the applicants come from many backgrounds including those of special need students.

The system of student recruitment is based on the philosophy of 'first come first served' and no special entrance test or interview is applied. This idea is believed to be effective because the approach of instruction in the kindergarten follows the philosophy of differentiated instruction (Nordlund, 2003) which accommodates the students from diverse and different learning needs to be taught in the same classroom. The idea has been developed in line with the needs of helping students with a wide spectrum of learning abilities and styles including those academically disadvantaged, and those with advanced ability.

SHF Kindergarten has a class of three year old toddlers, 2 classes of four year olds in A group; and two classes of B group consisting of children five or six years old. A and B groups have up to 25 students in each class and they are different in terms of their ability as well as literacy development. There are also three students of special need in the classrooms. With these classroom conditions, the teachers of SHK kindergarten are challenged to develop tasks of diverse instruction in order to help every child according to different needs and to enhance their full potential. By implementing the approach of differentiated instruction, it is clear that the students of different groups and needs can be optimally helped to develop into their full potential and ability. It is in line with what is mentioned by Nordlund (2003: 3) as follows.

'We must consider education as an array of services. Every teacher, whether specially trained in special education, reading, or English as a second language, as well as those trained primarily in standard education, must assume responsibility for educating all students. Students need to be educated wherever is most appropriate and by whomever is best suited to meet the child's learning needs. Special education students are no longer educated in the small room hidden behind the boiler'.

The differentiated instruction classroom which has heterogeneous students from different kinds of groups, interests and profiles allows each individual's full potential to progress and development to take place yet still enjoy the comfort zone created by the teacher. This article is therefore intended to describe and analyze how differentiated instruction has been implemented in a bilingual kindergarten in Singaraja, Bali.

The Implementation Of Differentiated Instruction In Shf Kindergarten

Differentiated Instruction is defined as a learning process which provides services for students of different needs in the same classroom which:

include a wide spectrum of learning abilities, styles, and needs, including students who demonstrate above-average intelligence, students who are considered "at risk of school failure, students with cultural/ language differences, students who are educationally disadvantaged, students who have a slow learning rate, and students who qualify for special education services

(Choate 1993 in Nordlund, 2003).

The instruction is intended to help students to develop their full potential, and as such, it should be started from where the students are, and not based on the materials provided in the curriculum. For that reason, the teacher must be ready to provide a great range and variety of methods, techniques and modalities along with a wide range of complexity. In order to meet the different needs of the students, the teachers are certainly required to enrich themselves with special skills, knowledge and patience in order that every student can be in the zone of comfort, and enjoy their learning process in the classroom. The teachers are challenged to provide help which recognizes the children as unique individuals, regardless of the levels they are assigned in the classroom teaching learning process.

Having a differentiating classroom, though at first glance may look easy, is often found to be difficult by teachers in the classroom. The teachers need to have a good understanding about each student they have in the classroom and also be familiar with the learning characteristics of each individual student. From this understanding, the teacher will base their planning and how they design their classroom using various styles and methods in order to suit the need of each individual for their best potential and development. Every student has his /her own phase of learning which is not identical to other students, and as a result, in a differentiated classroom, a teacher needs

to provide specific ways for each individual to learn and to give them chances to develop at their maximum and optimal rate.

SHF Kindergarten applied the Tomlinson model of differentiated instruction which offers the three methods of differentiating instruction for any curricular area such as modifying the content, the process of learning, and the end product (Tomlinson 1999).

In the process of modifying the content to suit the students' different needs, the teacher must decide the core unit first which can be identified from the syllabus. Once the core content is established, then the complexity can be adjusted as needed.

For the modification of the learning process, the teacher utilized many kinds of strategies and techniques in order to teach each concept. For more advanced learners, the students were given many opportunities to work by themselves, and also study all aspects of the topics for the content component. For those who are struggling, they were expected to do less for the content component and the teacher utilized direct instruction to give better guidance for the students. Students who were in-between were assigned to work in groups with the occasional help of the teacher and with a medium range to cover for content.

The end product of a differentiating classroom was conducted by varying the levels or degree of complexity of tasks or projects made by the students and the amount of the assignment which should be finished by the students. *Products* are ways through which students demonstrate and extend what they have learned which will vary according to the ability levels of the students. Students at an advanced level might be able to establish the best product in the most quantity, and those who are in-between might be able to produce something of an average level, while struggling students may only be able to finish their task with the guidance of the teacher. The scoring system applied to the end products made by students is based on indicators which are generated from the statements of basic competencies in the syllabus. The set criteria of achieving 'pass' is indicated by the fulfillment of the minimal standard mastery learning set by the school which is then used as a point of decision; whether the students can continue on to the next topic or need to be given remedial instruction and opportunities.

One thing which needs to be emphasized is that the teacher needs to set the objectives of the instruction that every child must be able to achieve and

basic competencies as assigned in the syllabus regardless of the flexible modification made by the teacher. The objectives of the instruction which are reflected in the fulfillment of the minimal basic competency function as a criteria whether the goal of the syllabus can be attained or not. During the process of teaching and learning in the classroom, the objectives act as a guidance for the teacher on how the ranges of complexity of material will be managed and how the degree and the depth of the product can be challenged by the students based on their needs and the levels of ability.

The following table shows the blue print of differentiating the content, the process and the product made by the teacher at SHF kindergarten.

Table I. Three Ways to Differentiate Instruction.

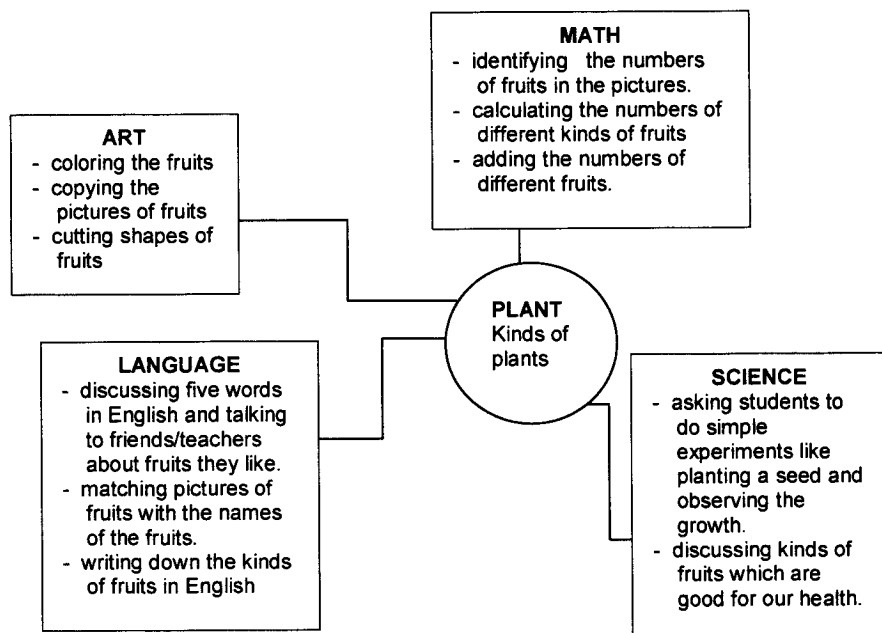
	Challenged/left-behind students	Average students	Advanced
Content	Three topics	Five topics	All topics for content component
Process	Mostly with individual guidance by the teachers	Group work with occasionally guidance by the teacher	Direct class instruction by the teacher and independent work.
End product	Based on the topics and assignment given by the teachers	Based on the topics and assignment given by the teachers	Based on the topics and assignment given by the teachers

In addition to modifying the content based on the student's level of ability, the modification of the learning process was also conducted by giving opportunities for the students to choose material based on their interest. As a bilingual kindergarten, this choice can sometimes be accompanied by a choice of language, according to the student's interest, ability and confidence. The material must be based on a certain theme as determined by the syllabus which is elaborated into several topics such as art, language, mathematics and science. The students can choose the topics based on their preference. Consequently, the teacher needs to provide several teaching guidelines in accordance to the different possible topics provided in the classroom. To avoid the complexity of material arrangement and management in general, modification in terms of students' interest and levels of ability are conducted in turn, not concurrently at the same time.

The teacher will not differentiate everything for every child in the classroom, as it would destroy the unity and the wholeness of the classroom. The differentiation is designed in appropriate moments based on the informal and formal assessment done by the teacher. The teacher sometimes selects a moment for students to carry out activities which are of students' interests. On other occasions, the teacher may give the chance for the students to do tasks based on their ability so that students can link what they study with what they need. A differentiated classroom is therefore organized in a flexible way where the adjustment of what to teach and what to be learned by the students can be compromised for students' optimum growth and developments as learners.

The following is the example of the topic mapping differentiation based on the students' interest at SHF Kindergarten.

Diagram I. The Topic Mapping Differentiation at SHF Kindergarten



From the mapping above, it can be seen that the students can be classified to have different kinds of activities based on their interest. The students are invited to choose their topics based on their preference. The competencies of the students to do the task and activities in the topics are

assessed by developing indicators which would be used as a criteria whether students need remedial treatment or an enrichment program.

Within each category of topics, different kinds of tasks are also designed to give alternatives for the teachers to provide to students based on the student levels. In the language area for example, the teacher designed three kinds of activities which were: mentioning five kinds of fruit in English and talking to friends / teachers about the fruits they like, matching pictures of fruits with their names in the target language, and writing down the kinds of fruits in English. Matching pictures with their names in English is designed for those who are struggling in the area, so it is expected that by providing the pictures, the students will be given a clue of what names are referred to by the pictures. This activity is considered less challenging than mentioning the names and talking about them with friends/teachers, because the students must be able to recall concepts of fruit from memory without any clues and elaborate on concepts and knowledge about fruits in their own words. The last activity was to write the names of fruits in English which was for the most advanced students. This activity needs higher skill than the other two tasks because the students are expected not only to identify kinds of fruit but also to write down the names in English. Though this activity is targeted for English, differentiated instruction allows the flexibility for the teacher to insert the native language according to individual student ability or for a group of students – a further sub-division, if you like. Though possibly too much to manage at one time, with anecdotal record keeping the further “sub-division” that was observed could be planned into a future lesson with a group of lower ability getting the further help they need. Similarly, by observing each activity, a student or a small group of students who exhibit a high interest level in the activity or a portion of the activity could be further encouraged in this area at a later date.

In the science area, students were asked to carry out a simple experiment where the teacher asked students to put seeds/small plants in the plastic bag of soil already prepared earlier by the teacher. While the teacher was doing the planting, he was also explaining the concept of plants to the students. The teacher then asked the students to plant the seeds following the example given by the teacher. For the other group, the teacher asked the students to discuss the kinds of fruits which are good for our health. In the following days and weeks, the students would be asked to observe the growth of the seeds. The task of doing that simple experiment is considered to be a basic concept in science so this activity is not designed as a preference for the

students, but it is given to all students. For that reason, if the students choose to do the experiment in one session, in the following session, the same experiment would be given to the other students, so every child would have the experience of doing it and understand the basic concept of how the plants grow and live. Those who were in the first group would essentially be exchanging activities with the second group who were asked to discuss the kinds of fruits which are good for our health with the assistant teacher.

In the math area, the teacher also planned a variety of activities such as identifying the numbers of fruits in the pictures, calculating the numbers of different kinds of fruits, and adding the numbers of different fruits. Identifying the numbers of fruits in the picture is considered as a basic skill because the students are only expected to count the pictures of fruit in the picture provided; while the other activity like calculating different kinds of fruit is considered to be more difficult than the previous one because the students are provided with more than one kind of fruit and then they are asked to count all of them. This was done by those who were in the average level, because even though the concept introduced is the same in other words, just counting numbers, the amount of numbers counted are more than the first task. The last task in the math area was adding the numbers of different kinds of fruits. The students were given several kinds of fruits to be added with several other kinds of fruits, then they had to write the total number of all fruits. This task was given to the group of advanced students in the class room because the concept introduced in this activity is more difficult than the two assignments which were only counting numbers. The last activity needs higher levels of understanding which covers the concept of counting and adding numbers in order to be able to finish the task correctly. For a bilingual or EFL setting, the teacher also has the flexibility to vary the lesson in terms of language. Math concepts can be introduced or reinforced in the native language according to student ability, thereby possibly creating further sub-groups or individual instruction. Advanced students who have no trouble with the actual concept can be sub-divided, as well, challenging them in the second language.

Similar to other tasks in the other areas, activities in the art area also provided three different levels of tasks such as coloring the fruits, copying the pictures of fruits and cutting shapes of fruits. Coloring the fruits is for the lowest level students, copying the pictures is for those in-between, and cutting the pictures and sticking them on another piece of blank paper is for the highest level students. The process categories need different levels of skill

which were designed based on the skill levels of the students with the expectation that every individual will therefore have the same chance to be successful and enjoy the feeling of comfort from which more challenging tasks could then be enhanced gradually.

Because thematic based instruction needs careful planning and serious management additional help and support is often needed from an assistant teacher. The following is the format of the thematic based material which can be used to assist the teachers in their instructional management.

Table 2. The Format of Thematic Material Management in Different areas

Month	Week	Theme			
		Art	Math	Language	Science
January	Week 1				
	Week 2				
	Week 3				
	Week 4				
Etc.					

The management of the thematic based material as shown above helps the teacher to better plan the categories and elaboration of the key concepts into diversified activities in each area and manage the balance suited for the students' need and learning profiles. The instruction must be planned with enough care and attention for the sake of students' comfort and ease of learning. The instructional activities must be carried out step by step with clear instruction. The clarity is essential and patience is important for successful implementation.

The following is the framework of the design of the implementation which can be shown in the form of a diagram as follows:

Diagram 2. The Framework of the Design of the Differentiated Instruction

Statement of Standard of Competency (taken from the curriculum)
Statement of Basic Competency (taken from the curriculum)
Material: thematic based
Enrichment Program for best/gifted students
Modifications for left behind learners
Activities Appropriate for inclusion of specific need students
Assistance needed for assistant and shadow teacher

As can be seen in diagram 2, the material and concept introduced is thematic based which is developed based on the standard of competency and the basic competency as stated in the curriculum. The theme of the material is available in the syllabus with the competency standard which had to be achieved by the students. For differentiated instructions, the thematic material is developed based on the differences the students have (either in terms of interest, skill, language or other areas). For that reason, the teacher does not only prepare materials for mainstream students, but they also need to design enrichment programs for the gifted students who might be advanced in their task accomplishment and also prepare modifications for the challenged students. This holds true not only for content and concepts as well as for second language. Since the class also has a student of special needs, the teacher needs to provide special activities for him suited to his need and prepare the support from the assistant or shadow teacher.

The implementation of those activities needs special skill and commitment not only from the teacher side but also the management and administration staff. The management as well as the teachers all view diversified learning as a positive learning experience for the children. The classroom teacher and other team members in the school share the same belief that students from different background, learning abilities, academic achievement and cultural socioeconomic status enhance their learning climate in a differentiated classroom. The spirit of cooperation, not competition, is established by the teachers and the students, in order to create an enjoyable and comfortable atmosphere of learning. The whole processes, for that reason, needs the teachers' professionalism as well as their flexibility to make use of different kinds of learning resources to support the success of the instruction based on the needs and the goals of the curriculum.

The classroom becomes more difficult because there is a student of special need in the classroom. The difficulties lie in the area of adapting the kinds of material suited to him and to the management of staff. What was done in SHF Kindergarten was to provide a shadow teacher in the classroom. A special program was designed for the special need student and the system employed was a combination of a 'pull out' system and an 'inclusive system'. The pull-out system was employed when the student needed to be taken out for his comfort and he was included again when he felt good to continue. This process needs sensitivity, skill and professionalism on the part of the shadow teacher.

The power of differentiated instruction lies in this part. The ability of modifying and designing a special program based on the students' needs allows for progress and the full potential of each student to take place while accommodating the spirit of comfortable learning in the classroom. The modification is conducted not only to suit the different needs of the students but also the different levels of cognitive process each student needs to experience based on their ability levels. Diversification of the cognitive process was conducted based on the Bloom taxonomy (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001) which utilizes different levels of instruction based on a person's cognitive ability. The hierarchy of the taxonomy ranges from the easiest to the most difficult which is indicated by key words to show the different levels of ability. The taxonomy is explained in the following table.

Table 3. The Hierarchy of Bloom Taxonomy in Differentiated Classroom

Level	Process categories	Cognitive process and examples
Knowledge	Remember	Retrieve relevant knowledge from memory. e.g. Recalling the names of transportation in English
Comprehension	Understand	Construct meaning from instructional messages. e.g. giving examples of kinds of transportation on land, air and sea.
Application	Apply	Carry out or use a procedure in a given situation. e.g. draw a picture of a kind of transportation.
Analysis	Differentiate, Compare	Break material into constituent parts and determine how parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose. e.g. Compare one kind of transportation with another one.
Evaluation	Evaluation	Make judgments based on criteria. e.g. Judging which of the two kinds of transportation is the best to take to school.
Synthesis	Create	Reorganize elements into a new pattern or structure. e.g. generate hypothesis based on the observed phenomena.

Based on the hierarchy above the teacher chose the appropriate process of instruction which suits the ability levels of the students. Students of the lowest ability could be given material which was in their level of knowledge. The feeling of success on the task given by the teacher can make the students motivated to study more, and frequently students who are challenged to do something difficult and cannot carry out the task correctly make them demotivated or even make the students avoid to learn immediately. This is supported by Nordlund (2003) who states that

‘If we let a child begin instruction where he feels successful, this child will be willing to take more risks as learning becomes more motivational and successful. This rule is particularly true of children who are educationally disadvantaged, transient, or previously unsuccessful in their school experiences. These challenged learners have faced repeated failure in their academic careers and are fearful of taking risks educationally. Often, they feel it is better not to try than to look bad and fail’.

A student with a learning disability is guided to do the task step by step and directed to be able to do the task successfully and also be given the chance to demonstrate their success in carrying out the activities to other students in the classroom. In other words, all students regardless of their ability should be given the chances to demonstrate their best abilities so they are able to inspire each other. In differentiated classrooms, teachers must be able to help students based on their full potential and ensure that a student competes against himself as he grows and develops more than he competes against other students (Tomlinson, 1999). Teachers using differentiated instruction should understand that every child bring their commonalities to schools but they also have their essential differences which make them individual, for that reason the teacher should plan and prepare instructions which become a good fit for each individual in the classroom.

In differentiated instruction the teacher is also well aware that each student varies in readiness and learning profile. Students’ readiness or entry point to a particular understanding or skill is uniquely different. Some students might not need as much assistance as other students. Some students might need someone to help them give direct instruction while others need more self experience. This different entry is used as a guidance on how to choose the best learning process for the students. One student might start to have knowledge level of cognitive process, while others can be enhanced to experience the level of the application process.

The choice of the learning process should also be adapted to the learning profile of the students; how each individual learns. Some students feel best if they work alone with writing, but others prefer to work in group and need more analytical process before they start writing.

It cannot be denied that considering all the differences each student has in the learning process in the classroom it certainly is complex for management. For that reason, teachers may need to adapt one or more of the curricular elements (content, process, products) based on one or more of the student characteristics (readiness, needs, and learning profile) at any point in a lesson or unit. It is needed because growth does not always proceed in a steady, forward direction (Owocki, 2001). However, teachers need not differentiate all elements in all possible ways as it might bring about complicated management and chaotic process of material diversification. Effective differentiated classrooms include many times in which whole-class, non-differentiated fare is the order of the day. The modification of a curricular element is conducted only when (1) a student might personally need some adjustment and (2) the teachers are convinced that modification increases the likelihood that the learner will understand important ideas and use important skills more thoroughly as a result (Tomlinson, 1999). The basis of the modification is the students' need which is used as a point from which development and diversification of the instruction will be carried out.

The following is the comparison between the traditional classroom and the differentiated instruction implemented in SHF Kindergarten.

Table 3. The Comparison of Traditional Classroom and Differentiated Instruction Implemented in SHF Kindergarten

No	Traditional Classroom	Differentiated Instruction
1.	Students' differences are not considered in the planning but only when it is seen as problematic.	Students' differences are used as a basis for designing learning instruction.
2.	The materials are chosen by the teacher. The students' choice is not well accommodated in the students' learning process.	The students are frequently given the chance to choose material based on students' interest.

3.	The coverage and scope of curriculum guides the process of instruction.	Students' readiness, need and learning profile strongly influence the process of instruction in the classroom.
4.	The teacher usually decides single option assignment for students.	The teacher designs multi-option assignments.
5.	A relatively narrow sense of intelligence prevails	Forms of multiple intelligence are highly appreciated
6.	Student's interest is hardly considered	Students' interest is frequently used as a basis for choosing the topics.
7.	Few student learning profile options are taken into consideration.	Student learning profiles are frequently well treated.
8.	Whole class instruction is the focus.	Many instructional arrangements and management are used.
9.	Single option assignment is the main emphasis.	Many option assignments are mostly used.
10.	The teacher directs students' behavior.	The teacher facilitates students becoming more self-directed learners.
11.	The teacher solves the problems	The teacher directs students to solve their own problems.
12.	A single form of assessment is used.	Multiple kinds of assessment are used.

A differentiated instruction in B Class of SHF Kindergarten sometimes combined the diversification based on students' interests and students' ability level. Ability level is based on cognitive and language ability. The teacher divided students into three groups based on their abilities such as the more able students, the average students and the low-level students. The theme of the instruction was 'Recreation' and each group was instructed to choose the topic area based on their interests. The coverage of the topic area was language, art, and shapes and blocks. The students in the more able group (Group A) chose the Language Area, the average group (Group B) chose the Art Area and the lower level students (Group C) chose the Shapes and Blocks Area. The special need student present in the class was classified in the lower level group. All students are expected to understand the concept of

'Recreation and see the link between language, art and Shapes and Blocks area.

Mr. Wika, the main teacher of B Class asked Group A to draw a picture of the recreation plan that the students might have if they have holiday. The teacher gave an example about his plan to go to another city if he has holiday. Then Mr. Wika went to Group B who chose the Art Area. Mr. Wika asked the students about their plan for the next holiday. One student in the group said that they would like to go to the beach and the others kept silent for a while and afterward followed their friend and said 'beach'. The teacher then kneeled down in order to be closer to the students and asked them what they might see when they were at the beach. Sita, one of the students said, 'fish' and was followed by her friends. The teacher then gave them a picture of fish and asked the group to color them. The last group was Group C. In this group the teacher talked to the students and discussed about their plan if they have a holiday. One of them said that they would like to go to the Zoo and see some kinds of animals there. These students were then asked to work together to rearrange blocks to make various kinds of shapes. The teacher was helped by an assistant and a shadow teacher for the special need student. The assistant helped the students to generate ideas if they were blank and had no idea what to do. As the groups worked, the teacher worked with individuals and the groups to check or assess their understanding and their progress and to facilitate the tasks.

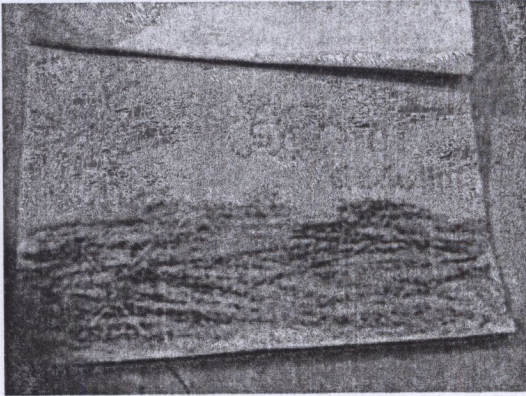
The following is the results of Group A who were working on the Language Area:



In the language task of Group A on "Recreation", the above picture shows that Mr. Wika utilized a student made journal to support the students' worksheet to encourage emergent readers, writers, and users of language. The teacher prepares blank books with a cover sheet. Children were invited to write their names on the cover and

decorate it. Each day following, the teacher works with the children to do a page of the journal. Children are encouraged to do a picture and write there. The goal of this activity is to encourage thinking, writing, speaking and reading at the child's pace in the areas/topics the child finds of interest. This

is more of a child directed activity and very valuable over a period of time. The teacher's role is to be supportive and encouraging. Making comments about the level of drawing or the content are not helpful; it is better to encourage, extend etc. The following is the work of the student named 'Made' who is about six years old. The teacher sat down closer to students and asked about his picture.



From the conversation with the student, it was learned that Made would like to go swimming at the beach if he has holiday. From the picture, it can be seen that Made had a good concept of a beach.

He colored the water in the beach with blue, and drew a sun above the beach. Made was also able to write 'sun'

correctly but wrote 'suwiming' for 'swimming' (where the 'ng' was written above the word because not enough space available). Analyzing the characteristics of the spelling made by Made it can be stated that he is in the stage of 'Early Writing' (McGee, Lea M.; Richgels, Donald J., 2003; Morrow, 2007). As a six year old child it is shown that he had a good concept of 'swimming' despite the spelling mistake he made.



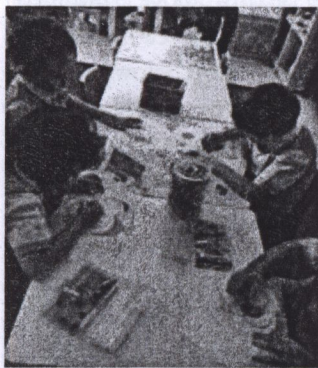
Picture 3: Mahesa's picture

From Picture 3, it can be seen that the concept of 'Recreation' was well understood by the student named Mahesa. He has a plan of going to Kalimantan for his holiday. However he also made a spelling mistake. He wrote 'tugo Kalimantan' for 'to go to Kalimantan'. As with Made, Mahesa was also in the stage of 'Early Writing' because he was

able to demonstrate his concept clearly which is reflected from his writing. From Mahesa's journal, it can be figured out that he intended to write 'to go'. However instead of writing 'to' he wrote 'tu' (as how it is pronounced)

and without a space with the word 'go'. It is evident that his writing reflected the alphabetical principle but without a complete understanding about the order of letters and space arrangement needed for correct spellings.

In the next group, the students made other activities. Group B, for example, chose to go to the beach for their recreation and see some fish there. The teacher then gave each of them a picture of fish which had to be colored by the students. The following picture shows the product of Group B.



Picture 4: Group B's picture of coloring fish

Group B students were average in ability. They were all asked to color the fish. They did not spend much time coloring. During their time, they were not assisted by the teacher even though occasionally they discussed with each other.

The next group, Group C, carried out different activities. They had blocks which were arranged into different kinds of shapes. The following picture shows the activity of the students in Group C.



Picture 5: The Process of Group C Doing Their Task.

The three pictures in series above showed how the students in Group C carried out their task. In the first picture, it was shown that the assistant teacher was coaching them to understand their work better. The next picture

is how the students worked together to finish their task and the last picture is the product after they finished doing the task.

The next step would be the students' presentation. The students were instructed to share the information about the results of the work they had in their groups. Group A for example was assigned in the Language Area. In this group, the students were asked to draw a picture about the plan of recreation in their journal book and the students were also instructed to write something about the plan. Based on that assignment, Group A made a picture of the recreation plan they had. The pictures they made were about the plan to go to Kalimantan (like shown in the picture above), going to Hardisk Mall (the first picture below), and go to village (the second picture below) and go swimming in Putrisari Hotel (the third picture below).



Pictures 6: The Results of Group A on Language Area

From the picture above, it can be observed that the students could internalize the concept of a recreation plan. The student who made the first picture mentioned that he would like to go to Hardisk Mall with his mother and father. From the picture it can be seen that the students wrote four words such as 'hardis' for 'Hardisk Mall', 'tu' for 'to' (like in 'to Hardisk') and 'mather' for 'mother' and 'Father'. Similar to the second picture, the students also produced four words: 'goeng' for 'going', 'to', 'Filet' for 'village' and 'gress' for 'grass'; while the student of the third picture only produced three words such as 'Putrisari' (which is the name of a hotel in the town), 'ster' for 'stair' and 'pul' for 'pool'.

From those data in the Pictures 6 above, it is evident that the students have performed literacy development even though their understanding about English spelling principles is not entirely perfect yet. Their literacy development can be categorized in the stage of Early Reading and Writing where the students are in the process of being able to perform spelling principles. Despite the spelling mistakes the work is still understandable.

The products of Group B were about the colored pictures of fish, while Group C was to rearrange blocks in order to make a shape related to a place of recreation. From analyzing the products of all groups, it can be seen that all students show a good understanding of the theme which was about Recreation. However, the levels of demand of competency among the groups is different.

When Group A was asked to tell their plan for holiday, the students in Group A could explain quite well where they would like to go for holiday by showing their pictures to their teacher and their friends. Students in Group B were asked to show their colored fish one by one and the teacher developed questions for them to stimulate their understanding about the pictures. The questions were mostly in the knowledge level and only a few questions on the comprehension level. By varying the levels of questions, the students can be either directed to work to their best ability, or challenged to reach their highest level of thinking.

Group C was instructed to arrange the blocks and they made into a kind of park. Some students then provided it with some animals and explained in their native language that they would like to go to a zoo. One of the students in Group C brought animal toys and showed them to the teacher, then the teacher asked the group to count the number of animals they had, and confidently all of them in the group could answer it correctly. The modification made by the teacher to develop the questions by asking them to count the numbers was in fact intended to challenge the children to go deeper into the topic in the Math Area and leading them to develop their understanding and exploration about the theme.

In Group C, there is a student of special need who has been diagnosed as autistic. During the group work of building blocks with friends, he can socialize and be involved in the group work. The following picture shows how as a member of the group, he could work together with others and do the task cooperatively. However he could not fully concentrate on task for the whole time of instruction, especially when the students were all approaching the teacher to listen to the student who did the presentation. He has frequent breaks and special attention from the shadow teacher at various intervals. In these situations, the teacher takes advantage by asking him to put toys in their place or by drawing so he has a moment of having movement breaks which he highly needs for his comfort.



With the different kinds of activities and performances of the students in one class as mentioned above, the assessment of the students' competencies needs to be taken into consideration. The assessment was designed by conducting a process evaluation and taking notes of special behavior in the anecdotal records made by the teacher to monitor special

occurrences that may have happened in the classroom which is also filed as a record for seeking solutions and helping with the parent report. The formal assessment was managed by the classroom teacher through the evaluation of the student progress and analyzing their products compiled in a portfolio and put it in a portfolio folder. Individual portfolio is a very effective strategy of keeping the students' records from which the differentiated instruction materials are based on. This level of differentiation requires a comprehensive understanding about the curriculum as well as the needs of the students who are gifted as well as the students who are struggling to learn.

Conclusion

Differentiated instruction is found very appropriate and effective when implemented for students who learn in different ways at different rates and who bring with them different backgrounds, different needs and different learning profiles to school. Though this is true in general, it is also specifically evident with regards to a bilingual setting or a TEFL setting. Differentiated instruction in a bilingual or EFL setting allows students to experience their second language in a much more self-directed and meaningful way. As discussed, students have varying levels of ability, interest and backgrounds. It follows that this should also be considered with regards to a second language where emergent reading or language readiness can be more effectively applied to the second language in a differentiated classroom.

Teachers in differentiated classroom are more in touch with students and care for the needs of the students. For them teaching is more of an art than as rigid procedural steps. For maximum results for all students, the teacher's clarity of instruction is of paramount importance. The clarity of the

instruction assists the struggling learners to focus on essential understanding and skills, while advanced learners will be directed to spend their time grappling with important complexities rather than repeating activities which they have already experienced. The clarity of the teacher increases likelihood that the teacher can introduce concepts in a way that every student finds meaningful and enjoyable which enhances student's optimal growth and success.

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