DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH IN ORGANIZING INDEPENDENT WORK OF STUDENTS AT ENGLISH LESSONS

©*Zulpukarova A.,* SPIN-код: 3564-5533, Ph.D.,
Osh State University, Osh, Kyrgyzstan

ДИФФЕРЕНЦИРОВАННЫЙ ПОДХОД В ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ САМОСТОЯТЕЛЬНОЙ РАБОТЫ УЧАЩИХСЯ НА УРОКАХ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

©*Зулпукарова А. К.,* SPIN-code: 3564-5533, канд. филол. наук,
Ошский государственный университет, г. Ош, Кыргызстан

Abstract. The topic of differentiated instruction has continued to be a hot topic over the past 50 years, and will continue to be so as long as the classroom-lesson system of education exists. Differentiation can be defined as learning that takes place in groups of students, formed on the basis of any peculiarities, while taking into account the individual characteristics of students. In such groups, learning takes place according to several different curricula and programs. Authors describe main variants of realization of independent work with the help of differentiated approach and present the experience of implementing one of the options in teaching English language.

Аннотация. Тема дифференцированного обучения остается актуальной на протяжении последних 50 лет, и будет актуальной до тех пор, пока существует классно-урочная система обучения. Дифференциацию можно определить как обучение, которое происходит в группах учащихся, сформированных на основе каких-либо особенностей, при этом учитываются индивидуальные характеристики учащихся. В таких группах обучение происходит по нескольким различным учебным планам и программам. Авторы описывают основные варианты реализации самостоятельной работы с помощью дифференцированного подхода и представляют опыт внедрения одного из вариантов в преподавание английского языка.

Keywords: differentiation, individual assignments, independent work, foreign language teaching.

Ключевые слова: дифференциация, индивидуальные задания, самостоятельная работа, обучение иностранному языку.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the learning process and to overcome student failure, many foreign language teachers use the technique of differentiated approach. Differentiation means division, dissection, stratification of the whole into parts. In the classroom it means dividing students into groups for various reasons, both explicit and more hidden. It also means that the teacher places completely different demands on different groups of students and on their mastery of the educational content. Differentiated learning is a pedagogical technology of the organization of the learning process, within the framework of which there are different levels of the learning material absorption, that is, the depth and complexity of the same learning material is different in the level classes, which gives each student the opportunity to master the learning material of

individual subjects of the education programme at different levels, but not below the basic level, depending on the abilities and individual characteristics of each student personality [1].

Each child has his or her own individual characteristics, which arise as a result of his or her own development and acquire different typological characteristics of the higher nervous activity. These characteristics have an influence on the child's sensations, perception, thinking, memory, interests, abilities and personality. Multi-level learning contributes to the development of the cognitive interests of the pupils and helps them to overcome difficulties and learn more successfully. These accomplishments provide opportunities for self-fulfilment, self-discovery and self-development [6].

The work is differentiated according to the degree of independence of the pupils when the work is organized as follows In the orientation phase, the pupils familiarize themselves with the task, find out its meaning and the rules for its design. Then some of the children (mostly in group 3) start to do the task on their own. The others, with the help of the teacher, analyse the method or the example given. They do part of the exercise in front of the class. This is usually enough for another group of children (Group 2) to start working independently. The pupils who have difficulties (usually children from group 1, i.e. pupils with low learning ability) do all the exercises under the teacher's guidance. The control phase is frontal [4].

In this way, the degree of independence of the pupils varies. Group 3 works independently, group 2 ~ semi-independently and group 3 - frontally under the teacher's guidance. The students decide for themselves when they want to start working independently. There is always the possibility of a return to the teacher's guidance if this is necessary. Differentiated teaching is based on individual knowledge, depending on the student's ability and level of language knowledge and skills. This helps the teacher to involve both the weaker students and those who know much more than the others in studying a given topic. It is worth noting that the material can be exactly the same. However, several tasks of different complexity are developed for it. All this makes it possible to apply the success situation to each individual student in the group. This increases the motivation to learn. One important advantage of differentiated tasks is that they can be used at different stages of the classroom, in all types of language activities (reading, speaking, listening, writing) and in grammar and lexicography. In the modern conditions of the surrounding reality it becomes obvious that the society needs highly qualified specialists with active professional and vital position, who are able not only to adapt in the global world, but also to take a leading position in it. For this reason, higher education is faced with special tasks related to the training of future specialists who possess both professional and cultural competences, as well as the desire for self-development and self-improvement. Undoubtedly, in order to achieve this goal, it is impossible to limit oneself to the revision of methodological approaches to the teaching process in higher education institutions and the use of modern technologies.

The solution to this problem requires, first of all, a change in the conceptual principles of teaching. The formation of creative self-identity can hardly be achieved through the traditional presentation of knowledge. The new educational paradigm should transform students from passive consumers of knowledge into active subjects capable of solving problems and finding effective ways to achieve them. Students' independent work is not only a form of the educational process in this vision of the university educational process, it becomes its integral basis. Therefore, it is a contemporary issue that requires detailed analysis and research to consider the substance and content of independent work in higher education institutions, the formation of cognitive autonomy in language teaching of students. It's worth noting that studying this issue is driven by the spirit of the new age: the processes of globalisation and integration that are taking place in the modern world require universal, competent and self-confident professionals.

Methodology

It should be noted that independent work of students, being an important part of educational process, requires optimal conditions for organizing and carrying it out in an effective way. According to scientists, permanent optimization of independent work of students allows to activate the cognitive process and to find new ways of self-improvement of students. The research must start with an in-depth consideration of the values of the terms 'self-employment' and 'independence', and analyse the numerous points of view and conceptions that emerge from different conceptual approaches.

Thus, in the New Dictionary of Methodical Terms and Concepts it is said that independent work is the inalienable obligatory link of the educational process, which provides for individual work of the student in accordance with the teacher's or textbook's instructions, educational programme. Tasks intended for independent work must be active and creative in character. They stimulate the search for independent decisions, while the acquisition of necessary skills is the obligatory condition for the development of self-education.

In the dictionary of terms of general and social pedagogy independent work is interpreted as "a type of educational activity in which a certain level of independence of the student is assumed in all its structural components, from the posing of the problem to the realisation of control, self-control and correction, moving from the simplest types of work to the most difficult, having a searching character. Independent work must be aimed at continuous learning as a means of developing the student's cognitive abilities".

In pedagogy, the term independent work refers to the various types of individual and group activities undertaken by students in the course of class and out-of-class instruction.

Independent work, according to scientists, includes seeking necessary information, acquiring knowledge and using it for solving pedagogical, scientific and vocational problems. Assuming that the activity is aimed at self-education of the student, independent work includes the performance of various tasks of educational, productive, research and self-educational character. It serves as a means of mastering the system of professional knowledge, methods of cognitive and professional activity, formation of skills of creative activity. Next we have a look at the meaning of the word "independence". In the encyclopedic dictionary of pedagogy this concept is revealed as: "one of the leading qualities of personality, reflected in the ability to set some goals, to achieve them independently". Independence means to act responsibly, to know how to act in all circumstances, to take unconventional decisions".

It is necessary to consider that students' involvement in independent work should take place in stages when organising independent work. According to experts there are three stages, each of which is characterized by defined goals and objectives. The first stage is the development of positive motivation of students to manifest their interest in independent work, understanding of the nature of their self-education abilities, disclosure of methods of self-education. The second stage is aimed at the formation of skills of independent work and is based on the maximum immersion of the students in working with information, mobilizing and activating the internal resources of the students, conscious and purposeful extraction and generation of subjectively new knowledge. The third stage, as one of the conditions for the development of self-education, self-improvement, is the mastering of creative and reflective activities aimed at improving the skills of independent work.

A classification of four types of independent work has been proposed by a number of scholars:

- Independent work of the reproductive type, which is based on knowledge acquired in the past;

- Independent work of the cognitive-searching type, which is aimed at the acquisition of new knowledge;

- Independent work of the creative type, the aim of which is the creation of new and original works;

- Cognitive-critical independent work aimed at learning to analyse.

The use of textbooks or reference literature during the work distinguishes the types of independent work.

The researchers also offer classifications of independent work with the following aims in mind: mastery of the material in the lesson; mastering systemic knowledge; knowledge generalization; applying knowledge in a practical way; knowledge control; formation of a scientific view of the world.

There is independent work of a compulsory nature, carried out in the course of lessons and preparation for them, and also of a supplementary nature, carried out individually according to the personal interests and inclinations of the student. This includes traditional homework done by students to prepare for a specific activity: educational and creative tasks that take more time to complete. Independent work done in preparation for the final exams requires more time and is more time-consuming, as it contains a large number of tasks and occupies an interval ranging from a month to the duration of the whole semester. These are: the computational model, types of projects, computational and graphical tasks, coursework, course projects, individual creative tasks. The final pieces of work, such as diploma projects and master's theses, are the longest pieces of independent work.

For the organization of independent work, researchers distinguish different criteria: the possibility for the teacher and the student to act independently as a controller; the way in which the work is carried out (the mode can be chosen independently by the teacher and the pupil); the way in which the work is motivated: this can come from the teacher, from the educational institution or from the student's needs; the fixed place of the educational activity (it can be a fixed place, for example, a classroom).

It should be noted that, depending on the place and time of independent work, there is a traditional division in the educational system into three components:

- Independent work in the process of teaching (lectures, seminars, practical lessons, laboratory work);

- Independent work under the supervision of the teacher in the form of planned consultations, creative contacts, tests and examinations (IWSS);

- Independent work outside the classroom in the form of homework assignments of an educational and creative nature to be carried out by the student.

There is no doubt that the independence of the above-mentioned types of work is rather conditional and that in the real educational process these types of work overlap with each other.

In foreign language teaching it is particularly important to take into account the individual characteristics of the students and to differentiate the tasks. This is because the abilities to learn foreign languages are not identical. The most common differentiation of the group of students into three main groups is: the first with high level, the second with average level, the third with low learning level. Despite the fact that the compilation and development of three groups of tasks is a rather laborious and not always quick process, in the future it will bring significant advantages and convenience in the teacher's work [5].

Especially if you develop workbooks, methodological manuals or thematic collections of tasks that will serve for many years, not only facilitating the teacher's work, but also helping each student develop at his own pace, taking into account his individual characteristics. At the same time,

it is possible to develop students' independence and self-assessment skills through the use of symbols for different levels of tasks and the possibility for students to choose their own tasks. Differentiation can be done not only by the level of difficulty, but also by the interests of the students, by their personal characteristics, by the level of the teacher's support in working with the tasks, and so on. In foreign language classes we often use the following examples of differentiated tasks. When studying the grammatical topic past simple:

A. Divide these verbs into two categories: 1) Regular Verbs; 2) Irregular Verbs: walked, sit, jumped, teach, present, built, sleep, fight, drink, wrote, polished, cooked, saw.

Regular verbs	Irregular verbs

Fill in the table, write the missing words:

Translation	Verb 1	Verb 2	Verb 3
добавить	add	added	Added
быть			
			come
	drink		
		broke	

C. Open the brackets using the proper tense of the verbs: 1. My friends … playing computer games (to like). 2. Tomorrow I … a good mark. (to get). 3. Last summer my family … our relatives in Africa. (to visit). 4. Look! This dog … with a stick (to play). 5. Every day he … to school. (to go). 6. Sometimes children … his music. (to listen to). 7. In two years I … a famous writer. (to be). 8. Our classmates … this rule by heart three years ago. (to learn). 9. Every year Bob … part in this competition. (to take). 10. Our mum … the best one. (to be). 11. I like to help my parents. I can … the dishes, … my room and … shopping. (to wash/to clean/ to do). 12. Emily …a lot of books every day. (to read).

And when studying the lexical topic FOOD, students are asked to do this task: Look at the picture and divide the words into two categories: *Healthy food - Unhealthy food*
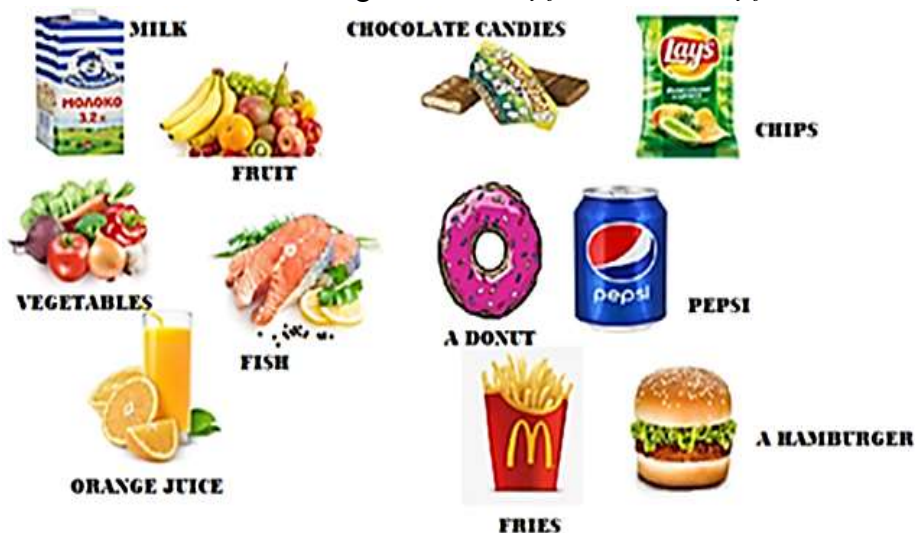
The following possibilities for implementing a differentiated approach to teaching English have been taken into account in the selection of materials:

- Differentiated complexity of the task and equal conditions for its fulfilment for all;
- Differentiated task complexity and differentiated conditions for completion;
- The same complexity for all students and differentiated conditions for completing it;
- The same complexity of the task for all students and the same conditions for its completion [2].

Prior to the development of the tasks, it was necessary to have a conditional division of the class into groups. As already mentioned, the main criteria were the students' abilities and the level of acquired skills and abilities (above average and below average). Special attention was paid to the individual psychological peculiarities of the students when choosing the tasks [4].

All the tasks were carried out independently. At the end of the lesson there was an exchange of "experiences", i.e. both groups of pupils exchanged their impressions of the tasks, checked the tasks independently, in case of errors or mistakes the pupils corrected them together and pronounced the correct answers, which led to the formation of the speaking skill. In case of errors or mistakes the pupils corrected them together and pronounced the correct answers, which led to the formation of the speaking skill.

In the opinion of the scientists we will agree that the independent work of the pupil is a study of the properly organized public activity; it extends, intensifies and continues the process of cognition in the out-of-school time. It is necessary that as a lever of self-learning pedagogical discipline the pedagogical work of the student, organized by the teacher, should come to the fore. That is to say that the efficiency of the mastery of the language discipline is dependent on the pedagogue, the organization of the pedagogical course, and also on the formation at students of a part of the technologically independent development of the discipline in the course of the solution of the new pedagogical organization of the pedagogical course. Obviously, for the student, independent work must be understood as an internally motivated creative activity that includes the following steps: awareness of goals and objectives; self-organization in allocating educational actions in time; self-control in carrying them out. In general, independent work of students under the teacher's control is pedagogical development of purposeful readiness for professional self-education, didactic tool in educational process, artificial pedagogical structure of organization and management of students. Thus, structurally independent work of students can be divided into two parts: teacher-organized and independent work organized by students at their own discretion without direct teacher control (preparation for lectures, laboratory and practical classes, tests, colloquia, etc.).

Conclusion

The most important thing is not to assume that those who are weak will always have to work less. Their abilities develop over time, and succeeding means working. Therefore, satisfying the cognitive needs of both strong and weak learners, taking into account their individual readiness and individual qualities, are the main objectives of the differentiated approach to foreign language teaching.

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