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**TYPES OF DIFFERENTIATION USED IN TEACHING ESP
AT TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITIES**

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Abstract. In this article we have analyzed types of differentiation having used in teaching ESP specifically teaching to students of IT at Shushi University of Technology. We have considered three types of differentiation (by outcome, by task and methods). We have proposed some extension and supported activities, tasks and different techniques which were used during our lessons. We must mention that in the process of differentiation there is no ultimate idea how to differentiate and it is based on teachers' creativity and proactivity to detect and to meet students' needs. So teachers should practice differentiation in the process of their teaching.

Keywords: differentiation; extension activities; support strategies; interactive resources; cooperative learning; flexible pace learning.

In teaching ESP, differentiation is taken into consideration as well and often referred to as 'teaching mixed ability' or 'mixed levels'. We as teachers know that students are different in many different ways, not just ability. And students have different strengths and weaknesses within and beyond their language ability.

Speaking about class we must mention that no class is completely homogeneous, and number one task for a teacher is to identify and to meet the individual needs of the students. For teachers it is important teaching the students rather than sticking to the lesson plan.

In fact it is very difficult or almost impossible to have interactive classes by providing different worksheets for all the students and getting them to work on these individually or even in pairs. Language is all about interactions and students come to class to interact with each other, and the same process is happening in learning ESP. One of the effective methods of having interactive lesson in teaching ESP is differentiation [2] and its types according to functions. Differentiation must provide options and create an environment for a better learning, not limit them. In this article we shall consider three types of differentiation met in teaching ESP namely teaching IT English to university students :

by outcome, by task and by methods. In this article we consider lesson plan based on "Scrum in IT-Agile Project management" topic taken from www.eslbrains.com [3].

Differentiation by outcome

The first thing to remember is that many of the tasks we are already doing will enable us to differentiate quite well. Any task which is open (a task with more than one answer) will allow students to work at their own level.

Similarly, any tasks which provide choices or which are personalized or require interaction with others are likely to be naturally quite differentiation-friendly, and will allow for different outcomes.

Teachers in teaching ESP use differentiated outcomes used in their lesson plans. It can be formulated like "By the end of the lesson all students will know the basics of Scrum in English"/ "Most will be able to learn some key project related terms / "Some will obtain IT vocabulary".

This can be a useful reminder that what we teach is not necessarily what is learnt, but, personally we are not hugely keen on this approach, as it starts the lesson by assuming that some students cannot achieve. This approach limits the choice by assuming that some students will be out of the process which is already undesirable for teachers

from the beginning. Teaching ESP is a little bit different from teaching ordinary English as it is focused on teaching English through teaching specialty as well. Students also have a chance to learn basics in the IT industry concerning Scrum project management.

Differentiation by task

In teaching ESP we can give tasks to students so that we provide either extra support, or extra challenge. The table below gives some examples:

Table 1

Differentiation by teaching techniques

Activity Type	Extension activities	Support strategies
Reading	<p>Focus on 6 new words from vocabulary in the given text, look them up in their dictionaries and choose one right option for each sentence to learn IT vocabulary. After reading the article find synonyms to the words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repeatable = <i>iterative</i> • comprehensive = <i>holistic</i> • to question = <i>to challenge</i> • to harmonize = <i>to sync</i> <p>4 questions about the professional text on <i>Scrum</i>. Questions can then be given to another early finisher to answer and after being answered passed back to the original student for assessing.</p>	<p>Pre-teach vocabulary Leaving words on the board after being completed by students.</p> <p>Activating their previous knowledge on Scrum before reading the article by asking question. Give multiple choices for finding right synonym. Give students the answers in a mixed order. Break the text into sections with statements and after each section ask whether the given statement is true or false.</p>
Listening	<p>Give students the opportunity to listen for the second time to be sure in their answers, give some optional extra questions as well. You can also extend an activity on true/false by asking why/why not?</p>	<p>Give students the tapescript on second listening. In an activity on filling the gaps, provide some word choices. Give students a chance to discuss answers in pairs or groups before feeding back to the class. Monitor and play again if necessary.</p>
Writing	<p>Make use of creative tasks that students can do at their own level. Use a correction code to give students a chance to self correct. Increase the word limit</p>	<p>Do modeling by giving an example before they start writing. Correct the draft with the student or give them to correct each other before rewriting. Reduce the word limit.</p>
Speaking	<p>Ask students to give arguments on topic. Match high level students together to let them go beyond their limits</p>	<p>Give students time to plan their ideas and time for revision. Pair weak and strong together.</p>

Teachers can also use differentiation by teaching methods. It allows teachers to give students of all levels and abilities the best chance of learning. Using differentiation by teaching methods increases teacher's chances to cater for a wide range of abilities among students in the classroom. Above mentioned table shows that an activity which involves active learning and group or pair work is likely to differentiate more effectively because

- Students can work at their own level.
- Students can support each other and learn from each other.

Teachers may experiment with *flexible pace learning* technique by giving stronger students extension tasks meanwhile the ordinary and weaker ones are able to finish their exercises at a more comfortable speed. The observation based on class analysis of Shushi University of Technology shows that it works really well [4].

Another useful technique is *cooperative learning*. Teachers make up mixed-ability groups which give a platform for strong students feeling free to produce their ideas and for weak students a collaborative environment to learn from peers. However, sometimes the stronger student dominates or resents the role and/or the weaker student feels embarrassed or says nothing.

Using *interactive* tools and *digital resource* [1] s may also increase productivity of your lesson. Students with less academic ability seem more enthusiastic during this class rather than in the lesson where traditional resources (such as blackboard, worksheet, etc.) are used.

The task with *variable outcomes* [4] may also encourage students with slow performance rather than a task with one "right" answer. We also call it "interpretive approach". Students of different abilities find the outcome corresponding to their level of English.

Progressive task technique makes teachers possible to set separate exercises to students based on their ability. However it may cause some problems increasing additional

administrative work for teachers and publicly highlighting students' ability.

Another useful technique is questioning technique. It can also be modified to provide better differentiation. You are using this technique by giving students enough time and space to answer. A teacher has to reflect on the question complexity and not to put students in an uncomfortable situation by asking difficult questions. A teacher may use monitoring while students are working in pairs or groups to identify who is able to answer and which question. But there is a threat of overdoing, so teachers must be attentive while monitoring their student's work.

Differentiation by methods can also be expressed by asking different types of questions. A teacher might ask a learner to describe or define something. The easiest and most productive thing a teacher can do when asking questions is to wait longer for an answer, and discourage the stronger students from jumping in. Waiting for a while may have a huge impact in terms of both the number of students who are prone to answer and in the length and intricacy of their answers. We come to the conclusion that none of these ideas is ultimate to meet the needs of both students 'and teachers'. So differentiation depends on teacher's creativity and how a teacher is capable to integrate the following types of differentiation (by task, by teaching method, by outcome). Moreover by doing that teachers can go some way towards helping to address the different needs, interests and abilities of the learners.

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