

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DIFFERENTIATION TEACHING ENGLISH AT SD AL KHAIRIYYAH TAHFIDZ INTERNATIONAL TEGAL

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Abstract

This study explored how differentiated instruction was implemented in the English subject at SD Al Khairiyyah Tahfidz International Full Day School, Tegal city, academic year 2024/2025. This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to gain of how differentiated This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to learn how differentiated instruction is implemented in the English subject at SD Al Khairiyyah Tahfidz International, Tegal city. This research uses qualitative data. The qualitative data were collected through teacher interviews and student questionnaires. The participants consisted of five students and one teacher. The data were analysed and interpreted based on the data findings. Based on the closed-ended questionnaire, the teacher used the concept of differentiated instruction in the classroom. The study revealed that English teachers at SD Al Khairiyyah Tahfidz International apply differentiated instruction primarily through variations in content delivery, classroom activities, and assessment methods.

Regarding the findings, the differentiated instruction approaches affect the students' engagement in the English subject at SD AL Khairiyyiah. The differentiated instruction approach can help students understand, be more comfortable, engaged, focused, helpful, flexible, and creative. Implementing differentiated instruction presents several challenges for teachers. The teacher highlights that managing many students is a primary concern, as preparing varied materials and activities for diverse learners demands significant time and effort. Overall, the research highlights the differentiated instruction to transform educational practices and improve learning to ensure equitable access and benefits for all students. The findings and discussion showed that differentiated instruction makes students more understanding, comfortable, engaged, focused, helpful, flexible, and creative.

Keywords: Differentiated Instruction, English Language Teaching, Elementary Education, Inclusive Learning, Student Engagement

INTRODUCTION

The paradigm shift in modern learning activities at the elementary school level differs from traditional learning. Learning at the elementary school level is currently faced with various phenomena of rapid change in multiple aspects of learning. These changes can occur within students, namely from

differences in learning styles. Learning challenges are increasingly real, namely, students' different characteristics and learning styles in the modern era. Changes in learning patterns occur quickly and massively. Therefore, facing increasingly developing learning changes, ideal learning activities are needed.

Ideal learning is learning that can make learning fun and easy for students to understand. So that learning can run effectively and efficiently. Learning based on learning styles and student needs. Learning based on these learning indications is differentiated learning, ideally implied by students' character and learning style. And by the learning needs of students at the elementary school level.

Elementary classrooms often comprise students with a wide range of abilities. Some children may be advanced in specific subjects, while others may struggle with foundational skills like reading or math. Differentiated instruction helps teachers meet students where they are, providing customized learning experiences that are neither too challenging nor too easy. They have different ways of processing and understanding information. Some are visual learners, while others learn better through auditory, kinesthetic (hands-on), or reading/writing methods. DI allows teachers to use multiple teaching approaches, ensuring that all students can engage with the material in a way that works best for them (Sar et al., 2023; Anjarwati & Sa'adah, 2021)

In elementary school, children learn at different paces. Some grasp concepts quickly, while others need more time and repetition. Without differentiated instruction, some students may become bored due to a lack of challenge, while others may become frustrated because they cannot keep up. DI ensures that each child is challenged appropriately and supported in their learning journey. Differentiated instruction is vital in elementary schools because it accommodates the wide range of differences among young learners. By personalizing learning, DI ensures that every child receives the appropriate level of challenge and support, fostering a positive and effective learning environment that can enhance academic outcomes and overall student development.

Education is a dynamic process that considers changes in several aspects (Nugraha & Herdiana, 2024). They state that education will constantly change. Thus, the needs in education will also shift following the era of the students. There has been a shift in the teaching and learning process, moving away from the old way where the learning focuses on the teacher and emphasizes one-way instruction (Moh. Nawafil & Junaidi, 2020). As for now, the tide has turned, and there has been a consensus on the importance of the teaching and learning process that applies student-centered learning. In one class, different characteristics are present in the students. Naturally, the class will not only consist of students with equal ability and capability. The students may also have a range of characteristics and competencies; therefore, it is conceivable that the learning and teaching process must facilitate the diversity of the students.

The concept of student-centered learning had been promoted and encouraged by Curriculum 2013. However, even after years of the curriculum implementation, student-centered learning could not be fully utilized in many situations and contexts (Prasetyo et al., 2023).

The hindrances include the teachers' abilities, the learning resources, and the classroom facilities. However, despite the non-ideal outcome, the new Merdeka Curriculum pushes the notion further in which differentiated learning is vehemently operated (Prasetyo et al., 2023; Fredricks et al., 2004). Differentiated learning, or differentiated instruction, recognizes how students are not the same and that access to equal education means that, given a specific goal, each student ought to receive resources, instruction, and support to assist them in meeting that goal (Imbeau & Tomlinson, 2013). Similarly, Marlina et al. (2019a) state that differentiated learning is the learning and teaching process done according to the

interests of the students, learning style, and enthusiasm to learn, so that the learning result will be maximized.

This study described the issues and challenges the teacher and fifth-grade students faced and explored how differentiated content facilitated students' interests. The issues and challenges reflected how the English subject was conducted and established expectations for the new curriculum. Regarding students' interests, the study explored how they were facilitated through differentiated content. This study aimed to contribute to the body of knowledge regarding differentiated instruction in the Indonesian educational context, particularly in English language teaching. By identifying effective practices and potential barriers, the research offered recommendations for enhancing teaching approaches and fostering a more inclusive learning environment. Ultimately, the study sought to promote improved educational outcomes for students at SD Al Khairiyyah and similar institutions by effectively implementing differentiated instruction.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative case study design. It aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of how differentiated instruction was implemented in the English subject at SD Al Khairiyyah Tahfizh International Full Day School, Tegal city. A case study design was chosen because it allows detailed exploration within a real-world context (Khan, 2022). The study conducted an appraisal of the topic from individual perspectives. This study examined and discussed a phenomenon related to differentiated instruction at SD Al Khairiyyah Tahfizh International Full Day School, Tegal city. The researcher intended to explore how the differentiated instruction approach was implemented in the English

subject at SD Al Khairiyyah Tahfizh International Full Day School, Tegal city. As a result, the qualitative method was used as the research design in this study. The qualitative approach allowed investigators to understand a particular issue more deeply (Khan, 2022). The researcher used a qualitative study to examine a particular case, which could be a person, a group, an organization, an event, or a phenomenon, in order to explore how the differentiated instruction approach was implemented in the English subject at SD Al Khairiyyah Tahfizh International Full Day School, Tegal city. It utilized a qualitative study design to investigate a complex phenomenon or event within its natural context (Sitorus, 2021; Gibbs & Poskitt, 2010). Qualitative study research allowed academics to investigate and depict occurrences from many data sources and perspectives.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data analysis findings, including the questionnaire data from the teachers, the questionnaire data from the students, and the interviews. Furthermore, the researcher examined the use of differentiated instruction in English class. The findings are presented in four main parts: 1) The Teacher's Perspective on Differentiated Instruction Approach at SD Al Khairiyyah 2) Differentiated Instruction Approach are being Implemented in the English Subject at SD Al Khairiyyah, 3) The Differentiated Instruction Approaches Affect Student Engagement at SD Al Khairiyyah, and 4) The Teachers Challenge Face in Implementing Differentiated Instruction.

Here, the closed-ended questionnaire and the interview. These data were obtained from the teacher and the students. To make the explanation more accessible, the researcher gave the code T for teacher, and S1 to S5 for students 1 to 5. The detailed explanation is presented below.

The Teacher's Perspective on Differentiated Instruction Approach at SD Al Khairiyyah

The findings presented the teachers' perspective on implementing the differentiated instruction approach at SD AL Khairiyyah in the English subject. The data was obtained from the questionnaire and the interview. There is one teacher from SD Al Khairiyyah Tahfidz International Full Day School, Tegal city. The data findings were processed and analyzed to explain the use of differentiated instruction in the English subject.

Regarding the interview, here are some implementations of differentiated instruction in the English subject at SD AL Khairiyyah. The teacher's perspective on implementing differentiated instruction in the English class is considered concerning the indicator. Based on the closed-ended questionnaire, the teacher sometimes uses the concept of differentiated instruction in the classroom. The teacher also "very much" believes that differentiated instruction improves the students' engagement. Here is the interview evidence to support the data findings:

The first one is the teacher's perspective and explanation of differentiated instruction.

T: DI is essential, especially in a class like mine. Children have different abilities and learning styles. If we use the same method for everyone, some will fall behind or get bored because it is too easy. I agree that DI is crucial. Every child is unique, with different capabilities and learning styles. Ideally, as teachers, we should accommodate those differences. However, honestly, it is not easy. Differentiated instruction is an approach where we recognize that every student is unique; they differ in their learning, interests, starting abilities, and learning speed. So we, as teachers, must adjust our teaching

methods so that every student can learn effectively, without anyone being left behind or getting bored.

The data findings showed that teachers recognized the importance of DI in creating an inclusive classroom environment. Teachers recognized that Differentiated Instruction (DI) is essential in creating an inclusive classroom environment by addressing the diverse needs of students (Iqbal et al., 2020). Through DI, teachers adapt their teaching methods, materials, and assessments to accommodate various learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds, ensuring every student has equal opportunities to succeed.

The Implementation of Differentiated Instruction in the English Subject at SD Al Khairiyyah

The second study focuses on implementing differentiated instruction in the English subject at SD AL Khairiyyah. The data findings are from the closed-ended questionnaire and the interview. The teacher's answer to this research question is how the teacher implements differentiated instruction in the classroom. Then, the teacher used some of the differentiated instruction approaches to engage the students by using group work, individualized tasks, the use of technology, varied instructional materials, and student choice in assignments.

Here, some evidence of how the teacher applies the differentiated instruction in the English classroom at SD AL Khairiyyah:

Q: What about the tasks or products the students create?

T: I give students freedom to choose how to demonstrate their understanding. Some prefer writing reports, some like creating presentations, and others prefer making posters or videos. The important thing

is that they show they have understood the material.

There is some additional support that can make a differentiated instruction approach successful in the teaching and learning process. There are more effective ways to differentiate instruction and engage with the students. There are more training workshops, access to the teaching resources, collaboration with other teachers, and increased administrative support. Here is the evidence from the teacher interview:

T: The school has started offering training on differentiated instruction, which is very helpful. However, it still needs improvement, for example, having a specific time for teachers to collaborate and share experiences. Also, better access to diverse learning materials would help. Administrative support for class management would also be beneficial, especially for diverse classrooms.

Implementing Differentiated Instruction (DI) at SD Al Khairiyyah follows best practices influenced by Vygotsky's. Teachers modify their teaching strategies based on Dixon et al.'s approach, incorporating four key elements: content, process, product, and learning environment differentiation. Regarding content differentiation, teachers adjust learning materials based on students' abilities, such as providing simplified texts for struggling learners and advanced materials for high-achieving students.

The Differentiated Instruction Approaches' Effect on the Student Engagement at SD Al Khairiyyah

The findings of this study present that the differentiated instruction approaches affect the students' engagement in the English subject at SD AL Khairiyyah, as evidenced by the data from the questionnaire and the interview. The data was obtained from the teacher and the students in these findings.

There is one teacher and five students to support these data findings.

The first is the teacher's findings about the effect of differentiated instruction on students' engagement. The teacher believes "very much" that differentiated instruction improves the students' engagement. Here is some evidence from the interview:

Q: Do you feel DI is effective in increasing student engagement?

T: So far, I have seen improvements. Students ask more questions and participate more actively. They are more motivated to learn because they have options and are not forced.

Differentiated instruction can enhance student engagement by acknowledging and addressing the diverse learning needs present in a classroom. The teachers' insights underscore this, as she observes that students become more motivated when they perceive the lesson's relevance to their learning styles, interests, and abilities. By providing students with choices and the opportunity to work at their own pace and level, differentiated instruction fosters a sense of ownership over their learning, increasing participation and engagement.

Moreover, the data findings from the students' perspective showed how implementing differentiated instruction affects their engagement. Five sample students gave their thoughts on implementing the differentiated instruction approach in the English subject. The researcher labels the students from S1 to S5, which means students 1 to 5. Based on the questionnaire, the researcher labeled each question with Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The findings of each question of students' perspectives on the effect of differentiated instruction on their engagement in the English classroom are explained as follows:

Table 1. Students Questionnaire

No	Question	Total Questionnaire Answer				
		SA	A	N	D	SD
1	The use of differentiated instruction makes me more interested in studying in English class	1	4	-	-	-
2	The use of differentiated instruction motivates me to study in English class.	-	3	2	-	-
3	Differentiated instruction makes me more focused during English class	1	2	2	-	-
4	I engage during the English class by using differentiated instruction.	-	4	1	-	-
5	The use of differentiated instruction improves my communication skills during English class	2	3	-	-	-
6	The differentiated instruction enhances my ability to think creatively in English class	1	3	1	-	-
7	I am more enthusiastic about the English class using differentiated instruction	2	3	-	-	-
8	I am more confident in the English class using differentiated instruction.	-	4	1	-	-
9	The English class is fun when using differentiated instruction	2	3	-	-	-
10	The use of differentiated instruction makes me comfortable in English class	2	2	1	-	-

The data showed that the question about differentiated instruction makes the student more interested in studying the English class. From the data presented, one student strongly agrees and four students agree that using a differentiated instruction approach makes them interested in studying. The next question is whether the differentiated instruction approach motivates the students to study. The three students agree that differentiated instruction can motivate them while they study in English class. Moreover, the two other students are neutral. The other question aims to understand how differentiated instruction makes students more focused during English class. One student strongly agrees, two agree, and two students are neutral. A differentiated instruction approach can help students focus while studying in the English class. The question

intends to know how the students engage during the English class using a differentiated instruction approach. It concluded that most students agree that using a differentiated instruction approach engages them with all four students, and one is neutral. A further question about using a differentiated instruction approach to improve the students' communication skills: the two students strongly agree, and three students agree that using a differentiated instruction approach can make them engage during the lesson.

The next question in this section is whether the differentiated instruction approach makes students improve in English class. Most students agreed that differentiated instruction can engage students during the lesson. Three students agree, one strongly agrees, and one is neutral. Furthermore, the question concerns using differentiated instruction approach to

make students enthusiastic in English class using differentiated instruction approach. The data shows that two students strongly agree and three agree that the differentiated instruction approach can make students enthusiastic. Next, the question aims to determine whether students are more confident using the differentiated instruction approach. The data showed that four students agreed, and one student was neutral.

Additionally, the question is intended to know whether the student finds studying English fun when the teacher uses a differentiated instruction approach. Half of the students agree that they have fun in the classroom while the teacher uses a differentiated instruction approach in teaching and learning, and the two strongly agree. The question is whether students are comfortable studying English when the teacher uses a differentiated instruction approach. Two students strongly agree that they are comfortable when the teacher uses a differentiated instruction approach during the class. The question is how the students engage during the English class using differentiated instruction.

To support the data from the questionnaire, the researcher interviewed students to learn their perspective on learning English using a differentiated instruction approach in their engagement class. Based on the analysis of the interview findings, most students said that the differentiated instruction approach makes them engage in English class. They said it was interesting, motivating, focusing, engaging, improving, enhancing, enthusiastic, confident, fun, and comfortable in their English classroom.

The students answered from the interview that using a differentiated instruction approach in the English classroom engages them. Here are some sample answers from the students:

Q: How do you feel when your teacher teaches you with differentiated instruction?

S1: I feel more supported and understood when my teacher uses differentiated instruction. It helps me learn in a way that matches my abilities and preferences.

Based on the students' answers above about using a differentiated instruction approach, the students were helped to engage more in the classroom. It helped them to enjoy the teaching and learning process. The next question is below:

Q: How is your engagement during the class using differentiated instruction

S2: I feel more engaged and focused during classes where my teacher uses differentiated instruction. Since the lessons are adapted to different learning styles and levels, I find it easier to follow along and stay interested.

The finding above shows us how the differentiated instruction approach affected the students. Then the next question is:

Q: What are your difficulties when the teacher uses differentiated instruction

S1: One of the difficulties I face when my teacher uses differentiated instruction is that sometimes I am unsure what to do. Since everyone is working on different tasks, I get confused about the instructions or the goals.

From the data results above, the teaching and learning process sometimes faces difficulties. Those are the students' difficult faces when they are in the classroom. The other question is:

Q: Give your opinion about using differentiated instruction in the English class?

S3: Using differentiated instruction in English class is very helpful. Students have different strengths; some are good at speaking, while others are better at writing or reading.

The result above showed us the students' opinion about using differentiated instruction in the classroom. Furthermore, the last question is:

Q: Please check the differentiated instruction that the teacher uses

S1: In class, the teacher often uses group work as a form of differentiated instruction. She groups us by our learning level so that we can support each other. The teacher sometimes gives different worksheets or activities to different groups, depending on what they need to improve.

According to the data interview, a differentiated instruction approach can help students understand, be more comfortable, engaged, focused, helpful, flexible, and creative. These findings showed us that differentiated instruction positively affects the students' engagement at SD AL Khairiyyah.

The Teacher's Challenge in Implementing Differentiated Instruction

This study's findings are teachers' challenges in implementing differentiated instruction in the English subject at SD Al Khairiyyah. The data findings were based on the closed-ended questionnaire and the interview. Here are the findings of the questionnaire and the interview with the teacher. The questionnaire showed the challenges "student readiness levels" faced, and the teacher was "moderately confident" while implementing the differentiated instruction in the teaching and learning process. Here is some evidence from the interview:

Q: What advice would you give to other teachers who want to implement DI but find it difficult?

T: Start small, do not try to do everything at once. Get to know each student's learning style and offer variety in activities. Maximize the available resources. Most importantly, do not give up and keep learning. DI is a great concept, but its implementation is not always easy. DI is an ideal, a goal we strive for, even if we cannot achieve it 100%.

Q: What is the biggest challenge you face when implementing DI?

T: Time! (laughs) Preparing different materials and activities is very time-consuming. Plus, I have to assess their work individually. Sometimes students get confused or uncomfortable with the differences, so I must explain why and how DI benefits them. Also, resources are an issue — not all materials come in different difficulty levels, so sometimes I have to create them myself, which takes extra effort.

Q: What makes DI difficult to implement?

T: Many factors. Besides large class sizes and limited resources, there is also the curriculum, which is sometimes too packed. We are expected to cover the material on schedule, while DI needs more planning and execution time. Often, I must choose between covering the curriculum and fully applying DI.

The teacher also tries to find a way to manage the challenge. The teacher implements the differentiated instruction approach in the English classroom. Here is some evidence:

Q: How do you manage that? Do you still try to apply DI?

T: Of course. I cannot completely abandon DI because I believe every student is unique. However, I find the most efficient and effective ways. For instance, I often use blended learning, where students study independently using online materials, and then we discuss in class. This way, I can give more personalized support to students who need extra help, while others can move at their own pace.

Q: How do you overcome those challenges?

T: I am more creative with the available resources. I often search for online learning materials or create simple teaching aids myself. I also learn from fellow teachers and attend DI training sessions. Most importantly, I am always open to feedback from students.

Implementing differentiated instruction presents several challenges for teachers. The teacher highlights that managing many students is a primary concern, as preparing varied materials and activities for diverse learners demands significant time and effort. Teachers face several challenges in effectively implementing differentiated instruction.

DISCUSSION

In this section, the findings of this research were discussed. This research attempted to explain the use of the differentiated instruction approach in English classes at SD AL Khairiyyah Tahfidz International Full Day School, Tegal city. The major of this research discussion is: 1) The Teacher's Perspective on Differentiated Instruction Approach at SD Al Khairiyyah 2) Differentiated Instruction Approach are being Implemented in the English Subject at SD Al Khairiyyah, 3) The Differentiated Instruction Approaches Affect Student Engagement at SD Al Khairiyyah, and 4)

The Teachers Challenge Face in Implementing Differentiated Instruction.

The Teacher's Perspective

Based on the findings from interviews and classroom observations, the teachers at SD Al Khairiyyah generally demonstrated a positive attitude toward implementing the differentiated instruction (DI) approach. Teachers acknowledged that in a typical classroom, students differ significantly in terms of readiness, interest, and learning profile. Therefore, they viewed DI as a teaching strategy and an essential educational philosophy that respects and responds to these differences. One teacher stated, "Using one method for all students is insufficient. Some students need more visual support, while others like to learn through doing. Differentiation helps us meet these needs."

Furthermore, the teacher said the differentiated instruction (DI) approach is critical in teaching and learning. The teacher believes that the differentiated instruction (DI) approach improves the students' engagement. It also aligns with the previous research by Trowler (2018) about the English teachers' perceptions and practices of differentiated instruction (DI) in the *Merdeka* curriculum. The result of the study revealed that the participants exhibited high proficiency in using DI strategies in their classrooms (Marlina et al., 2019). The assessment considered various dimensions, including understanding DI concepts and objectives, adapting instruction to diverse student needs, evaluating students through diagnostic assessments, and aligning teaching strategies with individual learning profiles. However, there was room for improvement, especially in tailoring instruction based on diverse learning profiles.

Furthermore, (Kurniasandi et al., 2023), the English teachers' perceptions of

DI significantly shaped their instructional practices. While there was a solid theoretical understanding and commitment to personalized instruction, practical challenges and systemic constraints impacted the seamless integration of DI principles. The teachers' commitment to addressing these challenges, demonstrated through varied instructional practices, underscored the dynamic interplay between perceptions and the complex reality of implementing DI in the classroom.

In summary, while the teachers at SD Al Khairiyah Through DI adapt their teaching methods, materials, and assessments to accommodate various learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds, they ensure that every student has equal opportunities to succeed. Continued support and targeted training are essential to empower teachers in delivering differentiated learning experiences more consistently and effectively.

Implementation of the Differentiated Instruction Approach

Implementing the Differentiated Instruction (DI) approach in the English subject at SD Al Khairiyah reflects the opportunities and challenges inherent in adapting instruction to meet students' varied needs. Based on observations and teacher interviews, it was found that English teachers have made conscious efforts to differentiate content, process, and product, although the degree and consistency of implementation varied.

A differentiated instruction approach is implemented in the classroom. Some students create concept maps, others write short descriptive paragraphs, and some create visual presentations (Heningjakti & Surono, 2024). The teacher gives students freedom to choose how to demonstrate their understanding. Some prefer writing reports, some like creating presentations, and others prefer making posters or videos. It supports the research by Hidayati and Sujarwati

(2023) on the differentiated learning strategy in implementing Medeka Belajar in Elementary school. The findings revealed that the differentiated learning strategy improves the students' English lessons.

Furthermore, the research done by Suprayogi et al. (2021) differentiated instruction implementation: a survey study among elementary school teachers. The result revealed that there was a significant difference between the understanding of DI and the implementation of DI. Based on the findings, this study suggests that increasing DI implementation helps sustain teaching and learning activities for all teachers and students.

Furthermore, (Aminuriyah et al., 2023), the study's implementation of differentiation instruction improved student performance. The previous studies indicated that implementing DI in reading instruction to elementary school students includes differentiation in content, process, and product, increased quality and quantity of explicit reading instruction, assessments-informed instruction, and integrating DI with other instructional models. This emphasizes that although differentiation might seem complex, it is possible to implement it in reading instruction (Goyibova et al., 2025). Implementing differentiated learning in SP1 is more effective than SP2 due to comprehensive guidance and longer experience. Sustained mentorship and professional development are crucial in enhancing teachers' effective teaching (Hsu & Malkin, 2011). This research underscores the need for a contextual and focused instructional and assessment model to meet students' needs better and serve as a guide for differentiated instruction implementation (Sari, 2023).

In conclusion, implementing the differentiated instruction approach in the English subject at SD Al Khairiyah involves the teacher adjusting learning

materials based on students' abilities, such as providing simplified texts for struggling learners and advanced materials for high-achieving students.

The Students' Engagement Implementation of Differentiated Instruction

The findings from classroom observations and teacher interviews indicate that the application of Differentiated Instruction (DI) at SD Al Khairiyyah has had a notable positive impact on student engagement, particularly in the English subject. Teachers observed increased participation, enthusiasm, and confidence among students when lessons were tailored to match their readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles.

One of the implementations of DI was improved active participation. When students were given tasks appropriate to their skill levels and interests, they were likelier to participate in classroom activities through discussions, group work, or individual assignments. For example, students who were typically passive or hesitant in traditional settings became more responsive when given options that suited their strengths, such as visual or kinesthetic activities. Teachers noted that this shift was particularly evident among students who previously struggled with the English language. It is in line with the research (Iqbal et al., 2020) about the impact of differentiated instruction on student learning. The differentiated instruction has a significant influence on the students' learning. The teachers use differentiated instruction to improve the high-quality skills of the students. The differentiated instruction promotes an environment in the classroom. The study about the differentiation learning improves students' engagement by (Mulyawati et al., 2022) showed that differentiation provides opportunities for students to show what

they understand. Also, in this way, the teacher can determine what method should be given to students whose grasping power is lacking, sufficient, and reasonable. By understanding students' potential, teachers can give an accurate picture of their strengths and weaknesses, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of each student. They can identify potential areas that need to be improved and weaknesses that need to be minimized. Differentiated learning guides students in increasing the potential that exists within themselves (Li, 2022). The teacher's conclusion must be able to guide students to develop according to their characteristics and the potential possessed by these students; this is closely related to differentiated learning. One of the values and roles of teachers is to create learning that favors students, namely, learning that liberates students' thinking and potential. Differentiation can be implemented in the content, process, and product of learning.

Moreover, differentiated instruction in the implementation showed promising results for the students. Based on the findings, this study recommends that schools provide a specific program to increase DI implementation among teachers. The program can be a professional development on DI and a sharing session among teachers with good DI implementation experience. Therefore, increasing DI implementation will help sustain teaching and learning activities for all teachers and students (Suprayogi et al., 2017).

In conclusion, differentiated instruction has had a positive and measurable effect on student engagement at SD Al Khairiyyah. DI strategies have increased student participation, motivation, and confidence in learning English when effectively planned and supported. Nonetheless, consistent implementation, access to diverse resources, and teacher

capacity-building remain critical factors in maximizing the long-term engagement benefits of differentiated instruction.

Teachers' Challenge in Implementing Differentiated Instruction

While the teachers at SD Al Khairiyyah generally support the principles of Differentiated Instruction (DI) and recognize its value in improving student engagement, they also face several significant challenges that hinder consistent and effective implementation.

One of the most frequently mentioned challenges was time constraints. Teachers reported that planning differentiated lessons required significantly more preparation than traditional instruction. Creating multiple versions of teaching materials, assessments, and activities tailored to students' varied needs was time-consuming, especially when balanced with other administrative duties and teaching responsibilities. The teacher stated, "It is difficult to find enough time to plan different daily tasks for different students."

Another critical issue was large class sizes, which made it difficult to provide individual attention or manage multiple learning groups effectively. In classes with 30 to 40 students, teachers often struggled to monitor student progress, provide timely feedback, and maintain classroom discipline during differentiated activities. This challenge was compounded by the lack of teaching assistants, leaving teachers to handle all differentiation tasks alone. Supported by (Pendi Rosadi et al., 2024) research about challenges in implementing differentiated Instruction in English classes.

From the results of the study, it was found that the teachers have a good understanding. The study also found several challenges faced by the teachers in implementing DI, which included the large class size and constraints with time and resources to design and deliver material for

different learners. The study results suggest that teachers play an active role as facilitators for students in every learning process and can recognize different students' characteristics, interests, and learning styles. Furthermore, (Brett et al., 2020), the differentiated instruction that English teaching at primary schools in Indonesia faces various challenges, ranging from a shortage of qualified English teachers, changes in language policy, limited learning resources, and limited time allotment to limited exposure to English. Despite the challenges, this study reveals some opportunities, such as the community's high demand for English learning and the new Emancipated Curriculum policy reopening doors for English lessons at primary schools. These findings offer insights into how English teaching at primary schools in Indonesia should be managed in the future (Daud, 2024)

In summary, differentiated instruction at SD Al Khairiyyah is hindered by logistical, pedagogical, and systemic challenges. While teachers are committed to meeting students' diverse needs, they require stronger institutional support, adequate resources, and ongoing professional development to overcome these barriers and fully realize the benefits of differentiated instruction.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to answer the two research questions about implementing the differentiated instruction approach. The research and data analysis conducted led to the following conclusions.

First, teachers' perspectives on the differentiated instruction approach at SD Al Khairiyyah. Based on the closed-ended questionnaire, the teacher sometimes uses the concept of differentiated instruction in the classroom. The teacher also "very

much" believes that differentiated instruction improves the students' engagement. Teachers adapt their teaching methods, materials, and assessments to accommodate various learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds, ensuring students have equal opportunities to succeed. Continued support and targeted training are essential to empower teachers in delivering differentiated learning experiences more consistently and effectively.

Second, based on the findings, the differentiated instruction approach has some implementations. Some students create concept maps, others write short descriptive paragraphs, and some create visual presentations. I also frequently use various media, not just textbooks. I incorporate videos, pictures, games, and physical activities so all students can engage according to their learning styles. Regarding content differentiation, teachers adjust learning materials based on students' abilities, such as providing simplified texts for struggling learners and advanced materials for high-achieving students.

Third, the findings show that differentiated instruction approaches affect students' engagement in English at SD AL Khairiyyah. The differentiated instruction approach can help students understand, be more comfortable, engaged, focused, helpful, flexible, and creative. These findings showed us that differentiated instruction positively affects the students' engagement at SD AL Khairiyyah.

Fourth, the questionnaire showed the challenges "student readiness levels" faced, and the teacher was "moderately confident" while implementing the differentiated instruction in the teaching and learning process. Implementing differentiated instruction presents several challenges for teachers. The teacher highlights that managing many students is a

primary concern, as preparing varied materials and activities for diverse learners demands significant time and effort. Teachers face several challenges in effectively implementing differentiated instruction.

From the findings, the teacher thought that teachers adapt their teaching methods, materials, and assessments to accommodate various learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds, ensuring that every student has equal opportunities to succeed. This present research has also proved that differentiated instruction can improve students' engagement in English class. The findings indicate that effective implementation of differentiated instruction enhances student engagement by providing interactive and personalized learning experiences. Overall, the research highlights the differentiated instruction to transform educational practices and improve learning to ensure equitable access and benefits for all students. The findings and discussion showed that differentiated instruction makes students more understanding, comfortable, engaged, focused, helpful, flexible, and creative.

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