

# The differentiated teaching English-speaking interaction to prospective teachers

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**Abstract.** Among the techniques of foreign languages and cultures teaching, the technology of differentiated teaching is recognized. We realize internal differentiation of English-speaking interaction teaching in the context of the learner-centered approach while educating prospective teachers. We distinguish the motivation-affective, cognitive, and emotion differentiation. Thus, the cognitive differentiation includes two more subtypes such as the receptive-cognitive differentiation and the reproductive-cognitive one. Every type of the differentiation has its inherent mean of diagnostics and implementation.

**Keywords:** *differentiation, English, prospective teachers, speaking interaction.*

**Introduction.** Each higher education lecturer is looking for new teaching technologies to form their students' foreign communicative target competences more effectively. Among the techniques of foreign languages and cultures teaching in higher education institutions, the technology of differentiated teaching is worth being investigated. Thus, the differentiated approach enables teaching students by means of the programs based on self-learning.

**Literature review.** Babanskii [2, p. 17] defines *the differentiated approach* to teaching as matching of all the study components and students' abilities, especially their skills and level of knowledge.

Unt [12] distinguishes *differentiated* and *individualized instruction*. According to the scientist, *individualized instruction* is a teaching approach due to which teachers involve their students' individual characteristics by means of different teaching techniques. However, *differentiated teaching* turns out to be a way of individualized instruction realization by grouping students due to their similar characteristics.

Artuhov [1, p. 11] claims that *differentiated teaching* is a special educational system with its subsystem of teaching that involves both individual and prevailing group characteristics.

Sikorskii [11, p. 19] distinguishes between terms *differentiated approach*, *differentiated teaching*, and *differentiation of teaching*. The scientist explains that the differentiated approach is applied when a teacher diversifies educational components. *Differentiated teaching* is pedagogical collaboration between a teacher and a student, where student's individual characteristics are recognized and developed. *Differentiation of teaching* is students' grouping by some criteria and further adaptation of study context, methods, and forms to each typological group.

In the context of modern methodology, differentiation can be internal and external. Artuhov [1, p. 11] explains that external differentiation is realized by means of grouping students' due to their age, interests, and specialty. Specialized classes, different types of educational institutions, specialties etc. exemplify external differentiated teaching.

Internal differentiation requires educational and methodological work within studying group to solve the problem of its diversity considering individual characteristics of each student [17, p. 7].

In this research, we are aimed at internal differentiation of teaching English-speaking interaction to prospective teachers. Therefore, it is important to choose the criteria we are going to group students by. However, the scientists

mentioned above have not found out unified criteria yet.

Osmolovska [10] suggests grouping students due to their creative skills. Babanskii [2] and Humankova [7] find it effective to group students by their knowledge and skills. Honey and Mumford [18], and Gardner [16] investigate the differentiated teaching based on cognitive (learning) styles [7, pp. 167-170]. Nevertheless, the criteria suggested in the previous research are lack of systematic approach.

**The aim of the article** is to organize criteria which students can be grouped by and introduce an authorial methodology of differentiated teaching English-speaking interaction to prospective English teachers.

**Materials and methods.** To make grouping more organized and systematic, we [6] realize the methodology of differentiated teaching of English-speaking interaction in the context of the learner-centered approach.

Due to the learner-centered approach, a student's development includes motivational, intellectual (cognitive), emotional, studying, and communicative aspects of their personalities. Thus, we apply different criterion depending on the aspect considered and form typological groups of students while teaching them English-speaking interactive communication. In addition, a chosen criterion predetermines a type of differentiated teaching English-speaking interactive competence.

Thus, students' motives to study English-speaking interaction, their cognitive processes, and emotions involved are the criteria that we group students by. Consequently, we distinguish *motivational*, *cognitive*, and *emotional* [5] types of differentiated teaching English-speaking interaction. Moreover, we distinguish between *receptive-cognitive differentiation* [13, pp. 128-134] and *reproductive-cognitive differentiation* [15, pp. 139-145].

Stages of teaching speaking interaction. Top-down processing of teaching foreign speaking interaction [4, p. 318] provides for listening an example of a pattern dialogue first and its further transformation. Students eventually make their own creative conversations.

Therefore, there are four stages of speaking interaction competence development, such as *turn-taking*, *adjacency pair exchange*, *mini-dialogue making*, *a conversation making* [4, pp. 318-319]. Following Metiolkina [9, p. 9], we find it necessary to add a preparatory stage aimed at listening a pattern dialogue.

Thus, the methodology of differentiated teaching English-speaking interaction that is introduced in this research involves such stages as the preparatory stage, the first stage, and the second stage.

At the preparatory stage, students listen to a pattern dialogue and enact some of its parts practicing turn-taking. Then, they combine turns into adjacency pairs mastering their communicative skills.

At the first stage, gained at the preparatory stage knowledge, students reproduce while developing communicative skills of making mini dialogues. A teacher should provide their students with learning prompts, which may be visual, spoken, or written, for greater efficiency.

At the second (final) stage, students practice making a conversation (dialogue) of a learned functional type.

**Diagnostic means and students' typological groups.**

In order to form typological groups of students, we implemented several diagnostic methods. First, we conducted a questionnaire to find out the students' motives for learning speaking interaction and divide them into groups such as "Inner-motivated students" and "Outer-motivated students".

According to the questionnaire, 46% of the students have inner motives for learning English-speaking interaction, whereas only 25% are influenced by their outer motives. The rest of the respondents (29%) have both types of learning motivation involved on the same level. The results of the survey prove that outer and inner motivation affect a student simultaneously [8, pp. 34-35]. It is important to mention that the predominance found out in one of the groups is little. Thus, it is wrong to believe that students are charged by one type of the learning motives.

Secondly, we conducted a survey to examine students' dominant sensor modality and divide them into visual, aural, and kinesthetic learners. The results show that 46% of the students are so called audials, 33% – visuals, and 21% – kinesthetic learners. However, the majority of respondents seem to have multi-modal perception with insignificant domination of visual or aural reception. According to the survey results, following Beliavskaia [3, p. 34], we believe that for better study performance teaching should be multi-modal, though, with an emphasis on a dominant perception channel.

In addition, we tested students to measure the activity of their verbal and visual thinking and group them accordingly. 55% of the examined students coped with verbal tasks better and faster than with illustrative ones. 45% showed an opposite result.

As a result, we introduced the following typological groups:

- "inner-motivated" and "outer-motivated" students by their dominant motives for studying English-speaking interaction;
- "audials", "visuals", and "kinesthetics" by their dominant perceptive modality;
- "verbally oriented" and "visually oriented" students by their dominant type of thinking.

At each stage of the teaching English-speaking interaction, we provided every typological group of students with differentiated teaching technique.

**The receptive-cognitive differentiation.** At the preparatory stage, we provide all the students with both recorded and printed versions of a pattern dialogue to realize multi modal perception of the information studied. "Audials" listen to a pattern dialogue first and enact it while practicing turn-taking or making adjacency pairs taken out of the record and printed in the context of exercises. "Visuals"

should work on the printed text first, where their attention should be drawn to initiative and reactive turns colored differently, highlighted etc. As concerns "kinesthetics", they should enact a pattern dialogue by reading its script with movements, emotions, and props if possible.

Even though we realize multi-modal perception this way, the first information flow is targeted at a dominant perceptive channel. Thus, the mean of realization of the receptive-cognitive differentiation at the preparatory stage of teaching English-speaking interaction is a providing format of a pattern dialogue.

**The reproductive-cognitive differentiation.** While investigating educational potential of a comic strip [14], we found out that its creolized nature had positive impact on students' studying by activating their different cognitive processes and two channels of perception. Thus, we suggest a comic strip as means of realization of reproductive-cognitive differentiation while teaching students English-speaking interaction.

At the first stage, while students create their own mini dialogues, depending on their dominant type of thinking, they get different comic strips as learning prompts. The students with dominant verbal thinking use self-made black-and-white comic strips where verbal component prevails (Figure 1). Oversaturation of pictures and other colors may distract such students' attention, while exercises aimed at filling the gaps or making turns contribute to their verbal cognition.

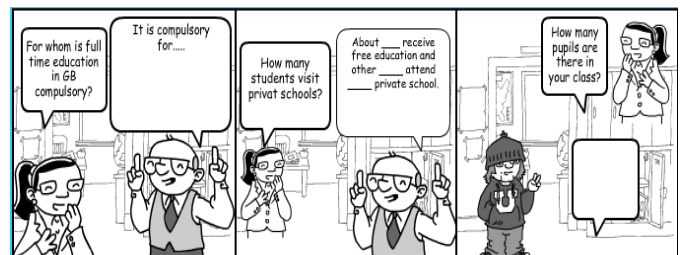


Fig. 1. Learning comic strip for students with dominant verbal thinking

On the contrary, it is important that students with more developed visual thinking get colorful comic strips with a greater part of illustrations and reduced verbal component (Figure 2). Otherwise, the latter one can either overload or distract such students' attention having negative impact on their studying performance. Thus, all the lines should be given apart from a comic strip (e.g. in a table). The students create mini dialogues filling the gaps with necessary lines, ordering panels chronologically, adding self-made images etc.

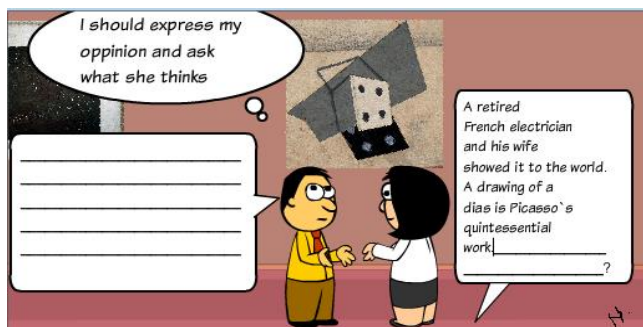


Fig. 2. Learning comic strip for students with dominant visual thinking

We introduced an algorithm (Table 1) for the application of a comic strip while teaching English-speaking interaction to students with either visual or verbal dominant way of thinking.

Hence, verbal and illustrative components of a comic strip make it possible to apply differentiation by dominant type of students' thinking at the English class. Consequently, we suggest that a comic strip be means of realization of reproductive-cognitive differentiation while teaching students English-speaking interaction at the stage of their making mini dialogues.

**The motivation-affective differentiation.** At the second stage, students create their own dialogues playing role games. First, by means of questionnaire, we divide students

into two groups depending on their dominant (inner or outer) learning motives.

Students with prevailing outer motivation get a task to make a conversation due to communicative situations which reflect their everyday social life or refer to future profession: job interview, seeing a doctor, conversation with a friend etc.

However, students whose prevailing motives are inner ones enact non-standard situations (e.g. time-travel, space research etc.) In that case, students have to apply more creativity and additional extra-linguistic knowledge.

Thus, a communicative situation is considered to be a means of motivation differentiation at the point of students making their own dialogues.

**Table 1.** Algorithm for the application of a comic strip as means of reproductive-cognitive differentiation realization

	<i>Typological group of "verbally oriented" students</i>	<i>Typological group of "image oriented" students</i>
<i>Presentation of verbal component in a comic strip</i>	- verbal component prevails over images in its amount; - text conveys general meaning	- reduced verbal component; - usage of creative colors and prints
<i>Presentation of images in a comic strip</i>	- reduced number of images; - a black-and-white comic strip; - unfilled speech bubble occupies a greater part of a panel	- bright images rendering involving plot; - greater number of illustrative details; - space for self-made images / sketches
<i>Exercises</i>	- lines transformation; - lines extension	- chronological or logical sequence of panels; - matching lines with images; - adding self-made images to given lines

What is more, in order to make friendly and comfortable atmosphere for students working in pairs, we consider diversity of their temper [5].

*Sthenic* type is characterized by greater activity, constant desire for activity, initiative, and prevailing positive emotions. *Asthenic* type is quite indifferent and suffers from negative emotions or weakness.

Facing failures, *emotionally strong* students can resist stress; they are always ready for new tasks. On the contrary, *affective* students tend to have too emotional unexpected reactions hard to be predicted at class.

*Passionately involved* students seek constant activity; they are always excited and express great interest in studying no matter what they have to do. However, students who are *less motivated* should enact different roles not to get bored at class. They are more likely to act as professionals discussing field they are good at.

Being sociable and expansive, *extraverts* adapt to all the

changes in the surrounding fast; they tend to make quick decisions and gain new skills sooner than the others. Such students should get leading roles. At the same time, *introverts* are internally focused people. They are involved into studying activity and appear to prolong its preparatory stages to understand a task better. They happen to be at the bottom of a social ladder in a group more frequently than extraverts.

Hence, the means of realization of emotional differentiation at the stage of making dialogues are the roles that are proposed by the lecturer.

Since motivation differentiation and differentiated teaching by emotions (temper) are implemented at the same stage and by means of a role-play, we find it possible to unite them into motivation-affective differentiation.

Conclusions. The authorial methodology of differentiated teaching English-speaking interaction to students is concluded and introduced in Table 2.

**Table 2.** The methodology of differentiated teaching English-speaking interaction to students

Learning stage and its content	Type of differentiation	Diagnostic tool	Means of realization
Preparatory stage: •listening to a pattern dialogue; •turn-taking and adjacency pair exchange	The receptive-cognitive differentiation	Survey	Format for presenting a pattern dialogue
The first stage – making a mini-dialogue	The reproductive-cognitive differentiation	Testing	A comic strip
The second stage – making a dialogue	The motivation-affective differentiation	Questionnaire	A communicative role play

In this way, we introduced theoretical basis and practical value of the receptive-cognitive, reproductive-cognitive, and motivation-affective differentiation of teaching English-speaking interaction to prospective teachers; organized criteria students should be grouped by at every stage of their studying English-speaking interaction, introduced

authorial methodology of differentiated teaching English-speaking interaction to prospective teachers with another subtype of differentiation at every stage. The further aim of our research is to investigate a professional component of differentiated teaching English-speaking interaction to prospective teachers.

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