

Differentiated Approach To Teaching In Russian Language Lessons

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Abstract

This article examines the differentiated approach to teaching Russian language lessons as an effective pedagogical technology within the modern educational process. The study highlights the importance of competency-based education and the necessity of adapting instructional methods to students' individual abilities, cognitive activity, and learning pace. Special attention is given to grouping learners according to their academic preparedness and psychological characteristics. The article analyzes the criteria for differentiation, describes the pedagogical tasks of the teacher for each group, and outlines practical methods used at different stages of the lesson. The findings demonstrate that differentiated instruction contributes to improving educational quality, fostering learner autonomy, and developing communicative competence.

Keywords: Differentiated instruction, competence-based approach, Russian language teaching, communicative competence, educational process, learning groups, cognitive activity, individual approach, instructional.

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1. Introduction

Improving the quality of education remains one of the most urgent challenges of contemporary society. This task is directly connected with the modernization of educational content and teaching methodologies. In recent decades, there has been a significant shift in educational assessment from the concept of “knowledge acquisition” to the concept of “competence” [1]. Competence is understood as the ability to apply acquired knowledge, skills, and abilities effectively based on practical experience in solving educational and professional tasks.

The integration of a competence-based approach into the educational process is dictated by modern social and pedagogical needs. A contemporary teacher is required not only to transmit knowledge but also to develop students' independence, responsibility, and readiness for lifelong learning [2]. One of the pedagogical

technologies that allows achieving these goals is differentiated instruction.

Differentiated instruction in Russian language teaching involves organizing educational activities based on learners' individual characteristics, including their level of knowledge, cognitive abilities, and motivation. This approach is particularly relevant in teaching Russian as a non-native or second language, where students demonstrate different levels of language proficiency and learning readiness.

2. Methodology

The methodological foundation of this study is based on pedagogical and didactic principles of differentiated instruction described in national educational literature [3]. The differentiated approach is implemented within the traditional classroom system but assumes different levels of task complexity for students.

The criteria for dividing students into groups include the volume of prior knowledge, culture of intellectual work, level of cognitive activity, ability for abstract thinking, skills of analysis and generalization, and degree of learning independence [4]. These criteria are interconnected and allow teachers to identify learners' educational needs more accurately.

According to the differentiated model, students are conventionally divided into three groups: A, B, and C. Each group requires specific instructional strategies and pedagogical support. The methodology also includes the use of supporting materials such as tables, reference cards, dictionaries, and visual aids to facilitate learning.

3. Results

The analysis of differentiated instruction demonstrates that students in group C possess a sufficient level of knowledge, high cognitive activity, and well-developed analytical skills. These learners show high independence and productivity. For this group, teachers are expected to organize learning activities that involve complex tasks without increasing their volume, such as composing texts, preparing task cards, working with additional literature, and performing consultant roles during lessons [5].

Students in group B have an average level of knowledge and cognitive activity. They are capable of abstraction and analysis but require pedagogical support to develop confidence and independence. Instructional tasks for this group aim to stimulate cognitive engagement and gradually increase task complexity.

Group A includes students who lag behind their peers in language development. They experience difficulties in reading, identifying key information, and performing analytical operations. For these learners, a supportive learning environment is essential. Teachers use simplified tasks, visual-textual support, reference schemes, and individual learning pace to help overcome academic difficulties [6].

The use of differentiated tasks allows teachers to obtain an objective picture of students' academic achievements and learning progress.

4. Discussion

The differentiated approach to teaching Russian language lessons represents a systematic pedagogical strategy aimed at addressing learners' individual

cognitive, psychological, and academic characteristics. In the context of modern education, differentiation is not merely a methodological option but a necessary condition for ensuring equal access to quality education and achieving competency-based learning outcomes. The analysis of differentiated instruction at various stages of the lesson demonstrates its effectiveness in optimizing the learning process and enhancing students' communicative competence.

One of the key aspects of differentiated instruction is its stage-based implementation throughout the lesson. Each stage of the lesson — introduction of new material, consolidation, teacher guidance, and homework assignment — requires specific differentiation strategies aligned with learners' abilities. This approach ensures pedagogical continuity and logical progression of learning activities.

Differentiation at the Stage of Introducing New Material

At the stage of introducing new material, differentiation plays a decisive role in determining how students perceive, process, and internalize theoretical knowledge. Learners classified into group A typically require structured guidance, visual support, and step-by-step explanation. Their need for scaffolding is обусловлено insufficient language proficiency, limited analytical skills, and slower cognitive processing. For this group, the teacher's role is dominant, as instruction is delivered through guided explanation supported by visual-reference materials such as tables, schemes, and keyword lists.

Group B learners demonstrate moderate independence and sufficient prior knowledge. At this stage, they are capable of working independently with textbooks and educational materials. After initial exposure to the content, they complete structured tasks such as filling in tables or summarizing key concepts. This form of activity supports gradual development of analytical thinking and reinforces comprehension.

Group C learners represent the highest level of academic preparedness. They are capable of autonomous learning, including reading additional literature, analyzing texts, and drawing conclusions independently. For these students, differentiation manifests in the form of extended tasks that promote critical thinking and deep linguistic analysis rather than teacher-led instruction.

The differentiated implementation of instructional

strategies at this stage ensures that all learners engage with the material at an appropriate cognitive level,

preventing both overload and under-stimulation.

Table: Differentiated Approach at the Lesson Stages

Lesson Stages	Group A	Group B	Group C
Introduction of new material	Require step-by-step explanation and visual support; theoretical material is mastered under teacher guidance using reference materials	Work independently with the textbook; complete tables and structured tasks on the topic	Independently read additional literature and analyze texts
Consolidation stage	Gradual increase in task complexity with continuous support	Tasks of moderate complexity aimed at reinforcing understanding	Tasks requiring deep analysis and creative application
Teacher's role	Direct assistance combined with fostering independence	More detailed explanations and comments	General guidelines and minimal intervention
Differentiated homework	Reinforcement of basic knowledge and elimination of gaps	In-depth study of new material	Expansion and deepening of knowledge through creative tasks

Differentiation at the Consolidation Stage

The consolidation stage is critical for transforming theoretical knowledge into stable skills and competencies. Differentiation at this stage is characterized by a gradual increase in task complexity across all groups. For group A, consolidation focuses on repetition and reinforcement of fundamental concepts through simplified exercises. The teacher provides continuous feedback and corrective support, ensuring that learning gaps are addressed promptly.

For group B, consolidation tasks are designed to strengthen understanding through application. These tasks often involve comparative analysis, transformation of linguistic material, and moderate-level problem-solving. The teacher's role remains active but shifts towards guiding rather than direct instruction.

Group C learners engage in advanced consolidation

activities requiring independent reasoning, synthesis of information, and creative application of language knowledge. Such tasks may include text production, linguistic analysis, and peer consultation. This stage fosters higher-order thinking skills and supports the development of learner autonomy.

Role of the Teacher in Differentiated Instruction

The teacher's role varies significantly depending on the learner group and the lesson stage. In group A, the teacher acts as a facilitator and mentor, providing structured assistance and emotional support. This role is essential for overcoming learning difficulties and building students' confidence.

In group B, the teacher provides more detailed commentary and clarification, focusing on developing independence and self-regulation. Instruction is balanced between guidance and autonomous work, allowing

students to gradually assume responsibility for their learning.

In group C, the teacher's role is primarily advisory. General instructions are given regarding task requirements and methods of completion, while students independently manage their learning process. This approach aligns with competency-based education principles and prepares learners for self-directed learning.

Differentiated Homework as a Continuation of Classroom Learning

Homework differentiation serves as an extension of classroom instruction and reinforces individualized learning trajectories. For group A, homework aims to consolidate foundational knowledge and eliminate gaps in skills and abilities (knowledge, skills, and habits). Tasks are designed to be achievable and supportive, preventing cognitive overload.

Group B homework focuses on deepening understanding of new material. Assignments may include additional exercises, short written responses, or preparatory tasks for upcoming lessons. These activities promote independent learning while maintaining teacher oversight.

Group C homework is oriented toward expanding and deepening competencies. Creative tasks such as composing texts, conducting linguistic analysis, or preparing mini-presentations stimulate intellectual curiosity and creative thinking. Such assignments support advanced learners' need for intellectual challenge and self-expression.

Pedagogical Implications of Differentiated Instruction

The analysis of differentiated instruction across lesson stages highlights several pedagogical implications. First, differentiation contributes to creating an inclusive learning environment where students with varying abilities can succeed. Second, it enhances motivation by aligning tasks with learners' cognitive readiness. Third, it supports the development of communicative competence by allowing students to progress at an individual pace.

Differentiated instruction also requires careful planning and continuous diagnostic assessment. Teachers must identify learners' needs accurately and adjust instructional strategies accordingly. This process

demands high professional competence and reflective practice.

Discussion of Effectiveness and Limitations

While differentiated instruction demonstrates significant advantages, its effectiveness depends on several conditions. Successful implementation requires a teacher's thorough knowledge of students' psychological characteristics and academic levels. It also presupposes the formation of basic independent learning skills among students and the presence of a cooperative classroom environment.

One limitation of differentiated instruction is the increased workload for teachers, as lesson planning becomes more complex. However, the educational benefits outweigh these challenges, as differentiation leads to improved learning outcomes and higher student engagement.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, differentiated instruction in Russian language lessons is an effective pedagogical technology that addresses individual differences among learners. It contributes to improving educational quality, developing communicative competence, and fostering learner autonomy. The successful implementation of this approach depends on careful planning, diagnostic assessment, and the teacher's professional competence.

Differentiated instruction allows creating favorable learning conditions for all students, regardless of their initial level of preparedness. As education in the twenty-first century continues to evolve, the application of interactive and differentiated teaching methods becomes an essential component of modern pedagogical practice.

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